

# Derher

A Chassidisher

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העם

א חסידישער דערהער

ירושלם  
הבנויה פעיר  
שחברה לה  
יהיו



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לעילוי נשמת  
 הו"ח אי"א רב פעלים עוסק בצ"צ  
 ר' אברהם חיים ישראל ב"ר יוסף ע"ה  
 נלב"ע ביום י"ח אדר-שני ה'תשע"ו  
 וזוגתו מרת רעכיל ע"ה בת ר' עזריאל איכל הי"ד  
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**ראפאפארט**  
 טורונטו, קנדה  
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 נתרם ע"י בניהם ובנותיהם ומשפחתם שיחיו



לזכות  
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 להצלחה מרובה בכל אשר יפנו בגו"ר, מתוך הרחבה ונחת  
 חסידותי מכל יו"ה

לע"נ  
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The possuk quoted on the cover from the Rebbe's new kapitel, קכב, is addressed by the Rebbe at length at the farbrengen of Chof Cheshvan, 5742.



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וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,  
אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו  
איזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן  
קכ"א שנה להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר



## A DAY OF GREAT UNITY

A special day like Yud Aleph Nissan illuminates our lives as Chassidim in so many ways.

Examining the Rebbe's new *kapitel* for this year, there is a message of unity and *ahavas Yisroel*, which is especially connected with Yud-Aleph Nissan:

The Rebbe explains that the general message of this *kapitel*, **תהלים קכב**, is one of unity and peace. Moreover, it's about the unity brought about amongst the Jewish people through the city of Yerushalayim. The *possuk* says, "**ירושלים**—**הבנוי כעיר שחברה לה יחדיו**—The built up city of Yerushalayim is like a city that was built up within itself."

*Chazal* say that the city of Yerushalayim makes all its inhabitants into "*chaverim*," i.e. members of the same halachic status. No matter what their differences are outside of the city, Yerushalayim has the power to unite all the Jewish people into one. Much like the revelation of G-dliness that was felt at Har Sinai had the power to transform all the Jewish people into "one man with one heart," the G-dliness in the city of Yerushalayim similarly accomplishes this sense of oneness.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, the Rebbe explained many times that there is a unifying power in the *nossi hador* that brings all the Yidden of his generation together as one. Based on Rashi's words on Chumash that "**הנשיא הוא הכל**—the leader of the generation is one and the same with everyone in his

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generation,” all Yidden of the generation become like one entity. All their varying levels of intellectual and spiritual capabilities melt away with their connection to the *nossi*, the “heart” of the people.

As we know from the mitzvah of Hakhel, each and every Yid is required to hear the words of Torah from the mouth of the king, no matter what the extent of his or her comprehension is. Because the king’s very presence inspires a *bittul*, resulting in an awe and reverence for Hashem that transcends all possible differences.<sup>2</sup>

It follows that connecting with the *nossi* brings Yidden together and strengthens a sense of *ahavas Yisroel*.

“This should not even feel like *ahavas chinam*,” the Rebbe once explained. “You’re not loving the other without cause. You are both... under the care of the same faithful shepherd, the Rebbe, my father-in-law...”<sup>3</sup>

On Yud-Aleph Nissan, a day when we all come to be with the Rebbe, whether physically traveling to be in the Rebbe’s presence or by strengthening our connection to the Rebbe, the unity of all the Jewish people shines brighter than ever.

Further in the *kapitel*, the *possuk* says, “שאלו—Seek out the welfare שלום ירושלים ישליו אהבין

of Yerushalayim; may those who love you enjoy tranquility...”

The Rebbe explains that the first half of the *possuk* tells us that when Yerushalayim is not “at peace,” i.e. in the time of *galus*, we are supposed to “seek out” and request from Hashem, with a sense of longing, its immediate restoration with the coming of Moshiach. At the same time however, we can already reach a higher level—the tranquility of *geulah*, when we will feel “אהבין”—a love of Hashem in its purest form. We can already implement this in our daily lives, by living “higher,” in a manner of *geulah*, not paying attention to all the disturbances of *galus*.<sup>4</sup>

With that, we will indeed merit the ultimate *geulah*, and the rebuilding of Yerushalayim in the physical sense too, and we will be reunited with the Rebbe, our *nossi* and our *melech*, may it be *teikef umiyad Mammash!*

#### The Editors

ט אדר ה'תשפ"ג שנת הקהל את העם  
מאה ועשרים שנה

1. See 20 Cheshvan 5742, Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 1, p. 407.
2. See sichas 11 Shevat 5748, Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 1, p. 229-230, and fn. 20.
3. 26 Tishrei 5744, Sefer Hasichos 5744 vol. 1, p.
4. Shabbos Parshas Emor 5749, Sefer Hasichos 5749, vol. 2, p. 446.



# Hei Lachma Anya

## *A Deeper Look*

### *Why There?*

*Maggid*, the section of the Haggadah that recounts the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, begins with the paragraph of “*Hei lachma anya*,” and the Rabbeim would begin their discussion of commentary on the Haggadah at this point.

The question is: *Maggid* should have opened with “*Avadim hayinu*”—or at least with “*Mah nishtana*”—both of which fit with the theme of *Maggid*, recounting the story in the form of questions and answers. “*Hei lachma anya*” is seemingly only about inviting all people to come participate in the *seder*.

There must be a reason it was placed at the beginning of *Maggid*.

### *Three Questions*

“*Hei lachma anya*” primarily discusses three things: “*Hei lachma anya*”—the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in Egypt; “*Kol dichfin... kol ditzrich*”—inviting all those who are hungry and needy to join; and “*Hashata hacha*”—the yearning for the *geulah*.

Several questions arise: Firstly, what is the connection between these three topics that brings them all together into one paragraph? Second, the invitation for the hungry and needy people should have come before we mention the “*lachma anya*,” so that they can partake in that as well. And third, the wish for the *geulah*, which doesn’t have any apparent connection with the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*,

should have come at the end of the Haggadah.

### *Inviting the Poor*

To answer these difficulties, we must first understand the idea of “*Kol dichfin... kol ditzrich*.” In a spiritual sense, one might think that since poverty is usually brought about by sin,<sup>1</sup> we shouldn’t change what was ordained by Hashem by alleviating their poverty and inviting these poor people to our *seder*! And practically, in order to accommodate many people, one would need to be wealthy enough to be able to afford such a feast.

That’s why we start off the paragraph with “*Hei lachma anya*,” reminding ourselves that the bread of affliction—which should instill *bitul* and *emunah* within a person—“*di*



לע"נ  
 מרת גאלדא מרים בת ר' חנניה ע"ה  
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*achalu avhasana*”—both my own and the poor person’s forefathers ate it. In a practical sense, we do not need to be wealthy enough to pay for a feast, we’re just serving matzah—“*Hei lachma anya*.”

## *A Hakhel Seder*

This can be connected to the theme of this year—Hakhel. Pesach, being the “Rosh Hashanah of Yomim Tovim,”<sup>2</sup> carries an influence throughout the whole year. Because this year is a year of Hakhel, by inviting and gathering Yidden for a meal, we are essentially holding a Hakhel gathering, which will lead to the ultimate Hakhel in the times of Moshiach.

## *From Galus to Geulah*

At the end of the paragraph, we express our yearning for the *geulah*. But we preface it by saying “*Hashata hacha*”—this year we are here. What is the point of highlighting the obvious

fact that we are currently still in *galus*?

The answer is that we bring about the *geulah* specifically through the *avodah* of *galus*. This is accomplished through creating general awareness about Moshiach’s coming, and specifically through the *avodah* of tzedakah, as it says<sup>3</sup>, “So great is tzedakah that it brings the *geulah* closer.” This applies to both physical charity and influencing someone positively in a spiritual sense.

Additionally, within tzedakah itself there are different levels, the greatest of which is giving food that can be eaten straight away. The Gemara<sup>4</sup> praises the wife of Abba Chilkiyah for doing so, saying that the advantage of this is that the “benefit is immediate.” When one gives tzedakah in such a way, he causes the *geulah* to become an immediate reality as well.

Thus, the connection between all three themes of this paragraph is clear: “*Hei lachma anya*” is the bread that

humbles us—and all our forefathers ate it. “*Kol dichfin... kol ditzrich*”—we invite poor people to participate, an act of tzedakah (the *avodah* of *galus*, “*Hashata hacha*”) which brings the *geulah* closer—“*Lshana haba’ah*.”

Now we can answer our original question, why “*Hei lachma anya*” is a part of *Maggid*. The essence of this paragraph is the idea of *geulah*, connecting it to the *geulah* of Mitzrayim, the theme of *Maggid*. As it is written, “*Ki’mei tzeischa mei’eretz Mitzrayim*—Like the **days** of your exodus from Egypt...” in a plural form—because the journey of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is a continuous one, ultimately leading to the final *geulah*.<sup>5</sup>

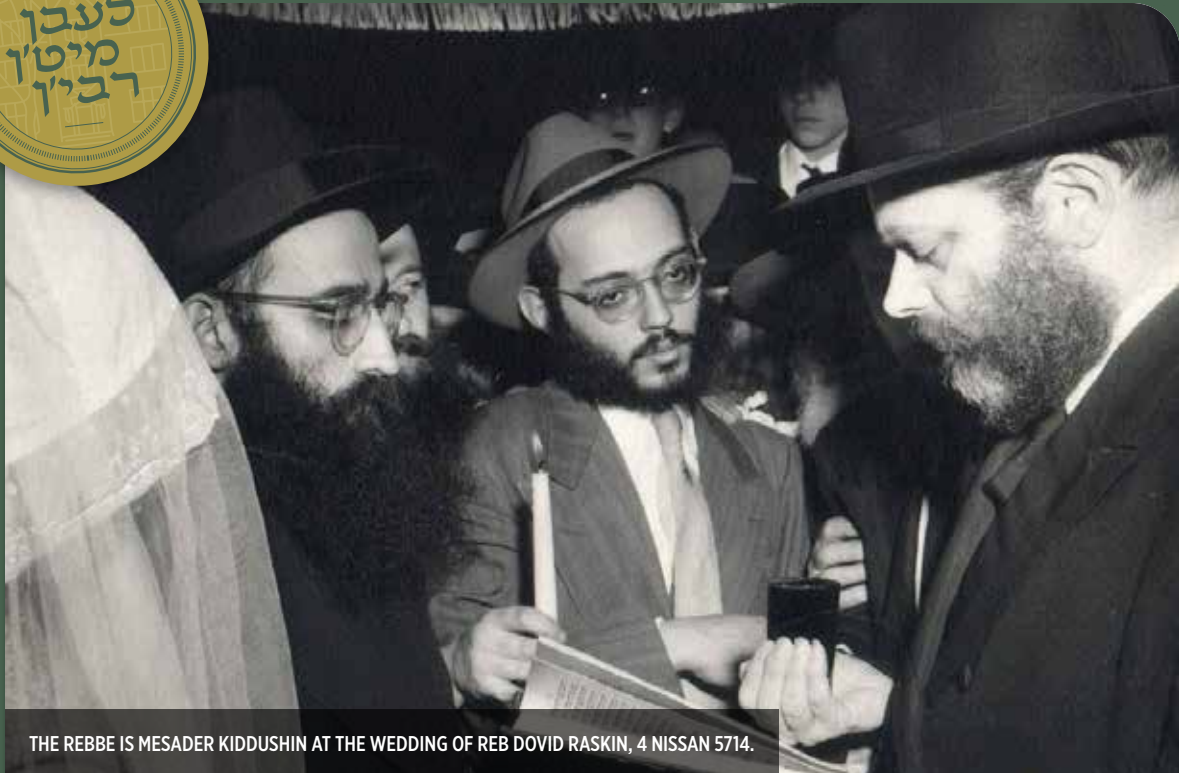
1. Shabbos, 55a.

2. Rosh Hashanah, 4a.

3. Bava Basra 10a.

4. Taanis 23b.

5. Adapted from the sicha of the second night of Pesach, 5727.



THE REBBE IS MESADER KIDDUSHIN AT THE WEDDING OF REB DOVID RASKIN, 4 NISSAN 5714.

# TZAMIA LECHIA NAFSHII

PESACH 5714\*

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL  
WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

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



## Yud-Gimmel Nissan, Erev Shabbos

The *bochurim* went today to the matzah bakery to participate in baking the Rebbe's matzos. Once they were ready, the Rebbe began distributing the matzos while standing at the door of his room. Each person who passed by received two pieces of matzah from the Rebbe's hand, and to some of the *eltere Chassidim* the Rebbe gave *shleimos* (whole matzos). Along with the matzah came the Rebbe's *bracha* for "*ah kosheren un ah freilichen Pesach*."

## First Night of Pesach

Following Maariv, the Rebbe went to visit the *bochurim's seder* which was held in the building of Beis Rivkah.<sup>1</sup> The Rebbe did a quick inspection of the premises, giving the kitchen a more thorough inspection.

As every year, the Rebbe's *seder* was held in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment, and it began a little after nine o'clock. Throughout the *seder*, the Rebbe did not talk at all and glanced numerous times at the Frierdiker Rebbe's chair. (Note: Due to space constraints we have not included the many *minhagim* of the Rebbe that were witnessed at the *seder*.<sup>2</sup>)

As the Rebbe began leaving to go downstairs after the *seder*, Chassidim standing outside in the hallway began to sing the *niggun* "*Keili Ata*." When the Rebbe came out into the hallway, the singing stopped and the Rebbe began to talk.

The Rebbe repeated what the Frierdiker Rebbe once said regarding the *niggun* "*Keili Ata*," that singing it is a *segula* for "*gilui Eliyahu*." Eliyahu is the one who will herald Moshiach's arrival, thereby making this a *niggun* that prepares us for Moshiach. Therefore, the Rebbe said, it should be sung *b'simcha*, and this should be a *segula* for Eliyahu HaNavi to come and announce the arrival of the *geulah ha'amitis v'hashleima, lemata me'asara tefachim!*

As soon as the Rebbe finished speaking, the assembled Chassidim broke out into joyous dancing and singing, while the Rebbe clapped his hands along with tremendous *simcha*.

The Rebbe then went downstairs to his room, and when he reached the door he stopped, and—leaning with his shoulder on the doorpost—began to speak.

The Rebbe went on to say a few more *sichos*, interspersed with *niggunim* and more dancing. The Rebbe

spoke then with great emotion, and when he talked about how the *neshama* is a חלק אלוהי ממעל ממש, he gestured with his hand towards a few Chassidim standing nearby and said, "And this *neshama* is to be found in *your* body, and in *your* body... and in all those who are standing here..." The Rebbe made a gesture with his hand towards those standing a bit further away, and added, "As well as in all those who I can not point to with my finger."

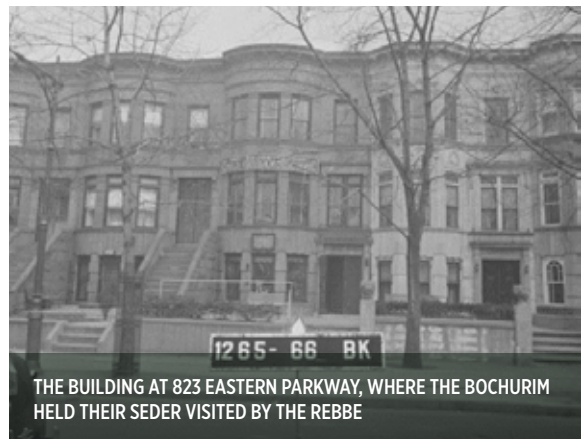
The Rebbe also spoke about how mitzvos have an everlasting impact (*yichud nitzchi*). The Rebbe took Reb Zalman Duchman's beard in his hand, and said: "When a Yid says Tehillim for five minutes, it is not [just] five minutes—*nor s'iz an inyan nitzchi*—it is eternal."

Afterwards, the Rebbe said that Rabbi Mentlik should go and dance with all his current *talmidim* (in 770), as well as those he taught in the past. Some of the people standing there did not want to move away from the Rebbe and join the dancing, so the Rebbe asked many of the assembled if they had learnt from Rabbi Mentlik. Eventually, the Rebbe himself joined the dancing, all the while exhibiting tremendous *simcha*.

Afterwards, the Rebbe said another *sicha* while surrounded by a circle of Chassidim, and then he went to his room.

After a while, the Rebbe came out of his room wearing his coat, and headed to the small *zal*. The Rebbe stood at the entrance to the large *zal* and instructed all those present to go inside and dance. The Rebbe even took many people with his hand and gave them a push inside...

When the Rebbe left to go home, those who were present began to sing "*Ki B'simcha*" while following the Rebbe outside to escort him home. The Rebbe motioned



that they should not follow, but some people continued walking behind. The Rebbe turned around and motioned with his hand that they should go back.

## Second Night of Pesach

The Rebbe's second *seder* began before 9:00 p.m. and ended at about 1:00 a.m. Following are some of the *hanhagos* from the *seder*: When the Rebbe reached the section in the Haggadah of "Nishmas" (after *bentching*), he raised his voice enough to be audibly heard by everybody present. He also cried a lot when reading this part; mainly, the words "וכל קומה לפניך תשתחוה". When they reached "Shochen ad..." the *chazzan* began to read it out loud. People immediately tried to quiet him but the Rebbe indicated that he should continue. (The Rebbe finished saying the long "Hodu" while the *chazzan* read "Shochen ad.") When they reached the paragraph in Hallel "ה' זכרנו", the Rebbe motioned for everyone present to say it as well.

As is the Rebbe's custom every year, following the *seder* he sat down in the shul downstairs and *farbrenge*d. For two hours he elucidated various sections from the Haggadah, with some breaks for *niggunim*.

## Shabbos, Shevi'i Shel Pesach

Many *orchim* came for the last days of Pesach; among them was Reb Peretz Mochkin along with a group of *bochurim* from Montreal. Forty *bochurim* walked to Williamsburg to *chazzer* Chassidus in the shuls, and they returned to 770 before 9:00 p.m. When they returned, Reb Shmuel Levitin notified the Rebbe.

## Acharon Shel Pesach

A large *farbrenge*n was held today in the courtyard of 770. The *farbrenge*n lasted eight hours, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and continuing all the way until 2:00 a.m.

Rabbi Hodakov came in before the *farbrenge*n and instructed that someone should announce that following the *farbrenge*n everyone should stay in their places for Maariv, and that when it comes time for *kos shel bracha*, a line should be formed so that everyone can pass by the



Rebbe in an orderly fashion. This is in order to prevent the chaos that can ensue in such situations, as indeed it had on Purim of this year.

The Rebbe started off the *farbrenge*n talking about *seudas Moshiach*. He then requested for a *freilichen niggun* to be sung, followed by "Ani Maamin," *Shalosh Tenuos*, and another *niggun*. After the *niggunim*, the Rebbe recited the *maamar* ד"ה ונחה עליי which lasted about 50 minutes.

In middle of the *farbrenge*n, the Rebbe announced that all those *bochurim* who went to shuls to do *hafatzas hamaayanos* should say *l'chaim*. People started to say *l'chaim* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe asked each one if they had indeed gone.

The Rebbe asked Itche Shpringer if he had gone, and he responded affirmatively. The Rebbe inquired further if he had also said words of Chassidus while there, to which Itche replied that he had not. When the Rebbe asked him why not, he answered that he was not yet used to doing so... "Men hot doch geredt az m'zol nit opleigen," was the Rebbe's reply. "We have already spoken in the past about not delaying [in this area]..."

The Rebbe also announced that the *bochurim* should have four cups of wine (like at the *seder*), and

he instructed Rashag to bring more wine so that there should be enough for everyone.

At another point during the farbrengen the Rebbe began the *niggun* “*Essen Est Zich*” and the room fell silent to hear the Rebbe better. The Rebbe stopped singing, and remarked, “*Es iz nit nogeia nor tzu mir...* It [i.e. the message conveyed by the *niggun*] is not directed solely at me...” The Rebbe became very emotional while singing the *niggun* and wept throughout.

Afterwards, the Rebbe signaled (more than once) for the crowd to sing along. The Rebbe then said another *sicha* after which he again started the above *niggun*.

The Rebbe instructed many people to say *lchaim*; to some the Rebbe instructed they should have two cups of *lchaim*, and to many individuals the Rebbe gave a piece of matzah.

The Rebbe instructed a certain individual to say *lchaim*. When the Rebbe noticed that he had not fully consumed his entire cup, he told the person to finish the entire cup, while proceeding to drink and empty his own *becher* of any remaining wine, turning it upside down for all to see that it was completely empty.

Before *bentching* the Rebbe asked for the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun* to be sung, and motioned with his hand that the fourth stanza should be repeated three times.

The Rebbe led the *zimun*, and when coming to the line of “*B’reshus...*” he began: “*B’reshus Adoneinu*”—then he continued saying something in an undertone, resuming out loud by the word “*...Maranan...*”

After *bentching* it was announced that everyone should remain in their farbrengen spots for Maariv, and that following Maariv the Rebbe will distribute *kos shel bracha*. After the Rebbe finished handing out *kos shel bracha*, he sat down to make a *bracha acharona* (the Rebbe had made *havdalah* before giving out *kos shel bracha*) and then he began once again the *niggun* “*Essen Est Zich.*”

The Rebbe wished everyone “*Ah gezunten zummer*” (a healthy summer) and left for his room, accompanied by the crowd’s singing of “*Ki B’simcha Seitzeiu.*”

## *Shabbos Mevarchim Chodesh Iyar, Parshas Kedoshim (28 Nissan)*

The farbrengen today started before 2:00 p.m. After making *kiddush* the Rebbe instructed the crowd to say *lchaim*, and he announced that those who had not yet been instructed to say *lchaim* (at the previous farbrengen) should raise their hand.



The Rebbe continued that since this Shabbos is a continuation of Acharon Shel Pesach and *seudas Moshiach*, “*Ani Ma’amin*” should be sung.

Afterwards, the Rebbe began to talk about how we need to march towards Moshiach with *simcha*! But with what, continued the Rebbe, is one to be happy? Every person knows where they are really holding spiritually... To be *b’simcha* from the Torah and *mitzvos* which he learns and performs is also hard since he can not actually *see* what he is accomplishing! Nevertheless, *knowing* that the *giluyim* of Moshiach are in fact happening as a result of our Torah and *mitzvos* *right now*—and it is only because we are in *galus* that we are *not yet* able to *see* those *giluyim*—this itself should fill one with joy! The Rebbe connected this to the theme of the *niggun* “*Nye Zhuritze*,” and then instructed for the *niggun* to be sung.

However, the Rebbe continued, until we arrive at our destination (“*da kratchamku*”) we are still traveling and do not yet see what we are accomplishing. So how can one be expected to be happy if right now he does not have anything tangible? The answer to this, the Rebbe explained, is that the passionate thirst and yearning for the destination itself quenches, at least in part, the thirst itself: Because his true desire is to be at the destination—it is as if he is already there!

The Rebbe then asked for the Alter Rebbe’s “*Tzama Lecha Nafshi*” to be sung, but nobody knew of such a *niggun* and the room remained silent... Until one person finally began to sing a *niggun* to the words of “*Tzama*.” After he finished the Rebbe said that that is not the *niggun* of the Alter Rebbe, and when they tried singing a different one the Rebbe asked if perhaps there is a third version... They began another *niggun* that at the end had the words “*Tzama lecha nafshi*,” yet the Rebbe was still not satisfied and asked if there might be a fourth version, but no one knew.

Finally, the Rebbe leaned his head on his hand, and began to sing “*Tzama lecha nafshi*” to a tune that no one present recognized. The Rebbe sang the whole *niggun* once, then a second time, and afterwards he asked that the *bochurim* should help out; but they still had not been able to catch on to the new *niggun*.

Someone called out, saying that the part of the *niggun* with the words “*Kein bakodesh*...” people already know. Someone else tried quieting him and the Rebbe said to the second individual: “Why are you quieting him? Do you have something better to say?”

Then the Rebbe asked further: What about someone who does not even have the *desire* to reach the destination; what is the solution for him? This, he continued, is what we say in davening “*וְיָאֵתָהּ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ*”; the *rachmanus* on him is so great that he does not even realize that there is about what to have on him *rachmanus*; only Hashem knows how great the *רחמנות* really is. When one meditates on this, he will arouse within himself self-compassion and realize how far he is, and how much he wants to be near *Elokus*...

This, continued the Rebbe, is the inner meaning of the *niggun* “*Esen Est Zich*”: When it comes to eating—there are no issues; there is no need to work on arousing hunger. But when it comes to davening—then one must make the proper *hachanos* and do *hisbonenus*, etc. in order to arouse a desire to connect to Hashem...

The Rebbe then asked that they should sing this *niggun*, and afterwards, he said that since there is a *minhag* to sing a *niggun* as preparation for saying a *maamar* *Chassidus*, they should therefore sing another *niggun*.

The Rebbe then recited the *maamar* ד"ה על שלשה דברים. Following the *maamar*, there were a few more *sichos*, and then the new *niggun* “*Tzama Lecha Nafshi*” was sung a few more times. The same individual as before announced to the Rebbe that the piece of “*Kein bakodesh*” the Chassidim already know, and again the other person tried to quiet him. “This one says ‘*Kein bakodesh*’—and the other one is telling him to be quiet!...” said the Rebbe.

Another person attempted to sing the new *niggun* but was not singing it correctly, and the Rebbe gave a smile. The crowd tried again and again to grasp the *niggun*, and finally the Rebbe said; in a mix of Yiddish and English; “*Ich hob getreit mein best*—I tried my best [to teach the *niggun*]...”

At the end of the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe said that the *bochurim* who go to shuls and speak should repeat what was spoken at the *farbrengen*. The Rebbe then repeated what he said in the beginning of the *farbrengen*, that being as this Shabbos is a continuation of Acharon Shel Pesach, everyone should therefore say *l’chaim*, and the Rebbe told certain people specifically to say *l’chaim*. ①

1. Located at 823 Eastern Parkway.

2. See “*The Rebbe’s Seder—A roundtable discussion*,” Derher Nissan 5776.

לע"נ  
הרה"ח הרה"ת  
ר' אהרן בן הרה"ח הרה"ת יהושע  
שניאור זלמן ע"ה  
סערעבריאנסקי  
נלב"ע ט' ניסן ה'תשע"ט  
ת'נצ"ב'ה'  
נדפס ע"י בנו  
הרה"ת ר' יוסף וזוגתו מרת חנה  
רחל שיחיו  
סערעבריאנסקי



# “Is He Working On His Inventions?”

*The following story is one of many from the lifelong relationship of Rabbi Dr. Naftali Berg with the Rebbe, as told by his daughter, Rivka Reintez.*

**Written By:**

Rabbi Shabi Soffer and Rabbi Tzemach Feller

My father was raised in a traditional Jewish home in Chicago. He discovered Chassidus at a young age and began developing a close connection to the Rebbe; a connection which would last throughout his entire life. He was gifted with a brilliant mind and eventually became an awarded and world-renowned scientist working for the United States government, specifically the Defense Department, as a frum, hat and jacket wearing Lubavitcher Chossid in Washington, DC. He would receive constant encouragement from the Rebbe because of what he would be able to achieve for the Jewish people and the safety of Eretz Yisroel.

Once, when a private job—one that came with a significant pay raise—was offered to him, the Rebbe told him, “Let them see in Washington that a frum Jew can rise this high and do this well.”

Most of his research and work was—and still remains—highly confidential. I can share that some of his work was in the development of a number of advanced fighter jets and the Patriot missile defense system. While helping develop these defense technologies, he showed up each day in the office dressing—and acting—proudly like a Chosid, with a Tanya

in his pocket and Rambam in his hand.

When I was a young child, my father was diagnosed with leukemia. Despite aggressive treatment, he eventually reached the point where the doctors informed him that his life expectancy was six months. Around the time that we received this terrible prognosis, my parents and I went to the Rebbe at Sunday dollars for my 17th birthday, on 2 Nissan 5751\*.

My father informed the Rebbe of a special procedure they would be trying in the coming weeks, and requested a *bracha* that it should be successful. The Rebbe gave a *bracha* for a successful and speedy recovery, and immediately reminded him that he is currently in the middle of writing a book, and wished him continued success in his endeavors and that he should earn awards for his work.

Afterwards, the Rebbe gave me a dollar and a *bracha* for my birthday, then suddenly he called my mother back and said “this is for the wedding, at an auspicious hour” which was quite odd considering that it was my 17th birthday, and I had no plans to get married. My father privately wondered if the fact that the Rebbe called only my mother back to give this unusual *bracha* meant that he wouldn’t live to see my

*“The Rebbe called my mother back and said ‘this is for the wedding, at an auspicious hour’ which was quite odd considering that it was my 17th birthday.”*

wedding day.

As my father’s sickness progressed, his spleen swelled up—a side effect of leukemia—and the doctors determined that it had to be removed, and noted that it had grown so large that it was the second largest ever recorded globally. In his weakened state, my father would be lucky to survive the surgery, the doctors informed him bluntly.

My sister went to the Rebbe during Sunday dollars and requested the Rebbe’s *bracha*. Interestingly, the Rebbe replied using the same word the doctor used: a *bracha* that it will be with good luck, and he repeated this a few times in the few languages that my sister knew, including French.

After this encounter and the Rebbe’s go-ahead for the surgery, my father’s condition worsened and he had to be rushed to the ICU, on life-support in an induced coma. In the state in which they would perform the operation on him, the doctors didn’t think he would survive.

On Pesach Sheni I went to the Rebbe again to ask for a *bracha* for my father’s recovery, using his first name and his mother’s name.

The Rebbe gave me a dollar and quickly responded, “Professor Berg? Give this to tzedakah for him. May he have a speedy recovery, and success in his inventions.”

Then suddenly the Rebbe asked me, “Is he working on his inventions?” almost as if the Rebbe hadn’t known about the severity of the situation.

To this I replied no, and I told the Rebbe that he was currently in the hospital in intensive care.

The Rebbe then asked, “But before that he was working on his inventions? He probably left in the middle of things.”

I told the Rebbe that my father’s staff were continuing their work on his projects.

Then, with a beautiful smile from ear to ear, the Rebbe looked right at me and told me to remind my father that he must make his recovery as soon as possible to return to and continue his work, and the Rebbe gave us *brachos* for *bsuros tovot*—good news.

At that time, my father was unconscious, undergoing a complex and risky operation with little chance for survival, and yet the Rebbe’s reaction to the whole situation was almost as if there was nothing to worry about, he’ll be back to work in no time, and he wanted me to give him that message. All of this, together with the warm smile the Rebbe gave me while saying it, put me at ease and gave me hope.

Amazingly, that’s exactly how it happened. To the surprise of the doctors and surgeons he successfully made it through the operation and was soon on the path to recovery.

Not long after, my father was out of the hospital in Maryland and on his feet. Of course, he returned to Sunday dollars at 770, on 15 Elul. I joined him on this trip as he went to thank the Rebbe for all the *brachos* and his continued care and involvement for us and our situation.



RABBI DR. NAFTALI BERG WITH MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES DEFENSE DEPARTMENT



RABBI DR. NAFTALI BERG PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH AN EARLY EDITION OF THE TANYA AT 'SUNDAY DOLLARS', 15 ELUL 5751.

Especially after this story's miraculous outcome, my father wanted to show his appreciation to the Rebbe in a unique way, so he decided to gift the Rebbe an early edition of the Tanya which he had in his possession.

The Rebbe, holding the Tanya, reminded my father that they had recently discussed my father's work on writing and publishing an upcoming book. (In this full-circle moment, the discussion the Rebbe was referring to was the one that took place at that very first Sunday dollars encounter of this story, just a few months prior, on 2 Nissan, that the Rebbe initiated immediately after giving a *bracha* for a speedy recovery.) The Rebbe then asked with a big smile if my father could follow up his current work in progress with a book like the Tanya he had just handed to the Rebbe. My father smiled, gesturing humbly with his hands, and the Rebbe gave a *bracha* for Hashem's help and said, "*Yagata U'matzasa* — Toil and you will find [success]."

Right before we left, the Rebbe summoned my father back, and again asked about the inventions that my father had been working on, to which my father replied, again gesturing with his hands, that with G-d's help, hopefully it will be ready soon, since they were in the middle of working on it. The Rebbe replied with a smile, "All this must be in the future? Why gesture doubtfully with your hands; better use your hands to accomplish good things!"

Just like in the previous time, the Rebbe focused the

discussion on where his work was holding, encouraging him to continue where he left off and increase in his efforts.

In fact, all the way back to that very first encounter, what may have seemed like the Rebbe changing the subject from the severity of the situation to my father's work endeavors, was actually the Rebbe showing us that my father's mission in this world was not yet complete, and there was nothing to worry about.

Thank G-d my father outlived the initial estimated life expectancy of 6 months by a few years.

As for the mysterious dollar my mother received for "the wedding" and my father's concerns, he did in fact live to see my wedding day, and passed away a few months later.

To top it all off, 26 years later I was marrying off my daughter when my brother-in-law approached me at the wedding and asked whether anyone had the dollar. I wasn't sure what he was referring to. He said, "You know? The dollar for the wedding the Rebbe gave on this date in 5751\*."

I then realized that the date of my daughter's wedding was the exact same date on which the Rebbe gave my mother, on my 17th birthday, a dollar "for the wedding". Now, here I was with that same dollar at my daughter's wedding, and *baruch Hashem*, my mother, may she live and be well, was present at the wedding as well.

Only then did we begin to understand what the Rebbe meant. **1**

\* 5751-1991



# PESACH SEDER *with the* REBBE

The Pesach Seder is filled with customs and traditions laden with layers of depth and meaning. Towards the beginning of his commentary on the Haggadah, the Rebbe cites from the *minhagim* of the Maharil:


“יהא כל אדם חרד באימה לקיים מאמר חכמים שתקנו מצות הסדר והגדה, ולא יהא הדבר קל בעיניו, אף אם כמה דברים יש בסדר שנראה בעיני האדם שאין הקפדה בהם, ישכיל בדעתו לקיים שאין שום דבר ריק בהן...”

*“Every person should be filled with awe when approaching the instructions of our Chachamim to perform the Seder and recite the Haggadah. Let it not be taken lightly. Even if there are some details that don’t seem significant, one must be wise and fulfill them, for there is no meaningless detail in [the Seder]...”*

In the following essay we collected 15 short insights from the Rebbe’s vast writings and *sichos* on the Haggadah, one for each step of the Seder.

*Compiled and Translated by: Rabbi Mendel Vogel*





מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק  
אדמו"ר בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן  
מאה ועשרים ואחת שנה

נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער  
וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא  
ובנותיהם ברכה ליפשא, עליזה ושיינדל  
ובנו מנחם מענדל שיחיו  
שוחאט



In the *kiddush* for Pesach we refer to the Yom Tov as *Chag Hamatzos*, but we find that it actually has three names:

1. Pesach
2. *Chag Hamatzos* (the Festival of Matzos)
3. *Zman Cheiruseinu* (the Season of Our Freedom).

These three names are interrelated:

Matzah (*Chag Hamatzos*) represents *bittul*, selflessness. It symbolizes the element of *kabbalas ol* which is a foundation of *avodas Hashem*. This quality leads to true freedom (*Zman Cheiruseinu*), for it allows a Yid to express his true self—which is to serve the Hashem with joy through Torah and mitzvos. This, in turn, allows for Pesach (lit. “a jump”), a radical leap forward, incomparably higher to the previous standing (“*b’ein aroch*”) in *avodas Hashem*.

*Likkutei Sichos vol. 17, p. 71*

# KADESH

This *siman* is the only one that begins with a *vov*. One reason for this is that we want it to have two syllables, just as the rest of the *simanim*, and the extra *vov* accomplishes that. Another reason for the added letter is to emphasize the order of events—first *Kiddush*, **then** *Urchatz*. Meaning that even someone who during the rest of the year may follow a different *minhag* in this regard—on the night of Pesach he follows the above order. Similarly, even someone who follows the opinion of washing one’s hands before *Kadesh* needs to wash again now.

*The Rebbe’s Haggadah, p. 35*

# URCHATZ

# KARPAS

“שבכל הלילות אין אנו מטבילין אפילו פעם אחת, הלילה הזה שתי פעמים”

One might ask: What in fact is so extraordinary in the dipping that we do on the night of Pesach if one is able to dip his food on any other night of the year too? Indeed, we find that in the times of the Gemara the custom was to dip one’s food during a meal—and more than just one time!

The explanation is: On one hand, dipping food is an act of *bittul*, since some of the food’s own taste is negated in order to receive the taste of the dip. In fact, the word in *Lashon Hakodesh* for “dipping” is “טיבול”, which has the same exact letters as the word

“ביטול”. On the other hand, the act of dipping food demonstrates that one is a connoisseur who understands that the food on its own is lacking and knows just what to add to get the right flavor—clearly an act of feeling oneself as an important being—a “*metzius*.” In other words, the **food** that is being dipped has *bittul*—the *person* dipping does not.

This paradox exists the rest of the year.

The dipping on the night of the *seder*, however, is “different from all other nights.” For on this night, even our act of dipping demonstrates *bittul* in the *person*.

*Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 3, p. 83-84*

The Frierdiker Rebbe relates: Before his father—the Rebbe Rashab—put away the larger half of the matzah for the *afikoman*, he first broke it into five pieces. At first, the Frierdiker Rebbe continued, he was not sure if the number of pieces was intentional. But then on one occasion, the matzah broke into six pieces, and he noticed that the Rebbe Rashab put one piece aside in order for the *afikoman* to specifically consist of five pieces. At that point, he asked his father for the meaning behind his actions, and the Rebbe Rashab responded, “*Az men vil altz vissen, vert men gech alt*—Wanting to know everything makes one grow old quickly.” The next day, while walking together with his father, the Frierdiker Rebbe let out an anguished sigh over the previous night’s exchange. “[If] it is that important to you [to know the reason]...” the Rebbe Rashab said, and began to explain the significance:

The middle matzah corresponds to Yitzchak, which is why the letters of the word “*yachatz*” are the same as in the name “Yitzchak.” The *afikoman*—the larger half of the middle matzah—symbolizes the *chesed* of Avraham, for the word “*afikoman*” is a combination of two words—*Afiku man*—“to give forth food.” This is expressed in the kindness performed by Avraham, feeding and providing for whomever passed by his tent, even complete strangers.

The idea of *breaking* the *afikoman* is to draw down the energy of Yitzchak (*gevurah*) into *keilim* (i.e. to ground the energy of *gevurah*, whose nature is to otherwise rise upwards). This is done through *breaking* the matzah, which symbolizes the “*breaking down*” (*shevira*) of *gevurah*. Since there are “five levels of *gevurah*,” we break it into five pieces, which also causes a “*sweetening*” of the severity of Yitzchak through the “five levels of *Chesed*” of Avraham.

*Likkutei Sichos 3, p. 1016*



## MAGGID

The Frierdiker Rebbe related that when he was a child, his father—the Rebbe Rashab—asked him why we do not make a *bracha* before performing the *mitzva* of telling the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* at the *seder*.

He did not know the answer, and the Rebbe Rashab shared with him that when he was a young boy, his father—the Rebbe Maharash—asked him the same question, and he, too, did not have an answer. The Rebbe Maharash then told him that when *he* was a child, *his* father—the Tzemach Tzedek—asked him the same question, and he also did not know what to answer. The Tzemach Tzedek then shared with him that when he was a little boy, his grandfather—the Alter Rebbe—asked him this question, and when he, too, did not have an answer, the Alter Rebbe explained that it is for the same reason that we do not say a *bracha* “*Lvarech birkas hamazon*” before reciting *birkas hamazon*.

Meaning, since the *Haggadah* is essentially one long *bracha* where we thank and *bentch* Hashem for the miracles of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, therefore, just as at *bentching* after a meal one does not make a *bracha* before reciting *birkas hamazon*—for that would mean making a *bracha* on a *bracha*—the same can be applied to the *mitzvah* of reciting the *Haggadah*.

*Likkutei Sichos 3, p. 1016*

YACHATZ

There are those who wanted to amend the name of this *siman* to “Rechatz” and take out the *Hei*, thereby making it the same as “Urchatz” (see above *Urchatz*). But in many authoritative versions it is spelled “Rachtzah,” which is how we spell it in practice.

A reason is given in *Pri Eitz Chayim* for this specific way of spelling: There are two times during the *seder* that we wash our hands—*Urchatz* and *Rachtzah*. The first washing corresponds to “*Chochma d’Za*,” and the second one corresponds to “*Binah d’Za*.” Kabbalah explains that *Chochma* is *zachar* (masculine energy) and *Binah* is *nekeiva* (feminine energy). Now we can understand the difference in the spelling of these two *simanim*: *Urchatz* is simply the masculine form of spelling the word, while *Rachtzah* is the feminine way of spelling it.

There is a fascinating response written by the Rebbe to Dr. Asher Heilman in answer to his letter with comments on various points in the Rebbe’s

commentary to the *Haggadah*. One of the points he suggests is a possible answer to the question of why these two *simanim* are spelled differently: The *simanim* of the *seder* form a poem of sorts, where words rhyme with one another. That, he proposed, is why it is specifically spelled “*Rachtzah*,” so that it should fit into the rhyme (i.e. *Maggid*, *Rachtzah*, *Motzi-Matzah*).

The Rebbe responds that, on the contrary, if the intent was to make all 15 of the *simanim* rhyme, then it actually should have been written “*Rechatz*.”

To explain, there are two options for making the *simanim* rhyme: 1. Spell the sixth *siman* “*Rachtzah*,” thereby making it rhyme with the eighth *siman* “*Matzah*.” In this case, however, the last of all the *simanim*, “*Nirtzah*,” will not rhyme with any of the others. 2. Spell it “*Rechatz*,” and have it rhyme with the fourth *siman* “*Yachatza*,” and then the last *siman* “*Nirtzah*” would rhyme with the eighth *siman* “*Matzah*.”

*Igros Kodesh* vol. 2, p. 364.

The *bracha* of *Hamotzi* comes first, and then we make a special *bracha* for the *matzah*. This is because of the rule that when two time-bound *mitzvos* present themselves at the same time, the one which occurs more frequently—in our case, the *bracha Hamotzi*—takes precedence and is performed first. Another rationale to begin with *Hamotzi* arises when one takes into account the process of making the *matzah*: First the wheat has to grow, and only then can flour—and eventually *matzos mitzvah*—be produced from the wheat. Hence, the *bracha* of “*Hamotzi lechem min ha’aretz*”—literally “Who brings forth bread from the earth”—comes first in the process of making the *matzah*.

*The Rebbe’s Haggadah*, p. 80



Someone once asked the Rebbe if he can feed machine-made matzos to his young grandchildren during Pesach. The Rebbe responded: Regarding *geborks* and other *hid-durim*—”*macht nit ois*”—one may be lenient with regards to small children. But with regards to choosing between machine-made matzah and hand-made *shmura* matzah, one must be stringent even with small children! Matzah is the “food of *emunah*,” and one must begin working on their *emunah* from a young age (“*fun kind'veiz un*”).

When discussing this quality of *emunah* found in matzah, Chassidus connects it with the statement in Gemara: “A child does not know how to call out ‘Father!’ until he tastes the taste of grain.” This symbolizes the idea that matzah (“grain”) has a power to instill in a person *emunah* in Hashem, our father. Obviously, the Rebbe concluded, when we are talking about “grain” it is not referring to machine-made matzos (“*mashinove matzos*”)...!

*Toras Menachem 5711, vol. 2, p. 7*

## MATZAH

## KORECH

”כן עשה הלל בזמן שביית המקדש ה' קיים...”

Seemingly, the fact that we mention that Hillel would eat the *Korech* sandwich during the era of the *Beis Hamikdash*, is superfluous. When else would he have eaten it?! The *Beis Mikdash* stood throughout his entire lifetime.

Perhaps, this is said to make a point: It was only *because* he lived during the *Beis Hamikdash* era that he introduced *Korech*. These days, however, one does not fulfill the mitzvah of *achilas matzah* with the *Korech* sandwich.

*The Rebbe's Haggadah, p. 85*

## MAROR

Why is the *maror* placed in the middle of the *ka'ara*? The *maror*—which possesses a very harsh and bitter taste—is eaten as a reminder of the intense suffering the Yidden experienced during *galus Mitzrayim*. In Kabbalah terms, *maror* is *gevurah* (severity). Seemingly, then, it would have made more sense to place the *maror* on the *left* side of the *ka'ara*, since, kabbalistically speaking, the attribute of *gevurah* is associated with “the left” (versus *chesed* which is on “the right”).

The Rambam explains that eating *maror* is not a separate mitzvah but rather a detail in the mitzvah of *korban Pesach*. As it says in the *possuk*: “על מצות ומרורים יאכלוהו”; when eating the *korban Pesach* you need to have matzah and *maror* with it as well. The deeper meaning behind this is, that in order to fully taste freedom, it must be preceded by darkness, bitterness; only then can one truly appreciate the light which follows. The *korban Pesach* represents light and freedom, while the *maror* is the bitterness of *galus*, which comes first. The reason for the existence of *maror* is not an end for itself, but rather a means to an end—to accentuate the *cheirus* aspect of the *korban Pesach*. So the *maror* is not so bitter, after all.

*Toras Menachem 5720 vol. 2, p. 56-57*

In Shulchan Aruch it states that at the second *seder* night, it is appropriate to commemorate in some way the feast of Esther, which was held at this time, because it was following this feast that Haman was hanged.

One might ask: Why should the miracles of Purim be remembered on Pesach? The miracles of Pesach were far greater, since the Purim miracles were enfolded in nature and therefore hidden, as opposed to the miracle of Pesach. Also, the *nes* of Purim did not free the Yidden entirely from Persian rule.

There is, however, a superior quality to the Purim miracles: In contrast to the Pesach miracles, they came as a result of the *avodah* of Yidden. As Chazal state in Gemara, it was as a prelude to the *nes* of Purim that “קיימו מיה שקבלו כבר” (the Yidden accepted what they had already begun by *matan Torah*)—through their *avoda* of *mesiras nefesh*, the Yidden merited a salvation from their enemies. This results in the miracle having a long-lasting effect, since the Yidden prepared themselves spiritually through their *avodah*, they were deserving vessels to receive the *gilui Elokus* in a *pnimius*. The story of Pesach lacks this quality.

The complete and final *geulah* will combine the positive dimensions of both the *geulah* from Mitzrayim and the *geulah* of Purim. We will indeed experience “Pesach-like” miracles transcending the natural order, and yet they will need to be preceded by the *avodah* of Yidden in order to be internalized in a *pnimius*. On Pesach, as we prepare for Eliyahu Hanavi to announce the arrival of *Moshiach tzidkeinu*, we emphasize both of these dimensions.

*Likkutei Sichos 3, p. 1016*

Once, during a *seder* with the Frierdiker Rebbe, *Shulchan Orech* had concluded and it was time for *Tzafun*, when one of the guests announced that it was time for *bentching*. The Frierdiker Rebbe heard and remarked that one only needs to take a look inside the *siddur*, then he will know where he is holding.

This is a *hora'a* for all of us: When it comes to areas in life that are in the category of “*tzafun*,” it is unclear and “hidden” from us which path to take, we cannot rely on ourselves but we must see what it says in the “*siddur*”—we must seek guidance from the Rebbe. And even if one has already heard from the Rebbe many *hora'os* in the past, one must nevertheless continue to turn to the Rebbe in each situation.

The truth is, that even in situations in which it seems to be obvious and “revealed” which direction to take, “עס איז גלייכער אז מען פרעגט,”—it is better to ask regardless. But in a situation where one is unsure of what to do, then it is an *obligation* to turn to the Rebbe!

*Toras Menachem 5711 vol. 2, p. 26*

## TZAFUN



Chazal state that whatever Hashem commands Yidden to do, He Himself does. The *minhag* of opening the doors on Pesach night indicates that in the Heavens too all the doors are opened. Every Yid, regardless of his conduct throughout the year, has the potential to reach the highest levels. He can leap (the definition of the word “Pesach”) to heights totally beyond his current spiritual state.

*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 4 p. 1298*

One may question: Why does the *siman* of *Hallel* appear only now in the *Haggadah* when we are *finishing Hallel*? It should have been put at the end of *Maggid* where we start *Hallel*.

The explanation is that the *perakim* of *Hallel* that were recited earlier in the *Haggadah* are actually a part of *Maggid*. Included in the mitzvah to relate the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is to mention the praise the Yidden offered to Hashem for all the wondrous miracles He performed. Therefore, as part of *Maggid*—when we tell the story— we also say the first few *perakim* of *Hallel* which talk about the praise that the Yidden gave to Hashem at *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

The *siman* of *Hallel* is not (only) referring to the last *perakim* of *Hallel* which we now say, but (also) to the passages which we say afterwards; *kapitel* קל”ו (“*Hallel Hagadol*”), *Nishmas*—all the way to the end of the *Haggadah*.

*Toras Menachem 5723 vol. 2, p. 283*

## HALLEL

The Frierdiker Rebbe once stated that his father, the Rebbe Rashab, would be very careful regarding the way he accented the syllables of the phrase “*Lshannah haba’ah*” in the *piska* of “*Hei Lachma Anya*.” He did not take such precise care, though, with regard to the *tefillah* which we say at the end of the *Haggadah*, “*Lshannah haba’ah b’Yerushalayim!*” This is because here the proper *dikduk* is not so important; what is important is that by next year we should actually be in Yerushalayim, celebrating Pesach together with *Moshiach tzidkeinu*, *בְּעֵגְלָא דִּידן*!

*Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 543*

## NIRTZAH





11 NISSAN 5732



לעילוי נשמת  
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מרדכי ב"ר מרדכי ע"ה  
רב קהילת חברת ש"ס - קראון הייטס כאן צוה"ה את הברכה  
נלב"ע ביום ש"ק פ' ויקרא ג' ניסן ה'תש"פ

ולע"נ זוגתו מרת פעסא רחל לאה בת ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה  
נלב"ע ביום ש"ק כ"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ז  
גורארי'  
ת'נצ'בה'

הוקדש ע"י בני משפחתם שיחיו

# LIGHT & JOY

*Celebrating  
the Rebbe's  
121st birthday*

## A CHASSIDISHER FARBRENGEN

*As we celebrate the Rebbe's 121st birthday and conclude the Rebbe's 120th year, me'ah v'esrim shana, A Chassidisher Derher sat down with several Chassidim for a chassidisher farbrengen: Rabbi Yisroel Noach Vogel, shliach in Postville, Iowa; Rabbi Eli Nosson Silberberg, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Lubavitch Chicago; Rabbi Zushe Greenberg, shliach in Solon, Ohio; and Rabbi Shmuel Butman, director of Tzach, Brooklyn, NY.*

*They graciously shared with us some of their memories of Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe, and imparted words of inspiration as we begin a new decade by the Rebbe, in the spirit of "והימים האלו נזכרים ונעשים".*

*We encourage our readers to review the special magazine published in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan—120 Years, "Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe," where many of the events described here are featured in greater detail.*

**Interviews by: Rabbi Yossi Katz | Written by: Mendel Zaklikovsky**

שיר המעלות

# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN WITH THE REBBE



*Rabbi Yisroel Noach Vogel*

Yud-Aleph Nissan by the Rebbe was a day rich with *giluyim* and much joy; so many different memories come to mind when I recall Yud-Aleph Nissan by the Rebbe.

I will try to impart from my memories of Yud-Aleph Nissan in the Rebbe's presence throughout the years; both my own personal memories and what I remember hearing from other Chassidim. Ultimately, sharing these memories evoke within every Chossid a strong yearning to be speedily reunited with the Rebbe physically, and merit the most joyous Yud-Aleph Nissan of all, with the *geulah ha'amitis v'hashleimah*.<sup>1</sup>



Generally, the Rebbe did not farbreng on Yud-Aleph Nissan in the earlier years; the one exception was in 5722\*, on the Rebbe's sixtieth birthday. The first of the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens took place in 5731\*. When the Rebbe returned from the Ohel on Yud-Aleph Nissan, he walked to the sink at the end of the hallway on the main floor of 770 to wash *netilas yadayim* before Mincha. The Rebbe then turned to Rabbi Groner and informed him that there will be "a short farbreng." The farbreng was such a surprise, that there wasn't even enough time to set up a microphone (although luckily, there is a recording of the farbreng)!

The Rebbe began the farbreng with the famous *maamar* "B'yom Ashtei Asar," which was edited by the Rebbe and published in 5749\*. During the *maamar*, a technician came to set up the microphone, but the speakers started emitting loud screeches. The Rebbe

motioned to the technician to turn off the speakers, and the technician ended up setting up the microphone after the *maamar*. The farbreng was short; lasting under an hour.

The events surrounding the farbreng of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\* ("*shnas hashivim*") were very special; the Rebbe began speaking about Yud-Aleph Nissan almost a month earlier, on Purim!

During the months preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan,



I was learning in the Lubavitch Cheder of London. Although we were small children, we too wanted to give the Rebbe a *matana*. Before Yud-Aleph Nissan we were already learning Gemara, and with the encouragement of our teacher we reviewed 70 (!) *blatt* of Gemara *ba'al peh* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

After Pesach, we were informed of a pleasant surprise: The Rebbe had sent a pocket sized Tanya with a *michtav kloli* pasted in the back cover to every single child that participated in our gift! The class younger than mine, who had also given the Rebbe their own gift for Yud-Aleph Nissan, received a pocket sized siddur with a different *michtav kloli* attached.

One small difference in the letters was that in our letter the Rebbe wrote: "... As it is written in this Tanya you shall contemplate that Hashem is always over you..." In the other letter the Rebbe wrote: "... As it is written in this siddur before *Modeh Ani*, that immediately after awakening one should remember that Hashem is over him..." (The Rebbe sent the siddur and Tanya, together with the letters, to children worldwide in thanks of their gifts in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.)

One particular anecdote which comes to mind from the *farbrengen* of *shnas hashiv'im* occurred as the Rebbe was leaving the shul after the *farbrengen*. The enthused crowd of Chassidim pushed forwards, and the banister on the western bleacher broke, causing a number of people to end up on the floor, right in the Rebbe's path.



THE TANYA SENT BY THE REBBE WITH THE ACCOMPANYING LETTER

The Rebbe's secretaries now had the job of helping all those on the floor to get up, handing them their hats and glasses etc.

One *bochur* who had ended up on the floor, in the confusion, reached out and pulled on someone's hand to pull himself up. When he looked up though he was shocked to see that he had pulled on the Rebbe's hand!

The *bochur* didn't know what to do with himself; he locked himself in his room for three days straight...

The next time the *hanhala* of 770 was in *yechidus*, they told the Rebbe about this *bochur* and about his current emotional state. The Rebbe commented: "Nu, *mistame iz er a chassidisher bochur*—He probably is a *chassidisher bochur*."

During the spring of 5733\*, a controversy broke out





THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES DOLLARS FOLLOWING  
MAARIV ON YUD GIMMEL NISSAN 5749

in the Crown Heights community, causing the Rebbe much *agmas nefesh*. Rabbi Nissan Mindel related that several days before Yud-Aleph Nissan, as he was leaving the Rebbe's room the Rebbe told him, "We will meet again on Erev Pesach, at the matzah distribution." When he asked the Rebbe why they would not meet at the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, the Rebbe responded: "How is it possible to farbreng when there is such controversy?"

Ultimately the Rebbe did farbreng but seemed to be in a withdrawn mood: the Rebbe did not encourage the singing, even of the new song for the Rebbe's Kapital, and didn't ask even once for a specific *niggun* to be sung, even before the *maamar*. (Before the *maamar* the Rebbe looked at the clock, motioned slightly with his head, and began the *maamar*.) Even at the end of the farbrengen when the Rebbe began to sing "*Ufaratzta*," he was looking down at the table as if singing to himself.

During the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke at length about the Holocaust, delivered the famous *hadran* on Kesubos (which was later edited and distributed by the

Rebbe in the *kovetz* "*Dvar Malchus*"), and also spoke about strengthening the 71 institutions from last year's Yud-Aleph Nissan and establishing an additional 72 institutions in the coming year.

At the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen in 5735\*, a *niggun* for that year had not yet been chosen. After the first *sicha*, Rabbi Shlomo Cunin began the *niggun* "*V'Elokim Malki Mikedem*," and in the following *sicha* the Rebbe began to speak about that very *possuk*! The Rebbe also delivered the *maamar* "*Vehigadta levincha*," a relatively rare *dibbur hamaschil*.

The famous *sicha* about the billionaire Howard Hughes was said at the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen in 5736\*. The Rebbe used this story of a billionaire—who despite his riches was held captive by his mind—to explain what true freedom is.

During the farbrengen of 5737\*, the Rebbe rejected certain practices to remember the Yidden murdered in the Holocaust during the *seder*, as well as to leave an empty chair remembering the Yidden behind the Iron Curtain. The Rebbe also made a *siyum* on *maseches*

Pesachim for the fourth time at a Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen!<sup>2</sup> The Rebbe also began the *maamar* with the *possuk* “*Vekocha*,” commemorating 100 years from when this *maamar* was said by the Rebbe Maharash.

Yud Aleph Nissan 5738\* marked the establishment of Education Day USA and the Rebbe addressed this at length at the farbrengen, thanking the American government and speaking about education. The Rebbe also spoke about the inauguration of the new shul in Kfar Chabad, named in honor of the Rebbe. At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe proclaimed: “*Lshana haba’á b’Yerushalayim!*”

That year was also the first time the Rebbe farbrenged on Yud-Gimmel Nissan, saying to Rabbi Hoda-kov that it was “as a continuation of the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen.” In the course of this farbrengen the Rebbe finished discussing some of the topics spoken about at the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen. This custom continued until 5747\* (even after a farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan itself stopped in 5746\*).

On Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5740\*, the Rebbe spoke for the first time about “*Veheishiv lev avos al yedei banim*” (the concept of specifically children educating their families and impacting their home). The Rebbe continued to speak about this passionately on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The first Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen to be televised was in 5741\*, as the world reeled from the attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan just over a week earlier. The Rebbe derived from this episode the need for education to be based on belief in Hashem. If a child knows that there’s an eye that sees and an ear that hears, he won’t be so fast to commit a crime. The Rebbe also wished the president a speedy and complete recovery.

The whirlwind of events throughout the following nights came as a surprise to the Chassidim:

Towards the end of the *leil* Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen the Rebbe launched a campaign to unite all Jewish children by having a Torah written in Yerushalayim especially for them with each letter purchased by a different child. The next night, *motzei* Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe surprisingly held another farbrengen, discussing more details about the new *sefer Torah* campaign. The Rebbe began the farbrengen by reporting the “good news,” that the writing of the *sefer Torah* had already started in the Old City of Yerushalayim. On the next night, *leil bedikas chometz*, for the third night in a row, the Rebbe farbrenged yet again! On Shabbos, (Erev Pesach), another farbrengen was held, also as a surprise (the Rebbe instructed not to notify the Chassidim until

an hour before the farbrengen was scheduled to begin). Thus ended a *Yud-Aleph Nissan* week full of *giluyim!*

Ahead of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742\*, *shmonim shana*, a massive *shturem* was underway among Chassidim in celebration of the Rebbe’s eightieth birthday. At a rally on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the Rebbe said that because Pesach is a time to be with family, and because of the costs involved with coming to New York—those who were planning on coming to New York for Yud-Aleph Nissan should not come, and should instead spend the money on *tzedakah* and Pesach expenses.

I remember people saying that when Mr. Zalmon Jaffe asked the Rebbetzin if he should come, the Rebbetzin answered that the Rebbe’s words don’t apply to “good friends.”

That year was the first time the farbrengen was broadcasted live via satellite in my hometown, London. The cost was exorbitant; just the initial connection was extremely costly, and every additional minute incurred additional cost. Two hours into the farbrengen, the money ran out and a quick appeal was made and everybody gave what they were able to. We ended up watching another hour, and listening to the rest of the farbrengen.

Many important officials and dignitaries came to the actual farbrengen, and the mayor of New York City sat next to the Rebbe.

After the farbrengen, which finished at 3:30 a.m., the Rebbe distributed a *Tanya* to all the participants until 6:30 a.m.! The Rebbe heard *krias haTorah* before returning home for a few hours. The next day, the Rebbe went to the Ohel and upon returning, announced that there would be another farbrengen. During the farbrengen the Rebbe encouraged the singing of “*Al Achas*” in an extra special way.

If you think about the Rebbe’s schedule during those few days, the results are astounding: the Rebbe was occupied—either at the Ohel or with the Chassidim—for nearly 48 hours!

A large part of the farbrengen in 5743\* was dedicated to spreading belief in Hashem amongst non-Jews. The Rebbe related a story of Mr. David Chase (the Rebbe shared the story without a name) who had been traveling on his yacht and needed to daven. He asked the ship’s captain which direction *mizrach* was and unknowingly inspired the captain in his devotion to Hashem. Several weeks later, during the Acharon Shel Pesach farbrengen, the Rebbe said that the story had not aroused the level of interest among the Chassidim that he had hoped, emphasizing how from this story one can make a ‘*trask*’ (big deal).

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5744\*, the *niggun* “*Veyeidu*” was composed by Reb Sholom Bruchstat. The Rebbe displayed special affection to the *niggun*, as was evident from the Rebbe’s special encouragement of the *niggun* throughout the year (especially during the Purim farbrengen of 5745\*).

At the conclusion of that Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen the Rebbe distributed a Tanya for the second time, this time through the Kollel *yungerleit*.

The Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen in 5745\* (the last farbrengen to be held on Yud-Aleph Nissan, *le’eis ata*) stands out as the first *siyum haRambam*. The Rebbe himself made the *siyum* during the farbrengen amidst great joy and song. The Rebbe also spoke of the 850th birthday of the Rambam and spoke about using this milestone to impact even non-Jews. The Rebbe even proposed making a stamp with the Rambam’s picture or a saying of his in order to arouse interest.

During this farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about himself in a unique and humble manner, explaining that the farbrengen was not a personal celebration but rather a celebration of the whole movement.

The Rebbe explained that after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *histalkus*, someone had to continue his activities, acting as his “hands and feet” on this world. Therefore, it doesn’t matter who this person is, rather what matters is the continuation of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s activities.

The Rebbe proceeded to relate a story he had heard in *cheder*, concerning a rav who was particularly short. When questioned as to how such a short person has such a great position he replied that although he himself is small, the chair is quite large. The Rebbe explained that being that the chair—the activities of the Frierdiker Rebbe—is large, it doesn’t matter who sits on the chair, because even if he is small “*der beinkel is grois...*”



ONE OF THE MANY STAMPS ISSUED WORLDWIDE MARKING THE 850TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAMBAM’S BIRTH, 5745

The Rebbe concluded by saying, that “the fact that a reason or cause was found, to connect this farbrengen to the birthday of a certain individual, is only a secondary reason and really nonessential; it is however important and helpful in raising and expanding ‘*der beinkel*’—encouraging more study of Chassidus and *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

From 5746\* and on,

the Rebbe stopped farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and the central event of Yud-Aleph Nissan shifted to the *bracha* from one of the elder Chassidim to the Rebbe. After their *bracha*, the Rebbe would respond with a short *sicha*.

Following the *bracha* on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5747\*, the Rebbe responded with an eight minute *sicha*, mentioning the *bracha* that Yaakov Avinu gave Shevet Asher, that their bread would be exceptionally rich. Chassidim took this as a sign that the Rebbe would distribute something—“rich bread”—to the Chassidim, and indeed, the Rebbe distributed dollars after the *sicha*.

In 5748\* the *bracha* took place in the Rebbe’s house (usually the *bracha* would be in *gan eden hatachton*). During the *sicha* after the *bracha*, the Rebbe mentioned several times the *maamar chazal*: “*Ein mazal l’Yisroel*,” noting that “*ayin*” (which is spelled the same as “*ein*”), referring to Hashem Himself, is the source of the Yidden’s *mazal*. I remember *bochurim* discussing that “*ayin*” is *roshei teivos* Yud-Aleph Nissan.

A few days later, on Erev Pesach, the Rebbe spoke a *sicha* after every *tefillah*—the only time throughout the *nesius* that the Rebbe did so! (The Rebbe also said a *sicha* every night of Pesach after Maariv, unusual and unique to that year of Hakhel.)

I remember returning to 770 for Yud-Aleph Nissan 5749\* after being away for almost a year and thinking as if I had entered a new world. The style of the Rebbe’s farbrengens had changed drastically; the Rebbe had stopped delivering Rashi *sichos* and *biurim* in the Torah of his father, and in general the Rebbe spoke in much lower tone than I remembered.

Ahead of Yud-Aleph Nissan, several Chassidim composed *niggunim* for Yud-Aleph Nissan. That year, a special committee had chosen a *niggun* to be sung, and the Chasidim had followed their choice. However, at the beginning of the Shabbos farbrengen before Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe began speaking about the first *possuk* in his new *kapitel*, “*Shir mizmor livnei Korach*.” After the *sicha*, the Chassidim spontaneously burst into the (now) famous *niggun* that begins with the words “*Shir mizmor*.”

Motzei Shabbos was Yud-Aleph Nissan and Maariv was held in the big shul downstairs. After the *bracha* and the Rebbe’s *sicha*, everyone burst into the new *niggun* and the dancing and singing continued late into the night. I remember one of the shluchim remarking that those moments were “*emese minutin*—moments of truth.”

The feeling among Chassidim during that Yud-Aleph Nissan was special and personal. It was just a

few months after finishing the year of *aveilus* after the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin, and here we were, together for Yud-Aleph Nissan, after all that the Rebbe went through.

The next night, the Rebbe distributed a limited number of copies of *Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel*, and then continued to distribute dollars to the rest of the Chassidim waiting in line.

But the surprises were not done. Two days later, on Yud-Gimmel Nissan, the Rebbe said a surprise *maamar*, “*Matzah Zu*,” in the tune unique to a *maamar*.

This was an unbelievably special moment and a massive surprise. The Rebbe had not said *maamarim* in the *maamar* tune for several years! Chassidim were in total shock!

In Crown Heights there was an alarm system set up to notify Chassidim if something special was happening in 770. One alarm meant that there was a *farbrengen* at the regular time (9:30 p.m.). Two alarms meant that the Rebbe was saying a surprise *sicha*. Three alarms were never sounded! Chassidim dropped whatever they were doing and ran to 770. I remember the crowds pouring into 770...

I remember vividly how the Rebbe wrapped a handkerchief around his hand and covered his hands with

his siddur. Then the Rebbe said: “*Zogen dem niggun*—sing the *niggun*,” meaning to begin the *hachana niggun* for a *maamar*.

Following the *maamar*, everyone just started dancing spontaneously.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5750\* the Rebbe was in his house. Shortly before Yud-Aleph Nissan, word went out that the Rebbe was going to distribute the *maamar* “*Ki Yishalcha Bincha*.” This was the first time that the Rebbe distributed a *kuntres* containing solely a *maamar* of his own to everyone. (The Rebbe had once distributed his own *maamar* only to the shluchim in 5748\*).



KUNTRES AHAVAS YISROEL, DISTRIBUTED BY THE REBBE ON 12 NISSAN 5749\*.

~  
*Yehi ratzon* that all these anecdotes and memories will help strengthen the *hiskashrus* of the readers to the Rebbe in the spirit of “והימים האלו נזכרים ונעשים,” and that very soon, we will march to the *geulah*, with the Rebbe at our lead, now!



FARBRENGEN, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5742

בית ה' נלך

# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN TODAY



*Rabbi Eli Nosson Silberberg*

My earliest memories of Yud-Aleph Nissan are from when I was a young boy, growing up on shlichus in West Bloomfield, Michigan. Every year my family would travel to New York for Pesach, and we would generally come a few days early, to be in the Rebbe's presence on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Although I was a young boy at the time, the events of *shnas hashmonim*, the Rebbe's eightieth birthday in 5742\*, are etched in my mind. Our journey from Michigan to New York began with driving through a massive snowstorm and our estimated time of arrival in 770 was delayed considerably.

Yud-Aleph Nissan that year was on a Sunday, and we finally arrived in New York just before the Rebbe's farbrengen on Sunday night. Because of our delay, my father drove our overstuffed station wagon directly to 770, so we would catch as much of the farbrengen as possible.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe surprised all the participants with the announcement that he would distribute a Tanya as a token of appreciation to all those who traveled and invested time and energy to participate in the farbrengen.

After a very long road-trip, my siblings and I were extremely tired. So we decided to leave 770 and go to our hosts in Crown Heights for a few hours, and then we'd come back to 770 in time to catch the end of the *chalukah* (we assumed that the *chalukah* would take a few hours, due to the thousands of people who were lining up to receive Tanyas).

My father received a Tanya from the Rebbe and

came to the house to bring me and my siblings. Unfortunately, by the time we arrived in 770, the *chalukah* had already finished, and the Rebbe returned to his room.

(Interestingly, my wife who was a little girl at the time also attended this farbrengen in the women's section and did receive the Tanya, so we do have this special Tanya in our home.)





Years later, in 5748\*, I came to learn in yeshiva in Crown Heights, and I had the *zechus* of being in the Rebbe's presence for the next few years. By this time however, the Rebbe had stopped farbrenging on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and several months later, after the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin on Chof-Beis Shevat, the Rebbe stopped farbrenging during the week altogether.

I vividly remember an annual debate that would take place among the *bochurim*. Yud-Aleph Nissan is just a few days before Pesach, and the overwhelming majority of *bochurim* would spend Pesach at home. The dilemma that *bochurim* would struggle with was simple: The Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens had ceased, and therefore it was possible that you would only see the Rebbe on Yud-Aleph Nissan for a few moments, perhaps on his way in or out of 770. Without these *giluyim* many *bochurim* didn't feel very strongly that they had to be with the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan; after all, it was possible that you would barely see the Rebbe!

But on the other hand, Yud-Aleph Nissan is a special day, notwithstanding any *giluyim* that might take place. True that the Rebbe may not be farbrenging, but the Rebbe's birthday is a day to be in the Rebbe's presence.

Obviously, the *chassidisher bochurim* would always stay by the Rebbe; Yud-Aleph Nissan is a time to be with the Rebbe, regardless of what *giluyim* we may be privy to. But this was the question that many *bochurim*

would struggle with; this was the debate.

As the years went on, this inner debate also continued, and in later years it intensified.

The months before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5752\*, the Rebbe's ninetieth birthday, were filled with intense preparation and excitement. Newspaper reporters and film producers were in 770, reporting and filming the celebrations of *shnas hatzadik*, and as Yud-Aleph Nissan approached, the aura of *simcha*, coupled with a sense of "*ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu*," the great privilege we have to be the Rebbe's Chassidim, only grew and intensified.

Then came the bitter events of Chof-Zayin Adar. Initially, we were expecting things to clear up quickly, and we assumed that by Yud-Aleph Nissan, we would celebrate with the Rebbe just as in prior years.

But as Yud-Aleph Nissan approached, the reality sank in and it soon became clear to us that we would not merit a Yud-Aleph Nissan like we were used to, and we may not even see the Rebbe at all.

I remember the night of Yud-Aleph Nissan, standing outside of 770 across from the Rebbe's room. A few friends of mine and I were standing together and the feelings of *tzimaon* and longing were very strong. We began dancing together to the new *niggun*, "ארך ימים אשביעהו ואראהו בישועתי—I will satiate him with long years and show him my salvation." Gradually, the circle grew and many Chassidim joined together, dancing



and singing, with the heartfelt plea to Hashem that he grant the Rebbe *gezunt* and *arichas yomim*. The feelings were bittersweet.

Just as the time has gone on, so has the inner debate continued in the hearts of Chassidim: On one hand we do not experience the Rebbe's birthday with him physically, meriting special *giluyim* from the Rebbe and so on. Yet on the other hand it's Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday; a most special day no matter what.

Perhaps we can glean some insight by going back to 'the basics' of Yud-Aleph Nissan; looking at the way that the Rebbe looks at the birthday of a *nossi hador*.

The Gemara in *maseches Taanis* says:<sup>3</sup> "משוכנס אדר—מרבין בשמחה—When the month of Adar comes, we increase in joy." Rashi explains that the reason for the joy of the entire *chodesh Adar* is because the month consists of "days of miracles for the Yidden—Purim and Pesach."

Rashi's words are somewhat puzzling; why does Rashi mention Pesach? Why is the joy of *chodesh Adar* connected to Pesach which falls out in *chodesh Nissan*?

In a fascinating *sicha*,<sup>4</sup> the Rebbe explains that the joy of the entire month of Adar is rooted in the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu on Zayin Adar. It was Moshe's birth that brought about the miracles of Haman's lottery on Purim, and also the miracles of *yetzias Mitzrayim* that we celebrate on Pesach. Therefore the entire month of Adar, as soon as "משוכנס אדר—the month of Adar begins," is a time to increase in joy; the entire month of Adar becomes transformed because of Moshe's birth.

Now we can understand why Rashi writes that the joy of *chodesh Adar* is connected to Pesach. Rashi is teaching us that the joy of *chodesh Adar* is because of Moshe's birth, the one who brought the Yidden out of Mitzrayim on Pesach. It is the joy of the birthday

of Moshe Rabbeinu, a *nossi hador*, that brought about "days of miracles," both Purim and Pesach.

Yud-Aleph Nissan is the Rebbe's birthday, the birthday of the *nossi hador*, our Moshe Rabbeinu. A Rebbe's birthday is a *yom habahir*, a tremendously luminous day, a day that transforms entire months into joyous months.

And the joy of a *nossi's* birthday is not only during his physical lifetime. Just as with Moshe Rabbeinu, thousands

of years after Moshe's *histalkus* his birthday transformed a decree of annihilation into the Yom Tov of Purim.

The same is true regarding the birthday of our Rebbe. Yud-Aleph Nissan is a day that transformed and continues to transform Yidden everywhere, and in many ways now more than ever. Countless people all over the world are constantly being affected by the Rebbe and his shluchim in a real and meaningful way.

Yud-Aleph Nissan is therefore a tremendously joyous day. The Rebbe referred to the *fabrengens* on Yud-Aleph Nissan as "*hisvaaduyos shel simcha*,"<sup>5</sup> joyous *farbrengens*. The day that the light of our Rebbe began to shine, the day of the Rebbe's "*mazalo gover*," is a day that continues to transform and affect us notwithstanding the tremendous darkness of *galus*.

In other words, Yud-Aleph Nissan is much more than just a *hergesh* of Chassidim. The Rebbe himself explains what a birthday of a *nossi hador* really means. The Rebbe himself teaches us the tremendous joy that comes with the birthday of a Rebbe. We therefore travel to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan and we celebrate with even more *chayus*, because the joy of Yud-Aleph Nissan is not limited to any *giluyim* we may experience; it's an eternal joy.

To conclude on a practical note: One way that Chassidim celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan is by giving the Rebbe a *matana*. The Rebbe himself expressed his appreciation for these *matanos*, and even described the ideal *matana* that he would appreciate.

Giving a *matana* to the Rebbe is an expression of the deep love that a Chossid has to the Rebbe. Nobody gives their friend a gift because they owe him something; a gift by definition means that you're giving something to someone else for no other reason aside from the fact that you feel personally connected to him.

So too in regards to the *matanos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan. A *matana* should not be something that is done '*tzu yotzei zein*' (just to fulfill your obligation), it should be a personal gift to the Rebbe.

Therefore, how and what to give as a *matana* for Yud-Aleph Nissan is something for you to decide, based on your talents and qualities. For *bochurim*, whose *avodah* is connected exclusively to *limmud haTorah*, there are many different areas of Torah that a *bochur* can find his niche in.

Personally, when I was a *bochur*, my personal feeling towards Yud-Aleph Nissan was very much connected to my work on the *maareches* of "Kovetz Pilpulim Oholei Torah," a *sefer* which consisted of *pilpulim* from the *bochurim* and the *hanhala* of Oholei Torah.

During my four years on the *maareches*, we began



ONE OF THE KOVTZIM WITH PILPULIM FROM OHOLEI TORAH PUBLISHED IN HONOR OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN.

working on publishing the *sefer* during the months before Yud-Aleph Nissan. We always wanted to present the first copy to the Rebbe; I remember going to the printer in Williamsburg on Yud-Aleph Nissan, picking up the freshly bound *sefer*, and running back to 770 to present it to the Rebbe.

I would give the *sefer* to Reb Mendel Marozov, who was a member of *hanhalas hayeshiva*, and he would typically give it to the Rebbe during the *chaluka* after the *sicha*. I remember the special feeling we had when we saw the Rebbe carrying our *sefer* back to his room after the *chalukah*.

That was my special Yud-Aleph Nissan moment; my special Yud-Aleph Nissan *avodah*, this is what I

invested myself into then.

The Midrash<sup>6</sup> relates a story of Reb Chanina ben Dosa who once saw the residents of his city bringing *korbanos* to the Beis Hamikdash. Reb Chanina thought to himself: "All of them are bringing *korbanos shelamim*, what can I bring to the Beis Hamikdash?" He went to the outskirts of his city and found a particular stone. He smoothed it, chiseled it, painted it and decided to bring it to the Beis Hamikdash. This was his *matana*, his gift.

Just like Reb Chanina ben Dosa, try to find your *techum*, your precious stone, to bring as a personal gift to the Rebbe.

להודות לשם ה'

# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN WITH THE BOCHURIM

*Rabbi Zushe Greenberg*



Growing up in Eretz Yisroel, my memories of Yud-Aleph Nissan as a child are mainly of the *shturem* and excitement among the Chassidim in the community preparing for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

One Yud-Aleph Nissan that I particularly remember from my youth was *shnas hashmonim*, 5742\*. The *shturem* that enveloped Chassidim before Yud-Aleph Nissan was unbelievable; truly *more'dik*.

Several weeks before Yud-Aleph Nissan, two or

three of the "*shluchoi kodesh*" (the shluchim that the Rebbe sent to Eretz Yisroel in the years 5736\*-38\*) called an assembly of our entire community in Bnei Brak. After the official part of the event, which included *divrei hisorerus* about the upcoming milestone of *shnas hashmonim*, everyone was encouraged to take on a commitment to participate in the Yud-Aleph Nissan *mitvzoim* campaign. When the *asifa* finished, the shluchim stood at the door and didn't let anyone leave



before they wrote down exactly what part they would help with.

Obviously Yud-Aleph Nissan itself was celebrated tremendously in Eretz Yisroel; there was a grand farbrengen in Kfar Chabad, similar to Yud-Tes Kislev, and many important rabbonim attended and spoke.

The first Yud-Aleph Nissan that I merited to be with the Rebbe was when I came to learn in 770 in 5746\*.

That year Yud-Aleph Nissan was different; it was the first year since 5731\* that the Rebbe did not farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and I remember the feelings of disappointment among the *bochurim*.

The *bochurim*'s feelings were not just because the Rebbe didn't farbrengen, it was a lot more than that. During that time the Rebbe had tremendous pain in his foot, and needless to say, everyone had one thing on their minds on Yud-Aleph Nissan: that the Rebbe should be *gezunt*.

In that short *tekufa*, all the *tefillos*, Shabbos included, were held in the upstairs *zal*. I remember Maariv on Motzei Shabbos, *leil* Yud-Aleph Nissan. After Maariv,

everyone broke into a *lebedike* dance. The joy of Yud-Aleph Nissan dominated despite the bitter situation.

In general, Yud-Aleph Nissan was a most special time with the Rebbe. For the *bochurim* who were there it was extra special; being that many would leave for Pesach already before Yud-Aleph Nissan, there was a very personal and intimate feeling between all the *bochurim* who had stayed in 770.

I remember farbrenging with a few *chaverim* on Yud-Aleph Nissan in the *cheder sheni* of the upstairs *zal*. The feelings that all of us felt were simple: We were in the absolutely best place in the world at the right time. We were the luckiest people. Those were the feelings of Yud-Aleph Nissan; "אשרינו מה טוב חלקנו ומה נעים גורלנו" ומה יפה ירושתינו."

But in addition to the feelings among the *bochurim*, it was clear from the Rebbe himself that Yud-Aleph Nissan was a special day.

I remember standing outside of 770, waiting for the Rebbe to arrive to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe on his birthday, as he arrived from the Ohel on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5747\*. It was late Friday afternoon, right before *licht bentchen*, when the Rebbe rushed out of his car, his face shining with a special *simcha*.

The hundreds of Chassidim packed in front of 770 burst into song, and the feelings of thanks to the *Aibeshter* gushed forth from the hearts of all the Chassidim standing there.

In addition to all the above, the one feeling that was dominant on Yud-Aleph Nissan was one of *tefillah*. Yud-Aleph Nissan for us *bochurim* was a day when we davened that the Rebbe should be *gezunt*, that the Rebbe should have *arichas yamim*. This was on the heart of every one of us, whether we said it or not.

Looking around today at the fire of *hiskashrus* that burns brightly in the hearts of the younger Chassidim, many of whom never saw the Rebbe, it's clear *az der Rebbe lebt*. The fact that every year when it comes Yud-Aleph Nissan, more *bochurim* than ever are learning with such *lebedikeit* solely to give the Rebbe *nachas*; or the fact that *shluchim* are doing tremendous *peulos*, inspiring Yidden and building *mosdos*, is the biggest proof that the Rebbe lives on, giving us *chayus* and *kochos* to continue doing our *shlichus*.

Nowadays more than ever, Yud-Aleph Nissan is a day to say thank you. Thank you to Hashem for giving us the Rebbe, for giving us the *zechus* to be the Rebbe's Chassidim, and for giving us the privilege of being able to celebrate the Rebbe's birthday year after year; *l'hodos l'sheim Hashem*.

שלוה בארמנותיך

# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN WITH GOVERNMENT LEADERS



*Rabbi Shmuel Butman*

**Rabbi Butman, thank you for taking the time to share with us some of your memories of Yud-Aleph Nissan.**

**It has become tradition that on Yud-Aleph Nissan, local and state governments, and the president of the United States, honor the Rebbe and his efforts to promote true education with proclamations and resolutions declaring “Education and Sharing Day.”<sup>7</sup>**

**As the director of Tzach in New York, you had the zechus of initiating Education Day in New York, and beyond. Can you share with us some of the history behind this special tradition?**

Although by now the celebrations of Education Day are almost taken for granted, many years ago, this custom was totally nonexistent. It was in the early 5730s when we first had the idea to honor the Rebbe in the offices of the New York City government. I contacted Mayor Abraham Beame, who was a resident of Crown Heights and a close friend of Lubavitch, and he agreed to issue a proclamation honoring the Rebbe.

I must note, that the first proclamations that we arranged in New York were not honoring the Rebbe in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan specifically, but were more general and not time constricted.

After confirming that the city would honor the Rebbe with a proclamation, we wrote up a draft with the text we wanted them to include, and submitted it to the Rebbe for approval.

We were pleasantly surprised to receive the draft from the Rebbe, with edits and corrections on the text of the proclamation in the Rebbe’s *ksav yad kodesh!*

At a certain point we began working with the New

York State assembly and senate to honor the Rebbe on a state-wide level, and we began an initiative to honor the Rebbe’s efforts in education with a specific number of ‘days of education.’ The amount of ‘days of education’ grew every year, corresponding to the Rebbe’s age; for example in 5752, the Rebbe’s ninetieth birthday, the state proclaimed 90 days of education, and so on.

I remember the first time we received a proclamation from the governor in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan; we were told to come receive the proclamation on a Monday.

On the Friday before, I got a call from the Rebbe’s *mazkirus*; Rabbi Hodakov was on the line. Rabbi Hodakov told me that no one should know about the proclamation until I actually receive a physical copy of it, even my own children. And if people ask where I’m going on Sunday, I should respond that I’m just leaving town.

*Baruch Hashem*, we received the proclamation, and since then we have received a proclamation from the governor every year for Yud-Aleph Nissan, in addition to the proclamations and resolutions from the state senate, assembly, and local mayors.

**Did you receive any special responses from the Rebbe? Did the Rebbe ever express his appreciation?**

The short answer is yes, I was privileged to see the Rebbe’s appreciation for these proclamations, both in New York, and for the proclamations from many different states throughout America.

Allow me to give some background:

Some time in the 5740s, before Yud-Aleph Nissan,



RABBI SHMUEL BUTMAN PLACES A DOLLAR BILL IN A TZEDAKAH PUSHKA AS HE ADDRESSES MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN HONOR OF CHOF-CHES SIVAN 5751.

I reached out to the governors of some 20 states that didn't have shluchim yet (some of them being Oklahoma, South Dakota, etc.), and I asked them if they would consider joining the states that are already honoring the Rebbe's birthday by proclaiming Education Day in their states as well.

I didn't know what to expect but ultimately around twelve governors agreed to join the Yud-Aleph Nissan celebration and sent back proclamations declaring Education Day in their state!

The Rebbe was very happy about it. I remember that Rabbi Nissen Mindel asked me for the contact information for the governors who had sent proclamations for Yud-Aleph Nissan to send them personal letters, thanking them for their declaration.

Once we're speaking about the Rebbe's appreciation for the proclamations, let me share with you an additional episode in this regard:

Chof-Ches Sivan 5751 was just a short while after the start of the Rebbe's ninetieth year, and I went to the United States Capitol to open the Senate with a prayer. Before I left, on Sunday, Chof-Zayin Sivan, I went to receive a dollar from the Rebbe. When I came by the Rebbe, Rabbi Groner told him that I was going to speak at the Capitol in Washington. The Rebbe said that I should take along a *pushka* with me to the Senate, and I should give tzedakah in front of everyone, showing an example of what money should be used for—to help other people.

Since then, every year, when I go to the New York State Capitol to speak before Yud-Aleph Nissan, I bring along a *pushka* and give tzedakah in front of everyone present. After I finish, all the senators and representatives line up to put tzedakah in the *pushka* as well.

So just to summarize:

Yes, the Rebbe's appreciation for the proclamations was clearly apparent. In fact, every year Rabbi Hodakov would call me and ask when the proclamation was

coming. Reb Dovid Raskin (the chairman of Tzach) would also get asked by Rabbi Hodakov about the proclamation.

**Wow, thanks for sharing, Rabbi Butman!**

**We are certain that these memories will bring a new *chayus* to those already active in bringing Education Day to their local government, and will also inspire all Chassidim to further their efforts in bringing the Rebbe's message about Education to the world.**

I hope so too. Please allow me to share one last insight:

After the Alter Rebbe was released from prison on Yud-Tes Kislev, he wrote a letter describing the tremendous miracle that happened, "...for Hashem magnified His great and holy Name which will be magnified and sanctified before many and in particular in the eyes of all the ministers and all the nations."

It's seemingly puzzling that the Alter Rebbe describes the effect of his release on the non-Jewish ministers so much. Why was that such a focal point of the *nes* of Yud-Tes Kislev?

The Rebbe explains that the *geulah* of Yud-Tes Kislev was a lead-up to—and in fact a taste of—the ultimate *geulah* with Moshiach. Therefore, just like the ultimate *geulah* will come after the maayanos of Chassidus are disseminated to the furthest places, so too the *geulah* of Yud-Tes Kislev is primarily connected to the fact that it affected the most distant people, even the non-Jewish ministers.

In our generation, standing on the threshold of the final *geulah*, we see clearly how the most influential ministers and highest levels of government are being affected and impacted—through the Rebbe's shluchim—by the Rebbe's vision for the world.

The celebrations of Education Day in the highest offices of government are testament to the tremendous *hafatzas hamaayanos* that the Rebbe orchestrated in our generation, as a prelude to the era when *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus* will come together as one, "וראו כל בשר יחדיו," "כי פי ה' דיבר with the *geulah* ha'amitis v' hashleima." **1**

1. The memories that Rabbi Vogel shared with us were also featured in the *Techayenu* magazine, issue 4, pg. 50 and further.
2. The other three times were in 5722, 5732, and 5736.
3. 29a.
4. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 16 pg. 342.
5. See the *sicha* of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5748.
6. *Shir Hashirim* Rabba 1:1.
7. See *Education Day USA*, Derher Nissan 5776. Derher Yud-Aleph Nissan supplement 5782, pg. 64.



# The REBBE'S KAPITEL



In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, we present our readers with this card containing the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's Kapitelach. Please use this gift, conveniently sized to fit straight in your wallet, as a reminder to take the few moments every day and connect with the Rebbe in this special way. May we all merit to see the fulfillment of the Rebbe's brachos in our lives.



It would be worthwhile to recite every day *bli neder*—until the upcoming Rosh Hashanah—the Rebbe's Kapitel Tehillim (71). This will serve as a channel for the fulfillment of all the brachos he gave you in their entirety.

*(The Rebbe in a letter dated 3 Menachem-Av 5710)*



# כתב יד קודש

לעילוי נשמת  
הבחור היקר והנחמד  
**ברוך שניאור זלמן** ע"ה  
בן יבלחט"א הרה"ת ר' אברהם  
אליהו שיחי'  
גלב"ע ל' ניסן ה'תשע"ח  
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'



נתרם ע"י הוריו  
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו וזוגתו  
מרת אסתר גאלדע ומשפחתם  
שיחי'  
פלאטקין

# PERHAPS IT'S TIME INDEED

*In the following note, the Rebbe expresses his frustration when Chassidim don't utilize the great opportunities available to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus:*





לזכות  
החיילת בצבאות ה'  
חי' מושקא תחי'

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת דבורה  
לאה שיחי'  
טרייטעל

# PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

## HAGGADAH FOR CHILDREN

ENGAGING THE YOUTH WITH A  
CHILD-FRIENDLY HAGGADAH

WRITTEN BY: MENDEL ZAKLIKOVSKY

## ANOTHER STEP IN EDUCATION

“We will conclude the farbrengen with a new *gezeirah*,” the Rebbe said with a smile at the end of the farbrengen of Purim 5747\*.<sup>1</sup>

“In addition to what we spoke about how every child should purchase his own Chumash, siddur and a *tzedakah pushka*—since we are standing 30 days before Pesach, it is an appropriate time to give notice that it is extremely worthwhile to publish a children’s *Haggadah*, obviously with illustrations, in a beautiful way, to engage the hearts [of the children].”

This new *horaah* was given at the height of the Rebbe’s campaign that every child turn their room into a *mikdash me’at*, a miniature *Beis Hamikdash*, by having a siddur and a *tzedakah pushka* in their room.<sup>2</sup>

Three days after giving the *horaah* to publish a children’s *Haggadah*, the Rebbe spoke at a *yechidus klolis* about the tremendous effect early education has on children throughout their future lives.<sup>3</sup> It is because of this tremendous effect, the Rebbe said, “that we have recently emphasized the importance of having *sifrei kodesh* in children’s rooms; because the very presence of *sefarim* in the room has a big effect on the children.”

Having *sifrei kodesh* doesn’t mean sufficing with just one *sefer*, the Rebbe continued. The entire room should become a “*cheder malei sefarim*,” a room with the central purpose of housing *sefarim*, and the other functions of the room being only secondary.

“It is therefore necessary to ‘fill up’ the child’s room with at least three *sefarim*; a Chumash, a siddur and a *Haggadah Shel Pesach*.”<sup>4</sup>

The Rebbe continued to speak about the importance of the children’s *Haggadah* during the coming weeks.<sup>5</sup>

## GETTING IT DONE

Just before Purim, Tzach in Eretz Yisroel distributed a flyer detailing the Rebbe’s call to every child to transform his room into a *mikdash me’at* by purchasing *sifrei kodesh*.

On the day after Purim, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Aharonov, director of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel, wrote to the Rebbe that he intends to distribute an updated version of the flyer with an announcement about the soon-to-be-published special children’s *Haggadah*.

Rabbi Aharonov added that after doing some research, it seems that Tzach will have to publish their own *Haggadah* from scratch (instead of building off of a pre-existing *Haggadah*), and distribute the *Haggadah* through the many Chabad houses throughout Eretz Yisroel. (In a future letter, the publishers detailed an additional advantage of Tzach publishing their own *Haggadah*: the cost of the *Haggadah* would come out to be a lot



HAGGADAH ILLUSTRATED BY REB ZALMAN KLEINMAN WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION (SUBSEQUENTLY PRINTED WITH TRANSLATION IN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES) PUBLISHED AS A RESULT OF THE REBBE'S REQUEST.



THE CHILDREN'S HAGGADAH PUBLISHED BY TZACH IN ERETZ YISROEL.

cheaper than if they would use an *Haggadah* from another publishing house.)

In reply, the Rebbe highlighted the last paragraph of Rabbi Aharonov's letter and wrote: "בנוסף חב"ד ונוסף לזה." קובץ ציורים בפני עצמו השווה לכל נוסח The *Haggadah* should be published in the Chabad *nusach*, and a supplementary booklet featuring illustrations and child-friendly content should be published, catering to any *nusach*.

As the project continued to develop, the publishers wrote to the Rebbe their questions and ideas, and the Rebbe answered them with several insightful comments.

In a letter, the publishers wrote to the Rebbe about their idea to make the *Haggadah* in a small format which would be more user-friendly. In response to their question: "Is the general approach correct?" the Rebbe wrote: "כעצת ידידים" (מבין בזה—Follow the advice of acquaintances who are knowledgeable in this field (experts))."

In response to their suggestion to enlarge the text of the *Haggadah* and to add punctuation (question marks and quotation marks for the *pesukim*), and to split the text into paragraphs, the Rebbe responded: "רק אלה שכבר ישנם בסי" 'רק אלה שכבר ישנם בסי'—Only [the paragraphs and punctuation] that are already in the siddur Torah Ohr and Tehillas Hashem [should be included]."

In response to their idea to add *nekudos* to the *piskei dinim* of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote: "לא—No."

In response to their suggestion to include in the supplement (with the illustrations) parts of the *Haggadah*

that are not included in the Chabad *Haggadah* ("Chad *Gadya*," "Echad Mi Yodea" etc.) the Rebbe wrote: "ה"ז ככתבם" As they [i.e. the editors] wrote, [the *Haggadah*] is *nusach Chabad*."

In response to a letter asking for a *bracha* for *hatzlacha* in the project the Rebbe responded: "וה' יצליחם בכל" Hashem will give them success in all the attached."

## נתקבל ות"ח

Just about three weeks after the Rebbe first spoke about the children's *Haggadah*, on 7 Nissan, Tzach presented the final, clearly formatted and beautifully published *Haggadah*, together with the supplementary booklet of illustrations, to the Rebbe.

The publishers attached a letter to the *Haggadah*, informing the Rebbe that the *Haggadah* with its supplement will be distributed as a gift to the children who participated in the campaign to transform their rooms into a *mikdash me'at*. In response, the Rebbe wrote: "נתקבל ות"ח" —Received; thank you. I will mention this at the Ohel for much success etc." ①

1. Hisvaaduyos 5747, vol. 2 pg. 637.

2. See *The Beis Chabad*, Derher Kislev 5778.

3. Hisvaaduyos *ibid.* pg. 648.

4. The Rebbe explained that a *Haggadah* is actually very much connected to children's education; much of the Pesach *sefer* is designed to engage the children. See further in the *sicha* regarding a Tehillim as well.

5. See Hisvaaduyos *ibid.* pg. 692 and pg. 766.



לע"נ  
מרת חסיה בת הרה"ח ר'  
איסר ע"ה  
ניו  
גלב"ע כ"ה טבת ה'תשפ"ג  
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

נדפס ע"י נכדה  
הרה"ת ר' איסר וזוגתו מרת  
חי' מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו  
ניו

# Trip Details



Presented here is a note written by  
Rabbi Menachem (Meni) Wolff of Eretz  
Yisroel, with an interesting backstory:

Written By: Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

Rabbi Wolff studied in the yeshiva at 770 twice as a *bochur*; once during 5725\* and again during the years 5728\*-5729\*. He was due to leave back to Eretz Yisroel after Pesach 5729\*, along with a group of Israeli *bochurim* who were studying at 770 as part of the *kvutza* program.<sup>1</sup>

At the last farbrengen before they left, on Shabbos Parshas Shemini, the Rebbe addressed the group during one of the *sichos*, saying:

“There is a group of *bochurim* here who will be traveling this week to Eretz Yisroel, the place that affects the entire world, because it contains the ‘*even shesiya*,’ the stone that serves as the basis for the entire world...

“May their elevation be successful; may they have success in the study of Torah in a manner of ‘*shnei-or*’

(double-lights), both in *nigleh* and in Chassidus...”<sup>2</sup>

After the *sicha*, the Rebbe instructed those *bochurim* to say *l'chaim* along with members of the *hanhala*.

On Tuesday afternoon, just as the group was about to leave for the airport, Rabbi Hodakov called Rabbi Wolff into the *mazkirus* office and gave him several instructions for the *bochurim* to carry out during their travels. With his mind fixated on the trip, he was unable to concentrate and memorize all the instructions, and he hastily left for the airport.

En route, Rabbi Wolff realized that these instructions must have been given by the Rebbe and he regretted not paying closer attention to them, so as soon as they reached their gate he called the *mazkirus* office and

spoke with Rabbi Hodakov once more. While Rabbi Hodakov spoke, Rabbi Wolff realized that the Rebbe had picked up the line and he even heard the Rebbe's voice adding to the conversation in an undertone.

Not wishing to miss the important instructions again, he wrote down what he heard on a paper of El-Al stationary.

The following is a copy of that paper<sup>3</sup>:

**While on the airplane, review the *sicha* that was said about the travelers,<sup>4</sup> until its contents are clear to them, so they can convey it in [clear] words.**

**If there are [any inquiries from] the press, we should convey the message about our mission, that we are traveling to the Holy Land, Eretz Yisroel, the foundation of the world, and that we are coming to learn and to illuminate [our surroundings] with the double-lights.**

**We should also convey to the press about the Rebbe's *sicha* against Jews leaving their communities,<sup>5</sup> and that this will embolden the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel as well not to leave the liberated territories—emphasize that they are *liberated* [not occupied].**

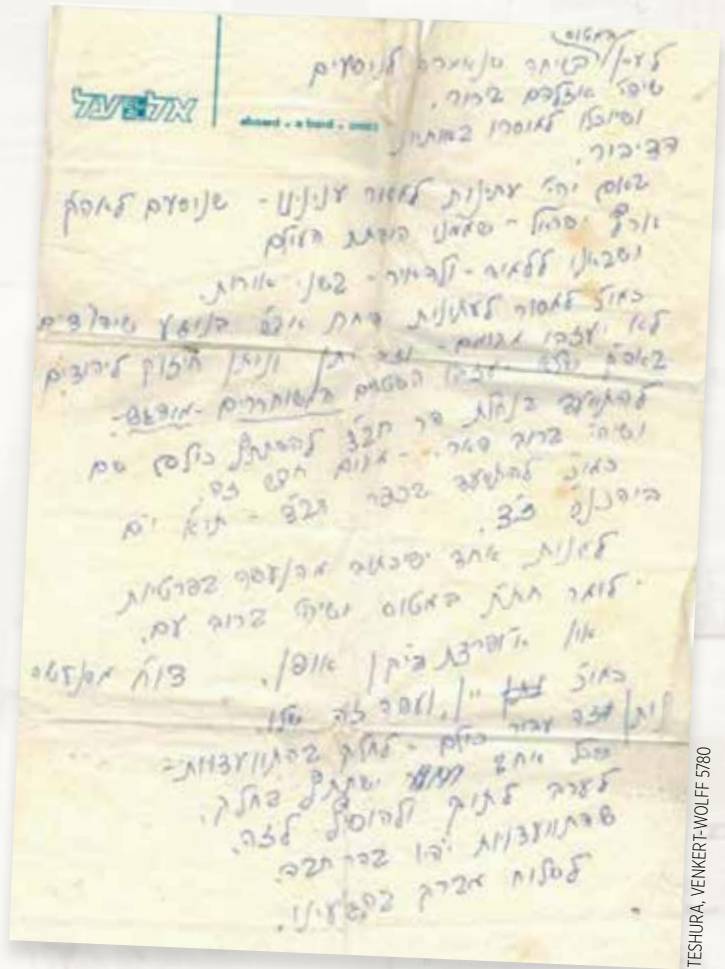
**We are to farbreng in Nachlas Har Chabad, everyone should participate; the gathering should be done nicely. This is a newly established place.<sup>6</sup>**

**We are also to farbreng in Kfar Chabad, at [Yeshivas] Toras Emes, in Yerushalayim, and in the Tzemach Tzedek Shul [of the Old City of Yerushalayim].**

**We are to appoint one individual to write a detailed report [to the Rebbe].**

**We should learn Chitas on the airplane, in a large group.**

**[Everything should be carried out] in a manner of “*Ufaratzta*” [beyond limits].**



TESHURA, VENKERT-WOLFF 5780

**[Send in] a report of what gets done.**

**[The Rebbe] also [sent] wine, making it belong to each individual.**

**He gave it for everyone, to distribute at these farbrengens.**

**Each one [of the *bochurim*] should participate in part of the farbrengen.**

**Mix [this wine] into the [drinks at these farbrengens] and add more to it [making the new drink a continuation of the wine from the Rebbe].**

**The farbrengens should be expansive [and joyous].**

**We are to send a telegram [notifying the Rebbe] when we've arrived. ①**

1. See “*A Year With the Rebbe*,” Derher Elul 5779.  
 2. Toras Menachem vol. 56, p. 171.  
 3. Published in Teshura, Venkert-Wolff 5780.  
 4. Toras Menachem *ibid*.  
 5. Acharon Shel Pesach 5729. See “*Crown Heights – The story of the Rebbe's battle to uphold the neighborhood*,” Derher Cheshvan 5777.  
 6. Nachlas Har Chabad was established in Adar 5729. See “*A Mountain of Pride*,” Derher Tishrei 5780.



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר  
לרגל יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

ולזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר בכל אתר ואתר  
שיצליחו, שימלאו שליחותם הק'  
מתוך הצלחה מרובה בגו"ד ומתוך מנוחת הנפש

נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל  
וזוגתו מרת אסתר מרים  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
ליפשיץ

# BRE THE





# AKING ICE

*After being profoundly inspired by the ways of Lubavitch and the teachings of Chassidus by his peers in the Manchester Yeshiva, Reb Aharon Cousin traveled to learn by the Rebbe in 770 in 5717\*. He was the first British-born boy to do so. Eventually, Rabbi Cousin went on to serve as the headmaster of the Lubavitch Boys Primary School in London.*

*Interview by: Rabbi Yanky Bell | Written by: Rabbi Bentzion Schtroks*

# Transforming into a Yeshiva Bochur

Growing up in Leeds, England, I had a challenging childhood. My mother passed away when I was very young, and being at home felt lonely. All three of my siblings were away from home, my brother served in the Royal Air Force and my two sisters studied at university. Aside from the circumstances at home, the dreadful anti-Semitic climate that we lived in did not make things any brighter.

Not only were we scared to walk on the streets out of fear of being assaulted and hurt, but even the teachers at school were anti-Semites who would beat us with their favorite “weapon.” One would use a cane, the other a ruler, and another would use a rubber slipper. They made us feel miserable.

Ninety percent of the 600 students in the school were not Jewish, and they would physically and verbally harass us too.

I attended a local Jewish after-school program (Talmud Torah) which was considered to be Orthodox, but in reality did not have very high standards at all. The amount of Judaic studies there was at an absolute minimum.

Shortly after my bar mitzvah, on Erev Rosh Hashanah 5711\*, my mother sadly passed away (as mentioned) from a severe disease, and I began to attend shul to recite kaddish daily. There, I met two boys from the Manchester Yeshiva who befriended me and engaged in many conversations with me.

They would share with me how wonderful the Manchester Yeshiva was and how much they enjoyed being there. The atmosphere that they

described was so peaceful, all the boys got along with each other, the educators were G-d fearing Jews who treated others with dignity, and the students were constantly immersed in learning Hashem’s holy Torah.

To me, it sounded like Gan Eden.

You could only imagine how much I liked the idea of moving over from the non-Jewish school which I was then studying at, to the Manchester Yeshiva, and so I asked and pleaded with my father to send me there.

My father made arrangements for an interview with the rosh yeshiva, Reb Yehuda Zev Segal. When the long-awaited date arrived, I excitedly traveled with my father by train from Leeds to Manchester and showed up for the interview.

Rabbi Segal began the meeting with his first question that was directed to me: “What have you studied in Talmud Torah?” I said that I learned Chumash. “Do you learn Mishnayos or Gemara?” he asked. I innocently replied: “I never heard of that.” The rosh yeshiva couldn’t believe what he heard! He then continued and asked: “Which Chumash do you study?” I said that I learned about Joseph and his brothers. “Ok,” he said, as he opened a Chumash and asked me to start reading.

I began: “*Vayidaber Hashem*”—and Hashem spoke, “*el Moshe*”—to Moshe, and then I was stuck. I simply wasn’t capable of translating any further. He then asked me if I could read the Rashi. “What is Rashi?” I asked. They never told us anything about Rashi in Talmud Torah.

With a facial expression full of regret and dissatisfaction, the rosh yeshiva looked at me, then looked at my father and said: “I can’t accept you into the yeshiva. The students here are on a very high standard. I don’t have a class to put you in. I’m sorry.”

My father began to plead with him. He said: “My son is an orphan, he lost



RABBI AHARON COUSIN IN 5712\*

his mother, and when he comes home from school he has nobody to talk to.” After much arguing back and forth, the rosh yeshiva was still not ready to accept me, and we turned to go.

Just then, I exclaimed: “But I want to learn!”

I can’t understand where I pulled together the courage to say that since it was not at all acceptable at the time for children to speak up like that. The rosh yeshiva looked at me and said: “You want to learn?” “Yes,” I fervently answered. The rosh yeshiva then said: “Today is Sunday. I want you to go back home and pack your bags, and be here on Tuesday.”

The yeshiva in Manchester was like a melting pot. It had many types of bochurim; Belz, Bobov, Satmar, Litvish, English boys, and a few Lubavitchers.

When I began studying at the Manchester Yeshiva in 1951, World War II had just recently ended. As such, most of the bochurim were orphans who had lost their families, and some were even survivors of the brutal concentration camps.

Every Thursday night, aside from bochurim staying up and learning for many hours, it also became the custom for bochurim to sit together and share



memories from the war, so much of which was truly remarkable and soul-stirring to listen to.

Everyone had incredible and unforgettable stories to share, and there were so many different emotions that they aroused. Many told of the great miracles that occurred to them when the Aibershter saved them in one way or another. Others told of the unbearable conditions that Yidden endured. The list can go on and on, there were

so many unforgettable memories that were shared.

But what moved me the most, was the unparalleled *mesiras nefesh* to keep and spread Yiddishkeit in ways that they weren't even required to according to Shulchan Aruch, that the Lubavitcher bochurim told of. The bold stance that the Friediker Rebbe took against the Communist regime, opening underground *chadarim*, building and maintaining secretive

*mikvaos*, and other Jewish activities that were all highly punishable and risky, is what intrigued me the most.

In my rational mind, Yiddishkeit was something that was kept when it came easy, but if it becomes too difficult, one is not responsible. The approach that Lubavitch took, and the huge sacrifices that they made, completely blew my mind.

The learning standards in the Manchester Yeshiva were exceptional.

## THE FIRST LETTER FROM THE REBBE

In 5712\* I had my first correspondence with the Rebbe. I wrote a letter introducing myself and explaining a little bit about my background. I wrote that my mother had passed away and that I had started learning in the Manchester Yeshiva. The Rebbe wrote back a most beautiful English letter, dated 23 Tammuz 5712\* and signed with the Rebbe's holy signature. This letter still has a profound impact on me today. Its message was so appropriate and enlightening to a thirteen-year-old boy who was just starting to learn in yeshiva.

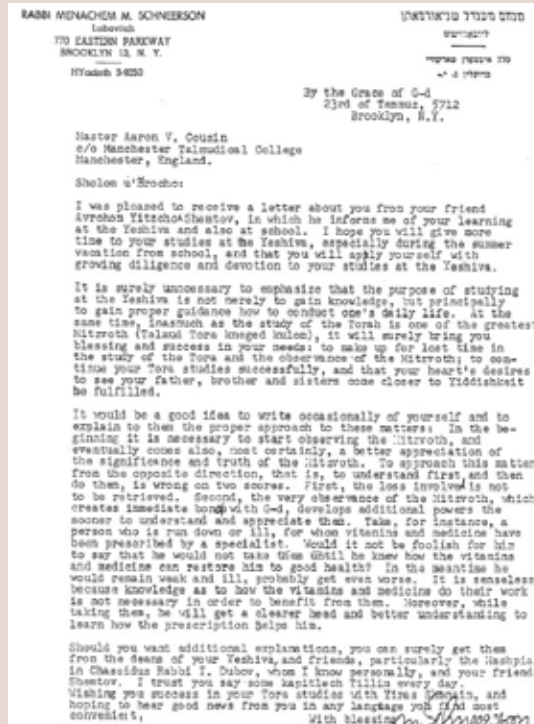
The Rebbe explained the following beautiful idea, learning from a doctor prescribing medicine:

"In the beginning it is necessary to start observing the Mitzvoth, and eventually comes also, most certainly, a better appreciation of the significance and truth of the Mitzvoth. To approach this matter from the opposite direction, that is, to understand first, and then do them, is wrong on two scores. First, the loss involved is not to be retrieved. Second, the very observance of the mitzvoth, which creates immediate bonds with G-d, develops additional powers the sooner to understand and appreciate them.

"Take, for instance, a person who is run down or ill, for whom vitamins and medicine have been prescribed by a specialist. Would it not be foolish for him to say that he would not take them until he knew how the vitamins and medicine can restore him to good health? In the meantime he would remain weak and

ill, probably get even worse. It is senseless because knowledge as to how the vitamins and medicine do their work is not necessary in order to benefit from them. Moreover, while taking them, he will get a clearer head and better understanding to learn how the prescription helps him."

Until today, this concept serves as a foundation for my studies. At times, I learn something that I may not understand, but I know that there is a good explanation, and I only need to work harder to comprehend it.<sup>2</sup>



During times of learning, bochurim would sit and learn diligently and intensely. When it came time for a break, however, we would all run to the field and play sports. That was, aside from the Lubavitcher bochurim who would learn in their free time as well.

This caused me to explore what exactly it was that the Lubavitchers possessed which made them so unique and special. That is when I started to speak with Rabbi Yitzchak Dubov<sup>1</sup> who was a Lubavitcher Chossid and one of the *maggidei shiur* in the yeshiva. We began to learn Chassidus together, which I enjoyed immensely.

## The Best Years

One by one, the Lubavitcher bochurim started leaving to learn in 770. The Gurkow brothers, the Shemtov brothers, and Berel Futerfas all went, and I too wanted to travel to New York to learn near the Rebbe!

One day the rosh yeshiva called me into his office and said: “Aharon, why are you growing a beard?” I said: “Because I want to go learn in Lubavitch, and in Lubavitch they wear beards.” “Lubavitch is not for you,” he said. “You should go learn in Mir, or where I learned, in Slabodka. Anyway, take it off.”

There was no such thing as not listening to the rosh yeshiva, but Rabbi Dubov advised me to keep my beard.

A few months later I finally received my I-20 visa from the yeshiva at 770, and I traveled to New York.

My older sister Vichna Kaila was working in Leeds at the time and was earning exactly three pounds a week. A ticket from London to New York by ship cost sixty pounds at the time. My sister saved up all of her earnings for five months and paid for my ticket. Without her huge sacrifice and gift, I



REB YITZCHOK DUBOV LEARNING TANYA WITH STUDENTS AT THE MANCHESTER YESHIVA.

may have never made it to the Rebbe, and I am forever grateful to her for that.

## Coming to the Rebbe

I arrived at 770 in the beginning of Cheshvan 5717\*. The very first time that I saw the Rebbe was when he came out to *krias haTorah*, and then again to Mincha and Maariv that day. The experience of being in the Rebbe’s holy presence for the first time was breathtaking and unreal.

With me, I brought a letter from Rabbi Dubov that he asked me to deliver to the Rebbe. I didn’t read the whole letter, but I noticed that it started off with the words: “*Hinei noseia habochur harishon meiAngliyah*—the first bochur from England is traveling...” I was the first English bochur that came to the Rebbe. I sort of broke the ice. After that, there were many others, including Feivish Vogel, Yosef Boruch Spielman, Avrohom Jaffe, and now *ka”h* there are hundreds of *yungerleit* that came to learn in 770.

I merited to enter *yechidus* for the first time on 27 Cheshvan. One of the questions I wrote in my *tzettel*

was whether or not I should switch from davening in Nusach Ashkenaz to Nusach Ari. I knew that I was permitted to do so according to halacha, but I wanted the Rebbe’s guidance and bracha. The Rebbe said: “Yes, you should switch, but you should wait until Rosh Chodesh,” which was three days later.

The Rebbe asked me if I had a siddur. I responded: “I don’t, but I will buy one.” The Rebbe said to me: “I will give you one.” The Rebbe searched his desk where there were large piles of *sefarim*, but didn’t find a siddur. He then pressed the buzzer for Rabbi Hodakov who hurried in swiftly. “*S’iz efsher faran fun di kleine siddurim fun Merkos*—Are there perhaps any of the small siddurim of Merkos?” the Rebbe asked. Rabbi Hodakov went to look.

A few minutes passed but Rabbi Hodakov had still not returned. Meanwhile, the Rebbe asked me a few more questions about what I was learning, who I was learning with, and various other things. The Rebbe also asked me about my sister Esther Leah. (Every subsequent time that I was in *yechidus* the Rebbe again asked: “*Voss macht di shvester in Manchester*—How is your sister in Manchester doing?” referring to her.) Then the Rebbe said: “I don’t know why he hasn’t returned, but I will see to it that you receive one.”



ON 16 SHEVAT 5735, AS RABBI COUSIN PREPARED TO RETURN FROM 770 TO LONDON, HIS 11 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER SORELE STOOD IN GAN EDEN HATACHTON HOLDING A CAMERA AS THE REBBE WAS ON HIS WAY TO THE SMALL SHUL FOR MAARIV. THE REBBE STOPPED, SMILED AND ASKED IF SHE WANTED TO USE THE CAMERA AND PAUSED FOR A MOMENT AS SHE TOOK THIS BEAUTIFUL PICTURE

After leaving *yechidus*, I hurriedly sat down in the small zal upstairs, and began transcribing my *yechidus*, when I heard someone calling me “Kuzhin, Kuzhin.” He exclaimed in his Russian accent, “The Rebbe wants to see you!” I had already forgotten about the siddur.

I went to Gan Eden Hatachton, and Rabbi Groner directed me to go into the Rebbe’s holy room. To my surprise, when I opened the door, I saw the Rebbe speaking to Rabbi Yitzchok Ushpal. (I then saw a most unusual sight: Usually, one would give their *tzetel* to the Rebbe, and stand back in front of the Rebbe’s desk. But here, Rabbi Ushpal was standing right near the Rebbe behind the desk, reading the *tzetel* out loud, and the Rebbe was looking up at him.) Seeing this, I immediately jolted back and closed the door, but Rabbi Groner told me to go back in.

When I cracked the door open just a moment beforehand, I noticed that the Rebbe was holding the small siddur in his holy hand as he spoke to Rabbi Ushpal. I then realized that the Rebbe must have been waiting for me, and I entered once again. The Rebbe stood up and handed me the siddur and said: “*Zolst davenen besimcha un matzliach zayn*—You should daven joyfully and be successful.”

## Years in Gan Eden

I merited to study in 770 near the Rebbe for four years, and one year in the yeshiva in Newark, NJ. Those were the best years of my life. I was *zoché* to be at ten of the Rebbe’s Pesach *sedarim*. I received a silver dollar for Chanukah gelt from the Rebbe four times. I would go on the Released

Time program (the “Wednesday hour,” teaching Jewish public school children about Yiddishkeit), and I was involved in *mesibos Shabbos* and sharing Chassidus in shuls.

An incident I remember from when the Rebbe distributed Chanukah gelt, is when the Rebbe said to one of the bochurim: “Take for your *chaver* in Montreal”. The bochur had already passed by, and Reb Yisroel Jacobson was standing between him and the Rebbe, so Reb Yisroel took the dollar to pass to the bochur. The Rebbe said: “*Nein, lomir em geben*—No, let me give it to him.” The Rebbe took that dollar and put it back into the bag, took out another dollar, and gave it to the bochur himself.

During the years that I spent in 770, the Rebbe sent the first couples out on shlichus. Among the bochurim, there was a lot of talk about potential places where it was possible to move on shlichus. The Rebbe heard about this and addressed it publicly. I remember the Rebbe spoke very strongly: “A bochur when he sits in yeshiva, may not think about any things that he will pursue in his life, even *tachlisim* (pursuits) of *kedusha*. All that a bochur should do is to learn and daven.”

I didn’t like to take the Rebbe’s time. When I would go into *yechidus* it was very brief; I would ask for a bracha and that was it. I wouldn’t ask many questions. I heard that the Rebbe once said: “*Ich vel monin di minutin*—I will demand the minutes.” Any time that I took from the Rebbe, I knew the Rebbe could ask me how I made it worth it. Later on, when I became a headmaster of the school in London, I would ask more questions.

I had an aunt that lived in Manchester who unfortunately became very ill and was hospitalized. The doctors examined her and concluded that they certainly would need to amputate one of her legs, and perhaps

## THE COUSIN FAMILY

I once wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha for my brother who was in the Royal Air Force. I wrote that it isn't possible to keep Yiddishkeit in the air force, thinking that since he is surrounded by non-Jews it must not be possible. The Rebbe wrote back: "This is, of course, incorrect and you should impress this upon your brother. There are thousands of Jewish soldiers in the army who observe the Mitzvah of Tefillin and prayer etc. The Tefillin is especially important for Jewish boys in military service, for, apart from the Mitzvah involved, it is also a Segulah for safety and a return home in good health..."

One of our children was not very disciplined, and we asked the Rebbe what we could do about it. The Rebbe said that we should appoint them in a leading position in whatever it might be. This way they will need to set a good example and automatically it will cause them to become more disciplined. Of course, we listened to the Rebbe and baruch Hashem the strategy worked wonders.

We have a son, Mendel, who has special needs. Raising him was a tremendous challenge. We constantly needed to take him from one specialist to the next, and the emotional and financial burden drained us. At one point, we were looking for a school for him, and the Rebbe told Reb Hirshel Chitrik who traveled to many countries for business, that he should tell us to reach out to a specific school in Japan that might meet our child's needs. We did apply to the school, but unfortunately, the school didn't accept our son.

After a specific out-of-town hospital visit with Mendel, my wife traveled with him the next day to New York. They waited upstairs outside of the Rebbe's room until the Rebbe would return from Mincha. Standing in one place for fifteen minutes with an autistic child was not easy, but my wife held onto him and managed to make it work. When the Rebbe came towards his room, Mendel pulled the Rebbe's sleeve and my wife was horrified. The Rebbe turned around and gave Mendel a huge smile that will never be forgotten.

One year on Chanukah, we traveled to the Rebbe with our entire family and we went into yechidus together. At the end of the yechidus, the girls approached the Rebbe's desk to receive their dollars. The Rebbe said to them: "Your mother should come first."

Once, I went into yechidus on my own, and I wrote in my tzetel asking for a bracha that my daughters should be mekushar to the Rebbe. We had five daughters at the time. The Rebbe asked me in yechidus for each of their names and wrote down each one's name as I said it.



RABBI COUSIN AND FAMILY, 5730\*

they will need to amputate the second one as well.

My sister Esther Leah sent me a letter requesting that I ask the Rebbe for a bracha for our aunt. Within a few hours of my writing in, an answer came back. The Rebbe said: "*Lehizaher b'hadlakas neiros Shabbos Kodesh kodem hazman*—she should be careful with lighting Shabbos candles before the (required) time." I quickly wrote back a letter to my sister with the Rebbe's response and sent it with express mail.

My sister went to my aunt and relayed the Rebbe's answer and said: "You must be lighting candles after the *zman*." She confessed and cried, "Yes, sometimes things are so hectic and I light the candles after *shkia*. I promise that from now on I will always light them on time."

The next Tuesday when the doctor came with the medical students to look at her leg and continue with the procedure, he was amazed. He said, "What happened? The leg is becoming healthy again!" They continued to

monitor her for the next two weeks in the hospital, and then they sent her back home. She had to use crutches for a bit, but eventually, she healed completely. It was an unbelievable miracle. The Rebbe was on the other side of the world, how did he know that my aunt wasn't lighting Shabbos candles on time?! But of course, the Rebbe knew, and through that, he saved both of her legs.

I once asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* which Chassidus I should learn outside of the *seder hayeshiva*. (Earlier, the Rebbe told me to learn perek 41 of Tanya.) The Rebbe told me that I should learn Derech Mitzvosecha and that I should learn every maamar twice, aside from the two long *maamarim* - *Shoresh Mitzvas Hatefilah* and *Ha'amonas Elokus* - which I was to skip. I found the material very fascinating, it really opened up my mind to many more concepts in Chassidus.

Another thing that I asked in *yechidus*, was whether I could start putting on Rabbeinu Tam tefillin. (In those days not everyone would put on Rabbeinu Tam from the age of bar mitzvah<sup>3</sup>.) The Rebbe answered that if I have a *geshmak* (enjoyment) in learning Chassidus I can start to put them on, and so I did.

## The Neshama of Moshe Rabbeinu

I was quite invested in the weekly "Wednesday Hour" Released Time program, an hour of Jewish learning with Jewish children who were in public schools.<sup>4</sup> I had quite a large group, and I was good at telling stories and entertaining the children.

My roommate on the other hand felt that participating in the Wednesday Hour disturbed him from

learning. Including travel to and from the schools, the preparations, etc., the whole ordeal could take a good number of hours and he felt that it took from the time that he could spend learning.

He wrote a letter to the Rebbe asking if he could be exempt from this duty, explaining that aside from the time that it takes away from his learning, he doesn't feel that it has a lasting effect on the children. "They only come to get time off from class and to receive prizes," he wrote. Additionally, he claimed that the responsibility burdens him during the rest of the week as well, further distracting him from his learning.

The Rebbe wrote back almost a full page of an answer to him, which read: "All of the *neshamos* in Gan Eden, including the *neshama* of Moshe Rabbeinu *a"h*, are envious of you that you can say Shema with a small child and they can not." Regarding that which he wrote that he doesn't feel that it has an effect on the children, the Rebbe wrote: "*Chazaka leta'amula she'eina chozeres reikam*—there is an assurance that hard work will not go to waste." Concerning the responsibility burdening his mind in general, the Rebbe wrote that it is not a result of the Wednesday Hour specifically, rather

it is a personality trait for a person to become distracted easily or not.

The Rebbe's words in that letter had a strong impact on me. The concept that Moshe Rabbeinu and all of the other *tzaddikim* and the Avos could be envious of my learning with a child, was eye-opening. Eventually, after I got married, the Rebbe sent me to London to work in Lubavitch House, but the Rebbe allowed me to decide what to be involved in. My decision to pursue *chinuch* was inspired to a great extent by this letter.

During the first few summers while I learned near the Rebbe, I was a counselor in Gan Yisroel in Swan Lake, NY. During the next few summers, I was sent on *Merkos Shlichus*. It was a very enjoyable experience to visit many different places and meet with local *Yidden*. I remember once being in Houston, and it was 105 degrees outside. We were walking around with big bags of *sefarim* and the heat was unbearable, but we were young guys and we tolerated it. It was difficult but very rewarding.

There weren't many kosher food items available in stores like there are today and the only item we could buy in local stores was canned sardines. At one point, someone raised a question about the kosher status of



REB AHARON COUSIN TEACHING AT BEIS LUBAVITCH IN 5723\*.

the sardines as well. I remember the Rebbe mentioned it at a farbrengen and said, “This is the only thing that the bochurim can eat when they go on Merkos Shlichus, and they want to take this away as well.”

When we would come back from the trip, we would write a comprehensive report to the Rebbe of everything that we did and of all of the people that we met.

After being in New York for a few years, my father and my siblings wanted me to come back home and visit. They hadn’t seen me in four years and they wanted to see how I was doing. I got permission from the hanhala and made plans to travel home.

In *yechidus* for my birthday on 28 Nissan, I notified the Rebbe that I booked a ticket to go home by ship on 17 Tammuz. The Rebbe said that since I am traveling on a fast day, I should start to pack my belongings beforehand so it will be considered as if my trip started before the fast day. In adherence to the Rebbe’s instructions, I made a mental note in my head to pack on the Sunday before my trip which was scheduled for Tuesday.

On that Sunday (almost three months after the *yechidus*), a bochur came over to me and said Rabbi Hodakov is looking for you. I came to Rabbi Hodakov’s office, and he told me that there is a note from the Rebbe for me. The note read: “*Betach yas’chil arizas chafatzav vichadomeh lifnei yom gimmel*—Surely you will start packing your belongings, etc. before Tuesday.” Needless to say, I was blown away by the way that the Rebbe looked out for a “little bochur’s” travel schedule, while he had the entire world on his shoulders.

Before I left, the Rebbe gave me a bracha for a successful trip. In *yechidus*, the Rebbe instructed me to take a shlichus from Tzach that I would fulfill during my stay in England. I was sent to Leeds and Liverpool, where I

met with locals, sold Jewish books, put up mezuzahs, and engaged in other mitzvot.

## Building A Family

During my visit, the Shemtov family, whom I was close with, suggested that I meet with my wife whom they knew from her involvement in arranging Bnos Chabad events and other programs in Beis Lubavitch in London. I wrote to the Rebbe asking about the prospective shidduch, and the Rebbe’s reply was: “*Yachol lehipagesh*—you can meet.”

After we got engaged, the Rebbe instructed me to spend another year in 770 before our wedding, saying that I should take everything off my mind and just concentrate on learning and davening.

Our wedding was scheduled for 8 Tammuz 5722\*. My six friends who had been sent that year as the Rebbe’s first *talmidim hashluchim* to Brunoy, wrote a letter to the Rebbe asking if they could leave yeshiva to attend my wedding in England. For many weeks they did not receive any answer; then, three days before the wedding date, the Rebbe replied that two representatives could go. They made a raffle, and Bentzion Schaffran and Shimon Lazaroff won. They made the wedding very lively.

Before traveling to England for the wedding, I merited another *yechidus* with the Rebbe. Of course, one of the questions on my mind was what I should pursue after my marriage. Without me even asking, the Rebbe told me: “You should work in Beis Lubavitch. You don’t need to decide immediately what you will do, but you should work in Beis Lubavitch.”

Sure enough, that is what I did. I began teaching in the school during

the daytime, and at night I would go door to door raising funds for Beis Lubavitch. I would walk throughout the whole city, South London, North London, and all of the many parts. I walked so much that eventually I developed terrible pain in my legs. I went to the doctor and he sent me to the hospital where I started physical therapy. After that, we bought an old junk car that I was able to use to get around.

For the first month of Tishrei after I got married, I went to New York to spend the Yomim Tovim with the Rebbe. During that trip, I had a very special *yechidus* with the Rebbe, and the Rebbe wished me a mazal tov on my *chasuna*. After that, I continued to visit the Rebbe very often, at least once a year.

## A Passion for Teaching

When I first started teaching, the Lubavitcher *cheder* in London had a total of five students. Eventually the school grew, and together with that I started teaching full days, although I was still doing the fundraising at night.

Baruch Hashem I had a lot of energy, and when the school continued to grow and had over 200 students, I was promoted to be the headmaster of the boy’s school, continuing in that position for many years.

The director of the school was Reb Aharon Dov Sufrin. Reb Aharon Dov would give reports to the Rebbe from all of the schools, and when I had a question for the Rebbe I would usually relay it through him.

On one occasion, I did ask the Rebbe for direction myself. In the school, there were English parents who wanted their children to be taught

in English, and there were also parents that spoke Yiddish and wanted their children to be taught in Yiddish. Thus, we were posed with a dilemma as to which language the teachers should teach in.

The children themselves didn't speak Yiddish. If we would translate the Chumash into Yiddish we would need to then translate it again into English.

At the next opportunity that I was in *yechidus*, I asked the Rebbe what we should do regarding this issue. The Rebbe told me that you must teach in the language that the children can understand. "Don't use the Chumash as a method to teach another language. If you want the children to speak Yiddish, you must speak with them in Yiddish at home, in the playground, or in the dining room." From then on we taught only in English. We would speak to the children in Yiddish as well, but that was only outside of the classroom.

One of the things that we implemented in the schools was a fold-over card with rules for each boy and girl to follow. It included things like wearing a school uniform, coming on time, always being neat and tidy, etc. When we sent it to the Rebbe for approval, the Rebbe was very pleased with it. The Rebbe said we should share it with other institutions so that they can use it as well.

## Rise to the Top

At one point, a certain parent from the Yekkish community decided to take his child out of Lubavitch and enroll him in Avigdor, which was a frum school, but the boys and girls were together in class and the students weren't taught much Torah at a very high level.

The fellow spread a rumor that Avigdor had higher learning standards

than Lubavitch, and that the Lubavitch learning standards were not very high.

I knew that information was not true and that truthfully this fellow took his son out of the Lubavitch school only because Avigdor was subsidized by the government so school fees were minimal. I was disturbed by the false narrative that was spreading.

The next time that I was by the Rebbe in *yechidus*, 14 Shevat 5735\*, I mentioned this issue that weighed on my heart. The *yechidus* was on a Sunday. On the Shabbos prior to that, the Rebbe spoke very strongly, in a manner that we had never witnessed before, about a certain person who printed fabricated and fallacious gossip about Lubavitch in the newspaper, saying that there are terror brigades in Lubavitch, Heaven forbid. The Rebbe spoke with great emotion.

When the Rebbe addressed what I had written about the rumors that were being spread in London, the Rebbe smiled and said: "*Oif mir redt men oich lashon hara*—About me people gossip too." The Rebbe then continued and said: "How ever high the standards of the school are, you should make the standards even higher, and you should discuss with your wife what to do, not with those that write the checks."

When I got back to England, I of course discussed with my wife what

we could do to strengthen the school's standards and reputation. One of the things that we came up with was to make a "public *farher*" event that would be attended by rabbonim and parents from throughout the city.

Each class was assigned a quota that they would be tested on. The youngest grade would be tested on all of the names of the parshiyos by heart. The next would be tested on all of the names of the *mesechtos* by heart. The next class would need to learn *Meseches Brachos* by heart, and so on.

The event was a huge success. The rabbonim, as well as the parents, were very impressed. From then on we continued to hold the public *farher* every year. The event became the "talk of the town," and would be featured in the local community newspapers.

To add entertainment to the event, we created a choir called "Mi Armi Admur" to sing niggunim. The choir was so successful that they eventually released their own tape. Naftali Cohen was the choirmaster, and there were about a dozen children that would sing in the choir.

It was my practice to visit each class once a week and test them on the subjects that they were learning. There was one particularly large class, which had twenty-eight students. I told them that when each one of them gets ten out of ten answers on the test

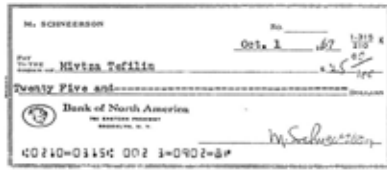


REB AHARON COUSIN STANDING IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN AT THE "PUBLIC FARHER," 5736.

\* 5735-1975, 5736-1976



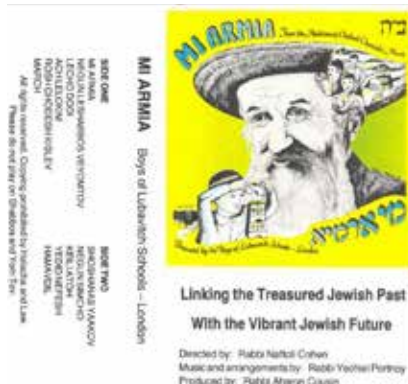
**RABBI COUSIN, AT THE FOREFRONT OF MITVZA TEFILLIN EFFORTS IN LONDON FOR CLOSE TO 40 YEARS, MANS THE 'TEFILLIN - MITZVAH MOBILE' IN 5730\*.**



**A CHECK SENT BY THE REBBE IN 5728 TOWARDS THE PEULOS OF MITVZA TEFILLIN IN LONDON**



**IN A LETTER TO RABBI COUSIN, THE REBBE ADDS LINES IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING AT THE BEGINNING AND END, ENCOURAGING REB AHARON'S ACTIVITIES OF MITVZA TEFILLIN.**



**THE TAPE "MI ARMIA ADMURA" PRODUCED BY THE CHOIR OF CHEDER LUBAVITCH OF LONDON IN MEMORY OF REB BENTZION SHEMTOV (PICTURED ON THE COVER), WHO WROTE THE TITLE TRACK OF THE ALBUM.**

correct for three weeks in a row, they will earn a special trip. The students worked very hard to try and earn the trip.

Finally, there were three weeks in a row where they all got ten out of ten answers correct and they earned the trip.

The next week, when I came to test their class, all of the students got ten out of ten answers correct making it the fourth week in a row. I congratulated them on the wonderful achievement and told them that it was the first time in the school's history that this had happened. I promised them that I will make sure their trip will be even more special. Then, I asked the children where they would want to go on a trip. Each one yelled out the place that they wanted to go until I said you know what, I want to take you guys to the Rebbe!

The children all began to cheer and scream, they were all so excited. After a brief moment of dramatic commotion, I calmed them down and said, "I'm sorry boys, I would love to take you to the Rebbe, but it will be too expensive. It will cost one thousand pounds." I promised them, though, that I will take them on a good trip.

At the final dismissal, one of the parents came over to me and said: "My son told me that you would like to take his class to the Rebbe, but you will need a thousand pounds." "Yes," I replied. "I will give you the money," he said. Sure enough, the next day, he wrote me a check for a thousand pounds.

The truth is that I made a mistake, it would cost a lot more than just one thousand pounds. But, with Hashem's help, I fundraised the money and we made the trip happen. We took the group of twenty-eight boys to the Rebbe for two weeks!

From then on, I began to take a group of boys to the Rebbe every

year. One year, the Rebbe gave each of the boys a siddur in *yechidus*. After that, at the farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that all of the children under the age of bar mitzvah should come up to receive a siddur. Reb Leibel Groner asked the Rebbe if the boys from London should come as well, and the Rebbe said yes, so they were lucky to each receive two siddurim from the Rebbe.

At that farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed to sing a "Torah niggun," and someone began to sing "Tanu Rabbanan," which goes through all of the Mishnayos that start with a number. When it came to number thirteen, the room became silent and nobody knew what the correct Mishna was. The Rebbe then said, "Shloshe asar simanim benivlas oif tavor." When we came back to London, we made sure that all of the boys knew that niggun.

As I conclude to share with you my personal story and journey of becoming a Chossid of the Rebbe and having the distinct *zechus* to serve as a shliach of the Rebbe for many years, there is a message which I hope these stories give way to and help us all appreciate. Each one of us Chassidim need to realize the tremendous gift that we have, of being connected to our dear Rebbe, who looks after us like his own children. We need to thank the Aibershter every day for this wonderful portion that he put into our lot, of being the Rebbe's Chassidim. **1**

1. See "The Lamplighter from Lubavitch," Derher Shevat 5779.
2. Over the following years, Reb Aharon merited to receive a handful of letters from the Rebbe - See Teshuros from Dubravsky-Cousin 5758 and Teldon-Flinkenstein 5772.
3. See "The Great Debate," Derher Adar 5780.
4. See "Released Time," Derher Tishrei 5781.





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# Timely Titles

By: RABBI MENDY GOLDBERG

נדפס ע"י ולזכות

הרה"ת ר' צבי יוסף  
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו  
שפאלטר

## ASHKAVTA D'REBBI



Beis Nissan 5680\* was the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rashab. An extraordinarily fascinating period in history, personal recollections of this sublime saga and the tumultuous events leading up to this date were recorded and transcribed in diary form, titled Ashkavta D'Rebbi.



"I am going to heaven, but I am leaving my writings with you. Take me into the *zal*, and we will be together."

Reb Moshe Dovber (Berel) Rivkin was an exceptional student in Tomchei Temimim, who merited to be the personal attendant of the Rebbe Rashab during the turbulent weeks before his passing. To be chosen for this task was considered a rare honor and indeed he was shown a great deal of affection while serving in this capacity. Unbeknownst to him at the time, he would accompany the Rebbe Rashab from the onset of his illness until he was finally laid to rest in Rostov.

During this time, Reb Berel observed many interesting habits and customs of the Rebbe Rashab and frequently discussed them with him in order to understand the halachic and Kabbalistic significance of these practices. When he later transcribed his powerful experiences into a personal memoir, he included insightful notes in the margins based on these learned discussions.

An unusual combination of history and *halacha*, this account of the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus* is of twofold importance. Firstly, from a historical perspective, the author's account is considered a reliable testimony as it contains the first-hand experiences of someone intimately involved in the events. In addition, the secondary facet of this work, which consists of a collection of learned analyses on various customs found in the footnotes, became an authoritative halachic source in its own right. Together, these two elements comprise the distinctive work known as "Kuntres Ashkavta D'Rebbi."<sup>1</sup>



## OVERVIEW



**Kuntres Ashkavta D'Rebbi** is structured in a diary-like narrative format with numerous footnotes and sidebars scattered throughout. It also contains a section featuring selected copies of documents, including the will of the Rebbe Rashab and interesting letters, as well as an appendix with three essays on *halacha*. The book begins with a foreword, an index of uncommon abbreviations, and comprehensive tables of contents for the diary, footnotes, and letters.

👉 **Ashkavta D'Rebbi:** This is the central text in this book. In this section, the author reflects on what transpired during that fateful period. As this was written months later, the author's perspective is imbued with a sense of foreboding as he describes the events, for while at the time the Chassidim were oblivious and did not read the telltale signs, with the clarity of hindsight the author was able to foreshadow what was to come. The story begins with an unexpected and illegal Purim farbrengen in which the Rebbe Rashab regaled the Chassidim in an extraordinarily joyous mood. Miraculously, the farbrengen prevails despite a dangerously close brush with the authorities. Soon after, the Rebbe Rashab falls gravely ill and is bedridden for a number of weeks. The author and the Rebbe Rashab's son, the Friediker Rebbe, attend to him and provide devoted care during this time. Despite the presence of typhus in the area (the author later contracts it himself), the physicians are unsure of the Rebbe Rashab's diagnosis as he exhibits unusual symptoms. Throughout his illness, the Rebbe Rashab is very serious and deeply contemplative. The author details the timeline of the Rebbe Rashab's illness until the climactic moment when his soul finally ascends to Heaven. The author continues to describe the aftermath of the *histalkus*, including the burial process, the period of grieving, and notable events from the subsequent months when the Friediker Rebbe assumed the mantle of *nesius*.

👉 **Ha'aros:** Scattered throughout the book are many footnotes that elucidate terms and concepts, providing valuable context. Some of these are quite lengthy and delve into the reasoning for certain Lubavitch customs. The most noteworthy ones address customs that the author observed the Rebbe Rashab being meticulous about while sick, and discussed with him to clarify their halachic and Kabbalistic significance. These halachic discussions can be studied independently of the book, and are often referenced in later Chabad *halacha sefarim*. The subjects addressed include the various nuances in the Rebbe Rashab's daily routine when laying tefillin and tzitzis, *halachos* related to the *seudah*, and other behaviors during davening. Some of these analyses were shown to the Rebbe and received his endorsement. However, most of them were not formally



REB MOSHE DOVBER RIVKIN (STANDING ON THE RIGHT) PICTURED WITH MEMBERS OF THE HANHALA OF YESHIVAS TORAS EMES IN YERUSHALAYIM IN 5684 - REB ZALMAN SITTING IN THE CENTER AND REB MOSHE ARYEH LEIB SHAPIRA SITTING LEFT.

validated by the Rebbe, so the author invites the reader to approach his conclusions with caution and not feel obligated to accept them as definitive.

👉 **Chelek Ha'Haatakos:** In this section, the author has curated a number of interesting documents related to the Rebbe Rashab. This includes a portion of the

Rebbe Rashab's will to *anash* and his son, the Frierdiker Rebbe, concerning Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim and other Chabad institutions, which was made public a month after the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*. In addition, the author was granted permission to publish several sections of the Rebbe Rashab's will which were not previously released to the general public. As the author was fortunate to be from the select few who were shown the entire will, he utilized the opportunity to memorize it and later transcribed it almost verbatim to keep a copy for himself. Additionally, there are accurate

copies of fiery letters from the Frierdiker Rebbe to the Temimim and *anash* that he composed in the wake of the *histalkus* of his father. At the Rebbe's urging, a facsimile of an emotionally charged farewell letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe to the author is also included in this book, located just before this section.

📌 **Shlosa Kuntreisim B'halacha:** Here, the author appended to his book three essays on miscellaneous halachic topics, dedicated as a tribute to his older and younger brothers who were murdered *al kiddush Hashem* by the Nazis.

## BACKGROUND

From when Reb Moshe Dovber Rivkin chronicled his recollections, it took 33 years for these notes to see the light of day.

Penned a mere six months after the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*, while his memories were fresh and his feelings still raw, these notes capture the depth of the powerful experience of his time spent tending to the Rebbe Rashab in his final days. The style of writing betrays its purpose; that is, a personal diary, a repository for the author alone to hold on to his intimate recollections and treasure them. Despite adorning it with a title and a cover page, he still did not intend to even show it to anyone, let alone publish it.

And so it remained. For 30 years no one was privy to the diary and its contents, with the exception of the Frierdiker Rebbe, to whom the author once divulged its existence and loaned it for a few days, which the Frierdiker Rebbe greatly appreciated.

Since then, the manuscript accompanied the author throughout all his sojourns as he fled from country to country in Europe until he finally settled in America in the summer of 5688\*.

In 5695\*, Reb Yechezkel (Chatche) Feigin, the *mazkir* of the Frierdiker Rebbe and editor of the Chassidus column in Hatomim journal, requested that the author extend his manuscript to the journal so they could feature it as a serial, either in its entirety or at least selected parts. However, this did not come to fruition as the author recalled those few days that the manuscript was in the possession of the Frierdiker Rebbe; it evoked such strong emotions and intense grief that

his tears caused further damage to the already fragile manuscript. Thus, out of sensitivity for the Frierdiker Rebbe, the author decided against featuring his memoir as he didn't want to cause him unnecessary anguish.



\*📅 5688-1928, 5695-1935

After the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe repeatedly encouraged the author to publish the manuscript and offer the masses a glimpse into the experiences recorded in his memoirs. The Rebbe's words prompted the author to contemplate and marvel at the *hashgacha pratis* of the preservation of this particular manuscript. Despite the tumultuous travels and the ravages of world wars, this document had somehow managed to remain intact, doggedly accompanying him throughout it all, while so many other important documents, manuscripts of Chassidus from earlier Rebbeim were lost, and all of his possessions destroyed. Thus the author came to believe that perhaps the miraculous preservation of this manuscript was meant for the benefit of the masses, and so he graciously acquiesced to have it copied and published.

Written in the summer of 5680\*, the memoir was left untouched with no stylistic changes, edits, or modifications made to the text. This was in order to preserve the authentic flavor and to capture the spirit of the first person observer's poignant impressions of the *histalkus*. For this reason, nothing was omitted or added before publishing.<sup>2</sup> Even minor details trivial or insignificant to the overall storyline were left intact, as the author treasured everything that made him reminisce of those precious days. For the author, revisiting these memoirs brings to life in vivid detail those harrowing moments at the Rebbe Rashab's bedside, the sublime experience as the Rebbe Rashab returned his pure soul to its maker. It is the author's hope that the reader will be able to transcend the text and allow his imagination to conjure up what it must have felt like to witness such a powerful event. It's important to note that when the author wrote these memoirs, they were only for his own personal reflection and not intended for a wider audience. As a result, he didn't take care to use language familiar to everyone. The goal was simply to engrave the sights and feelings into his memory.

When preparing the manuscript for publication, the author included extensive notes in the margins which expound on the background and rationales behind the Rebbe Rashab's precise behaviors. He understood that every subtle nuance in the customs of the Rabbeim is worthy of scrutiny and wanted to provide additional insight. As the author relates, during a conversation one summer evening in 5677\*, the Friediker Rebbe discussed his father's meticulous behavior and he explained how every particularity was deliberate, and a stringent effort to satisfy every possible opinion in *halacha* or Kabbalah, even those which were not codified as the final *halacha*. Many of these behaviors could often be mistaken for ordinary habits, but they always had a deeper significance.



THE TZIYUN OF THE REBBE RASHAB.

Published by the Ezra press affiliate 'Balshon' in 5713, the *kuntres* has since been reprinted several times, and recently, it was translated into English by Shmuel Kesselman and published by the Rabbinical College of Australia and New Zealand in honor of Beis Nissan 5780.

In a letter from Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik to the author, he marvels at the paradoxical synthesis of keen analytical insight and strict halachic rationale with the emotional depth and characteristic Chassidic warmth that is displayed in the book. This delicate balance is evident when the author attempts to justify the actions of Kohanim who faced a difficult dilemma being wary of ritual impurity but nonetheless desired to pray by the gravesite of a *tzaddik*. **T**

1. The term Ashkavta D'Rebbi is a reference to the funeral of Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi mentioned in Kesubos 103b.

2. Reb Dovid Raskin reveals in a letter that Reb Berel Rivkin confirmed to him that a name was added to the Rebbe Rashab while he was ill, but was dropped after the *histalkus*. Rabbi Rivkin explained that he didn't include this information in Ashkavta D'Rebbi because it was composed solely on his notes from that time.

# A LEAF FROM THE BOOK

ASHKAVTA D'REBBI  
An excerpt of the levaya

א ש כ ב ת א ד ר ב י

108

פני רבנו נ"ע כעת הטהרה, ועד כי נסתם הגולל ה' כמו חי, וכעין צחוק קל על פניו\*. אשר כל הנכחים עמדו מתפלאים ע"ו.

אח"כ הליכשו והעמיפו אותו בהטלית (הטלית של ש"ק אשר ה' מתפלל בו בהימים האחרונים כנ"ל) ואח"כ העמיפו בהסדין ג"כ כמובן מפתח נקי, וקודם שלקחו גופו הק' לשא, נגשה הרבנית שליט"א ונכדותיו יהיו בכבי גורא כו' וקרעו להרבנית קריעה כדין.

ואח"כ לקחו גופו הק' לשא למנוחת עולמים, וגם נושאי המטה והלופיהן היו רק התמימים, ואחדים יח"ס מזקני אנ"ש. ואני נשאתי המטה כל הדרך בלי הפסק עד הקבר, וכמוכּן לא יכולתי וגם דעתי לא ה' לזה לראות העולם המשתתפים בהלוי, אבל ספרו אח"כ שממש כל תושבי העיר איש לא נעדר מלהשתתף בהלוי.

כשכאו על הביה"ק העמידו המטה אצל הקבר, וכעת שהורידו גופו הק' בקבר, אמר כק"ש לג' אנשים שעמדו אז אצלו, (כמדומה הראב"פ והר"א קרטיק ועוד אחד) ועשאן כו"ד. שהוא מתנה בפניהם שהמקום הזה הוא קונה בשביל אביו הק' על תנאי, שיהי' הרשות בידי לפנות עצמות הקדושים אצל קברי אבותיו הק' נ"ע בליובאוויטש, (ע"י תשובת הת"ס חלק ששי סי' ל"ז שאלה כזה אודות הגאון ר' מרדכי באנעט נ"ע מניקלשבורג, ע"ד לפנותו מליכטנשטאד לניקלשבורג, ע"י"ש היטב בהיתר הב' שהוא פשוט להתיר מחמת שכנו של הגרמ"ב ו"ל התנה קודם הקבורה בפירוש שהוא קונה המקום וקברו בליכטנשטאד על תנאי שיהי' מותר לפנותו, וע"י"ש עוד התרים ששייכים גם כאן) ואחרי אשר נסתם הגולל אמר כק"ש ק"י כדין.

כשכאו חורה מהלוי' לבית רבינו, וכק"ש והרבנית שליט"א נכנסו בהקאביניעט — חדר רבנו — חלצו נעליהם כדין והביאו להם לשם סעודת הבראה, וטעמו, כן כל אנ"ש באו ג"כ מהלוי' לבית

## ה ע ר ו ת

בליובאוויטש וראסטאו אשר אהלי קברי רבוה"ק נ"ע הם בהתחלת הביה"ק, ולא היו צריכים לעבור דרך שאר קברי הביה"ק. לא נהגו באמת ליטול הידים, דעל קברי צדיקים בעצמם אין ר"ר. אבל בכנון ציון קבר כ"ק אדמו"נ"ע פה בנו יארק שהוא בתוך הביה"ק, ועד שמגיעים אל הציון צריכים לעבור דרך שאר קברי הביה"ק. אף אם אינם עוברים בקירוב ד"א אל הקברים. בוודאי צריכים ליטול הידים ג"ש כדין הולך בין המתים המבואר בשו"ע וכנ"ל. ומה"ט כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א נוהג באמת ליטול הידים קודם שנכנס בביתו. בכל פעם שבא מהשתטחות על ציון חותנו כ"ק אדמו"ר נבג"מ, ודי בהערה זאת]

(\*) באורא בהתלקותו של הרשבי איתא שלאחר ההתלקותו ה"י פניו חייבין. ומטבא ברודש האחרון הללא דרשבי, כי ע"ו ה"יט מצד התלמה התענג כו"ר.

During the *taharah*, we were struck by the radiant and seemingly alive appearance of the Rebbe Rashab's face, which even bore a hint of a smile until the moment it was covered for the final time.

The Rebbe Rashab's body was then wrapped in his Shabbos tallis and additional layers of linen shrouds, and moments before the body was to be carried out, the Rebbetzin and other family members approached the table to tear *kriah*.

The body was then transported to the cemetery. Since I held on to the coffin all the way to the grave, I didn't notice (nor did I have the presence of mind to notice) who attended the funeral, but I was told that everyone was present, with no one missing.

As the Rebbe Rashab's body was lowered into the grave, the Rayatz formed a Beis Din with three Chassidim (Reb Avrohom Boruch Pevzner, Reb Eliezer Karasik and one other) and declared before them that the Rebbe was being buried there on the condition that his body could be relocated to Lubavitch in the future. Following that, the pit was filled and the Rayatz said *kaddish*.

רבינו, ובחדר האוכל הסמוך להקאביניעט חלצו כולם נעליהם כדון תלמיד על רבו, וישבו על הרצפה כחצי שעה, ובין כה הגיע זמן תפלת מנחה וכק"ש התפלל לפני התיבה באריכות גדולה ובכבדות משונות כו', ואח"כ מעריב. ואנ"ש הלכו להם. ואני ועוד אחרים (הר"פ גו"א ואחיו הרר"ש — המל"ח כק"ש — והר"י לעווין) נשארו ללון שם בבית רבינו, ואני לנתי שם כל השבוע.

אחר תפלת מעריב, כשכל אנ"ש עזבו חדר רנ"ע והלכו לביתם, עכבני כק"ש להשאר עמו עוד בחדר רנ"ע. ודבר עמדי הרכה כשעתים, וככה בכבדות נוראות, ותוכן הדבורים הי' שעתה הוא רואה עין בעין כי מאחרי המועדים התכוון למועד היי החיים כו', וכל דבוריו עמו במשך החורף הי' ענין צוואה אליו מרם הסתלקותו, והוא לא עלה על דעתו שכר נורא כזה, ובתוך אריכות הדבורים צעק כקול מר צורח ובכבדות משונות כזה"ל: „גוואלד, גוואלד, ואו איז געווען מיון פארשטאנד, א גאנץ ווינטער האט ער מיר געוואגט אזוי קלאר און דייטליך אז ער ווערט נסתלק, און איך האב ניט פארשטאנען, והן הן הדברים אשר כתב אח"כ גם באגרותיו הראשונות לאנ"ש והתמימים אחרי ההסתלקות, אשר אי"ה נעתיקם להלן 30).

תפלת כק"ש לפני התיבה כל הזמן הוא באריכות גדולה ודיבקות נפלאה ובכבדות משונות, אשר פועל התעוררות והתרנשות הנפש על כל המתפללים בהמנין שלו כמו בתפלת יו"פ ממש. ומתוך אחת השיחות ששוחח עמי כק"ש קודם תה"ש, הכנתי מתוך דבריו — אף שלא אמר זה בפירוש — שבתפלותיו כעת בשנת האבילות, הוא מכוון הכוונות שעפ"י הקבלה, המבואר בהסודורים שעם כוונות ובפע"ה עפ"י קבלת האריו"ל. ונוסח ניגון התפלה שלו לפני התיבה, הוא ממש כמו של אביו הק' נ"ע.

בש"ק צו (הוא יום האחרון שנשלם השבועה) אחר מנחה, וכל אנ"ש היו בחדר האוכל (הסמוך להקאביניעט חדר רנ"ע) וחכו על תפלת מעריב, וכק"ש הי' לבדו בהקאביניעט, נקראתי לכק"ש בוקאד ביניעט ע"י אחד המשמשים, וכאשר נכנסתי, התחיל לדבר אלי בלב

#### ה ע ר ו ת

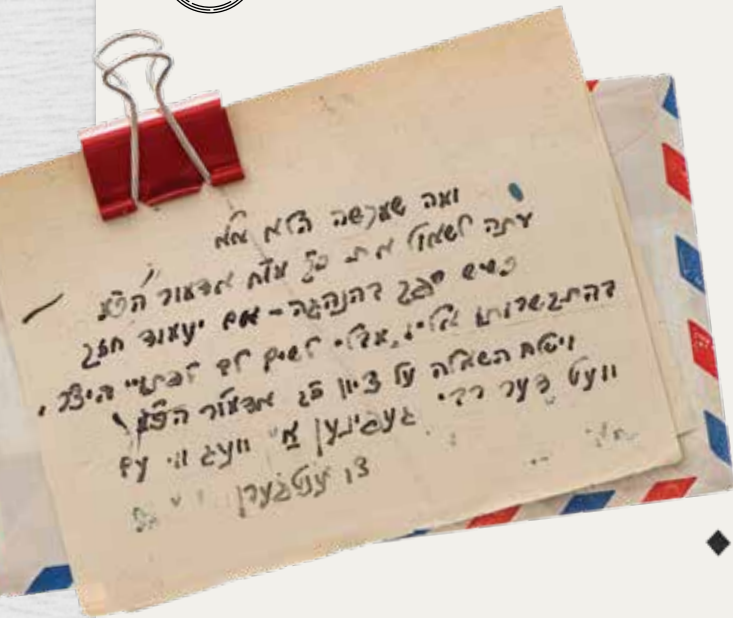
30) איזה חדשים אחרי ההסתלקות דבר עמדי כ"ק אדמו"ע עוד בענין זה באריכות יותר, ואמר אלי או שבמשך החורף תר"ם, דבר רנ"ע עמדו הרבה, וזאת לפני טבעות ומהות ומדריגת בפרטית מכא"א ממש מאנ"ש, ומשום צורך הוראת שעה אז. שהי' נוגע אלי ביהודי. גלה לי אז מקצת מהדבורים שרנ"ע אמר לו אודותי, וגם התום באוצרותי מכתבי כ"ק אדמו"ע אלי, כולם בכת"ק משנת רפ"ד מלענינגראד, אשר בהם מוזכר כ"ק דברי רנ"ע אליו אודותי, בהנוגע לפרט וענין מיוחד, ואני תפלה שהדבורים יהיו שמורים וערוכים בנפשי עד עולם.

After the funeral, the Rayatz and the Rebbetzin went to the Rebbe Rashab's office, where they removed their shoes as per the *halacha*, and partook in a meal following the funeral. The rest of the community returned to the house also, and they too removed their shoes and sat on the floor for about half an hour. The Rayatz was *chazan* for Mincha and Maariv, and he davened at great length sobbing heavily throughout. Afterwards, many of the Chassidim went home. A select few Chassidim including myself, remained at the house and slept there for the duration of the week of *shivah*.

Following Maariv, when most of the Chassidim had gone on their way, I remained in the Rebbe Rashab's office with the Rayatz. We spoke for quite an extensive period of time and amongst other things he bemoaned his lack of foresight, "Now, I look back and I can see that the Rebbe was preparing for this event. Over the last few months he told me many things that were a 'will' of sorts. I did not dream that this was his intention in telling me these matters." The Rayatz raised his tone and in a broken voice lamented, "*Gevald gevald*, where was my intuition?! The entire winter the Rebbe had been telling me so clearly and pointedly that he will be *nistalek*, and I did not realize it."

In the forthcoming weeks, the Rayatz was *chazan* for all of the *tefillos* and he recited *kaddish*. He davened at length, with great fervor, devotion and flowing tears. His *tefillos* caused all those surrounding him to feel a spiritual awakening and an emotional connection to Hashem. When he davened, all those davening with him felt like one would feel on Yom Kippur. The Rayatz later implied that during the year of mourning he davened with the intentions spelled out by the Arizal in the books of Kabbalah. The tune in which he davened was identical to that of the Rebbe Rashab.





לזכות  
 החיילת בצבאות ה'  
 חי' מושקא תחי'  
 לרגל הולדתה ט' טבת  
 ה'תשפ"ג שנת הקהל

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
 הרה"ת ר' שמעון זימל וזוגתו  
 מרת שרה ומשפחתם שיחיו  
 סילווער

# דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

## Hearing From The Rebbe Before And After Gimmel Tammuz

AS TOLD BY  
**DR. LEVI A. REITER**

In 5733\*, while I was obtaining a doctoral degree in experimental psychology at the University of Rochester, I met Rabbis Noson Gurary and Heschel Greenberg, and my connection to Chabad activities and the Rebbe began. My research in psychology led to the discovery of a new objective test for hearing loss.

This discovery was obvious *hashgacha pratis*, because my interest was in the behavior of simple reflexes, like the eyeblink; nothing at all to do with hearing. Nevertheless, since I discovered something new, I decided to write it up and send it to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe gave his *bracha* and the paper was accepted for publication in the highly prestigious Journal of Experimental Psychology. The Rebbe encouraged me to continue in this line of research, which I did. After receiving my Ph.D. I received the Rebbe's *bracha* and *haskama* to accept an NIH (National Institutes of Health) post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

While living in Kansas City I became concerned about my Jewish roots after hearing about a Lubavitcher friend who checked his genealogy and found to his



astonishment that his maternal great-great-grandmother was not Jewish. Of course, that meant that he too was not Jewish. Who knows, I thought to myself, after thousands of years since Sinai, the times of *Bayis Sheini*, Ezra, living in the diaspora, and so on, maybe I too am missing a Jewish link in my heritage.

Amazingly, just at the time that I was bothered by this doubt, I received a call from the Rebbe's *mazkir* Rabbi Leibel Groner. "The Rebbe told me to remind you to do Chitas," Rabbi Groner said. This reminder lifted the weight of doubt from my heart. I felt this was the Rebbe's way of assuring me that the golden chain of Yiddishkeit in my family was intact.

In 5778\*, 24 years after Gimmel Tamuz, my wife and I went to the Ohel. This time I was bothered by a different doubt. Let me preface by saying that the Rebbe had given me direction and miraculous help in many significant issues facing a Chassidic professor in a secular university, and more. I wondered if 24 years after Gimmel Tamuz, the Rebbe still considered me *mekushar*.

This is precisely what I asked. Can the Rebbe

please give me a sign that he still considers me a *mekushar*?

After washing our hands after the Ohel we entered the room with the video monitor, and naturally, I started looking at the screen. To my amazement, the video playing was of the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen 5745\*, and there I was on the screen! I could not believe my eyes, but I felt this was the answer to my question.

The Rebbe's sensitivity to his Chassidim's concerns is as evident today as it has always been. The Rebbe is here with us and for that we must be grateful and strive to bring him *nachas*. May we merit to be together with our Rebbe as he leads us to the *geulah shleimah, teikef u'miyad mamosh*. **T**

## YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher by emailing [stories@derher.org](mailto:stories@derher.org).





JEM 102842

לע"נ הרה"ח השליח ר' חיים ב"ר  
שמואל גרשון ניסן ע"ה  
גורביץ

נפטר במיטב שנותיו בעיצומו של  
מבצע מצה  
ג' ניסן ה'תשפ"א  
ת"נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו  
הרה"ת ר' רפאל דובער זוזגתו מרת  
רבקה ומשפחתם שיחיו גורביץ

# SEEING OFF GUESTS

NISSAN 5732\*

A few times a year, the Rebbe would see off guests who visited 770 for Yomim Tovim and special occasions, and in earlier years even for a Shabbos.

This is a set of photos from the month of Nissan 5732, the days surrounding Yud-Aleph Nissan and Pesach.



JEM 102845





JEM 103387



JEM 102843

# Letters

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to [feedback@derher.org](mailto:feedback@derher.org).

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

## Traveling to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan

*Dear Editors,*

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim and A Chassidisher Derher magazine for their part in creating a big *hisorerus* around marking and celebrating Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday, and other Yomim Tovim of *dor hashvi'i*.

Last year, in preparation of the Rebbe's 120th birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan, every yeshiva received magazines and weekly newsletters, filled with rich information and *geshmake* stories and insights related to Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe. These magazines gave me an entirely new appreciation for Yud-Aleph Nissan and I saw firsthand how numerous *bochurim* were inspired from them to give the Rebbe *matanos* and to travel to the Rebbe for this special day.

In connection with the article "Thank You For Coming—Traveling to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan" in the special Yud-Alef Nissan 5782 supplement magazine, I would like to point out a fascinating *reshima* of the Rebbe in this regard.

In Reshimas HaYoman, in an entry dated Chof Cheshvan 5692\*, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe writes what he heard from the Frierdiker Rebbe:

"Once it happened that I was at this time [Chof Cheshvan] in Petersburg—for I had been sent there [by the Rebbe Rashab] for a certain matter—and I received from him a letter. In it [he wrote]: '[You will] surely remember that Tuesday (or Wednesday) is Chof Marcheshvan, so come here for several hours,' and so I did."

This story is quite remarkable: The Rebbe Rashab wanted the Frierdiker Rebbe to leave his important mission of communal work in S. Petersburg and travel to Lubavitch (a distance—in today's standards—of more than a nine hour drive) to be present for the Rebbe Rashab's birthday even for a mere few hours! This is a very important lesson on the subject of the Rebbe's birthday and traveling to the Rebbe for this special day.

I'd also like to share a few more *maanos* of the Rebbe on the subject of traveling to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan and point out a common theme that we can see in them:

In 5732\*, thousands of Chassidim came in to celebrate the special milestone of 70 years with the Rebbe. To one of them, the Rebbe gave the following special answer:

ת"ח על הקורת רוח וכו' מביקורו כאן בימים אלו.  
ויה"ד שיהא ג"כ לתועלת הרבים (נוסף על שכל יחיד -  
עולם מלא הוא).

"Thank you for the pleasure, etc. from

your visit here during these days. May it be Hashem's will that it should also be for the benefit of many (in addition to the fact that every individual is an **entire** world)."

In the newest volume of Igros Kodesh published by Kehos (vol. 33 pg. 305) we find a special *maaneh* from the Rebbe regarding the *talmidim hashluchim* sent from Kfar Chabad to Migdal Haemek, who had asked for permission to come to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan and Pesach 5738\*.

The Rebbe answered:

ימסור להם בשמי שאלה מביניהם שיפעלו  
בהשיבה במגדל העמק כדבעי למיהוי-יקבלו  
מכתב אישור על זה מהנהלתה, יבואו לכאן מלפני  
י"א ניסן עד אחרי ש"ק מברכים אייר על מנת לחזור  
להשיבה תיכף ומיד לאחרי זה, ולפעול בה ביתר עז.  
90% מההוצאות נסיעתם-ע"י המזכירות דכאן.

"Convey in my name that those of them who will be effective in the yeshiva in Migdal Haemek as **expected**, and will receive a letter acknowledging this from its *hanhala*, can come here from before Yud-Aleph Nissan until after Shabbos Kodesh Mevorchim Iyar, **contingent on their return** to the yeshiva immediately afterwards, and to be active there **with increased energy**.

"90% of the cost of their trip—[will be covered] by the [Rebbe's] Mazkirus here." Another display of the Rebbe's *nachas ruach* from guests who came for Yud-

Aleph Nissan that year:

In Adar II, 5738\*, Rabbi Moshe Yeruslavsky, who was responsible for the *hachnosas orchim* of the guests who would come to the Rebbe, was in *yechidus* when the Rebbe asked him when he was planning on flying back to Eretz Yisroel. He responded that he was flying back on 3 Nissan. The Rebbe then asked him who would take care of the guests that would be coming in for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Reb Moshe of course decided to stay. At the farbrengen on Motzei Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan the Rebbe summoned Reb Moshe and gave him the tray of *mezonos* from his table, instructing him to distribute it to the guests who had already arrived and to those who would be arriving for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Following this, in the first *sicha* of the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe said: "It is a sweet and most pleasurable obligation to express my thanks to all those gathered here and all those gathered in other places listening to the farbrengen, and also those who will hear about this farbrengen (because they also wished to participate). And since they connected it with an individual—I take personal pleasure in the merit to express thanks."

The next day, as customary, Chassidim who were traveling back home received





the Rebbe's *bracha* for a safe trip. But this time, in a very unusual gesture, the Rebbe distributed a dollar bill for *tzedakah* to each of the guests who had come in for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Another incident from the later years:

It is well known that for decades, the *talmidim hashluchim* to Melbourne, Australia were required to stay there for the full two years of their *shlichus* without any exceptions.

In 5751\*, Chassidim the world over looked forward to and made *hachanos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan, the beginning of the Rebbe's ninetieth year.

With this milestone approaching, already at the beginning of Shevat(!) the *talmidim hashluchim* could not resist and wrote to the Rebbe that they were all making *hachlatos* to learn *baal peh* three *perakim* of Tanya and seven *blatt* of Gemara. They continued in the letter, asking for a first-ever, special permission to come in to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan, adding that their trip will surely add much *chayus* in their *shlichus*.

The Rebbe responded to their letter by circling the words they had written that their trip would add *chayus* in their *shlichus* and on this wrote: עפ"ז כדאי ויהא: "בשעט"מ. אעה"צ —If so, it is worthwhile. I will mention it at the *tziyun* (of the Frierdiker Rebbe)."

A common theme we see in these three answers of the Rebbe from throughout the years in regards to coming in for Yud-Aleph Nissan is that it should be for the benefit of others and to fulfill our *shlichus* with more *chayus* and vigor.

We should be *zoche* to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan this year with the Rebbe and the *geulah shleimah!*

**Yaakov Akiva Kagan**

YESHIVAS OHOLEI YOSEF YITZCHOK,  
DETROIT

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## Thank you for Derher

I want to share how much I appreciate the Chassidisher Derher magazine and eagerly await the new copy every month, which I proceed to read from cover to cover. There are so many interesting articles on Chabad history and happenings. It's wonderful to read about people's experiences by the Rebbe and to learn so many unique teachings from the Rebbe that I hadn't necessarily heard before.

It's also very enjoyable to read about the many wonderful Chassidim from old and how they conducted themselves and I find the entire magazine inspiring. It certainly adds much *chassidische* flavor to the value of my life. I feel that it's a very important magazine to have on show in one's home and I make sure to have them displayed on the coffee table in my lounge.

It's really easy for anyone to pick up and read a short article with photos to match.

The magazine being glossy and appealing tempts one to pick it up to browse through. Once having picked it up, it is not only inspiring, but sends out a strong message that here one can find meaningful, essential, G-dly teachings on how one should conduct their lives.

*Yasher koach!*

**Ella Shishler**

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

