

Derher

A Chassidisher

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My Journey to the Rebbe

RABBI SHOLOM BER GURKOV

A Bond Of Life

MA'AMED

THE ARIZAL



AV 5783
ISSUE 133 (210)
AUGUST 2023

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו
כ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע
ובקשר עם כ"ף מנחם אב יום ההסתלקות
כ"ק הרה"ג והרה"ח המקובל וכו' ר' לוי יצחק ז"ל שניאורסאהן
אביו של כ"ק אדמו"ר

ולזכות הו"ח, איש רחב-לב, בעל צדקה וחסד,
ראש וראשון לכל דבר שבקדושה ובפרט לעניני כ"ק אדמו"ר
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' ירחמיאל שיחי'
יעקבסאהן

בקשר עם יום הולדתו ג' מנחם אב
הקב"ה יצליחו ללכת מחיל אל חיל בכל הענינים ביחד עם זוגתו וכל צאצאיו שיחיו
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

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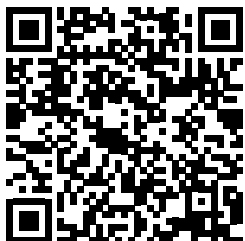
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TEACHINGS OF
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לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,
אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו
איזיקוביץ

בקשר עם כ"ף מנחם אב
יום הסתלקות כ"ק הרה"ג הרה"ח
המקובל וכו' ר' לוי יצחק ז"ל
שניאורסאהן
אביו של כ"ק אדמו"ר

ולע"נ זקנינו הרה"ת והחסיד
בעל מרץ למופת
ר' יעקב יהודה בר' יהושע ע"ה
העכט



TIMES THREE

The month of Av carries with it the sad occurrences that befell our nation, including the start of our current long and painful *galus*.

However, the Rebbe teaches us to look deeper and find the truth that lies beyond the surface:

The current time of year is known in the Jewish world as the “Three Weeks” of mourning. This is based on a prophecy of Yirmiyahu, where Hashem says He will hasten retribution upon the Jewish people at the speed of an almond branch’s sprouting—twenty-one days. Nevertheless, the *minhag Yisroel* is not to refer to this time period in its original form of the “Twenty-One Days,” but instead as the “Three Weeks.”

There’s a powerful implication in this name, says the Rebbe.

“Three” reminds us that the only reason why there was a destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* in the first place was in order to make room for the third and final *Beis Hamikdash*. In other words, the tragedies we experienced during these days actually contain a hidden dose of positivity, to be revealed in the time of the final *geulah* with the rebuilding of the third *Beis Hamikdash*.

Moreover—the three weeks themselves begin in the month of Tammuz, the fourth month of the year, immediately following the third month of Sivan. *Chazal* explain that the Torah is connected with the number three, referred to as “אוריין תליתאי”—a tripled light, and that’s why Hashem gave us the Torah specifically in the month of Sivan.

In this sense, the third month, which includes the giving of the Torah, serves as a preparation for the occurrences of the following month—preempting any negative energy with the strength of the Torah’s light.

In a deeper sense, the number three and its connection with Torah can be explained as follows:

A Yid’s entire *avodah* in this world can be summarized into three steps: 1. The fact that the individual is here and exists. 2. The individual realizes where he comes from; we were all created by Hashem. 3. The fact that we were placed here in this world must be for a reason: to influence and refine the world around us, infusing it with *Elokus*.

This is the special significance of the number three and its connection to the giving of the Torah, specifically in the third month: It symbolizes all elements of our *avodah* in this world and expresses the very purpose for which Torah was given—to transform the world into a *dira betachtonim*.

With this in mind, it is no wonder why we refer to this period of mourning as the Three Weeks. It reminds us of the true reason behind the whole *galus* and allows us to look forward to the *geulah* when all the hidden good will be revealed.¹

All of this gives us an increased measure of strength to carry on with our *avodah* and bring about the revelation of the third *Beis Hamikdash*, may it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

The Editors

חג הגאולה י"ג תמוז ה'תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל את העם

1. Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, Mevorchim Av, 5748.



Maximizing Potential

Chamishah Asar B'Av

Opposites

“There were no holidays for the Jewish people like Chamishah Asar B'Av and Yom Kippur.”²¹ In this passage from a *mishnah* in Masseches Taanis, our sages combine two concepts that seemingly couldn't be more distinct from each other: Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year, and Chamishah Asar B'Av, a rabbinic holiday that, until its institution, had nothing unique about it.

Indeed, the Gemara goes on to ask: “Granted, we mention Yom Kippur as it is a day of forgiveness, the day the final set of *luchos* were given — but what's [so special about] Chamishah Asar B'Av?” Nevertheless, the *mishnah* brings these two days together, saying that they are both the greatest days of the year.

This idea, however, is alluded to in the name of the *mazal* for the month of Av — “Aryeh,” which stands for “Elul, Rosh Hashanah, Yom

Kippur, Hoshanaah Rabbah,” these being special days, and specifically mentioning Yom Kippur.

Ready for Redemption

Every concept in Torah must have a practical lesson, and in our case, a relevant lesson regarding Chamishah Asar B'Av. The uniqueness of the fifteenth day of any month is the fullness of the moon. This symbolizes the fullness of the Jewish nation who are compared to the moon.



לזכות בני השלוחים
 לוי בן אסתר
 חנה רבקה בת אסתר
 שרה מושקא בת אסתר
 לרגל יום הולדתם בחודש מנחם אב

שיגדלו להיות שלוחים, חסידים,
 יראי שמים, מקושרים אל הרבי,
 ושיהיו מקור לנחת רוח רב
 להוריהם, למשפחתם ולנשיא דורנו

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
 הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר
 שיחיו טייכטל
 שלוחי המלך בנאשוויל, טענעסי

Specifically, the fifteenth of Av was the day when the death of the Jews in the desert ceased, nullifying the decree of Tisha B'Av, allowing the Jews to enter Eretz Yisroel. This symbolizes the ultimate nullification of the events of a later Tisha B'Av — the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, readying us to reenter Eretz Yisroel with the coming of Moshiach. This is the lesson we learn from the general idea of Chamishah Asar B'Av — that we are ready and our *avodah* is complete, and the *geulah* will be at any moment.

Increasing Kedushah

This is the advantage of the fifteenth of Av over the fifteenth day of any other month, whether it's Pesach on the fifteenth of Nissan or Sukkos on the fifteenth of Tishrei — Chamishah Asar B'Av comes after the ultimate low

of Tisha B'Av.

At the end of Maseches Taanis,² we are told that, “from now [Chamishah Asar B'Av] and on, whoever increases [in Torah study day and night, years] will be added to [his life].” The concept of increasing *kedushah* is always applicable, but there is a specific benefit to doing so after Chamishah Asar B'Av, bringing about an immeasurable difference in one's *avodah*.

The power of this day, like that of Yom Kippur, affects the entire year that follows, allowing us to harness the energy that we receive from Chamishah Asar B'Av and to grow in our *avodah*.

Hamaaseh Hu Ha'ikar

It is incumbent upon everyone to take upon themselves *hachlatos*

tovos and to begin to fulfill them immediately, not even to wait until the morning of Chamishah Asar B'Av. The *mishnah* in Avos³ tells us, “One hour (“*sha'ah*”) of repentance and good deeds in this world is more precious than all the life in the World to Come.” The word “*sha'ah*” can also mean a moment. This highlights the fact that we must start now — since every single moment is infinitely valuable.

May it be that in this very moment, Hashem gives all the Yidden *brachos* from His open hand, leading to the ultimate *bracha*, the true and complete *geulah* through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(Adapted from the sicha of 15 Av 5748)

1. Taanis, 26b.
2. Ibid. 31a.
3. Perek 4, mishnah 17.



כתב יד קודש



לזכות
מרת שרה מאשא בת אסתר לאה תח'י
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

נדפס ע"י
משפחתה שיחיו

DREAM TROUBLES

In this note, the Rebbe responds in his holy handwriting to an individual who was troubled by various dreams, and tried unsuccessfully to decipher their meaning with a professional interpreter.

His questions to the Rebbe were: a) How can one discern whether a dream is divinely inspired or not. b) What is the meaning of the fact that in his dream, he was **angry** about the **injustices** of the world, and because of this he wished to **ascend** [i.e. to leave the world]?

The Rebbe answers each of these questions¹ in order:

1. Published by Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak, Shabbos Parshas Tisa 5774.



THE REBBE READS PANIM AT THE TZIYUN OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE IN THE SUMMER OF 5710, BEFORE THE OHEL WAS BUILT.

THE FIRST SUMMER

AV 5710*

WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENACHEM LAZAROFF

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

Presented below is a description of Chodesh Av 5710* with the Rebbe. Culled from multiple diaries of *bochurim* who were there and printed in Yemei Bereishis, this is a glimpse into the time after Yud Shevat 5710*, before the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius* on Yud Shevat 5711*!¹

Tuesday, Daled Av

After Mincha, just before the Rebbe left for his room, he requested to meet with Hatomim Eli Gross for a few minutes.

Among other things, the Rebbe inquired about his well-being, expressing concern over his weary appearance and asked whether he was fasting excessively or engaging in *sigufim*.

“The Rambam writes that it is imperative to maintain a healthy body in order to keep Torah and mitzvos. If we become unhealthy, G-d forbid, we cannot fulfill mitzvos properly.”

The Rebbe then encouraged him to live a more balanced lifestyle. While not indulging in physical wants, it is important to not deprive the body of what it needs. Everything has to be done in a proper, orderly fashion.

The Rebbe concluded:

“This is what I wanted to tell you. When there will be good news you will presumably come and notify me.”

Sunday, fast of Tisha B'av

This morning during Shacharis, while reading the *haftarah*, the Rebbe cried a lot.

After Maariv, Kiddush Levanah was not recited due to the clouds.

Prior to Havdalah, the Rebbe mentioned that it is our custom to say the phrase “*savri maranan*” also when making Havdalah on beer.

Monday, Yud Av

Today, Hatomim Tzvi Hirsh Gansbourg entered the Rebbe’s study and delivered a *pan* on behalf of a relative in Eretz Yisroel who was experiencing complications in her pregnancy.

The Rebbe read through the *pan* for some time, and replied:

“This is your own pessimistic perspective! It seems like everything will be okay.”

About an additional relative who was pregnant and

having heart problems, the Rebbe said:

“Heart problems?! Just because one doctor in Eretz Yisroel says something, you make a whole tumult and you take upon yourself the negativity of the entire world... The doctor instructed her to be careful, she should follow his instructions and she will be healthy.”

Hatomim Berel Junik related that for one of the recent *farbrengens*, he asked the *gabbai*, Reb Yochanan Gordon, if he can sponsor the *kiddush*.

Before that particular Shabbos, during one of his visits to the Rebbe’s home, he told Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka about this. The Rebbetzin expressed her desire to contribute towards the *farbrengen* as well.

Prior to the *farbrengen*, Reb Yochanan came over to him to confirm the sponsor of the *kiddush* for the customary announcement. He informed Reb Yochanan that the Rebbetzin had participated in the expenses as well. Reb Yochanan decided to keep this private and from then on, the sponsor of the *farbrengen* wasn’t announced.



REB TZVI HIRSH GANSBOURG

* 5710-1950, 5711-1951



REB BEREL JUNIK AS A BOCHUR SEEN BEHIND THE REBBE. REB DOVID RASKIN IS ALSO VISIBLE BEHIND THE REBBE ON THE LEFT.

Tuesday Yud-Aleph Av

Hatomim Tzvi Hirsh Gansbourg recounted that at 2:30 p.m. today, he entered the Rebbe's study, where the Rebbe was sitting without his hat or *kapota*.

The Rebbe greeted him "Nu, Reb Hirsh," and he proceeded to tell the Rebbe that he came to deliver a *pan* on behalf of a relative who had experienced a second miscarriage. The Rebbe told him that this is not the proper way to do it and instructed him to return later.

Later, at 6:00 p.m., he returned for *yechidus*. The Rebbe buttoned his jacket, put on his hat, and read the *pan* with great attentiveness.

The Rebbe asked for her mother's name and said: "In due time, she will probably become pregnant again. She should go to a doctor and inform him that she already miscarried twice and why it happened. The doctor will look into it and everything will be fine. A report should be sent here which will be given over to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe. Her mother's name should be included.

"But there are two conditions. She has to see a doctor, and nobody should know about the pregnancy besides her husband and mother (if she chooses to say)."

The Rebbe also spoke to him about the woman for whom he asked a *bracha* the day before:

"Everything will probably be fine, but regardless, she too should see a doctor who will check her and inform her what she has to be careful about."

The Rebbe also instructed him to tell both women's husbands to say the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *kapitel Tehillim* every day (at least until the first *yahrtzeit* on Yud Shevat).

Wednesday, Yud-Beis Av

Today, one of the *talmidim* entered for *yechidus* and sought the Rebbe's advice on what to tell his parents, who wanted him to shave his beard.

The Rebbe told him: "Being that we are approaching the month of Elul, when we increase in the recitation of Tehillim (*LDovid Hashem Ori*), and we find ourselves in a time when there is growing fear of war, now is certainly not the 'right time' to remove your beard, Heaven forbid.

"The above would apply even in a city where other Jews don't grow their beards. How much more so does it apply in a city like this where there are Jews that do grow their beards, and you are amongst Chassidim." The Rebbe further encouraged the *talmid* to bring his parents to speak with him directly on the matter.

Before departing on Merkos Shlichus, the Temimim Yehuda Leib Groner and Azriel Chaikin went into *yechidus*. The Rebbe told them:

“The [Frierdiker] Rebbe certainly wants, all that is required is for you to want. Thus, the Rebbe’s will that he wishes to accomplish with this shlichus will certainly be fulfilled through you. Say the Rebbe’s *kapitel, kapitel ayin aleph* which we are currently saying, in order to internalize what the Rebbe demands of us. You should always carry with you a *maamar* and a picture of the Rebbe.”

Recently, many *anash* and *bochurim* have been discussing the greatness of the Rebbe’s conduct. Since Yud Shevat, the Rebbe is often seen delving into the *maamar* Basi Legani (5710) which he has in his *siddur*.

Someone from *anash* entered the Rebbe’s study for *yechidus* and told the Rebbe that he wants to be *mekushar blev v’nefesh*. The Rebbe replied, “When you will do what I have asked of you, you will attain the best *hiskashrus* and you will be connected to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe through me.”

To someone who requested a *bracha*, the Rebbe responded: “May Hashem help that the *brachos* of the Rebbe—that you become a Chossid, *yarei Shamayim* and a *lamdan*—should be fulfilled.”

Sunday, Tes-Zayin Av

In the morning, a Yid ran into 770 in great distress, stood on a table and said that his daughter was in labor for over 24 hours and was having trouble giving birth. He asked if anyone could help him. Hatomim Berel Junik put tefillin on him and helped him daven Shacharis. Afterwards, the *bochurim* brought him to the Rebbe’s study where he poured his heart out.

The Rebbe instructed the man to say *kapitel ayin aleph* (the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *kapitel* at the time -ed.) as soon as possible, and told him to give \$1.80 (a multiple of 18) to *tzedakah*. The Rebbe also instructed him to advise his daughter to make a habit of giving *tzedakah* every week before lighting candles.

The Rebbe emphasized that all of this should be carried out right away, and then the birth will be smooth and easy. Before the man left, the Rebbe requested that he call and update him on the outcome.

The Rebbe told Berel Junik to ensure that the individual carried out everything that was instructed. Then the Rebbe said: “If only he came to me earlier, in the afternoon. He should pass on the message to his daughter about giving *tzedakah* on Erev Shabbos as soon as possible. They should not think that it’s some arbitrary

thing, it is very pertinent!”

At 11:00 p.m., the Rebbe inquired if the man called back yet. Since he had not, the Rebbe instructed Berel Junik to call him. When he reported that the birth went smoothly and that a baby girl was born, the Rebbe was

THE FOUNDING OF “VAAD L’HAFOTZAS SICHOS”

In the early days (through Tammuz 5710*), the transcription and dissemination of the Rebbe’s Torah was sporadic, disorganized and limited primarily to a few Chassidim in the United States.

On Motzei Tisha B’av, Hatomim Yoel Kahan, who was doing most of the work himself, called a “special meeting” with several other *bochurim* to establish the distribution of the Rebbe’s Torah in an orderly fashion. They decided that it was time to disseminate the Rebbe’s *sichos* to Chassidim across the globe and assigned the different responsibilities which were required to make this happen.

A letter was sent to Reb Avraham Pariz in Eretz Yisroel and other prominent Chassidim in different countries, announcing the establishment of the new organization, “Vaad L’hafotzas Sichos.” The *vaad* also decided to send out free copies of the *sichos* to prominent Chassidim so that they would be able to share them with the public.

Within just a few weeks, letters of gratitude poured in from Chassidim worldwide, such as Reb Benzion Shemtov in London, who wrote: “From the depths of my heart, I want to thank you for establishing this *vaad*, which enlivens our souls...”

Such letters lifted the spirits of the *vaad*, and inspired them to continue and strengthen their holy work. They would also send out a letter with every *sicha*, encouraging Chassidim to learn and *koch* in the *sicha* — the only Torah so far from the Rebbe.⁴ The *sichos*, together with the heart-felt letters from the *vaad*, made waves wherever they were sent, and inspired Chassidim across the globe.

* 5710-1950

very satisfied with the good news. The Rebbe remarked that the man was probably in such a harried state of mind that he had forgotten to call back.

Today, the Rebbe asked Hatomim Dovid Raskin, who was in Alma Ata when the Rebbe's father passed away

six years ago, to document his memories of Harav Levi Yitzchok, especially any *divrei Torah* he heard.

The Rebbe also told him that when he goes to visit Rebbetzin Chana, he shouldn't reminisce about those days because it could bring up many painful memories for her.

Among other things, Dovid Raskin wrote that Reb Betzalel Wilschansky noticed Harav Levi Yitzchok writing on his Tanya, by *perek mem-aleph*. He tried to glimpse what was written but Harav Levi Yitzchok covered it with his hands.

At a later opportunity, they saw what Harav Levi Yitzchok wrote. Near the section that describes how a person has to study Torah *lishmah* similar to a *get* and *sefer Torah* which have to be written *lishmah*, Harav Levi Yitzchok noted that the Alter Rebbe chose these examples specifically: writing a *get* (*sur mera*), and a *sefer Torah* (*asei tov*).² These represent the positive and negative which encompass the entire Torah.

When Dovid Raskin gave over this description in writing to the Rebbe, the Rebbe thanked him, saying “*yasher koach*.” Later, at the Chof Av farbrengen, the Rebbe expounded on this topic.³



THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE SICHA ABOUT HISKASHRUS, FROM THE FARBRENGEN OF CHOF AV 5710*.

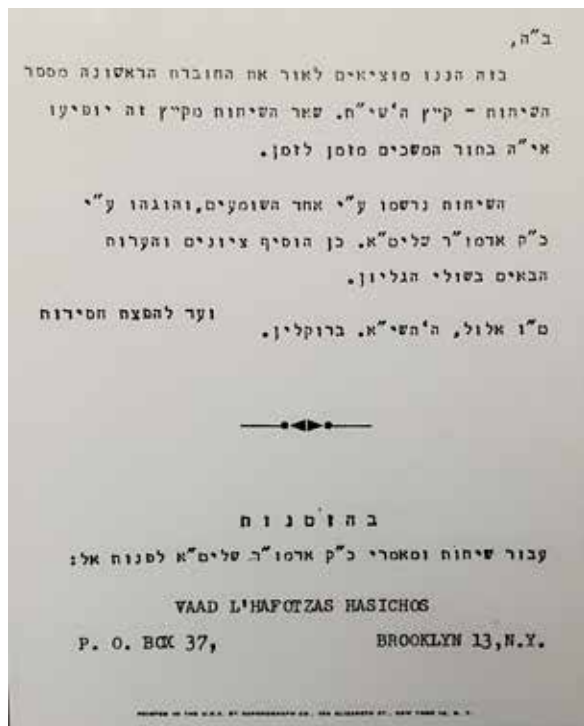
Thursday, Chof Av

After Maariv, at 10:15 p.m., a farbrengen was held in honor of the Rebbe's father's *yahrtzeit*. The Rebbe began the farbrengen by speaking about several customs associated with a *yahrtzeit*.

Afterwards, the Rebbe delved into a *hadran* on Maseches Kiddushin, which ended off with a discussion on *hiskashrus*.

The Rebbe said that it is critical to connect with the *maor* of *pnimiyus haTorah*. Even when someone is in dire spiritual straits, he should not be discouraged and should constantly strive to reconnect. This is accomplished by learning a *maamar*, a chapter, a line or even a single word of the Rebbe's Torah, in every free moment.

In the past, one had to thoroughly prepare oneself to learn Chassidus or to go into *yechidus*. However, in the final days of *galus*, one cannot refrain from learning Chassidus. A person must hold on to the “Rebbe's *kly-amke* [lit. doorknob, i.e. we must keep connected].” Then, the Rebbe's essence, which is invested in his teachings, will “pull him out of the mire” (of spiritual decay), and set him on the proper path.



ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATIONS OF THE “VAAD L'HAFOTZAS SICHOS” IN THE YEAR 5711*.

A BOND OF

Life

MA'AMED

BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL



לזכות
מרת חיה מושקא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ט מנחם-אב

נדפס ע"י ולזכות בעלה
הרה"ת הרב שלום דוב בער וילדיהם שיחיו
שוחאט

WHAT IS MA'AMED?

A¹ mainstay of *darkei haChassidus*—the origins of which go far back and are firmly rooted in Chassidic tradition, as well as in the many letters and *sichos* of the Rebbeim—is the giving of “דמי מעמד” (“*ma'amed* money”) to the Rebbe. From time to time, Chassidim would send a sum of money to the Rebbe for the Rebbe to use as he sees fit.

GOING BACK GENERATIONS

The custom amongst Chassidim to periodically send sums of money or gifts to the Rebbe has existed throughout the generations. It was an expression of the love they had for the Rebbe, and of their strong desire to be connected to him. So precious and important was this custom by Chassidim, that the Frierdiker Rebbe once referred to it as a “יסוד ההתקשרות של אנ”ש,” a foundation for the *hiskashrus* of a Chossid to his Rebbe.

Over time, this practice acquired the name “מעמד,” and the money was referred to as “דמי מעמד,” lit. the “money of *ma'amed*.” (It eventually acquired the additional codename of “*nifneh*,” as will be discussed further on in the article.)

SOURCE OF CUSTOM

The practice of presenting one’s teacher with gifts is found in the Gemara, where a fascinating comparison is drawn between the above-mentioned practice and the *mitzva* of *bikurim*: “One who brings a gift to a *talmid chacham* is considered to have brought *bikurim* to the *Beis Hamikdash*.”

During a Shavuos farbrengen in 5717*, the Rebbe explained the above statement based on the Rambam’s words in Mishneh Torah regarding the status of a Levi. The Rambam provides an explanation for why the Levi’im did not take part in the conquest—and therefore did not receive their own portion—of Eretz Yisroel: Since their sole occupation is to be servants of Hashem and to devote their lives to teaching the Yidden the ways of Hashem, they were not burdened with any other responsibilities and concerns. He goes on to state that all of this applies not just to *Shevet Levi*, but to anyone who removes themselves from worldly matters and devotes their lives completely to the service of Hashem. After we take into account, continues the Rebbe, that the *mitzvah* of *bikurim* is one of the 24 gifts the Torah designates for the Kohen (who is from *Shevet Levi*), we can now understand the

above-mentioned statement in the Gemara: One who brings a gift to a *talmid chacham* is in essence doing the same thing as someone who brings gifts of *bikurim* to the Kohen!

It is worth noting that notwithstanding the ruling in Shulchan Aruch that “It is pious behavior to not accept gifts, but rather to trust in Hashem that He will provide you with all your needs; as it says in the *posuk*: ‘He who despises gifts will live’”—the Rebbeim still accepted money of *ma'amed*, relying on the above-quoted Gemara (as the Rebbe explains in a letter dated Gimmel Tammuz 5726*).

SOURCE OF THE NAME

As mentioned, the name given to this contribution is “מעמד.” It is not clear when the name was given, but we find use of this word already in letters and talks of the Mittlerer Rebbe, making it safe to assume that it was around then that the term *ma'amed* was coined and added to the Chassidic lexicon.

PUTS ONE ON THEIR FEET

The word מעמד is derived from the word “מעמיד”—to stand something up. In a *sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5728*, the Rebbe gave the following explanation: The concept of giving *ma'amed* is standing oneself up on their feet. For when a person takes money that can be a source of life-giving sustenance and instead gives it to the Rebbe, this causes his bond with the Rebbe to permeate all the areas of his life.

Additionally, there is another connotation as well, as the Rebbe discusses in a *sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5725*: The act of giving *ma'amed* should be done with a *bittul* and *kabbalas ol*, a sense of self-dedication to the Rebbe and his instructions; much like the feet which carry the whole body, symbolizing humility and dedication.

MA'AMED – NIFNEH

Many years had passed since the practice of giving *ma'amed* was established, when the Communist regime came to power in the then Soviet Union. The Russian secret police—the N.K.V.D.—closely monitored every move of the Frierdiker Rebbe in an attempt to find any reason—however weak—to cast suspicion on him, and enable them to create libelous accusations against him. It was obvious, then, that the Frierdiker Rebbe’s financial activity had to remain as inconspicuous as possible, so as not to give the Russians any reasons for suspicion.

Therefore, the name for *ma'amed* was changed to “נפנה”: Each letter of the word “מעמד” is replaced by the letter following it in the order of the Alef Beis—the “*mem*” being replaced with “*nun*,” the “*ayin*” with a “*pei*,” and so on.

This specific form of code is called “*ksav mezuzah*,” since the idea for this cipher is taken from the mezuzah: It is customary—*al pi Kabbalah*—to inscribe on the backside of the mezuzah the letters כוזו במוכסז כוזו, while in the same spot, just on the other side of the parchment, is written the words “ה' אלוקינו ה'”. If you replace each letter of these three words with the letter which follows it in the Alef Beis, you end up with the “code” written on the other side.

Whenever one needed to write about *ma'amed* in a letter, for example, the word *nifneh* was used in its stead. This form of encryption was also employed when writing any amount of money being sent for *ma'amed*, in order to disguise the subject of the letter. So instead of writing the word “שקל” (or in plural “שקלים”) when writing out any amount of money, the word “תרם” (pl. “תרמכן”) would be used in its place. All of this was done just in order to conceal the existence of “*ma'amed*” from the prying eyes of the N.K.V.D.

The term “*nifneh*” eventually became synonymous with “*ma'amed*,”—to the point that even in places where there were no concerns about using the word “*ma'amed*” freely, Chassidim kept the term “*nifneh*.” One even finds the usage of this word in many letters of the Rebbe, where he confirms receipt of *ma'amed* money (“נפנה נמטר”).

Interestingly, one finds already in the times of the Tzemach Tzedek an attempt to disguise correspondence about *ma'amed* by using coded terms. For example, in a will that the Tzemach Tzedek wrote and left for his sons he refers to money of *ma'amed* (as well as money contributions designated for Eretz Yisroel) as the “tallis business” (this code eventually evolved into “esrogim business”).

A YESOD IN HISKASHRUS

EXPRESSION OF HISKASHRUS

The connection between a Chossid and his Rebbe can be expressed in various ways, but the quality of the *hiskashrus* that is formed through giving *ma'amed* stands out.

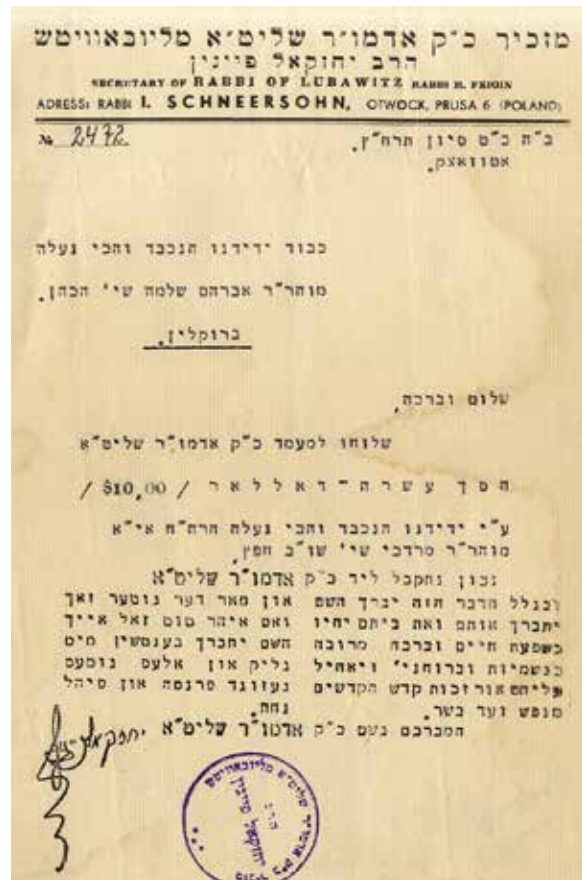
There is the intellectual form of *hiskashrus*, whereby the Chossid learns and comprehends a *sicha* or *maamar* from the Rebbe in which, as we know, the Rebbe invests

his whole being. This is comparable to the relationship and bond which is forged between a student and his teacher.²

Then there is the emotional element of *hiskashrus*, when the Chossid arouses within himself a love for his Rebbe.³

But then there is the bond that is created by giving *ma'amed*: The Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya (*perek* 37) that when one gives tzedakah, he is not merely handing someone some coins—he is parting with a piece of his *chayus*! As was mentioned earlier, since a person invests all his energy into earning that money, and with it he is able to acquire sustenance for himself, giving that money to tzedakah essentially means giving away a part of one’s very being.

The same applies when a Chossid gives *ma'amed* to his Rebbe; he connects to the Rebbe in the most literal and physical way. Indeed, he has connected his very *life* to that of the Rebbe.



A LETTER BY REB CHATCHE FEIGIN ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF MAAMED FUNDS FROM AMERICA TO THE FRIERDIKER REBBE IN POLAND

ACHDUS

In addition to the unique bond forged between Chossid and Rebbe, giving *ma'amed* accomplishes other things as well. When Chassidim give *ma'amed* to the Rebbe, it unifies and strengthens the *achdus* among Chassidim. As the Rebbe writes in a letter (Zos Chanukah, 5712*), “the *primius* of *ma'amed* is to connect Chassidim with each other through true *achdus*.”

We find another remarkable aspect about giving *ma'amed* in a letter which the Rebbe wrote to Reb Bentzion Shemtov (who, as part of his role as a *shadar*, collected money for the Rebbe's affairs). The Rebbe emphasizes the importance of *ma'amed* from a different angle: When someone gives *ma'amed* to the Rebbe, he is actively taking part in the work which the Rebbe wants to accomplish. In truth, every Yid has the duty to take part in the Rebbe's work. Since that is not always possible, by giving *ma'amed* (the Rebbe uses here the word “*nifneh*”) one accomplishes two things: 1. He removes some of the financial burden from the Rebbe so that he can do whatever he needs to do. 2. The main thing: He thereby takes part in doing the Rebbe's holy work.

The Rebbe writes further that when one becomes aware of this, he will give differently as well.

DETAILS OF MA'AMED

HOW OFTEN?

Initially, there were no fixed times defined in which each Chossid was required to give. Rather, it was treated as a personal matter and left to the giver's discretion to give when he saw fit. However, one does see that over time some type of order evolved in this area. In a letter from the Mittlerer Rebbe in which he encourages the practice of giving *ma'amed*, he refers to the contribution as something to be given weekly, at least for those with more means.

Much later, during the *nesius* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, efforts were made to regulate fixed times for giving *ma'amed*. In many letters, the Frierdiker Rebbe asks Chassidim to work within their respective communities on getting others to commit to giving monthly, or, at least once every three months.

HOW MUCH?

As with the times for giving, the same was with the amount. There was no fixed amount of how much to give, rather each person gave their own amount. This is clearly

seen in the following story as heard from Reb Velvel Konikov: “When my father, Reb Chaim Tzvi Hirsh, would present his *ma'amed* money to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, he would place it on a white handkerchief. While others brought with them banknotes which were worth much more, my father's coins would glisten on his handkerchief. The Frierdiker Rebbe said about him: ‘Reb Chaim Tzvi Konikov's fifty cents are more precious to me than the large amount of money of the others.’”

FOR EACH – A FIXED AMOUNT

Eventually, the Frierdiker Rebbe worked to establish fixed guidelines for amounts to be given—but he did not make one equal amount for everyone. The point was that each person should have their own personal but *fixed* amount to give. The Frierdiker Rebbe left this up for each person to decide for themselves, but asked that he be notified what that amount will be.

In the beginning of 5688*, the Frierdiker Rebbe—in an out-of-the-ordinary occurrence—spoke publicly about giving *ma'amed*. His secretary, Reb Yechezkel Feigin, who was present at the time, committed the talk to writing, and amongst other things he writes what the Frierdiker Rebbe said about each person setting for themselves a fixed amount to give: “...And from my part, [all] I need to know is who is giving, and how much; I need to know who they are, along with their household and children...”

The Frierdiker Rebbe explained why he needs to know the exact amount each individual is committing to give monthly: “...When I know how much each person committed to giving each month—if he adds to that amount, then he will receive more from Above. If there is a decrease in the monthly giving—which is an indication of decreased blessings from Above for livelihood—I need to know about it.”

The Rebbe wrote a letter on 23 Elul 5707* (shortly after his visit to Paris that year to meet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, where he passionately encouraged the *inyan* of *ma'amed*), in which he addressed the above question of how much to give: “The particulars of how to go about collecting *ma'amed* money depends on the conditions of each place. Surely, a decision will be reached amongst the members of the *ma'amed* committee according to the majority opinion, and in best interest of the matter at hand. Time will tell if the arrangement is working, or if something needs to be changed.”

In simple terms, there is no set amount one must give, rather everyone decides for themselves according to their means.

WHO GIVES MA'AMED?

IN THE BEGINNING— ONLY CHASSIDIM

On the one hand, the Rabbeim never made restrictions as to who should be included in giving *ma'amed*.

However, there was one restriction in previous generations: one needed to belong to the 'Community of Chassidim,' as it were. This was a necessary condition in order to be a part of those who gave *ma'amed*. The following story illustrates this point:

The Friediker Rebbe arrived on the shores of America for the first time on 12 Elul 5689*. A few days later, on Chai Elul, he hosted a gathering of rabbonim in his place of residence; his first step in strengthening Yiddishkeit in America. One of the rabbonim who came was Rabbi Eliezer Silver (a *baal mesiras nefesh* and an active partner with the Rabbeim in matters of Yiddishkeit) who had recently been appointed as the president of the Agudas HaRabbonim of the U.S. and Canada. His daughter later related that when her father met with the Friediker Rebbe on that occasion, he placed a very large sum of money on

the table for the Rebbe. But the Rebbe refused to take the money, saying, "Only Chassidim give *ma'amed*."

During a farbrengen on Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5710*, the Rebbe related a similar story (it is possible the Rebbe was actually referring to the same story): "It happened that there was an individual who wanted to give the [Friediker] Rebbe *ma'amed*, and the Rebbe refused to take it from him, saying, '*Ma'amed*—only Chassidim give.' The Yid answered and said that he will become a Chossid, to which the Rebbe replied, 'One does not begin with this [i.e. by giving *ma'amed*]...'"

THE REBBE'S APPROACH — EVERY YID!

Such was the accepted approach regarding who is eligible to give *ma'amed*. However, the Rebbe urged time and again for the circle of those giving *ma'amed* to expand and include even those who do not self-identify as Chassidim. In a letter to Reb Bentzion Shemtov dated 9 Cheshvan 5708*, the Rebbe explains the reason for this change: "In general, there is no need to be overly cautious before deciding to bring up the topic of *nifneh*. In particular, when bearing in mind that in recent years it has become most noticeable that he [i.e. the Friediker Rebbe] is the leader of *klal Yisroel*. The majority of his activities are



THE FRIEDIKER REBBE WALKS AT THE HEAD OF AN ENTOURAGE DURING HIS VISIT TO SPRINGFIELD, MA IN 5690. RABBI ELIEZER SILVER IS SEEN ON THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S RIGHT, REB DOVID MEIR RABINOWITZ ON HIS LEFT

in matters that relate to everyone, and are sometimes focused on those far from Yiddishkeit...”

However, the Rebbe also set limits: “...but on the other hand, you should not talk about this [i.e. *ma'amed*] with everyone, and certainly to be careful of those who after [they give money] will say that ‘I have made Avraham wealthy...’⁴”

In addition, the Rebbe spells out the attitude with which one should approach such an individual. It should be viewed as a personal duty, not as a favor. In the Rebbe’s words: “[The giving of *ma'amed*] needs to be done with the proper attitude on the part of the giver; namely, that this is in no way comparable to making a contribution to a *meshulach*, *chas v’shalom*.”

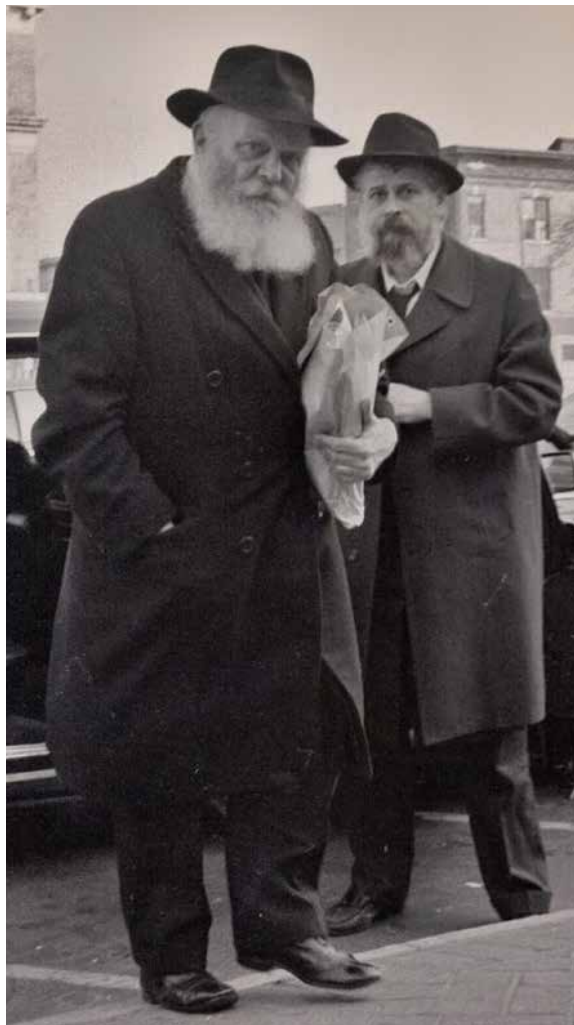
Later in the letter, the Rebbe emphasizes that one should not be satisfied with just taking money from the individual. Rather to “focus on being *mekarev* the giver and his family, if at all possible, to the general concept of a Rebbe and *manhig Yisroel*, whether it be by talking to him directly, or through him reading printed material on the subject (*zichronos* [=personal memoirs] of Chasidim), *sichos* etc.)”

ANSHEI MA’AMED — THE SHADAR

Historically, some of the Chassidim were able to give the *ma'amed* directly to the Rebbe. However, the Chassidim who lived in distant places and thus did not come to the Rebbe as often, were not able to do so. Therefore, the concept of a “*shadar*” was instituted. As the name *shadar* suggests—it is an acronym for “*shlucha d’rabonon*,” lit. emissary of a rabbinic authority—these were people whom the Rebbe would choose to travel from place to place to collect *ma'amed* from the Chassidim. Amongst the most famous ones in recent generations are Reb Yitzchok Horowitz, (known as Reb Itche der Masmid), Reb Nissen Nemanov, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, Reb Bentzion Shemtov, and Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik, to name a few.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUND

Beginning with the *nesius* of the Alter Rebbe until the *nesius* of the Rebbe Rashab, the Rabbeim were personally involved in overseeing *ma'amed*. This is understandable in light of the fact that during those years the main emphasis



of the fund was supplying the needs of *beis harav*. However, during the *nesius* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, *ma'amed* turned into an institution for itself and its management was done mainly through the *mazkirus*.

THE SUPERVISORS

On 11 Iyar 5688*, the Frierdiker Rebbe appointed Reb Yechezkel (“Chatche”) Feigin—his secretary at the time—to both oversee the *ma'amed* collection and to manage the funds. Reb Chatche wrote many letters to *anash* around the world promoting the importance of the fund, especially to the members of Aguch in America, from where most of the financial support came.

MA’AMED IN AMERICA

The general responsibility for the management of *ma'amed* overseas, i.e. Canada and the U.S., was placed upon the shoulders of Agudas Chasidei Chabad. In

5695*, the Frieddiker Rebbe addressed a special letter to the ‘Management Committee of Aguch in the USA and Canada,’ in which he clarifies what the main roles of Aguch are, and amongst them is the collection of *ma’amed*. Two years later, he sent them a prepared Document of Regulations of Aguch, in which he details the nature of their work in this area.

Indeed, amongst their varied activities, they printed special *takanos* for the members of “Chevras Machzikei Beis Chayenu,” an association whose members took part in providing financial support for the Rebbe’s household.

The Frieddiker Rebbe was very concerned that there should be an orderly system in place with regards to the collection of *ma’amed* and that the appropriate people should be appointed for the job. A lack thereof, he writes, can have a detrimental effect, both physically and spiritually. The Frieddiker Rebbe did not desist from highlighting the vital importance of the above, and even as late as in 5707* he writes to those involved: “*Men bedarf machen ah seder in hachnosas ma’amed*—there needs to be structure made in the collection of *ma’amed*.”

In order to facilitate the delivery of funds from different countries during World War II—something which entailed much difficulty—the Frieddiker Rebbe opened a special bank account in Montreal for this purpose and appointed Reb Moshe Eliyahu Gerlitzky as trustee on the account.

GABA’IM

Aside from the appointment of individuals as *shadarim*—personally chosen by the Rabbeim throughout the years—there were communities that appointed special committees to deal with matters of *ma’amed*, as well as designated *gaba'im* (collectors) who would be responsible to gather all the *ma’amed* of that area into one specific place. Regarding how to decide whom to select for the position, the Rebbe writes to a member of *anash* who had been offered such a position and was debating whether to accept it or not, to rely on the opinion of the people around him. Since, most of the time, a person is biased and may therefore come to the wrong conclusion, he shouldn’t trust his own opinion but rather he should rely on those who want to appoint him.

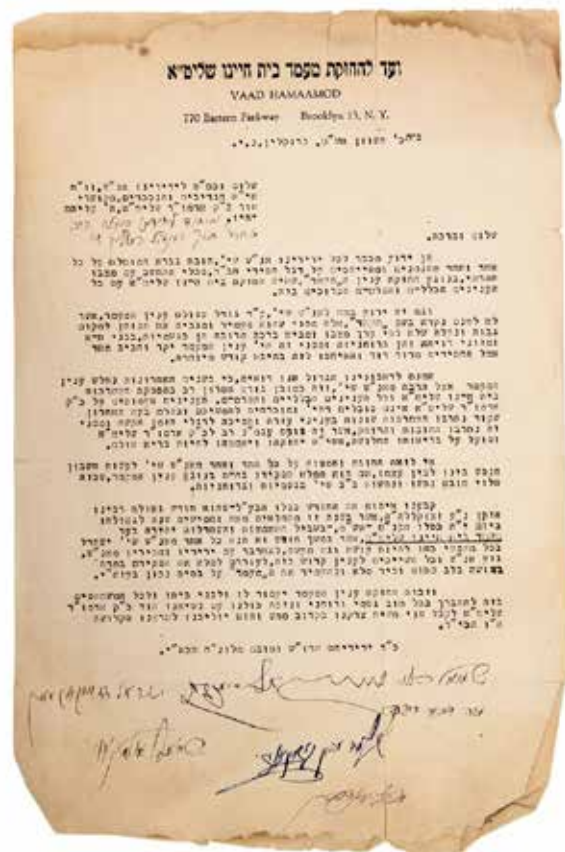
THE REBBE CHOOSES

On other occasions, however, the Rebbe was personally involved in determining who was to be responsible for collecting the *ma’amed*. Reb Avraham Alter Heber of Nachlas Har Chabad was involved in one such instance, and related the following story: “During the month of Tishrei of 5729*, I went in to the Rebbe for *yechidus*. At

the time, I was responsible for collecting *ma’amed* at the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, after which I would transfer the money to the one in charge of *ma’amed* in Eretz Yisroel, who in turn would send it directly to the Rebbe. During that time, there was a vacancy in the position for general overseer of *ma’amed* in Eretz Yisroel, and I—not knowing where to transfer the funds—asked the Rebbe about it during the *yechidus*. (Later, I found out that another guest from Kfar Chabad had also asked the Rebbe the same thing.) The Rebbe replied to me: ‘Regarding [the question] to whom to give the money—there will probably be a decision about the matter during the month of Tishrei, *b’li neder*. It will then be passed on to everyone [involved], and it will be passed on to you as well’—implying that the Rebbe himself will make the decision...”

ADDITIONAL BRACHOS

The Rebbe wrote on one occasion that those involved in the perpetuation of *ma’amed* merit a special *bracha v’hatzlacha b’gashmius ub’ruchnius*: “I was happy to read your letter, which deals with matters of *ma’amed*, and surely this will bring you additional success in your health and personal matters.”



AN APPEAL FOR MAAMED TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY OF BEIS HARAV, SENT BY THE “VAAD LAHACHZAKAS MAAMAD BEIS CHAYENU,” IN 5709

לזכות החייל בצבאות ה'
מאיר שלמה שיחי
ניו

לרגל ה'אפשרעניש' שלו
כ'ו מנחם אב ה'תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל

נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



Time to Recover

Written By:

Rabbi Shabi Soffer & Rabbi Tzemach Feller

Rabbi Alexander Namdar of Gothenburg, Sweden relates the following story:

During the year following our marriage, we lived in Crown Heights. One day, my father-in-law, Rabbi Dr. Tali Lowenthal put us in touch with someone named Lydia S. who would often attend his shiurim in London, and was then in New York. Lydia told us of an acquaintance of hers, named Adam, a very refined older gentleman, who spoke a beautiful Yiddish. Adam came from a large family in Europe. As a teenager he had jumped off a speeding train heading towards Auschwitz, escaping the clutches of the Holocaust. Sadly, the rest of his family perished. After reaching American shores, he settled in New York with his wife and became quite successful running a hair brush company out of Queens, NY. Lydia had called to tell us that Adam had just been diagnosed with stage four cancer, and the doctors had essentially given up on him, giving him the dire prognosis of only a few weeks left to live. She reached out to us on his behalf, seeking our advice and help to get a bracha from the Rebbe.

Of course, we agreed and on Sunday morning, we arranged to meet with Adam and his wife at our home, then set out to 770, where we accompanied them in line for Sunday dollars.

As we stood in the long line waiting for our moment with the Rebbe, Adam trembled from emotion. Generally,

as Chassidim, we wouldn't speak to the Rebbe. But this was an exception; this was an emergency. So as we passed by, I told the Rebbe, "This Yid is asking for a *refuah sheleimah*. He has *yene machla* ["that illness" i.e. cancer] and the doctors aren't giving him much time."

The Rebbe responded immediately, "*Der Eibershter hot a sach tzeit* — Hashem has plenty of time!. May you have long and healthy years, and good news to share." Then the Rebbe gave him two dollars, and gave his wife two dollars, as well as additional *brachos*.

After such encouraging words, Adam was buoyed with *bitachon*. New hope and joy filled his heart. Afterwards, he was in no worry or rush to leave Crown Heights, so we went with them to a local judaica store on Kingston Avenue, to buy some Jewish books, mezuzos, and other items. When we finished shopping, I remember Adam carrying a few heavy shopping bags with all of their purchases, as we continued walking. "What are you doing carrying such heavy bags — you're sick!" his wife exclaimed. "What do you mean," he replied happily. "The Rebbe gave me a *bracha!*"

Baruch Hashem, Adam did recover, and lived for another ten years.

Indeed, the Eibesther had a lot of time. **1**

לזכות הילדה פייגה טאובה
 לרגל יום הולדתה כ"ד מנחם-אב
 יה"ר שתגדל לתורה לחופה ולמעשים
 טובים מתוך בריאות נכונה ושפע בגו"ר
 לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר והוריה הי"ו

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

להקהיל קהילות:

COMMUNAL ASSEMBLY ON
 SHABBOS

WRITTEN BY:
 RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

Generally, Rosh Hashanah, especially the first day of Rosh Hashanah, was not a time for a farbrengen for our Rabbeim. It was a day on which every word was especially measured — and few were uttered. But on Rosh Hashanah 5750* that changed.

For the first time during the *nesius* — and for the first time in the history of Chassidus Chabad — the Rebbe held a farbrengen on the first day of Rosh Hashanah 5750*. The Rebbe began the farbrengen with explaining why:

“Since we have been accustomed recently to farbreng every single Shabbos ... and this *minhag* existed during the times of Moshe Rabbeinu, as is brought in Shulchan Aruch¹ quoting our sages, who explained on the *possuk* ויקהל משה—Moshe called to assemble:² ‘Hashem told Moshe, “Go down and gather for me large congregations on Shabbos so that the generations that follow after you will learn to gather as a community each Shabbos.” ... Therefore this should be done now as well — and all the more so — on this Shabbos, which is unique because it occurs on Rosh Hashanah.”³

Hakhalas kehilos was so crucial to the Rebbe that the Rebbe held a farbrengen on a day it had *never before* been held to emphasize its importance.

In the coming weeks and months, the Rebbe would explain that this concept of gathering as a congregation — as a community — on Shabbos is applicable to each and every one of us.

On Shabbos Parshas Noach, the Rebbe instructed that *hakhalas kehilos* should take place every Shabbos:

Since the times of Moshe Rabbeinu, Shabbos has been a fixed day for communal assembly to teach Torah, as Moshe Rabbeinu himself did: “And Moshe called the whole community of the *b’nei Yisroel* to assemble — men, women and children — and he said to them: “These are the things that Hashem commanded to do;” general and fundamental directives.

From then on, this was fixed in all places and in all times for all generations that on Shabbos, Yidden gather in shuls and *batei midrash* and occupy themselves with Torah. They focus on timely matters such as the laws of Shabbos, the *parshah* of the week, learning about the *yomim tovim* in

the upcoming week, and the like.

As the Alter Rebbe rules in Shulchan Aruch: “To set aside a fixed study time to inform the nation about Hashem’s laws and to teach *aggadah* to bring the fear of Hashem into their hearts.”

Since we’re in the first Shabbos of the “ordinary” months of the year,⁴ now is the time to recommend and encourage the keeping of this *takanah* that Moshe Rabbeinu established: Every place where Jewish people reside should try and have increased communal assembly on every Shabbos to study Torah, where everyone can encourage and reinforce one another’s Yiddishkeit, Torah and mitzvos.”⁵

The following week, the Rebbe spoke again about this *hora’ah*, and added a number of details.

- These gatherings should include *nigleh* and Chassidus, particularly timely subjects.
- Those gathered should take upon themselves *hachlatos* in Torah, *avodah*, and *gemilus chassadim*, as well as resolving to meet the needs of the community.
- To bolster the unity, it should be established that every community, in every place, should learn the same thing (even if it’s just a few short lines) in addition to the individual program of study that each community holds. This should include *nigleh* and *Chassidus*.
- This should begin with every community studying the weekly *parshah*, and they should all learn at least one *meforash* in *nigleh* and one in *Chassidus*. The Tzemach Tzedek’s teachings in Or Hatorah are recommended for the latter.
- When Shabbos occurs on Yom Tov, the study should include *parshas hamoadim* read in the Torah on that day, in addition to the weekly *parshah* as studied in Chitas.
- This is all in addition to the regular *shiurim* such as *Chitas*.

Two weeks later, on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, the Rebbe spoke again about *hakhalas kehilos*. As the Kinus Hashluchim was then taking place, the Rebbe spoke about

WHAT IF ONE DOESN'T HAVE A CONGREGATION TO ASSEMBLE?

During the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Noach, the Rebbe explained that even someone who is all alone can practice this idea of gathering as a congregation — by collecting and uniting the ten powers of his own *neshama*:

Based on what we’ve explained that gathering as a community emphasizes the strengths of the individual, we can say that this idea applies even when a Yid is all alone for whatever reason, and unable to gather with a community.

Since the goal of gathering as a community is to emphasize the power of each individual, to reveal their *yechida*, it is obvious that when someone is alone in a place where they’re unable to gather with a community, they must still strive towards fulfilling the intent of gathering. This can be done by gathering the “congregation” within one’s own *neshama* — the ten powers of the *nefesh* — and revealing the innermost and most fundamental point that is above them and unifies them — the *yechida*.

the unique role that shluchim have in promoting this *takanah* in every place they find themselves.

On Shabbos Parshas Noach 5751*, when speaking about *hakhalas kehilos*, the Rebbe emphasized that women should gather every Shabbos to learn Torah and to run *mesibos Shabbos* for girls. **T**

1. Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, 290:3.
2. Shemos, 35: 1.
3. Rosh Hashanah 5750.
4. As Tishrei is a “general month” that affects the entire year as explained in Chassidus.
5. Shabbos Parshas Noach 5750.



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To the
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To the amazing staff of the Chassidisher Derher we thank you for all your hard work and devotion in putting together this beautifully written and inspiring magazine!

Dr. And Mrs. Levi A. Reiter

NEY BBE

Rabbi Sholom Ber Gurkov, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Bais Shalom in Postville, Iowa, shares personal memories. Starting with his childhood in Communist Russia, and culminating with the precious years that he spent in the Rebbe's holy presence.¹

By: Rabbi Bentzion Schtroks

was born on 11 Nisan 5696* in Kharkov, Ukraine. My father, Reb Yaakov Yosef Gurkov, learned in Tomchei Temimim in Nevel.

In the years following World War I, Tomchei Temimim was forced to wander from one city to the next as they sought a safe haven where the students could sit and learn, away from the houndings of the Soviet authorities. One of the cities where the yeshiva was situated for a period of time during the war, was in Kharkov.

My father related to me that the Rebbe once visited Kharkov while he was there. During the visit, the Rebbe walked into the yeshiva and began to converse with *bochurim* in matters of learning.

When the Rebbe asked the *bochurim* a question on a *sugya* that they were then learning, no one had an answer. The Rebbe said: “This is the question of the Rashba! This is how we learn?”

My father was then learning with Reb Yehuda Kulasher at the end of the table. The Rebbe stood near them looking into my father’s Gemara as he began to ask a question. My father replied: “A *ge’onishe* question.” The Rebbe then went on to share with my father and his *chavrusa* a full explanation on the particular section.

Years later, when my father visited the Rebbe for the first time in 5714*, the Rebbe reminded him of the encounter in Kharkov.

My grandfather, Reb Meir Gurkov, learnt in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch during the first years of its existence. He used to tell the following story, articulating as to why he is not worried about longevity. (*Baruch Hashem*, my grandfather lived to the

“The Frierdiker Rebbe performed a miracle, and they crossed the border without any issues.”

ripe age of ninety with no medical issues.)

After *tekias shofar* one year, the Rebbe Rashab walked through the courtyard to his house in order to change his clothing, which were soaked in sweat. Upon attempting to turn the doorknob, the Rebbe Rashab saw that the door was locked and nobody was in the house. Observing this, my grandfather hurried over to the house, climbed in through the window and opened the door for the Rebbe Rashab. In appreciation for his efforts, the Rebbe Rashab gave my grandfather a *bracha* for *arichus yamim*.

Mekushar From Afar

When I was growing up in Russia, although we lacked any pictures of the Frierdiker Rebbe (which were forbidden by law), he was very much at the forefront of our minds and hearts. Chassidim would learn the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Torah and speak of the Rebbe regularly. The first time I saw a picture of the Frierdiker Rebbe was after we left Russia.

With the outbreak of World War II, many Lubavitcher Chassidim, my

family included, fled to Samarkand and Tashkent. During the years of war, the KGB was not as active in these distant cities, and Yidden were able to maintain a semblance of Jewish life. With the conclusion of the war, the persecution against Yidden and Jewish life escalated.

In 5706* a gratifying opportunity arose. The Soviet Union had decided to turn a blind eye to Polish immigrants attempting to exit their borders. Since many Polish immigrants had died on Russian soil during the war, the Soviet government wished to raise the tally of Poles who had left the country.

For Chassidim this meant that with the forging of a Polish passport they could finally escape to a place of freedom. My parents obtained fake Polish papers for our family, and we started preparing to leave Russia. My father had already bought train tickets and the suitcases were all packed, when my father heard that the Frierdiker Rebbe instructed that Chassidim should not leave Russia. Upon hearing this, my father tore the travel documents, not wanting to face the temptation of leaving.

A little while later it was discovered that in the many steps of communication, the Frierdiker Rebbe’s message was distorted. The Frierdiker Rebbe

hadn't said that Chassidim should not leave Russia, rather that if leaving Russia meant settling in Poland, then it was not worthwhile. If it was possible however to settle elsewhere, we should certainly leave Russia.

By this time, Reb Leibel Mochkin, who was very active in the escape efforts, received worrisome news from his aid, a Jewish Communist. The man claimed to have been in the Kremlin and was informed that Stalin caught word of the escape plan that was brewing amongst Lubavitcher Chassidim. Thus he ordered that all Chassidim who attempted to leave the country be sent to Siberia.

Chassidim were now posed with an ever challenging dilemma, whether to continue with their plans with the hopes that the rumor was false, or to remain in Russia to avoid the risk of being sent to Siberia.

My father was of the opinion that the plans must continue and that we must escape Russia. "The rumor from the Kremlin may or may not be true," he said. "One thing is certain though, and that is that we cannot remain here." Taking this approach, our family along with many other Chassidim managed to escape Russia.

One such person who left Russia with Polish papers was Rebbetzin Chana. In 5707*, the Rebbe traveled to Paris where Rebbetzin Chana had arrived, and accompanied his mother from Paris to America.

I heard from Reb Bentzion Shemtov that when the Rebbe farbrenge in Paris during his visit, he spoke of the connection that the Frierdiker Rebbe has to the Chassidim in Russia, and shared the following story:

The Frierdiker Rebbe was once sitting in his room with his holy head resting on his arms. When the doctors noticed this, they attempted to attract the Frierdiker Rebbe's attention. Not receiving a response, the doctors



REB SHOLOM BER (CENTER) AS A CHILD IN RUSSIA, CIRCA 5701.

rushed to notify the Rebbe of the situation. The Rebbe entered the Frierdiker Rebbe's room, and upon emerging he reassured the doctors that everything was alright.

When the Rebbe entered the Frierdiker Rebbe's room again later, he saw the Frierdiker Rebbe saying the words of *Az Yashir*, after which he exclaimed: "They passed."

The Rebbe explained that the Frierdiker Rebbe said *Az Yashir* three times, one for each of the trains of Chassidim that were leaving the Soviet Union. According to the natural order of things, the trains were not destined to make it out of Russia, and things were not set to end well. The Frierdiker Rebbe performed a miracle, and they crossed the border without any issues.

A New Era

Towards the end of 5707*, my family arrived in Paris where we stayed for approximately three years. During the summer of 5710*, following the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, Chassidim in Paris received a letter from the Rebbe encouraging them to raise funds for the Frierdiker Rebbe's



A PHOTO OF REB SHOLOM BER AROUND THE TIME OF HIS ESCAPE FROM THE SOVIET UNION IN 5707

causes. Although due to the financial state amongst most of the local *anash* money was scarce at the time, people gave whatever they had.

My grandfather, Reb Meir Gurkov, was responsible for collecting the funds from *anash* in our community to be sent to the Rebbe. There was one individual who was blessed with strong financial capabilities, and he pledged a certain amount for the cause. Hearing the amount that the fellow wished to donate, my grandfather told him that he needed to give a larger amount if he wished to be included in the list of donors.

* 5707-1947, 5710-1950

This individual wanted to be included in the list of donors, but did not want to give additional money. He therefore approached the collector of another community and attempted to give his donation there. The person responsible for the donations in that community told the Chossid that he should give the money to Reb Meir Gurkov. When he came back to my grandfather and indeed gave a larger sum, my grandfather said to him: “Do you know who the letter came from? It is from the one who is going to take us to greet Moshiach!”

The First Maamar

Towards the end of 5710*, my family relocated from Paris and settled in London. On the first days of Pesach in 5711*, an envelope from 770 arrived at our apartment. Enclosed in the envelope was the *maamar Basi Legani* which the Rebbe recited three months prior.

When my father saw the new *maamar*, he became overwhelmed with joy and began to dance with me and my brother.

The main floor of the building that we lived in housed the local *chassidische* shul. When people in shul heard that there were *hakafos* going on upstairs, they came and joined in the celebration.

On the following Shabbos, my grandfather came to visit, and my father showed him the *maamar*. Enthusiastically, my grandfather announced in shul that the first *maamar* from the Rebbe had arrived and he recited *Shehecheyanu*.

Many of the people that were present didn't understand what a *maamar* was, and they were confused by the extent of the celebration. They thought that a *maamar* was probably a few nice

“My grandfather said to him: “Do you know who the letter came from? The one who is going to take us to greet Moshiach!”

divrei Torah.

My grandfather told them: “I will explain to you what a *maamar* is. When the Mittlerer Rebbe began saying his first *maamar*, he started off by saying: ‘In order to be able to recite a *maamar*, there are three conditions. Firstly, one needs to feel as though he is walking on the street and children are throwing stones at him, so that he will speak with humility. Secondly, one must understand that none of the words are random, but rather each word is specifically aligned in accordance with Hashem's names. Thirdly, the one reciting the *maamar* needs to know the history of all of those listening to the *maamar*, from the day that they were born until today.’”

This was my grandfather's way of instilling in the minds and hearts of the people the spiritual weight that a *maamar* carries, and why receiving the Rebbe's first *maamar* calls for such immense joy.

Coming to the Rebbe

When we moved to London, I began learning in the Manchester

Yeshiva. Together with me in the Manchester Yeshiva were Avrohom and Yisroel Shemtov, and Berel Futerfas. Aside from us four, the rest of the *bochurim* were not Lubavitch.

After spending three years in Manchester, we decided that the time had come to travel to New York and learn near the Rebbe. Together we sat and penned a letter expressing our wish to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe gave instructions to the *hanhala* of the yeshiva to decide who should be allowed to come to New York. To my disappointment, they chose Avrohom Shemtov and Berel Futerfas, and I was to stay behind.

One year later, approaching the end of 5714*, I wrote to the Rebbe again asking for permission to come learn in New York in time for the year of 5715*. This time, I was *zoche* to receive a letter from the Rebbe telling me to contact the yeshiva in Montreal, and to ask if there was an appropriate class there for me. If I am accepted, I should attempt to attain US and Canadian visas, this way I could spend Tishrei in New York and then travel to Montreal.

Attaining proper visas was a difficult feat, and although I didn't manage

to arrange myself a visa I decided to fly to New York and worry about the next step once I was there. One of the requirements in order to enter the US was to show a return ticket. This too I did not have as I lacked the funds to purchase more than just a one way ticket. Miraculously, I was not given any trouble upon my arrival.

Exiting the terminal, I was surprised by my brother Moshe and my friends Avrohom Shemtov and Berel Futerfas who came to greet me. My brother told me that a few days earlier the Rebbe asked him if he knew that I was coming, and told him to greet me at the airport.

Before leaving for New York, I told the *bochurim* at the Manchester Yeshiva that those who would like could write a letter that I would submit to the Rebbe for them. Thirty *bochurim* indeed gave me personal letters that they wrote, along with coins for *demei pa"n*.

During my first *yechidus* with the Rebbe, I gave the Rebbe the stack of letters that I had brought. The Rebbe put the letters of the *bochurim* that I brought on top of mine, and set the coins aside.

The Rebbe then asked if the letters were from the *bochurim* in my class, or from the entire yeshiva. I responded from the entire yeshiva. The Rebbe looked through the letters, and said that I should write to them that when one asks for a *bracha* they ought to learn the Torah of the one giving the *bracha*. Therefore they should learn Tanya.

One of the *bochurim* who sent a letter was the son of the *rosh yeshiva*. His name was Pesach. In order to differentiate between him and his cousin who shared the same name, he was nicknamed amongst the *bochurim* "Pesach the Rosh Yeshiva's." When the Rebbe looked at his letter, the Rebbe asked: "This is Pesach the Rosh

Yeshiva's?"

Eventually, many of these thirty *bochurim* who sent letters to the Rebbe, became full fledged Lubavitcher Chassidim.

Precious Moments

During the month of Tishrei, I was *zoche* to be in the Rebbe's presence for the first time in my life. I was finally able to observe the Rebbe with my own eyes. Every moment with the Rebbe was awe-inspiring and precious.

In those years, on Simchas Torah after the main *hakafos* in the *shalash*, the Rebbe would go to the Friediker Rebbe's apartment for *seudas Yom Tov*. Afterwards, he would come to the *zal* and join another round of *hakafos*.

When the Rebbe came to the *zal* that year, he was given the Torah and he danced half a circuit. Afterwards, the Rebbe stood up on a chair, took out a bottle of *mashke* and said that he will distribute it to those who take upon themselves additional learning of Chassidus.

There were two *bochurim* who were standing behind the door to the *zal*. One of them said to the other: "Well,

I learn Tanya everyday." Although it wasn't physically possible for someone that was in the *zal* to hear what they had said, the Rebbe announced right then: "I am not referring to learning the daily portion of Tanya. Those who want to say *l'chaim*, need to take upon themselves additional learning of Chassidus."

While distributing the *mashke*, the Rebbe started to sing *Veharikosi Lachem Bracha*. There were a few *bochurim* who went over to Reb Yoel afterwards and complained that they were looking forward to seeing the Rebbe dance as had happened in previous years. Reb Yoel told them: "You should feel lucky that you merited to see the Rebbe sing *Veharikosi Lachem Bracha*, as he bestows us with *bracha*."

One of the interesting memories I have from that year, was when the Rebbe spoke a *sicha* on Chol Hamoed Sukkos about the story of the *tzedoki* who poured the water of *nisuch hamayim* on his feet instead of into the jug.

The Rebbe shared an incredible explanation to this story. After the *farbrengen*, my uncle Reb Michoel Teitelbaum told me that right before the *sicha* someone said *l'chaim* to the Rebbe, but instead of drinking the wine, he poured it onto the floor.



REB SHOLOM BER GURKOV SITTING IN THE BOTTOM ROW, FAR RIGHT, DURING HIS YEARS IN THE MANCHESTER YESHIVA. AVROHOM SHEMTOV IS STANDING RIGHT ABOVE HIM, SLIGHTLY TO THE LEFT



CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS 5715.

Did He Arrive?

Towards the end of Tishrei, with my visa still not in order, I approached Rabbi Hodakov and told him that I don't know what to do about going to Montreal. I hoped that this would be a good enough reason for me to be able to stay in New York near the Rebbe. Rabbi Hodakov told me that I should go to Montreal with the *menahel* of the yeshiva, Rabbi Kramer.

Unfortunately, Rabbi Kramer was going to Montreal before Shabbos Bereishis which meant that I would miss the *farbrengen*, but sadly I had

no choice.

Before leaving for Montreal, I merited to have another *yechidus* with the Rebbe. In *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked if I remembered what was spoken (in the *sichos*) here. I responded that I remember a bit. The Rebbe said that I should repeat in other places the things that I heard.

When Rabbi Kramer and I reached the Canadian border, I told the patrol officer that I was going to go to the embassy to apply for a visa. Surprisingly, the officer said: "If you want you can stay." On that token I stayed in Montreal for several months without the necessary papers.

When Yud Shevat approached, I knew that the yeshiva was going to travel to the Rebbe, although I did not

have a visa allowing me to enter the US again. I sent a letter to the Rebbe expressing my wish to come to the Rebbe for Yud Shevat, and that I was in doubt as to how I would cross over the border.

Being the risk taker that I was, I decided to board the train to New York together with the yeshiva, hoping that somehow I wouldn't have an issue. Before the train even departed the station, the conductor realized that I did not have papers, and I was removed from the train.

When I came back to yeshiva, I was notified that the Rebbe received my letter and said: "*Zol ehr kumen*—he should come!" Adding, that I should travel together with others, and not alone.

The next day, I traveled together with a group of *anash*. Miraculously when we arrived at the border, the border patrol did not say a word to me. Half an hour after we arrived at 770, the Rebbe walked towards the entrance as I stood nearby with several other *bochurim*. Approaching the front door, the Rebbe pointed in

TESTED IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE

I was once being tested by Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet in the small *zal* in 770. During the test, I realized that the Rebbe was standing outside the *zal* and listening in. When the Rebbe saw that he was noticed, he continued walking to his room.

“Walking towards the door, the Rebbe pointed in the direction where I was standing, and asked: “Did he arrive?”

the direction where I was standing, and asked: “Did he arrive?”

The next time I wanted to visit the Rebbe was for Yud-Beis Tammuz. I wrote another letter to the Rebbe, but this time Rabbi Hodakov called and relayed to me that the Rebbe said: “Too many *kuntzen* (tricks).”

Ahead of Tishrei the following year, 5716*, I once again merited to travel to the Rebbe.

On Simchas Torah night that year, when the Rebbe taught the *niggun* of Darkecha Elokeinu, Reb Shmuel Grossman from London said that he knew another part of the *niggun*. When he sang it, the Rebbe said that it has no connection to this *niggun*.

Before my birthday, which is on Yud-Aleph Nissan, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe. Included in what I wrote was that I wished to travel to the Rebbe for Pesach, but I still did not have the necessary papers. In response, the Rebbe wrote to me: “Hashem should fulfill the wishes of your heart for the good.”

Indeed, a few days before Pesach, I received a visa and the other papers that I needed, and after *bedikas chametz* I traveled to New York.

Before I departed to New York,

a few of the Chassidim in Montreal asked me to request matzos from the Rebbe for them and to send it to them by mail, with the hope that it would reach them in time for the second *sefer*.

On Erev Pesach I stood online as the Rebbe distributed matzos. When my turn arrived, the Rebbe said: “Did you receive the papers without any issues?” Here again the Rebbe indicated to me clearly that I was being looked after.

I then related to the Rebbe the request of the *anash* in Montreal. The Rebbe began giving me matzos for each person that asked, and I

attempted to keep them separated between my fingers so as to remember which matzah was for whom. The Rebbe told me that it doesn't matter who will receive which matzah, as long as everyone receives it.

When the Rebbe Smiled at Me

From when the Rebbe arrived in America in 5701*, until 5727* when a pond was built behind the library, the Rebbe would walk to the botanical gardens on the first day of Rosh Hashanah together with a procession of Chassidim to recite Tashlich.

In 5717*, it was pouring rain on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, to the point that the streets were practically empty from any pedestrians.

The Rebbe came out at the scheduled time with his *siddur* under his coat so that it shouldn't get wet, and the procession went on despite the downpour.

When we reached the entrance to the park, the gate was locked. Most likely, the custodian figured that



THE POND IN THE BROOKLYN BOTANICAL GARDENS WHERE THE REBBE RECITED TASHLICH

nobody would be coming due to the severe weather and decided to lock the gate early and head home.

The Rebbe handed his *siddur* to Reb Yisroel Duchman, and promptly climbed over the fence. All of the Chassidim followed suit and climbed over, young and old alike.

Upon returning to 770, we began to dance. Although the rain hadn't slowed down, we were already soaked to the point that the continuous rain couldn't make things any worse.

Within a few minutes, we saw that the Rebbe had opened the window of his room and was motioning that we should come inside to 770.

At first we thought that the Rebbe wanted us to dance inside, but once we came inside we heard that the Rebbe wanted to distribute *l'chaim*.

The Rebbe came out of his room and told us that the Alter Rebbe once distributed wine before *hakafos* and said that it should be given to the sick and barren to drink from. Miraculously, all of the recipients were healed.

The Rebbe continued and said that he would distribute something physical (wine) to everyone so that nobody should become sick (from the rain). Because it was nearing *shkiah*, the Rebbe announced that he would say *l'chaim* once to everyone. The Rebbe also said that those who didn't manage to receive wine before *shkiah*, it will be as though they had received.

Standing up on a bench, the Rebbe began distributing wine to each person. I hadn't heard the Rebbe say that he would say *l'chaim* once for everyone, so when my turn came I said *l'chaim* to the Rebbe. When the Rebbe didn't respond, I repeated myself again. The Rebbe said: "I said one general *l'chaim* for everyone."

During the distribution, someone came by with dry clothing and the Rebbe did not give him wine. There was another person who made his

clothing wet but he hadn't been at Tashlich. The Rebbe said to him: "מים תחתונים בוכים אנו בעינין למהווי קמיה—מלכא—The lower waters cry [and say] we want to be before the king [i.e. to be used for holy things]." The Rebbe did not give this person wine either.

When Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein came by, the Rebbe felt his hat which was dry. Reb Moshe explained that he had been at Tashlich, but he had managed to go home and change his hat, and the Rebbe gave him wine.

After this event, not only did nobody that went to Tashlich become sick, some of the older Chassidim who had previously been unwell became healthy too.

A few weeks later, when the Rebbe was entering the shul for *hakafos* on Simchas Torah, there was a bench sticking out into the pathway that was cleared for the Rebbe. One of the people near me tried to move the bench out of the way. I told him that moving the bench will cause people to fall and create a tumult. Instead the Rebbe can jump over the bench (as we had seen on Rosh Hashanah). And so it was, when the Rebbe came to the bench

he looked at me and smiled and then jumped over it swiftly.

Behind Closed Doors

I merited the distinct privilege of being present during several Yom Tov meals that the Rebbe had in the Frierdiker Rebbe's residence.

On one such occasion, a dish of peach compote was brought out. The Rebbe did not take any of it, but he did cut it into several pieces so that others would feel comfortable taking some. After the Rebbe left, we realized that he had cut the fruit into the exact same number of pieces as the amount of people that were there.

On another occasion, I wasn't present, but I heard later from Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik that the Rebbe gave out *shirayim*. This was an exception, as it was not the Rebbe's typical conduct.

During one meal on Shavuot, I believe, there were five of us *bochurim*

A HEALING GAZE

I believe it was in 5748*, when I brought my five-year-old twins to the Rebbe for Simchas Torah. On Erev Yom Tov while I was bathing them, I used an alternative substance to wash them instead of soap. Suddenly the boys began to scream and their eyes became red. I quickly washed their eyes with an abundance of water, and brought them to Dr. Zaklos to have them checked out.

Dr. Zaklos told me that I had done the right thing by washing their eyes out as much as possible, but there was still some left. He continued and told me that I should bring them to the 770 so that the Rebbe would look into their eyes.

I brought the twins with me to 770, and waited at the entrance for the Rebbe to come. When the Rebbe arrived, he looked deeply into the children's eyes, and the redness was completely cleared from their eyes. When I brought them back to the doctor, he said that no damage remained.

standing behind the door to the dining room, and the Rebbe turned around and said *l'chaim* to each of us.

During one of the meals on Pesach in 5721*, the Rebbe asked Reb Zelig Slonim to share something that he had heard or seen from the Rebbe Rashab. Reb Zelig shared that regarding the *possuk* “במקום אשר ישחטו את העלה ישחטו” “את האשם” (in the place where they slaughter the *olah*, there they should slaughter the *asham*), Rashi explains that the *possuk* speaks in plural terms (ישחטו—**they** should slaughter) since the *korban asham* is brought by the whole community. The Rebbe Rashab expressed that if he weren’t afraid, he would erase this Rashi since a *korban asham* can only be brought personally; not by a community.²

Hearing this, the Rebbe said: “אזוי?—האט ער גאזאגט?—Is that what he said? The *mefarshim* discuss this at length.”

Later when the soup was served, before tasting the first spoonful the Rebbe again repeated: “Is that what he said?”

Chosson Mohl

In 5721* the Rebbe instructed Reb Volf Greenglass to guide me to a particular *shidduch*, and we soon became engaged. The wedding took place in Montreal on the 9th of Sivan.

The custom was that the *chosson* davens *Mincha* from the Rebbe’s *siddur* on the day of, or before, his wedding. On Isru Chag Shavuos, the day before the wedding, I had *yechidus* with the Rebbe. In my note, I wrote that I would be okay with using the *siddur* the following afternoon (a few hours before the wedding), and then I would go straight to Montreal.

The Rebbe told me: “It is not appropriate for a *chosson* to arrive straight to the *chupah*.” He added that



I should travel by train and that I should *farbrenge* during the journey, as a *chosson mohl*. When I asked what a *chosson mohl* is, the Rebbe said that I should ask people what it is.

Regarding the *siddur*, the Rebbe said that he would come out early for *Maariv* that night and give me the *siddur*. Ordinarily, on nights of *yechidus* the Rebbe would daven *Maariv* close to midnight. This time however, the Rebbe made an exception, davening earlier and giving me the *siddur*, and then continuing *yechidus*.

During the *yechidus*, I asked whether I was to say *al chet*, as *tachanun* is not recited during the *yemei hatashlumin* after Shavuos, through 12 Sivan. The Rebbe said I should ask a *rav*, and most likely the *rav* will allow it.

As a *bochur*, I was weak and fasting was difficult for me. I wrote to the Rebbe that it will be difficult for me to say the *maamar* at the *kabbalas panim* if I will be fasting. The Rebbe said, if so you can say half of the *maamar*.

When I had the *chutzpah* to say that we generally don’t stop in the middle of a *maamar*, the Rebbe said: “We are coming now from *matan Torah*. With the strength of the Torah, you will be able to say the *maamar* in its entirety.”

Many guests attended the *kabbalas panim*, and I recited the entire *maamar*. Not only did I not feel weak, but I said it loudly and everybody was able to hear it well.

After our wedding, I began teaching children in Montreal. At one point I asked the Rebbe if I should learn to be a *shochet* like my father was, and the Rebbe replied, “There is good fruit from your labor [i.e. the children are educated well under your tutelage], as you yourself see. You should therefore continue on this path...” **T**

1. Much of the information in this article is culled from an interview by Rabbi Sholom Maggidman in Kfar Chabad magazine, issues #1994-5.

2. It should be noted that in earlier versions and manuscripts of Rashi, this entire comment indeed does not appear.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת חי' שצערקא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר



Detailed Curriculum

Written By: Rabbi Mendel Jacobs



THE REBBE IN 5704*

Presented here is a unique and historic document, revealing some of the earliest educational endeavors of Lubavitch in the United States.

In the Mission Statement of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch that appeared in *Hayom Yom*, published in 5703*, one of the activities of the organization is "Producing curricula for educational institutions."

The Friediker Rebbe refers to a curriculum in a letter to Reb Zalman Gurary, "...I sent to the administration a) a curriculum for the Chadrei Torah Schools and Achei Temimim Yeshivos, spanning an eight-year period. You will certainly find this beneficial..."¹

In a letter dated 18 Mar-Cheshvan 5704*, the Rebbe mentions that "regarding the school curriculum, I hope it will be published in the near future and I will send you a copy, as requested..."²

The curriculum included two tracks, one for boys and one for girls, and spans from the 1st grade through the 8th.

Below are a few sample pages of the curriculum.³

Curriculum Contents

Curriculum for boys' schools

Hours of study	3	Chumash	9
Tefillah, Halachos, and Talks	3 to 7	Nach	9
Lashon Hakodesh	8	Gemara	9
Yiddish	8	Jewish History	9

Curriculum for girls' schools

Hours of study of Hebrew subjects in parochial schools • 10	Chumash (in afternoon schools)	16	
Hours of study in afternoon schools	Nach (in parochial schools)	17	
Meaning of Tefillah, Halachos, and Talks	Nach (in afternoon schools)	18	
Lashon Hakodesh	15 to 16	Midrash	18
Yiddish	16	Jewish History	18
Chumash (in parochial schools)	17	Music	12

Curriculum for boys' schools

Amount of Hours of Study per Week¹

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Age	6-8	7-9	8-10	9-11	10-12	11-13	12-14	13-15
1. Tefillah ²	19	5	5					
2. Meaning of Tefillah				1	1	2	2	2
3. Halachos and (Ethical) Talks		1	1	1	1			
4. Lashon Hakodesh (reading, writing, speaking)		3	3	3	2	2	2	1
5. Yiddish				1			1	
6. Chumash		10	10	10	7	3	2	3
7. Nach				3	3	3	3	2
8. Gemara					4	8	9	10
9. Jewish History				1	1	1	1	1
10. Torah Reading with Trup			1	1	1	1	1	1
11. Music and song	1	1						
	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

NOTES:

(1) Each study-hour consists of 45 minutes.

(2) From the 4th grade and on, a separate time should be dedicated for davening, either before or after study, depending on the time of day (i.e. if the studying takes place in the morning, they should daven Shacharis before their studies. If it is afternoon they should daven before or after their studies, Mincha or Maariv [depending on the time of day]).

תכנית לימודים

- א. לסוסרות מנוך לנערים
- ב. לסוסרות מנוך לנערות

מסנת הלמודים הראשונה ער טנת הלמודים השנייה

נערכה ע"י

המרכז לענייני מנוך

סוז אימפרין סוקולין, ברוקלין, נ.י.



טנת הטנת אלפים טנת סאוח וארבע לנר

טעות הלמוד בטבוע (1)

טנת הלמודים	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח
וגיל התלמידים	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
טנים	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1. תפלה (2)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2. באור תפלה	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3. דינים ושיחות (מוסריות)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4. לשון הקדש (קריאה כתיבה דבור)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5. אידיש	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
6. תומט	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7. ני"ך	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
8. גמרא	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
9. דברי ימי ישראל	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
10. קריאה בטעמים	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11. זמירות וניגונים	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

הערות : (1) טעה הלמוד 45 רועים.

(2) החל מסנת הלמודים הרביעיה קובעים לתפלה זמן מיוחד לפני הלמודים או אחר הלמודים, בהתאם לתפלה המתאימה לזמן הלמוד (אם הלמודים בבקר מחפלייח לפני הלמודים תפלה שחרית, ואם אחרצ - מחפליים לפני הלמודים או אחריהם תפלה מנחה או ערבית).

תוכן

א) תכנית למודים לסוסרות מנוך לנערים

- 1. טעות הלמודים
- 2. תפלה, דינים ושיחות
- 3. לשון הקדש
- 4. אידיש
- 5. תומט
- 6. ני"ך
- 7. גמרא
- 8. דברי ימי ישראל

ב) תכנית למודים לבתי ספר לנערות

- 1. טעות הלמודים ללמודי קדש במאראקיל סקול
- 2. טעות הלמודים בבתי הספר סאחר הצהריים
- 3. באור תפלה, דינים ושיחות
- 4. לשון הקדש
- 5. אידיש
- 6. תומט (במאראקיל סקול)
- 7. תומט (בבתי-הספר סאחר הצהריים)
- 8. ני"ך (במאראקיל סקול)
- 9. ני"ך (בבתי-הספר סאחר הצהריים)
- 10. אנדה
- 11. דברי ימי ישראל
- 12. זמרה



THE ART


By: RABBI LEVIK GOURARIE

לזכות הרה"ת ר' אברהם צמח הלוי שיחי'
רוזנפלד

בקשר עם יום הולדתו ב' מנחם-אב
הקב"ה יצליחו ללכת מחיל אל חיל בכל הענינים
ביחד עם זוגתו וכל צאצאיו שיחיו

נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

ZAI



In just two extraordinary years, the Arizal (HaEloki, Rabbeinu Yitzchok Zichrono Livracha [Luria]) altered the course of Jewish history, essentially unlocking and revealing the secrets of *pnimiyus haTorah* [the inner part of Torah] for the coming generations.

From his assuming leadership of the *mekubalim* in the summer of 5330*, succeeding the Ramak (Rab-

benu Moshe Cordovero) after his passing—only a few months after the Arizal returned to Eretz Yisroel—through his passing in the summer of 5332*, the Arizal flicked the switch of *pnimiyus haTorah*. He crafted Torah and Yiddishkeit in its image, with his influence seen and preserved not only in his Torah, but in *hanhagos*, *minhagim*, *nusach*, *zemiros*, and more.

More than a century would pass before the Baal Shem Tov and the masters of Chassidus would take the revelation of the secrets of the Torah to the next level. Continued by Chassidus Chabad through the years, and specifically in our generation, the floodgates of learning and understanding of the inner part of the Torah have been broken open for everyone. But at its core, it was the Arizal, with his statement, “*Mutar vemitzvah legalos zos hachochmah*—It is permitted and a mitzvah to reveal this wisdom (Kabbalah),” that changed the nature and direction of *pnimiyus haTorah*.

It wasn't just the sheer proportion of revelation of Kabbalah that the Arizal is known for, it is also the new adaptation of Kabbalah that he spread that beckoned in the new age of Kabbalah and the world of *sod* [the secrets of Torah]. While much ink has been spilled explaining the different schools of Kabbalah, complete with arguments, disagreements, and differences of perspective, the Rebbe explained that

the Kabbalah of the Arizal includes and encompasses all the previous Kabbalah in it. In reality, everything is explained through the Arizal's Kabbalah, including Kabbalas HaRamak, which is often cited as an opposing view in many areas.¹

As with many of the *gedolei Yisroel*, especially those who pioneered and set into motion new processes and developments in the Jewish world, the Arizal's impact is not only seen in his Torah or through his students throughout the ages; rather it is also evident in his life story and his holy conduct in each aspect of life.

In connection with the Arizal's *yom hilula* on Hei Av 5332*, we will take a quick dive into the life and times of the Arizal through the lens of the Rebbe's Torah.

LIFE OF THE ARIZAL

The Arizal was born in Yerushalayim to his father Rav Shlomo, son of the prestigious Lurya family from Ashkenaz, and his Sephardic mother, in the year 5294*.

Following his father's passing, at the age of about eight, his mother uprooted their family and took them across the desert to Cairo, Egypt. There they were taken under the wing of her brother, the wealthy Rav Mordechai Francis, who cared for the family financially and ensured that the young Yitzchak had whatever he needed, allowing him to invest himself wholeheartedly in learning.

The Arizal's connection to his influential uncle only strengthened when he later married his daughter, at age fifteen.

During his early years in Egypt, the Arizal learned Torah from the great *rishonim* who lived in Egypt in that period, Rabbeinu Betzalel Ashkenazi, author of the “*Shitah Mekubetzes*,” and Rabbeinu Dovid ben Zimrah, the *Radvaz*. It was under their tutelage that he began to grow in his Torah study, both in the revealed parts of Torah and gradually, in its hidden secrets as well.

While there isn't much written about the Arizal's years in Egypt, what is known is that he was supported for the most part by his wealthy uncle and father-in-law. With the lack of financial burden, the Arizal was able to spend his days and nights

continuously climbing the rungs of Torah study. For years, he secluded himself and studied on his own in a small cottage on the Nile, at times venturing out to study away from home, returning only for Shabbosim.

Throughout these years, his study was often with *ruach hakodesh* and often accompanied by revelations from Eliyahu Hanavi.

It is interesting to note, that although the Arizal taught his Torah in Eretz Yisroel, his personal study and mastering of Kabbalah took place outside Eretz Yisroel, in Egypt. The Rebbe explained that after the times of the Mishnah, Torah is based in *chutz la'aretz*; even the Arizal, whose Torah seems to be from Eretz Yisroel, actually acquired his knowledge in *chutz la'aretz*.²

While the Arizal spent most of his life in Egypt, where his mastering of Kabbalah really took place, his role and impact as teacher of Kabbalah only essentially begins when he leaves Egypt and returns to Eretz Yisroel in the year 5330*.

Sometime in the first half of the year 5330*, the Arizal arrived in Tzfas, where he soon after joined the group of *mekubalim* led by the Ramak, which had previously been led by Rav Shlomo Alkabetz. Among this group of *mekubalim*, the Arizal also met his prize student, who would be entrusted with transcribing and transmitting all of his Torah, Rav Chaim Vital.

Tzfas in that period sported one of the most impressive line-ups of Jewish giants at one time in one place; including Rav Yosef Karo, the *mechaber* of the Shulchan Aruch, and Rabbeinu Moshe Alsheich. While they were primarily focused on different elements of the Torah, they encountered and interacted with each other and had much respect for one another.

That summer, after the Ramak's passing, the Arizal took his place as the leader of the *mekubalim* and for the subsequent two unforgettable years went on to teach them the secrets of the Torah through his unique lens.

The Arizal's time as teacher and leader was unfortunately short-lived. Only two years after the Ramak's passing, the Arizal himself returned his soul to his Creator, on Hei Menachem-Av 5332*, amidst a plague that swept through the city of Tzfas.

It may have been a mere two years, but the immense impact the Arizal had on the Jewish world during that short period is astounding.

THE ARIZAL'S LIMUD HATORAH

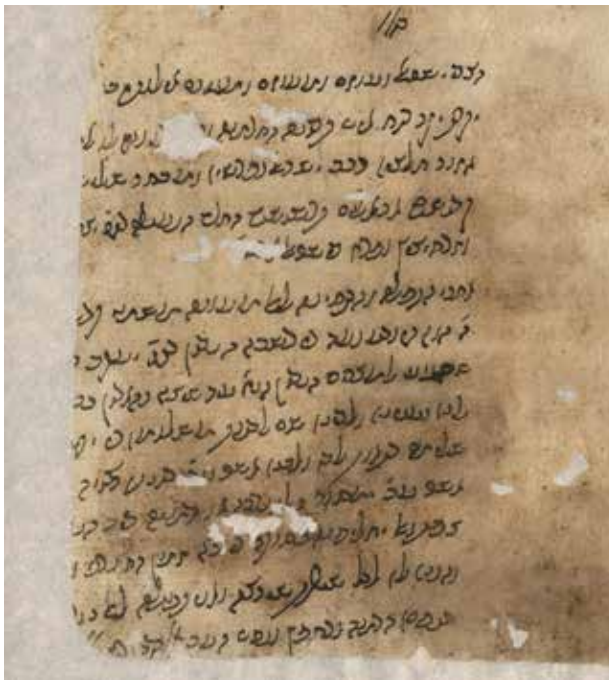
The lion's share of our knowledge about the Arizal is from his closest disciple, the great Rabbeinu Chaim Vital, who was charged by the Arizal with the writing of his Torah.

Those writings are primarily the Arizal's teachings, but here and there, sprinkled throughout the books, known as *Kisvei HaArizal*, are little glimpses into the life and character of his great and holy teacher.

The Rebbe spoke several times about the Arizal's greatness in learning, not only his *ge'onus*,³ but also the immense level of toil he exerted in his study, both in the learning of *nigleh* and Kabbalah.


The Arizal was an unbelievable giant in the revealed parts of the Torah. While there isn't much found of his writings in *nigleh*, from his correspondence with Torah scholars, and the responsa he wrote on concepts in *halacha*, the great proficiency he had in this field is evident. The Rebbe also pointed out the learning schedule that he prescribed in his writings, splitting the day, allotting a large portion to the study of *nigleh*.⁴

Rav Chaim Vital—one of the greatest masters of Torah in his time, as attested to by the *semicha* he received under the auspices of the revived *semicha* initiative of Mahari Bei Rav—describes in his writings, the greatness of the Arizal in *nigleh*. The Rebbe brings this fact as additional proof of the



THIS RECENTLY DISCOVERED LETTER, NOW PRESERVED AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ISRAEL, WAS ADDRESSED TO THE ARIZAL, THEN LIVING IN CAIRO, REQUESTING THAT HE SUPPORT THE FUNDRAISING FOR A CAUSE IN TZFAS

* 5330-1570, 5332-1572



Arizal's mastery of *nigleh*.

Following this understanding, the Rebbe teaches that nothing from the Arizal's vast world of Kabbalah stands in contradiction with anything in *nigleh*.⁵

But more than the Arizal's knowledge and expertise in Torah, the Rebbe emphasized the Arizal's labor in Torah and his ceaseless toil to get to the bottom of what he was studying and arrive at the correct conclusion. While the Arizal was unburdened with financial worry due to the gracious backing he received from his family, and had all the time and mind space in the world to learn comfortably, nevertheless, he still learned Torah with extreme toil and sweat.⁶

One description, quoted by the Rebbe many times, tells of the Arizal's unique style of learning. The Arizal would study every concept by exploring it six different ways in *halacha*, working so hard on the *pilpulim* that he would physically perspire. Following the *halacha* versions of the study, he would learn it a seventh way—according to Kabbalah—corresponding to Shabbos that comes after the six days of worldly toil.

The Rebbe explained that while the Arizal's ultimate purpose was to reveal the secrets of Kabbalah, he nonetheless spent time and exerted strenuous effort in the world of *halacha* in order to break the *kelipos* of questions and difficulties. He continued to work it all the way through, until he refined and developed the *halacha* properly, and only then would he explore the concept in the world of *sod* as well.⁷

Yet, while much of the Arizal's Torah knowledge came through toil and hard work, he also merited to be gifted many secrets and insights from above. The story is told, brought in many places in Chassidus, that during a nap one Shabbos afternoon, many wondrous *chidushim* and secrets of Kabbalah in the *parsha* of Balak and Bilaam were revealed to him, enough that would take him 80 years to share!

Chassidus explains that this was because he merited a level of comprehension of *re'iyah* — where he “saw” the Torah and grasped it on a whole other level.⁸

The Arizal's mind worked at a different pace than the rest of the world. In truth, his brain flow was too advanced even for his most gifted students. The Rebbe related that in addition to the fact that the Arizal had a difficult time putting his Torah down in

writing, it was a challenge for him verbally as well.

It was for this reason that he entrusted the task of writing his Torah to his students, specifically to one student, Rav Chaim Vital, because even in his speech, there were those who were not fully able to understand his meaning.

THE TEACHING OF THE ARIZAL

As mentioned earlier, in the summer of 5330*, the Arizal was appointed leader of the holy group of *mekubalim* in Tzfas. From this point on, he began teaching the secrets of Kabbalah following his novel and unique path, which would later be known as the Kabbalas HaAri.

His teaching was limited to a small and exclusive gathering of *talmidim* who were referred to as *Gurei HaAri* (“the cubs of the lion” — the Ar”i).

The Arizal split his students into four groups and gave them *shiurim* at different times. The *shiurim* would often begin based on one concept, exploring a quote from Zohar or the like, and as the *shiur* would go on, they would travel from topic to topic depending on the subject and the *talmidim*'s involvement.⁹

In addition to the *shiurim* that he gave, the Arizal would also assign certain *kavanos* and *yichudim* to specific students, giving specific guidance to each *mekubal* fitting to who they were and the level that they were on.¹⁰

While the Arizal shared never-before-revealed secrets of Torah and to a full class of *talmidim*, it was still a confined and controlled revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah* to a particular hand-picked few. So while he was the first to state that it is a mitzvah to reveal the secrets of Torah, at the point of his teaching, many of the previous generations' limitations were still in place.¹¹

In fact, students that were not fit or ready to hear certain secrets of the Torah, would fall asleep and miss the *shiurim* that discussed those concepts. The story is told that the famed *darshan* Rabbeinu Moshe Alshich who, as mentioned, also lived in Tzfas, once stayed on in the shul to hear a *shiur* from the Arizal.

However, he fell asleep and was not able to hear the *shiur*, because his *neshama* was meant for the world of *drush*, not Kabbalah.¹²

Even the *talmidim* that learned closely with the Arizal still needed to keep the Torah they learned to themselves, and were not allowed to share his Torah. This was to ensure both that it wouldn't be spread to people that it was not meant to be revealed to, and that they would transmit the Torah carefully and correctly. Rav Chaim Vital was the only one who was directed to transcribe the Torah of the Arizal, and even those *ksavim* were kept hidden for a long while before eventually being published.

Only later, with the revelation of Chassidus, would the work of the Arizal be completed, breaking down the walls around the inner part of Torah, revealing its secrets and its life to the entire world.¹³

THE ARIZAL IN VIEW OF JEWISH HISTORY

Understandably, the Arizal's mark on the Jewish world is unparalleled, both in terms of the Torah that he taught and in the scope of the various diverse communities that his Torah reached. He is hailed as the primary revealer of *pnimiyus haTorah*.

The Rebbe related that the Arizal's main purpose in life was to spread the secrets of the Torah. With his statement, "*Mitzvah legalos zos hachochmah*,"¹⁴ he essentially changed the tide of Jewish history, heralding a new era of Jewish life with an emphasis on revealing the veiled essence of everything. This began with uncovering the secrets of the Torah, and then eventually with the advent of Chassidus, revealing the soul of the entire world and everything in it.

In the first few generations, his Torah was spread quietly and to a select few, almost exclusively through the *ksavim* compiled by Rav Chaim Vital. But after a while, the Arizal's Torah slowly spread all across the entire

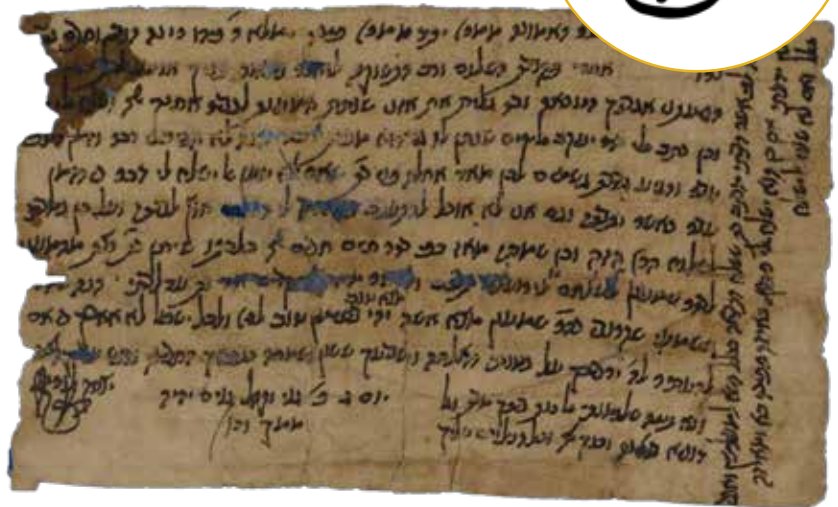
Jewish world, from Eastern Europe to Western Europe, in North Africa, and all throughout the Middle East, to both Sephardim and Ashkenazim and eventually also to Chassidim and *misnagdim*.

Even when fierce battles were waged against those learning and spreading Kabbalah, the Arizal always remained accepted by the entire Jewish people.¹⁵

The Rebbe referred to the Arizal as Moshiach ben Yosef,¹⁶ the redeemer that precedes the coming of Moshiach, tasked with preparing the world for Moshiach's imminent arrival. The Arizal accomplished this through disclosing and teaching the secrets of Kabbalah, readying the Jewish people for the coming of Moshiach.

And even though in the Arizal's times, his teachings were limited to his students and those around him, the ultimate goal of the Arizal's life-work was completed by the work of Chassidus Chabad, following through with the dissemination of *pnimiyus haTorah*.¹⁷

As the exceptional leader that he was, the Arizal's effect is timeless. He is often referred to as the *HaAri Hachai* (the living Ari), or even as the *Arizal Hachai*. The Rebbe explains that the terms *hachai* [the living] and *za"l* [of blessed memory] are not a contradiction, because his memory being a blessing doesn't mean that he is not alive and impactful. On the contrary, part of his lasting and ongoing impact is that his memory brings blessings.



A LETTER BEARING THE ARIZAL'S SIGNATURE (ON THE BOTTOM LEFT), DISCOVERED IN THE CAIRO GENIZAH AND HOUSED TODAY AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

The Rebbe also explained that the Arizal lives on in his Torah. And because today the Torah of the Arizal is meant to be spread, his Torah should be learned by everyone, including children.¹⁸

HANHAGOS AND NUSACH

While the Arizal's main contribution was teaching and revealing a whole new world of Kabbalah, his impact is felt, and in a way, even more seen, in a seemingly different area—in his *nusach* of davening and the many *minhagim* and practices that he followed or instituted. In fact, there are several customs of his that we follow, that many of us do not even know originated from the Arizal.

Additionally, there are the Shabbos *zemiros* that he composed: Azamer Bishvachin, Asader L'seudasa, and Bnei Heichala—the only *zemiros* included by the Alter Rebbe in his *siddur*, and consequently the only ones sung in Chabad, with the tune for Bnei Heichala even being composed by the Alter Rebbe himself.

In addition to carrying traditions from both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi homes of his parents, the Arizal primarily followed the way of Kabbalah. (This was, of course, without any contradiction to *halacha*, because essentially there cannot be inconsistency

between Kabbalah and *halacha*.) This fusion of *minhagim* can be seen in his *minhagim* and in his *nusach*. There are many versions of his *siddur* and *nusach* that came out through the ages, most importantly—the *nusach* of the Alter Rebbe, which is “*al pi*” [based] on the Arizal's *nusach*, though not his actual *siddur*.

Examples of customs and practices of the Arizal that have become part of our life include: Giving tzedakah before Shacharis (specifically by Vayevarech Dovid) and Mincha and not before Maariv,¹⁹ saying Hareini Mekabel before davening,²⁰ and wearing tzitzis under the clothes.²¹

Interestingly enough, the Rebbe notes that after the conclusion of *hakafos* in his shul on Shemini Atzeres, the Arizal would go to other shuls to continue celebrating *hakafos* with them.²²

In addition to these *minhagim*, there are several mitzvos that the Arizal was extra stringent with or careful about. The Rebbe mentioned these several times to emphasize their importance:

For one, the Arizal never haggled on the price of a mitzvah. No matter the cost, he would gladly pay the whole sum, not even browsing the market to find a better deal. At times he would give the sellers his pouch of money, telling them to take however much they want.²³ Similarly, when it came to tzedakah, the Arizal would just stick his hand into his pocket and give whatever money came out to the collector or the person in need.²⁴

Another practice of the Arizal that the Rebbe



THE MIKVEH WHERE THE ARIZAL WAS IMMERSSED BEFORE BURIAL, SOME 100 YARDS FROM HIS TZIYUN.

mentioned many times was that he would recite *tachanun* on behalf of the rest of the Jewish people. Even though he himself certainly did not sin and the *tachanun* definitely wasn't for him, nevertheless as a member of the Jewish community, the Arizal continued to recite *tachanun*.²⁵

LESSONS FROM THE ARIZAL

Throughout the years, the Rebbe quoted the Arizal, sharing many stories and anecdotes about his saintliness and his holy conduct, often bringing a lesson that we are meant to learn from the Arizal.

A commonly mentioned and explained lesson from the Arizal, denoting a special *midah* of his that the Rebbe viewed as central in his life and achievements, was the *midah* of *simcha*.

The Rebbe explained that all the phenomenal revelations and gifts (i.e. *ruach hakodesh*, *giluy Eliyahu*, and the opening of the gates of *chochma*) that the Arizal was blessed with, were in the merit of *simcha shel mitzvah*—the joy he displayed in doing a mitzvah.²⁶

The Rebbe also explained that even though the Arizal recognized the importance of fasting and penance, he was still a major champion of *simcha*. For this reason, the Alter Rebbe quotes Arizal in regard to *simcha* even though there were earlier sources.²⁷

Another lesson to be learned from the Arizal is his *yegiah* [toil] in Torah. The Rebbe taught a lesson from the Arizal's seemingly unnecessary toil in Torah, that everyone should invest themselves in the study of Torah in the way of *yegiah*, which ultimately leads to true clarity. The Rebbe added that

now, after the Arizal already cleared the way for this intense mode of learning, by himself studying until he physically perspired, made it a lot easier for us to follow.²⁸

At a children's rally, the Rebbe instructed the children to learn three overarching lessons from the life of the Arizal: The first, as mentioned previously, was *simcha*. The second lesson emphasized the relationship of *tefillah* and *ahavas Yisroel*, seen in the reciting of Hareini Mekabel before davening. The third lesson the Rebbe taught is *tzedakah*, the generosity the Arizal exhibited by not counting the money, just giving whatever was in his pocket to the person in need.²⁹

CONCLUSION

The Arizal stands out among the *gedolei Yisroel* of the generations as a figure who had a most profound impact on the Jewish world, with an emphasis on his unique message and impact, the teaching and revealing of the soul of Torah—Kabbalah; and by extension, igniting the soul of the world.

The Rebbe showed a special affinity to the Arizal, instructing people to visit his *kever* on his *yahrtzeit*³⁰ and often mentioning lessons and anecdotes from the Arizal at farbrengens, especially in the weeks surrounding his day of passing.

The Arizal is in many ways the closest predecessor to the Baal Shem Tov and the masters of Chassidus, building and reinforcing the bridge that connects the centuries of hidden *mekubalim* and undefined Kabbalah with the age of the dawn of Chassidus.

The Rebbe connected the Arizal's work and the work of Chassidus Chabad, showing how the latter is the culmination and the fruition of the Arizal's seed work. Through teaching and spreading the teachings of Chassidus and the inner part of Torah, we will accomplish his initial goal — the coming of Moshiach. **T**

1. Sichas Yud Shevat 5723

2. Sichas Chai Elul 5716, p. 198

3. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5718.

4. Sichas Yud-Beis Tammuz 5723.

5. Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach 5730.

6. Ibid.

7. Sichas Yud-Beis Tammuz 5723.

8. See for example Likkutei Torah, *maamar* Veheinif (Tzav).

9. Sefer Hachezyonos of Rabbi Chaim Vital, p. 210.

10. Shmona Shearim, 8:2.

11. Sicha Yud Tes Kislev 5722.

12. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Breishis 5721.

13. Sichas Vayeshev 5714.

14. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim 5735.

15. Sichas Purim 5736.

16. Sichas Shabbos Chanukah 5727.

17. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5739.

18. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim 5736.

19. Sichas Chai Elul 5734.

20. Sichas 4 Av 5740.

21. Likkutei Sichos, vol. 33, Shelach 3.

22. Sichas Parshas Tzav 5729.

23. Sichas Parshas Vayera 5725.

24. Sichas 4 Av 5740.

25. Sichos Purim 5717, Acharon Shel Pesach 5726, 20 Av 5741, Haazinu 5742.

26. Sichas Shabbos Parsahs Tavo 5713.

27. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Dvorim 5735.

28. Sicha 15 Av 5739.

29. See Sichas Erev Rosh Chodesh Av 5735

30. Sicha 4 Av 5740

Timely Titles

By: RABBI MENDY GOLDBERG

לע"נ
מרת צייטיל גיטל ע"ה ביסטאן
נלב"ע כ"ף מנחם אב'תשס"ט
ת'נ'צ'בה'

נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק זוזגתו מרת ביילא
רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו
ביסטאן

PELACH HARIMON



Yud-Alef Av marks the *yahrtzeit* of the iconic Chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher. Rav, *mekubal*, composer, and *mashpia* — these eminent titles represent only some of the numerous facets that comprise this illustrious personality. Among the various aspects of his character, one particular achievement that deserves special recognition is his invaluable contribution to the Chassidic canon, specifically the acclaimed works titled *Pelach Harimon*.



Much has been written about the legendary Chossid Reb Hillel Particher, and for good reason. As a quintessential Chabad Chossid of unparalleled spiritual stature, Reb Hillel embodied the archetype like no other.

Born Hillel HaLevi Molisov, he was swiftly recognized as an extraordinary child prodigy. From a young age, he demonstrated mastery of Shas, *poskim*, and select Kabbalistic works, and was known to pray fervently with the meditations of the Arizal. A bona fide scholarly genius, he went on to author numerous works of Chassidus¹ and innovative halachic responsa². Above all, Reb Hillel was a model “*oved*,” a self-made man and devoted servant; a relentless warrior in the everlasting pursuit of character refinement.

For this reason, Reb Hillel’s virtues truly shone in the sphere of education and mentorship. A rigorous master of discipline, he had meticulously cultivated himself and honed his body to be in perfect harmony with his soul, instinctively adhering to *halacha*. This quality of impeccable self-restraint made him an ideal choice for the Mittlerer Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek to entrust young *bochurim* for guidance, and indeed, he proved to be quite the consummate educator. With patience, warmth, and understanding, Reb Hillel endeared himself to his students, igniting within them a burning passion for Chassidus. As Reb Avrohom Dovid Lavut³ observed, the secret to Reb Hillel’s success was his genuine sincerity, for “words that emanate from the heart touch the hearts of others.”

Establishing himself in Paritch, he served as a *rav* there and in nearby Babroisk, leading a community and providing halachic guidance while simultaneously acting as a *mashpia*, teaching Chassidus to the masses. Following the Mittlerer Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek’s instruction, he periodically traveled throughout the province of Kherson as a wandering *rav* and *mashpia*. Consequently, his influence was renowned among both Chassidim and *misnagdim*, as documented in the early Chabad biography, *Beis Rebbi*:⁴ “Everyone approached his words with trepidation, as if they were fiery coals.”

Reb Hillel’s *hiskashrus* was so profound that he was referred to as “part Chossid, part Rebbe,” signifying the intertwining of his identity with the Rebbe; his essence partially subsumed within the Rebbe. To this end, the Rebbe noted in his diary, *Reshimas Hayoman*, that the Tzemach Tzedek even permitted Reb Hillel to dispense *brachos* and accept *panim*. This unique distinction sets his Chassidus apart from that of other Chassidim, and it is for this reason that we continue to study his Chassidic works to this day, primarily the revered series “Pelach Harimon.”



OVERVIEW



Pelach Harimon is a series of *sefarim* featuring Chassidic discourses (*drushim*) from the Tzemach Tzedek, presented in their original, unaltered form as heard and recorded by Reb Hillel. Within the text, Reb Hillel provides concise commentary and explanations, typically indicated by asterisks inside parentheses. Besides the Tzemach Tzedek's *drushim*, the series contains original *drushim* and innovative insights from Reb Hillel himself, predicated on either a *possuk* or a *maamar chazal* from Gemara, Midrash, or Zohar, drawing on Kabbalah and the Chassidus of earlier Rabbeim⁵. Interestingly, Reb Hillel's Chassidus style appears more grounded and pragmatic in comparison to the lofty, elevated tone of the Rabbeim's Chassidus (see sidebar — "Chassidus of Chassidim"). The *drushim* in Pelach Harimon are organized by *parshiyos* and thus the *sefarim* follow the traditional division of the Chumashim. In most volumes, the origin of each *drush* is specified, indicating whether it is a transcript from a discourse of the Tzemach Tzedek (*reshima*) or an original work by Reb Hillel (*drush atzmo*).

👉 **Hatza'as Hamotzi Lor:** In the first volume, the original publisher, Pinchas Molisov (a grandson of Reb Hillel), presents a foreword across a two-page spread. This foreword, written in the classic poetic style of *sefarim* introductions, serves to describe the *sefer* and emphasize its value, explain the publishing methods employed, clarify the meaning of the title, and outline future plans for the rest of the series. In a lengthy footnote, Pinchas offers a poetic paean to eulogize Reb Hillel, eloquently extolling his virtues and merits while encapsulating his life story in a heartfelt tribute.

👉 **Haskamos:** These letters of approbation from esteemed Chassidim of the era attest to the monumental value of this work. Some of the letters also endorse the publisher's integrity, exhorting readers to support him and contribute towards the publishing costs. The list features several prominent grandsons of the Tzemach Tzedek, including: Reb Mordechai of Vitebsk, son of the Rabash (Reb Baruch Sholom Schneerson) of Lubavitch; Reb Shlomo Zalman of Kapust and Reb Shmarya Noach of Babroisk, sons of the Maharil (Reb Yehudah Leib

Schneerson) of Kapust; Reb Yitzchak Dovber of Liadi and Reb Levi Yitzchak Guterman of Siratchin, son and son-in-law, respectively, of Reb Chaim Schneur Zalman Schneerson of Liadi; and the Raza and Reb Menachem Mendel, sons of the Rebbe Maharash⁶. Other notable figures include: Reb Avrohom Dovid Lavut, rav of Nikolayev; Reb Shmuel Ber Barisover; and the Rachmastrivka Rebbe, Reb Menachem Nachum Twersky of Nikolayev. Like the previously mentioned foreword, these letters of approbation appear only in the volume of Bereishis.

👉 **Roshei Perakim M'Toldos HaMechaber:** This basic biographical sketch, penned by the Rebbe, offers a glimpse into the life and legacy of the illustrious author, Reb Hillel Paritcher. In brief and succinct fashion, the biography efficiently captures the key moments in Reb Hillel's life, from his prodigious childhood to his early exposure to Chassidus and his subsequent embrace of the Chassidic lifestyle, culminating in his journey to Lubavitch to submit himself to the Mitteler Rebbe. The account continues by describing Reb Hillel's role

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2



3



1. FIRST IN THE SERIES OF PELACH HARIMON, PRINTED IN 5647.
2. HASKAMOS FOR THE SEFER, WRITTEN BY MEMBERS OF BEIS HARAV AND PROMINENT CHASSIDIM.
3. INTRODUCTION BY REB PINCHOS MOLISOV, GRANDSON OF REB HILLEL, WHO PUBLISHED THE MANUSCRIPTS.

as a *mashpia*, as appointed by the Mittlerer Rebbe and later the Tzemach Tzedek, and details the methods he employed to inspire his followers. It goes on to praise Reb Hillel's virtuous character, exemplifying his qualities as an *oved*, a *gaon*, and a meticulous *baal halacha*. The biography concludes with an account of Reb Hillel's passing, mentioning his family and providing a list of his *sefarim*, along with their publication dates.

👉 **Pelach Harimon—Bereishis (Chanukah):** This was the first *sefer* to be published, and it was only photocopied and reproduced for later printings, not yet revised and redone. As a result, it is set in Rashi script and lacks footnotes, indexes, and other features. In the Kehos edition, Reb Hillel's biography was appended to the photocopy, along with two responsa from Reb Hillel and two additional *maamarim* for this volume, including minor footnotes.

👉 **Pelach Harimon—Shemos (Megillas Esther):**

The second *sefer* in order of content, this was only published later, and therefore set in regular type. Published by Kehos, this volume includes Reb Hillel's biography, various indexes, and textual emendations.

👉 **Pelach Harimon—Vayikra (Pesach):** This recently published volume benefits from modern typesetting and helpful footnotes providing sources and cross-references. It does not include the author's biography but features facsimiles of some original handwritten *drushim*.

👉 **Pelach Harimon—Bamidbar (Shavuot):** The most recently published volume, featuring all of the modern enhancements, and a list of the various manuscripts that comprise the final edition.

👉 **Pelach Harimon—Shir Hashirim:** Another earlier print, this volume is also set in Rashi script and lacks the enhancements found in later editions.

BACKGROUND

In his capacity as a *mashpia*, Reb Hillel frequently shared the Tzemach Tzedek's *drushim* with his students. Given that most of his disciples were novices freshly embarking on their journey into the esoteric world of Chassidus, Reb Hillel often provided helpful commentary to elucidate the *maamarim* for these earnest beginners. It was these explanations that would form the basis for the bulk of his writings and personal notes that would later be released as "Pelach Harimon."

For many years following Reb Hillel's passing, his treasured manuscripts remained in the possession of his grandson, Pinchas Molisov. Born to Reb Hillel's only son, Reb Zalman, Pinchas was raised under Reb Hillel's care after his father's premature passing. Naturally, as the heir to Reb Hillel's possessions, the precious collection of his writings was entrusted to him after Reb Hillel's passing. After some time, a group of fellow *anash* and *rabbonim* cajoled Pinchas to release and publish these invaluable manuscripts. They passionately argued, "Why withhold this great treasure? Let the masses drink from its waters, as the contents of Reb Hillel's Chassidus will surely be appreciated by all. Both the great and the simple alike will quench their thirst, and surely this aligns with Reb Hillel's wishes!" Persuaded by their entreaties, Pinchas acquiesced and began the painstaking process of sorting, editing, and organizing the manuscripts for publication. Finally, in 5647*, the first volume of Pelach Harimon—Bereishis saw the light of day, a collaborative effort between Pinchas, Reb Hillel's grandson, and his uncle Reb Refoel Mordechai Schneerson, Reb Hillel's son-in-law.

Years went by, and the remaining manuscripts lay untouched. Although the initial plan was to eventually complete the series, 55 years had elapsed since Reb Hillel's passing, and only one volume of his teachings had been published. The future of the rest of the series appeared uncertain. Publishers of Chassidic works, Reb Chaim Meir Hillman (the author of *Beis Rebbi*) and Reb Chaim Eliezer Bichovsky, felt that this neglect was a great disgrace and a grave injustice to Reb Hillel's saintly memory. However, in the world of publishing, funding is paramount, and unfortunately, resources were scarce, their coffers running dry. Regrettably, there were no profits to be expected from this draining venture. On the contrary, when Reb Hillel's *Likkutei Biurim* was printed years prior, the original publishers did not recoup their investment. Moreover, after the first volume of Pelach Harimon was printed, the publishers had to lien 500 copies to the print house due to a 250 ruble debt, which remained unresolved. Unless a generous benefactor stepped in, Reb Hillel's mem-

ory would not be properly honored, and his writings would continue to languish in obscurity.

This predicament persisted until a benevolent Chaim Yosef Epstein generously donated 2000 rubles towards this cause, a sum large enough to finance all of Reb Hillel's works. Now, the only remaining task was to locate and gather various personal copies of Reb Hillel's writings to enable the publishers to properly edit the manuscript. However, people were reluctant to part with their personal copies, doubting the project would endure. Some refused to send their copies altogether, while others would only send them with strict stipulations. Meanwhile, as the publishers slowly collected these copies, another urgent matter arose: the Tzemach Tzedek's *Ohr Hatorah* was not being printed due to insufficient funds from *anash*. The decision was made to allocate some of the funding for Pelach Harimon to this cause, reasoning that Reb Hillel would have gladly sacrificed everything for the honor of his Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek.

Despite these setbacks, Hillman began working on Reb Hillel's *Shir HaShirim* manuscripts in 5673*. Instead of continuing in order with *Shemos*, they opted to work on this



REB HILLEL'S KEVER IN KHERSON.

later volume, as they had heard that Shemos was already organized and being prepared for publication elsewhere. However, after completing the first 92 pages of Pelach Harimon—Shir Hashirim, Hillman was forced to halt his work. Various difficulties caused delays over the next few years, but eventually Bichovsky completed the remainder, and in 5678*, Pelach Harimon—Shir Hashirim was printed in Poltava.

The manuscript of Shemos which was then rumored to be in progress, did not emerge until it was discovered many years later among the possessions of Bichovsky. It was sent to the Frieddiker Rebbe in America in 5706, who instructed Kehos to publish it, but unforeseen delays hindered the process. Several years later, in 5714, the Rebbe arranged for a reprint of the original volume of Pelach Harimon—Bereishis and included a biographical sketch of Reb Hillel, which he personally authored. Less than a year later, the volume of Pelach Harimon—Shemos was finally completed and published. In 5727, the Rebbe instructed Kehos to reprint the earlier volume, Pelach Harimon—Shir Hashirim.

In more recent years, Kehos has continued publishing additional volumes in the Pelach Harimon series, beginning with Pelach Harimon—Vayikra in 5762. This volume features valuable enhancements by Reb Alexander Zissel Piekarski, such as footnotes providing sources, cross-references, and comparisons to alternative *nuschaos*. Over the next few years, several supplemental booklets containing newly discovered

A Word On The Title

Pelach Harimon, which translates to “a pomegranate segment,” is also the numerical equivalent of “Hillel ben Meir Halevi.” This title was chosen by Reb Hillel’s son-in-law and grandson in order to perpetuate his memory. Additionally, the word ‘*pelach*’ in Aramaic means *avodah* (toil), and throughout Shas and Midrash, Torah and mitzvos are frequently likened to pomegranates. This allusion suggests that every Jew can find their path to spiritual service in Torah and mitzvos through this *sefer*.

drushim were released. Subsequently, Pelach Harimon—Maamarim L’Chodesh Tishrei, was published in 5775 by Kehos, featuring the same modern enhancements, this time by Rabbis Elie Matusof and Gavriel Schapiro. At present, the latest volume, Pelach Harimon—Bamidbar was just published in Iyar 5783, produced by Piekarski. Looking forward, the final volume of Devarim is currently under preparation by Matusof and Schapiro and will soon complete the series. ①

Chassidus of Chassidim:

Traditionally, Chassidim were often hesitant about studying Chassidus taught or written by other Chassidim. The reason for this lies in the understanding that Chassidus is not merely a mystical theology or philosophical doctrine, but rather, at its core, it is a revelation of the Divine. This level of revelation can only be conveyed by a Rebbe. A Chossid, no matter how great, cannot aspire to communicate G-dliness in the same way a Rebbe can.

A fitting analogy to illustrate this point is the difference between an expert artist and an amateur. When an ordinary person sketches a drawing of someone, the result is often a basic caricature of the subject, with each stroke or dot signifying a separate element. In contrast, an expert artist has the ability to bring the portrait to

life, creating a vivid, lifelike depiction instead of a mere representation of the subject.

Similarly, a Chossid is essentially a finite being and can never fully transcend the limitations of his intellect; thus, his grasp of the Divine will always be tainted by his mortal constraints so it follows that his teachings will reflect that. A Rebbe, on the other hand, has the ability to convey the very soul of Chassidus, directly transmitting the Divine through their teachings. This is why a Rebbe’s Chassidus is referred to as “*divrei Elokim chaim*” (literally, “words of the living G-d,”) for their words are truly alive.

This distinction is also evident in their respective styles: The Chassidus of a Chossid, despite its spiritual nature, is still largely governed by the principles of logic

akin to any academic discipline, necessitating a coherent structure and resolution of all raised queries. In contrast, the Chassidus of a Rebbe, being a pure communication of the Divine, is not subject to these laws. As a result, it might not be as neatly organized, with some questions occasionally left unanswered and ideas addressed out of order.

Nevertheless, Reb Hillel's Chassidus was indeed exceptional — relative to the Chassidus of other Chassidim — and therefore, it merited special recognition. In a *sicha*, the Frierdiker Rebbe once said, “When one reads — and I emphasize reads, not studies — the Chassidus of Reb Hillel, one can see how a soul delights in the sweetness of comprehension of the Divine.” While not on the same level as the Chassidus of Rabbeim, and it should be approached with that requisite understanding, we still see that it is recommended reading. Moreover, the Frierdiker Rebbe himself employed the term ‘learning’ in the context of Reb Hillel's Chassidus: In a letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe distinguished between the Chassidus of Chassidim and that of a Rebbe, stating, “The Chassidus of Chassidim is admittedly very grounded and presumably contains many deep insights — I say presumably, since apart from Reb Hillel's Likkutei Biurim⁷, I haven't learned any of it — whereas the Chassidus of a Rebbe consists of words given from above, and these words are something else entirely.”

Furthermore, it is said that the Chassidus of Chassidim typically assumes a certain form and is framed within a particular lens. For example, Reb Pesach

Malastovsker's Chassidus would always revert to the topic of *yesh me'ayin* (creation ex nihilo), and Reb Eizik Homiler's Chassidus would inevitably connect to *tohu* and *tikkun* (the worlds of chaos and order). However, Reb Hillel's Chassidus is strikingly unique in this regard, as it does not rigidly adhere to one specific theme. This is presumably due to the depth of Reb Hillel's *hiskashrus* (connection) to the Rebbe, himself being called “half a Rebbe” (see above in the introduction), which allowed him to sometimes grasp Chassidus from the perspective of a Rebbe.

Despite all of this, when Kehos began to work on Pelach Harimon, some Chassidim expressed reservations. In a letter, the Rebbe recounted how, when he first started handling the publishing of Pelach Harimon— Shemos, certain Chassidim vehemently protested the idea, arguing that they only needed the Chassidus of the Rabbeim. Upon relaying these concerns to the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe dismissed this misguided attitude entirely and instructed the Rebbe to proceed with the publication. When Reb Zalman Duchman posed a similar question to the Rebbe in a *yechidus*, the Rebbe responded that he published Reb Hillel's Chassidus upon the Frierdiker Rebbe's instruction.

Indeed, from all of the above, it is evident that our Rabbeim intended for us to make use of Reb Hillel's Chassidus. By studying his teachings, we can reap many benefits, most importantly the enhancement of our understanding and appreciation of the Rabbeim's Chassidus.

1. These works include: Pelach Harimon, Imrei Noam (a collection of maamarim on Rosh Hashanah, Purim, and Shvi'i shel Pesach), Likutei Biurim (a commentary on various *maamarim* of the Mittler Rebbe — Kuntres Hahispaalus, Shaar Hayichud, and Derech Chaim), and a *kuntres* titled Maamarei Hishtatchus.

2. Some of these were printed in the appendix of the Pelach Harimon— Bereishis, and additional responsa feature in the Yagdil Torah journal issues 4 and 9.

3. Rav of Nikolayev, and great-grandfather of the Rebbe. (For more about him, see Derher Adar 5783, “Timely Titles — Kav Noki.”)

4. For more about the sefer Beis Rabbi, see Derher Cheshvan 5783, “Timely Titles — Beis Rabbi.”

5. Notably, Pelach Harimon is a recognized source of original ideas from the Maggid of Mezritch.

6. The striking absence of the Rebbe Rashab's name is likely due to his travels for respite purposes.

7. In another *sicha*, the Frierdiker Rebbe relates that he studied this as a child upon the instruction of his father, the Rebbe Rashab. While the Rebbe Rashab himself studied Pelach Harimon and often referenced it in his *maamarim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe expressed personal reluctance to study it, as he explained in a letter, that he wished to preserve the clarity and purity of the Rabbeim's unadulterated teachings in his mind without interference from other Chassidus.

A LEAF FROM THE BOOK

PELACH HARIMON—VAYIKRA: EMOR
The Character of a Cry

To comprehend why the giving of the Torah is compared to the retention of the drop, we must first delve into the concept of “*Kayol ta'arog al afikei mayim*” [As a deer cries longingly for brooks of water].

Rashi explains that the expression “*ta'arog*” in *Lashon Hakodesh* characterizes the unique cry of a deer, akin to the growl of a lion, the bellow of a bull, or the snarl of a bear, and so on. Upon deeper reflection, we can discern the connection with the word in the context of “*arugas habosem*” [literally, “bed of spice,” the context is a *possuk* in Shir Hashirim, connoting a strong longing] and thus define “*ta'arog*” here as a primal cry of yearning, stemming from a sense of lack; for there are two types of cries:

פ ל ח א מ ר ה ר מ ו נ ר ס ה

רישומי דברים משיא אדמו'ר שליט"א יוס'א דחה"ש לענת ערב ברי"ת

וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת: מיום הביאכם את עומר התנופה כו'. הגה בזהר אמרו על פסוק זה וספרתם לכם לכם דייקאי כד"א וספרה לה שבעת ימים: לה לעצמה אוף הכא לכם לעצמכם כו'. ולהבין זה מה שהמשיל ענין ספה"ע ז' שבועות לספירת ז' ימים באשה לטהר עצמה כו'. הגה ידוע דביום חתונה זה מ"ת: שענין מ"ת נמשל לענין יחוד ח"כ שכמו ביחוד ח"כ הכלה קולטת הטיפה הנמשכת מפנימי' המוחין של החתן המשפיע בה כן במ"ת הקב"ה נק' חתן וכנ"י כלה' וענין המשכת השפע הוא הגילוי דאנכי' שהוא בחי' פנימי' עצמותו שלמעלה מבחי' הארה הנמשכת להחיות העולמות (-:שאותה הארה נק' בחי' אני כו' משאיכ' אנכי הוא בחי' פנימי' המשפיע ומהותו שנמשך ונקלט בנשיי' (-: זהו"ע נתינת התורה לישראל וכמו האשה כאשר נצרכת להתייחד צריכה לנקות אי"ע מדמי' ולספור שבעה נקיים כן הוצרכו נשיי' לספור שבע שבתות בכדי לנקות אי"ע מהפסולת שלהם כי מצרים הוא ערות הארץ' שהמשיכה עליהם טומאת נדה וכאשר יצאו ממצרים וניקו אי"ע מהפסולת (-:כדוגמת הפסק טהרה באשה (-: אז הוצרכו לספור שבע שבתות כי באשה שהיא פרטי' מספיק ז' ימים משאיכ' בכללות נשיי' הספירה הוא ז' שבועות תמימות דווקא, וזהו כד"א וספרה לה לעצמה היינו להנאתה בכדי שתוכל לקבל אח"כ שפע הטיפה כן בכללות נשיי' וספרתם לכם לעצמכם ולהנאתכם בכדי שתוכלו לקלוט בתוכם השפע דאנכי כניל וכמשי"ת וד"ל.

והנה להבין מתחלה מה שנמשל שפע התורה לקליטת הטיפה כו' יה"ק ענין כאיל תערוג על אפיקי מימי ופרשיי' שענין תערוג הוא בלה"ק מורה על צעקת האיל כמו שמורה נוהם על צעקת הארי וגועה על צעקת השור ושוקק על צעקת הדוב כו' וכאשר נשכיל בעומק יותר יש לחבר ל' תערוג עם ערוגת הבושמי כו', ויתפרש תערוג צעקה על העדר העונג כי יש ב' מיני צעקה הא' צעקה מן הכאב

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(1) וספרתם לכם: הנחת ר"ה מדרוש כ"ק
מאמר הציצ צנפס בביאוריו היא ע' שמכ [ושם
הפתיחה: פתח ריש ואמר כאיל תערוג]. הוא
דרוש כ"ק אדמ"ר הוקן (עם הוספת וכו') שגדפס
במאמרי אדה"ו תקס"ז בשני גוסחאות ע' קכג
(הנחת כ"ק אדה"א) וע' קכה (הנחת הר"מ בו
אדה"ו).</p> <p>ראה עוד ע"ד המאמר לקמן ברשימת הכתיי'.</p> <p>(2) וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת: אמור כג, טו.
(3) בזהר . . . וספרתם לכם לכם דייקאי: זהר
אמור צו, ב.</p> <p>(4) וספרה לה שבעת ימים: מצרוע טו, כח.
ראה גם כתובות עב, א ובתוס' שם.</p> | <p>(5) דביום חתונתו זה מ"ת: שה"ש ג, יא. תענין
כו, ב [במשנה].</p> <p>(6) הקב"ה נק' חתן וכנ"י כלה: וכל שה"ש
מיוסד ע"ז כידוע במדרשי רד"ל. ראה גם מאמרי
אדה"א נ"ך ע' רלא. ושיג. תרה וארא ח"א עה, ו
ובהערה 7.</p> <p>(7) דאנכי: יתרו כ, ב.</p> <p>(8) מצרים הוא ערות הארץ: מקץ מב, ט. יב
קה"ר פ"א, ד (בסופה). ע"ה שער ציור עולמות
שמי, פ"א.</p> <p>(9) כאיל תערוג על אפיקי מימי: תהלים מב, ב
ראה רש"י שם.</p> <p>(10) ל' תערוג עם עדונת הבושם: שה"ש ה, יג
פ"י מנחם ברשיי' תהלים שם.</p> |
|---|--|

A LEAF FROM THE BOOK

PELACH HARIMON—VAYIKRA: EMOR
The Character of a Cry

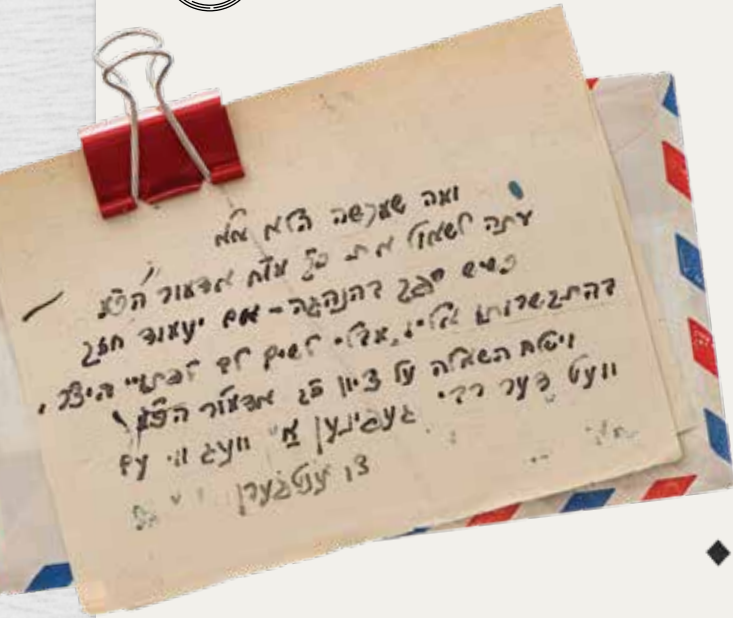
רסו פ ל ח א מ ר מן הרמון

ויסורין רחיל כו' והב' צעקה על העדר התענוג בלבד והיינו כאשר הי' מורגל באיזו עונג ועכשיו ניטל ממנו אז הוא צועק על העדרו וצעקה זאת נק' בשם תערוג כו' וגם כאן צעקת האיל הוא על אפיקי מים שהוא מקור מוצא מים והמים הוא מקור העונג (-כידוע דמים מצמיחים כל מיני תענוגים כו' א-) והצעקה הוא על הסתלקו מקור התענוגים כו'.

וביאור הענין יובן בהקדם המאמר דקוב"ה אתא לאשתעשע בגנתא דעדן ענ צדיקיי¹¹ והשעשוע הוא בלימוד התורה שלומדים אחר חצות והלימוד שלהם הוא מה שלמדו בעוה"ז דווקא כמאמר אשרי מי שבא לכאן¹² ותלמודו ביד שהוא תלמודו שלמד בעוה"ז דווקא כו', ולכאורה איך שייך שהקב"ה יקבל עונ מבחי' לימוד התורה שבעוה"ז דווקא, הנה אנו רואים למטה באדם כאשר ישכי שכל חדש תתמלא נפשו בתענוג מחמת ההשכלה שהשכל כו' (-והכוונה שאי תענוג זה שמתענג מהשכלת שכל דומה לתענוג שמתענג מדברים אחרים כמ מעשיית החסד וטוב או כאשר מתענג ממון וכבוד שאינו רק התעוררות גילוי עונ מצומצם בנפש ונק' עונג מורכב כו' משאי"כ מהשכלת שכל חדש יתעורר בנפם מקור העונג לבוא לידי גילוי בבחי' עונג פשוט עד שכללות הנפש מתמלא במילו אורה ושמחה כו', והיינו להיות כי מקור העונג ומקור השכל הכל אחד¹³ הוא כמש"ת א-, היינו מחמת שמקור השכל הוא בלחלוחית הרוחני שבמחו ושם הוא מקור העונג ג"כ לכן ע"י השכלת שכל חדש יתגלה מקור העונג בנפש. אך אי"כ למו אנו רואים חילוקים שונים בדיעות בנ"א בענין התענוג שמצד החכ' יש שמתענ משכל זה ולא יתענג משכל אחר ובחבירו יכול להיות להיפוך כמו עד"מ החכם אומ כל העונג שלו הוא כאשר מוציא שכל חדש במלאכת העשי' ולא יתענג מחכמו המדות, ויש שיתענג מחכמת המדות ולא יתענג מחכ' שבעשי', ויש שמתענג מבחי השכלות עמוקות שאינם שייכים לא לבחי' המדות ולא לבחי' העשי' כמו חכמו התכונה וחכ' דקדוק הלשון כו' וגם בזה יש חילוקים שונים יש שמתענג מחכ' ולא מחכ' אחרת ויש להיפוך וכמו עבני¹⁴ שכל עיקר העונג שלהם הוא בחכ האלקי דווקא שהוא חכ' התורה ולא מחכ' אחרת זולתה ולפי טעם הנ"ל הי' צרין שכל האנשים יתענגו מכל חכ' שיהי' כו'. אך הענין הוא שגילוי אור התענוג מוכרו להיות בבחי' איזה כלי כו' והכלי לגילוי העונג הוא היוקר וחשיבות דווקא (-כמו ג בגשמ' הממון אנו רואים שיש בני"א שאינם מקבלים תענוג ממנו רק שמחזירין אחריו בכדי למלאות הצטרותם ההכרחיות נמצא שאין עצם הממון יקר וחשו בעיניהם רק התועלת הנמשך ממנו, ויש בני"א שעצם הממון יקר וחשוב בעיניהם לכ מקבלים עונג ממנו בעצמו בלי שום תועלת נמשך ממנו כ"ה בענין החכ' יש מי שאי

The first is a cry borne out of pain or misfortune, while the second arises from the absence of something that is desired. This occurs when an individual becomes accustomed to a specific desire, and upon its removal, they cry for its absence. It is this cry that is referred to as "ta'arog." In this case, the deer's cry signifies a longing for brooks of water, which represent a source of water which, in turn, represents a source of pleasure [Reb Hillel adds: As it is known that water promotes the growth of all sorts of pleasurable things] and this cry laments the withdrawal of the source of all delights.

(1) דמים מצמיחים כל מיני תענוגים: תניא פ"א.
(2) דקוב"ה אתא לאשתעשע... עם צדיקיי...
ראה זה אחר (כאן סו, ב. לך עו, א.
(3) אשרי מי שבא לכאן: פסחים ג, א.
(4) מקור העונג ומקור השכל הכל אחד: ראה
גם לקמן מאמר ד"ה אם בחוקותי הא' על די הער'
95. ד"ה והתהלכתי תרטיני על די הערה 248. תר'
יתרו ח"ב רסו, ג. ושי"ג.
(5) עבני: א: עמינו ב"י.



לזכות
 השליח החייל בצבאות ה'
מנחם מענדל שיחי'
 לרגל יום הולדתו י"ד מנחם אב

נדפס ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 טייכטל

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

“You Were Also Blessed”



AS TOLD BY
RABBI MENDEL PEVZNER
 (RECHASIM, ERETZ YISROEL)

Rechasim is a town in Northern Eretz Yisroel mainly populated by frum Jews and is called “ממלכת התורה בצפון—The Torah Kingdom of the North.” We moved here on shlichus in Elul 5771* and our main focus is encouraging the locals to learn Chassidus.

Over time I became friendly with a certain fellow who I will call Dovid¹ despite the fact that he had a negative perspective on Lubavitch. We would meet from time to time in shul or on the street and have friendly conversations but he never accepted my invitations to learn Chassidus.

Dovid and his wife were married for eight years but sadly not blessed with children. They tried everything and

were disappointed with the results.

Every month the shluchim in Eretz Yisroel raffle off a trip to the Rebbe and for Menachem Av 5779 I won the raffle to represent the participating shluchim that month. I booked a flight for Thursday evening to spend Shabbos Mevarchim Elul at the Ohel.

Several days before my departure I met Dovid and offered to mention him and his wife at the Ohel for a *bracha* to have children. He eagerly provided me with the relevant information and thanked me for thinking about him. “At this point I am ready to try anything,” he said.

During the month of Teves I met Dovid and he asked



me if I remembered the exact day I was at the Ohel during my last trip. When he heard that it was Erev Shabbos Mevarchim Elul, he nodded and said, “*Baruch Hashem* we are expecting our first child!” He clearly associated this surprising and tremendous development with the Rebbe’s *bracha*.

Due to the COVID lockdowns which started after Purim I did not see Dovid until the middle of Sivan when the shuls started opening up. With some hesitation I said to him, “It’s awkward to ask this, but has there been any good news yet?”

“Yes!” Dovid said beaming as he shook my hand vigorously. “My wife gave birth to a healthy baby boy two weeks ago!” After eight years of waiting...

A month later I saw Dovid again and suggested that since his son was born due to the Rebbe’s *bracha* it would be appropriate for him to have a letter in the *sefer Torah* for children, in accordance with the Rebbe’s express wishes. He agreed to fill out the form and pay for the letter but begged me to ensure that his name

did not show up in any Chabad related databases. It should be completely anonymous.

During our conversation I mentioned that my wife had given birth to a baby girl two weeks earlier. “Hold on,” Dovid said enthusiastically. “That means you also received a special *bracha* from the Rebbe when you were at the Ohel!”

Although I had not thought of it this way, specifically this fellow—who had just experienced a miraculous *bracha* from the Rebbe and yet was still uncomfortable having his name in a Chabad database—understood that what I had taken for granted was in truth a tremendous *bracha* from the Rebbe. **T**

YOUR STORY

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





לזכות
 החייל בצבאות ה'
 לוי יצחק שיחי'
 לרגל הולדתו ט"ו טבת ה'תשפ"ג שנת הקהל

נדפס ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' יעקב דובער וזוגתו מרת חנה איטא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 ליה



TISHA B'AV WITH THE REBBE

AN OVERVIEW OF TISHA B'AV IN
 THE REBBE'S PRESENCE

Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer



9 AV 5750

The Rebbe enters the shul with a *kinos* in hand, wearing non-leather shoes. As is customary, some lights in 770 would be turned off throughout the fast.

The *paroches* in the shul would be removed from the *aron kodesh*. Upon entering for Maariv and Eicha, the Rebbe would gaze towards the aron for a moment, instead of his regular practice of touching the *paroches*.



During Eicha, the Rebbe sits on a small wooden box, reading along with the *chazzan*.

9 AV CIRCA 5705



9 AV 5750



CIRCA 5720S



9 AV 5750



PHOTO DATE:

As usual, Shachris on Tisha B'av morning, the Rebbe receives the third *aliyah* during *krias haTorah* and reads the *haftarah*. In earlier years the Rebbe often cried profusely during these moments.



10 AV 5751



The Rebbe spends the next hour and a half in his place reading *kinos* together with the Chassidim.

10 AV 5751



9 AV 5748

Tisha B'av in the Rebbe's home during the year of aveilus for the Rebbetzin.



CIRCA 5720S

As is customary, Mincha is davened with tefillin.

Letters

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

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

Thank You for Coming

As we enter in to the eightieth year—*shnas hashmonim*—of the *histalkus* of the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok (whom I have the great *zechus* to be named after) on Chof Av, I'd like to share with the readers of Derher a special story that happened with my father and myself on Chof Av 5734*, *shnas hashloshim*, forty-nine years ago:

In the early years (5719*-5730*), my father, Reb Gershon Mendel Garelik, would come to the Rebbe generally once a year and, as is well known, that would be for Chof Av. For many years he was one of the only Chassidim who would come in to be by the Rebbe on this day.

In 5734*, the year of my bar mitzvah, I spent the summer in Gan Yisroel Parksville until Chof Av. The plan was to go back home with my father for the rest of the summer. Chof Av fell out on Thursday and of course the Rebbe held a *farbrengen* that day, and then again on Shabbos.

On Monday, 24 Av, the day we were going to return to Italy, there was a camp that came into daven Mincha with the Rebbe and therefore the Rebbe deviated from his regular practice of davening Mincha in the upstairs *zal*. Instead, the Rebbe's *minyan* was held downstairs in order to accommodate the large crowd.

In those years (before 5741* when the

Rebbe started *Tzivos Hashem*), the Rebbe would not deliver a special *sicha* to the children following Mincha and camps would come in just to daven Mincha with the Rebbe.

As the Rebbe was leaving the shul followed by members of *mazkirus*, Reb Leibel Groner motioned to us, pointing upstairs, indicating that the Rebbe would like to see us by his room.

We started to follow behind the Rebbe as he walked out of shul and up the inner stairs (in those years the Rebbe did not use the elevator to go from his room to the shul or vice versa).

When we entered *Gan Eden Hatachton*, the Rebbe had already entered his holy room and we waited outside. We saw Reb Nissan Pinson, shliach of the Rebbe to Tunisia, who was already standing there, also having been informed that the Rebbe wanted to see him.

After a minute or so, the Rebbe came out of his room holding two bottles of *mashke*, one in each hand, and under his arm were dollar bills.

The Rebbe first handed Rabbi Pinson a bottle of *mashke* and gave him certain *hora'os* what to do. Then the Rebbe turned to my father and gave him a bottle of *mashke* and told him to make *farbrengens* in Italy, etc.

Following this the Rebbe took out the dollars that he had under his arm.

First he gave Rabbi Pinson three ten dollar bills (\$30) and said “*L’kavod shnas hashloshim.*” The Rebbe gave my father the same and said “*L’kavod shnas hashloshim.*” Then the Rebbe turned to me and gave me three one dollar bills and said “*L’kavod shnas hashloshim.*”

Then came the surprise: The Rebbe looked at my father in a most unusual way and said with a big smile “א דאנק פארן” קומען אויףן יארצייט (thank you for coming for the *yahrtzeit*). [I don’t remember if the Rebbe said א דאנק או ישר כח או א דאנק, I am almost certain that it was א דאנק.]

And now comes the unbelievable and amazing (and humorous) part of the story:

The next day, we arrived in Italy and came home, and we were sitting at the table with my mother and the rest of the family present. My father turns to me and says: “Tell Mommy what happened yesterday.” So I asked my father, “Why don’t you tell her?” My father replied: “She won’t believe me...” I said, “Why not?” he said “Try and you’ll see. Of course my mother was listening to this conversation and said, “Why don’t you tell me what happened?” I had no choice, and I told her what happened.

Her immediate reaction was “I don’t believe it! It’s impossible!” I said, “Why not”? But she kept on saying that it’s not true, it can’t be... I asked her, “Why not? I am telling you the honest truth, this is what happened!” Finally I got the “scoop” that this “thank you” of the Rebbe had much meaning to my father because of a story that was going on in our *makom hashlichus* and it was open *ruach hakodesh*:

From when my father went out on shlichus, he would fly in to the Rebbe once a year. Seldomly, he would go two or three times a year. However, from 5731* my father started to come to the Rebbe on a very frequent basis, almost once a month (for Shabbos Mevarchim or *yoma*

depagra).

This was unfavorable in the eyes of a number of the members of the community, especially since in those days air travel was very expensive and people rarely flew internationally.

It reached a point that Mr. Carlo Zippel, a local Yid who had a close *keshar* with the Rebbe (and the one who originally asked the Rebbe to send a young couple to Milan, with eventually my parents being sent), told my father that on the next trip to the Rebbe (which happened to be this Chof Av trip) my father needs to ask the Rebbe if what he’s doing is okay, as the *baalei batim* are not so in favor of it. He told my father that if the Rebbe agrees with him, they will raise their hands in agreement but if the Rebbe does not agree, he has to stop.

Knowing that my father possibly would not ask the Rebbe, Mr. Zippel told him that if he doesn’t ask, then Mr. Zippel himself, on his next trip to the Rebbe, will ask.

It was specifically on this occasion that the Rebbe himself initiated and thanked him in a very special way for his trip and the *nachas* the Rebbe gets from my father’s visits was evident.



When the members of the community heard the story, this appeased them and of course my father continued to travel to the Rebbe on a regular basis for many years to come.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Garelik
CROWN HEIGHTS, NY

The Rebbe On Martial Arts In Schools

In a letter to the editor printed in the *Derher* of Shevat 5783, I shared what I had heard from Rabbi Sholom Ber Lipskar that the Rebbe instructed Mr. Mel Landow that there should not be contact sports in the Chabad school that he sponsored in Miami, Florida.

It has come to my attention that this is the subject of a long letter the Rebbe wrote to Mr. Landow which is printed in translation to Hebrew in the book "Moreh L'Dor Navuch," vol. 3, pp. 167-169 (from the copies of the drafts of the Rebbe's letters in the archive of Rabbi Nissan Mindel).

In the letter, the Rebbe writes to him that the letter is a follow up to what they discussed in *yechidus* about this matter. The Rebbe raises several points negating having martial arts in school.

In the beginning of the letter, the Rebbe writes regarding secular studies in general, how it's very important not to do anything that would give the kids the impression that Yiddishkeit is in any way inferior to other cultures. In addition to the fact that this is the truth, it is of most importance now, when many Jewish children have feelings of inferiority and the powers of assimilation are very strong. This is in regards to secular studies required by law.

Regarding sports, there needs to be added caution due to the fact that in many schools in America there is an exaggerated emphasis on excelling in sports. This is to the extent that students

are rated by the school administration, and for sure by their peers, by their success in sports over their success in academics! The negative influence of students seeing sports stars as heroes is also self understood.

In regards to the suggestion that karate could be taught with the clear understanding that it is specifically for the purpose of self-defense (because in regards to wrestling and boxing it is clear how this arouses a negative inclination towards violence), the Rebbe writes that it's not possible to separate it clearly from the aggressive aspects of the sport. All it takes is for one student to find out about the aspects of karate that are not connected specifically to self-defense and he will tell his classmates and this will result in a demand that karate be taught in all its forms, including that which is purely aggressive.

The Rebbe therefore concludes, that being that karate is not something that is required to have in school and also does not contribute to having a healthy body, it is not something that should be brought into the *frum* school system.

Yossi Katz
CENTRAL LUBAVITCH YESHIVA, NY

