

A Chassidisher **Derher**

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This magazine
has been made possible

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

ולזכרון הצדקנית הרבנית
מרת חנה ע"ה
שניאורסאהן
בת הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' מאיר שלמה ע"ה
אמו של כ"ק אדמו"ר
לרגל היארצייט-הילולא ו' תשרי



INFINITE POWER

A new year is upon us.

Each year brings with it unique qualities and its own distinct *avodah*. The Rebbe teaches us to look at what makes this year special and incorporate that element into our daily *avodas Hashem*.

This new year—5784—is a *shnas ha'ibur*, a leap year with an extra month of Adar.

The purpose of a leap year is to reconcile the 11-day difference between the solar and lunar cycles, ensuring that the seasons of the sun correspond with the correct Jewish months.

Think about it: Hashem is the one who establishes the natural order of the world. It is due to his Will that the moon is smaller than the sun, and that the lunar year is shorter than the solar year. Nevertheless, Hashem puts it in our hands to allow the sun and the moon to work in sync. In other words, the Jewish people have the power to influence Hashem's natural order and fix the world for the better.

The only reason this is possible is that the Yidden are intrinsically higher than the realm of time, above and beyond all imagination. *Neshamos Yisroel* are one with Hashem—ישראל וקוב"ה כולהו חד—and they are thus able to manipulate all parts of creation.

A Yid should never underestimate the power that he or she has to make a real difference!

KEEP IT GOING!

Another special quality of this year is that it follows Hakhel.

In 5748, the Rebbe spoke throughout the year about the importance of Hakhel, utilizing the opportunity to gather Yidden together and inspire them with *Yiras Shomayim*.

As the year drew to a close and 5749 approached, the Rebbe reflected on the outgoing year:

“It’s important to recognize one’s faults, but it’s just as important to know when you’ve done well,” the Rebbe said. “When you look back at the past year and think about what was accomplished with regards to Hakhel, you will see that the activities were phenomenally successful!”

The Rebbe encouraged everyone to take this as an indicator for the future, to keep the activities in the spirit of Hakhel going forward.¹

May this coming year bring endless *brachos* in all matters, including all of the *brachos* from **Aleph** to **Tav**, especially the most important *bracha*—the *geulah* with Moshiach *tzidkeinu*, now!

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה.

The Editors

יא-יג אלול ה'תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל את העם

1. Tzom Gedaliya 5749; Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 1, pp. 17-20.



דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word
on the
Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

לזכות השלוחה
מינא צבילה בת אסתר שתחיל' נמדר
לרגל יום הולדתה ח"י תשרי
לשנת ברכה והצלחה בכל מעשיה
ושתרווה נחת רוח רב מכל יוצאי חלציה

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר שיחיו טייכטל
נאשוויל, טענעסי

האזינו

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְאמֹר: (לב, מה)

Hashem speaks to Moshe and commands him to ascend Mount Nevo, from where he will see the land he so much desires to enter. On that mountain, says Hashem to Moshe, Moshe will be *nistalek*.

Rashi explains the significance of the expression "בעצם היום הזה" ("on that very day") by relating the Yidden's reaction upon hearing of Moshe's impending passing. They cried out: "The man who brought us out of Egypt, who split the sea for us, who brought down the *mann* for us, who provided us with the *slav*, who procured for us the well of water, and who gave us the Torah — we will not let him ascend the mountain to be taken from us!"

It is in response to this defiance, Rashi explains, that Hashem says "בעצם היום הזה". Not only will Moshe pass away, but it will be in broad daylight, so that nobody could later come and say that if only they had been present, they would have

been able to prevent it.

The Yidden justified their intention to prevent Moshe's passing (contrary to the will of Hashem) on the grounds that they had a *halachic obligation* to not be ungrateful to him! For this reason the Yidden did not mention all the favors that Moshe had done for them in the past, since they had surely already shown him their appreciation and gratitude. They mentioned only the acts that were still ongoing, or whose influence was still ongoing, up to that moment, (including the very day Moshe was commanded to ascend the mountain), and for which the Yidden felt they still owed him a debt of gratitude.

Why, indeed, were they unsuccessful in their attempts to prevent Moshe's passing? The answer can be seen in the words "בעצם היום הזה": The event of that day—the *histalkus* of Moshe Rabbeinu—was crucial in ensuring the survival of the Jewish nation, the עצם of Yidden. If Moshe would have brought the Yidden into Eretz Yisroel, the very idea of a future *galus* from Eretz Yisroel would be impossible since Moshe's acts remain an everlasting reality. Hundreds of years

בראשית

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: (א, א)

later, when Hashem would decide to punish the Yidden for their *aveiros*, the option of *galus* would not exist, and instead of pouring His wrath on the “wood and stones” of the Beis Hamikdash while sparing (at least some of) the Yidden and exiling the from their land, it would be directed towards the nation itself, *chas v'sholom!* Therefore, Moshe could not be the one to bring the Yidden into Eretz Yisroel.

Takeaway:

Every Yid has a “Moshe Rabbeinu” within himself. But a person can protest, if Hashem wants me to learn Torah and fulfill mitzvos, why did He create me in such a way that my 'Moshe Rabbeinu' is concealed from me and all I feel is my *nefesh habehamis*? The answer is: Through doing the necessary *avodah* to overcome the concealment hiding the “Moshe Rabbeinu,” one is able to unveil an even *deeper* level within themselves—the level of *נפש*, the innermost recesses of the *neschama*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, p. 341)

וזאת הברכה

וַיְהִי בִּישְׂרוֹן מֶלֶךְ בְּהַתְּאִסֵּף רְאִשֵׁי עַם יְחַד שְׁבֹטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

(לג, ה)

The first letters of the last three words spell the name “Yishai,” the father of Dovid Hamelech. When there is unity amongst *Yidden* (יחד שבטי ישראל), then the very source and reason for *galus*—*disunity*—is erased, and we merit to be redeemed through *בן דוד*.

Takeaway:

Each one of us is like a spark. When there is unity among us, these sparks combine into a blazing fire. The nature of fire is such that it attracts other sparks, drawing them into its eager flames. The more unity there is, the greater our fire becomes, and the more “sparks” of *kedushah* we are able to draw in. Ultimately, the intense light and warmth of *kedushah* will fill the entire world and we will usher in the era of Moshiach.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 34, p. 276; Hisva'aduyos 5748 vol. 1, p. 190)

The Midrash teaches that after Hashem created the world using the letter *Beis* (בראשית), the *Alef* came to Him with a complaint: As the first letter of the *Alef Beis*, it should have been the first letter used in creation. Hashem calmed the *Alef* by explaining that the entire creation is only in the merit of Torah, and that He would begin the giving of the Torah with him, the letter *Alef*—אנכי ה' אלקיך.

All of Creation falls into one of three categories, alluded to in the three letters א ב ג:

א. The foundation of everything is Torah, as *Chazal* state in more than one place. That is why the opening of the *Aseres Hadibros* is with the letter *Alef*, the first of the letters.

ב. It is because of the Torah that the world was created. Therefore, creation begins with a *Beis*, for it is only a means towards an end, which is to fulfill the Torah.

ג. The completion and realization of everything will be when the work is finished, and the world reaches its exalted perfection—the era of Moshiach. This is symbolized by the letter *Gimmel*, גאולה האמיתית והשלימה.

Takeaway:

A day in a Yid's life also consists of three steps:

א. Immediately upon awakening one recites “*Modeh Ani*,” the starting point and foundation for the entire day's work to follow —*bittul* and *kabbalas ol* to Hashem; the “א” of “אנכי”.

ב. Only after beginning the day with davening and learning does one enter the outside world (“בראשית... את” “השמים ואת הארץ”), where he deals with the physical and mundane in a holy way.

ג. The day ends (גמר ושלימות העבודה) with a *cheshbon hanefesh*, an account of the past twenty-four hours while davening Maariv and reciting *krias shema*, where one—yet again—verbalizes their *bittul* to Hashem, and the desire to hand oneself over into the hands of Hashem—“בידך אפקיד רוחי”.

(Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5747; Hisva'aduyos 5752 vol. 2, p. 353)



כתב יד קודש



לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
חנה גוטא בת העניא חס'ה תח'י
לרגל יום הולדתה כ"ז תשרי
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' צבי אלימלך וזוגתו מרת העניא חס'ה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
רבקין

THE FUTURE IS NOW

In the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Bereishis 5711*, the Rebbe expounded on the fact that the special light Hashem created at the world's beginning, the light that was hidden away for tzaddikim to enjoy in *Olam Haba*, can be accessed today within the Torah.

The following are some of the Rebbe's edits on this *sicha* in his holy handwriting, explaining the reason for this phenomenon. The words the Rebbe added appear in **bold**:

1. For full context, see the *sicha* in its entirety: Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 443.



THE REBBE GIVES LEKACH TO REB BENTZION SHEMTOV, HOSHANA RABBA 5721*.

TISHREI WITH THE REBBE*

Presented below is the diary of a Chossid who came to spend the special month of Tishrei 5721* with the Rebbe.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL
WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENACHEM LAZAROFF

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

Thursday, First day of Rosh Hashanah

As the Rebbe led the recitation of the *pesukim* ערוך טוב טעם and עבדך, טוב טעם and ה' עליה that precede the blowing of the shofar, his voice trembled with emotion.

Once all the preparations were complete, the Rebbe lifted his tallis from his face, wiped away his tears and blew all of the *tekios*. At times they seemed to be sounded with some difficulty.

Later in the day, a lively dance broke out on the sidewalk outside 770. Hearing the noise, the Rebbe opened his window and gazed upon the Chassidim.

Friday, Second day of Rosh Hashanah

Towards the end of today's Rosh Hashanah *farbrengen*, an announcement was made that as Shabbos was approaching, *bentching* would take place before the Rebbe says the *maamar*.

After *bentching*, the Rebbe stood up and everyone present formed lines to receive *kos shel bracha*.

After *kos shel bracha*, the Rebbe instructed that the *niggunim* of the Rebbeim be sung, starting with the *Shalosh Tenuos*. When we sang the Rebbe Maharash's "*Lichatchila Aribet*," the Rebbe motioned for us to repeat the middle stanza over and over, around 30 times! When the Rebbe stopped banging his hand on the table, we continued into the rest of the *niggun*.

Afterwards the Rebbe asked Reb Shmuel Zalmanov to start the *Beinoni*. The Rebbe sat still throughout the *niggun* without moving, his eyes closed in profound contemplation. This was followed by the *maamar Tiku bashofar*, after which the Rebbe stood up and danced with great joy. Suddenly the Rebbe said something to Rabbi Mentlik who got up and announced, "Whoever didn't yet receive *kos shel bracha*, should come and get it now." Indeed, about twenty individuals went up.

At the end of the line, a Jew without a beard (who would frequent 770), approached the Rebbe with an outstretched hand and the Rebbe shook his hand with a smile. He received *kos shel bracha*, and then shook the Rebbe's hand again vigorously, with a huge smile. With his other hand he drank the wine, and then saluted the Rebbe.



JEM310431

Naturally, the whole crowd burst into laughter, and the Rebbe remarked to one of the Chassidim who was sitting nearby: "He is invigorating himself" (ער איז זיך מחי''). The Rebbe then began the *niggun* "*Ki visimcha*."

Shabbos Shuva

At today's *farbrengen*, as the Rebbe said "if only we could do *teshuva* once," he wiped the tears from his eyes.

When the *farbrengen* ended, the Rebbe stood up from his seat on the *farbrengen bimah* to go to his davening place. A few people quickly took the stairs that the Rebbe used to ascend the *bimah* and began to move them to the other side of the *bimah*, at the point closest to the Rebbe's place for davening, for the Rebbe to descend.

Noticing this, the Rebbe exclaimed wonderingly that moving the stairs on Shabbos is prohibited since it creates an "*אוהל*" (structure). The stairs were left in place. The Rebbe jumped off the platform and went to his davening place at the front of shul.

After *Mincha*, as the Rebbe left his place, the crowd began to sing *Ki visimcha*. The Rebbe said: "*Ufaratzta*," and immediately everyone began to joyously sing

Ufaratza. The entire way out of the room the Rebbe encouraged the singing.

Zayin Tishrei

Tonight there was *yechidus*. The Rebbe sat in his room and received dozens of people for thirteen and a half hours, until 9:30 a.m.! At 1:15 a.m. the Rebbe left the room and returned at 2:10.

One of the directives that guests received from the Rebbe's secretariat was to include our family name and place of residence in our note to the Rebbe.

When Reb Y. Yakobovich entered the Rebbe's room for *yechidus*, he realized that he forgot to write his last name and hastily began to add that to his note, but the Rebbe preempted him and said: "Your name is Yakobovich?"

Ches Tishrei

Today I was informed of a remarkable incident that occurred exactly a year ago. A family arrived at 770, with one of their sons suffering from *yeneh machla*, and appearing very frail.

He was meant to go to the hospital the following day and in the meantime they came to seek the Rebbe's *bracha*. Since there was no usual queue for *yechidus* scheduled during *Aseres yemei teshuva*, the *bochurim* recommended that the family wait near the Rebbe's room.

They stood outside the Rebbe's room, and when the Rebbe saw the man he said: "I waited for you. Put on Tefillin and don't go to the hospital." The man became a fully religious Jew, and *baruch Hashem*, he fully recovered from his illness.

Erev Yom Kippur

In the afternoon, the Rebbe distributed *lekach* to those who couldn't make it in the morning.

I saw the mashpia Reb Shmuel Levitin say something to the Rebbe, and later on I learned the gist of the conversation.

Since Reb Shmuel wasn't present during the two times that the Rebbe blessed the Chassidim, he requested that the Rebbe bless him individually before Yom Kippur.

The Rebbe replied that the *brachos* were said when they were meant to be said, and they were bestowed not only on those present in the room, but upon everyone.

Motzei Yom Kippur

Throughout the *seudah* in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment, the Rebbe's demeanor was very serious.

At a certain point, the Rebbe said *l'chaim* to the assembled. Then the Rebbe announced: "On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Yidden in Eretz Yisroel and *Chutz La'aretz* keep the same amount of days. It was written in the newspapers that *chashuve rabbonim* traveled here from *Eretz Yisroel*. They should *pasken* that Moshiach should come! Then we will be able to keep one day of Yom Tov even in *Chutz La'aretz*, just like in Eretz Yisroel."

One of the rabbonim responded, "Is it necessary for us to agree that Moshiach should come? Who are we? It's enough that the Rebbe agrees." The Rebbe's face turned very serious, and he did not reply.

Rabbi Kazarnovsky led the crowd in *bentching*. When he said "*Birshus Adoneinu Moreinu Virabeinu*," the Rebbe closed his eyes.

First Night Of Sukkos

During the *seudah*, Reb Shneur Zalman Garelik, rav of Kfar Chabad asked the Rebbe why it is our custom to add extra *schach*, when Shulchan Aruch states that one should be able to see the stars.

The Rebbe turned to Reb Shmuel Levitin, who was seated nearby and remarked: "You have a story, tell it!"

Reb Shmuel began that Reb Aizik Homler once added a lot of *schach* to his sukkah, and was asked the same question. Reb Aizik replied: "I once helped the Alter Rebbe build his sukkah, and he told me to add more and more and more (*schach*.)"

Reb Shmuel concluded: "This is the best source that can be."

Afterwards the Rebbe said to Reb Yankel Katz: "Being that there are guests with us from Eretz Yisroel that never heard your story, tell it again."

Reb Yankel said that when he was sitting in the Friediker Rebbe's sukkah, he took out a *machzor*, (at this point the Rebbe added: "of *Shalosh Regalim*") and began to recite the *Seder Ushpizin*.

The Friediker Rebbe told him, "We have our own *ushpizin*. The Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash and my father, my teacher, the Rebbe (Rashab)."



SHOLOM YISROEL HODAKOV VIA JEM 3/10/19

THE REBBE SPEAKS WITH REB SHMUEL LEVITIN AND ELDER CHASSIDIM IN THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S APARTMENT (19 KISLEV 5722).

After Reb Yankel told his story, the Rebbe clarified that “our” *ushpizin* are in addition to the ones written in the *machzor*. The Rebbe then pointed with his hands: “Here sits the Baal Shem Tov, here sits the Maggid etc.” and “anyone who has the right eyes, can see it.”

Reb Shneur Zalman asked the Rebbe: “From where can one acquire the lens to see this?” The Rebbe answered with the saying of the Baal Shem Tov, that “a person is where his will is.” All we have to do is desire to see it.

Reb Shneur Zalman asked, “Do we need to want it very much?” To which the Rebbe replied, “Don’t limit the Baal Shem Tov.”

He continued and asked “Is it that we have to want it *b’pnimius*?”

The Rebbe replied that on the contrary; the Rambam writes that deep down every Jew is good, and wants. It just needs to manifest in his outer consciousness as well.

First Day Of Sukkos

During the meal, Reb Shneur Zalman asked the Rebbe to explain how we (- the visitors from Eretz Yisroel -) need to behave regarding the second day of Yom Tov.

The Rebbe replied, “I don’t understand what you want. You had a choice in the matter on Motzei Yom Kippur!”

(Those present took this to mean that the Rebbe essentially told him that if the rabbonim would’ve *paskened* then, Moshiach would’ve arrived.)

Reb Shneur Zalman clarified that he was asking if the guests from Eretz Yisroel needed to observe two days of Yom Tov. The Rebbe responded: “They intend to return” (and therefore don’t have to).

“Even the *bochurim*?” The Rebbe answered in the affirmative, noting that the *bochurim* signed a document affirming that they would return to Eretz Yisroel.

Second Night Of Sukkos

During tonight’s *seudah*, it was evident that Reb Shneur Zalman was debating whether to ask the Rebbe something. The Rebbe said to him: “Why are you so worried? Perhaps you have something to ask. You could’ve asked at the beginning of the *seudah*, and then you would’ve been calm throughout the meal.”

Reb Shneur Zalman indicated that he wanted to ask the Rebbe whether the *zoche bagoral* from Eretz Yisroel

needs to observe one or two days of Yom Tov.

The Rebbe answered:

“Being that the *zoche bagoral* came here with his wife, and he has a son here, and another son who’s also outside Eretz Yisroel, he should keep two days.”

Afterwards the Rebbe said that the guests from Eretz Yisroel should farbreng and be especially joyous tonight, (since for them it was *Simchas Beis Hashoeiva*). That is precisely how the night unfolded.

During one of the *seudos*, Reb Shneur Zalman asked the Rebbe why it is not our custom to put up decorations in the sukkah.

The Rebbe explained that the idea of a sukkah is to be a temporary dwelling place, and putting up decorations signifies a more permanent structure.

Simchas Beis Hashoeiva

On Monday, the third day of Chol Hamoed, the Rebbe farbrenged for *Simchas Beis Hashoeiva*.

Among the participants at the farbrengen were several

individuals from Argentina, accompanied by Reb Berel Baumgarten.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe expounded on the words of Chazal that at *Simchas Beis Hashoeiva* the participants “didn’t taste sleep.”

After the *sicha*, the Rebbe said that right then, at 9:00 p.m, this whole thing doesn’t apply, since that’s not a normal time to be asleep even during the year!

After the third *sicha* the Rebbe instructed to sing a *sefardishe niggun*, as there were two *sefardishe* bochorim in yeshiva, one from Morocco and one from Argentina.

We sang the *niggunim Azreni Kel Chai* and *Mipi Keil*. During the latter *niggun*, the Rebbe wiped tears from his eyes.

Afterwards, the Rebbe announced that there should be a continuation of the Kinus Tzach from earlier in the day, requesting reports from activities around the world.

The Rebbe instructed Reb Yechezkel Ginsburg to begin, saying: “Nu, where’s the *Yoshev Rosh*?” Afterwards, other Chassidim from various countries spoke about



THE REBBE SEES OFF THE GUESTS WHO HAD COME FOR TISHREI 5721*.



YANOVER ESROGIM

EXCELLENCE *of* ORIGIN

AN OVERVIEW

BY: RABBI ZELIG KATZMAN



לזכות

ח' מושקא בת יהודית תח'
לרגל יום הולדתה 'שלושים לכח'
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

שנזכה לרוב נחת חסידותי מכל יוצ"ח
מתוך בריאות, הרחבה, ושמחה

CALABRIA,

along the southern coast of Italy, “the toe of Italy’s boot,” is famous for its sprawling beaches with stunning views of the northern Mediterranean, for its ancient castles and archeological parks, and for its agricultural richness. It was one of the first regions in Italy to have a human population and has a long and storied history.

For a Lubavitcher Chossid, the name Calabria evokes other associations. The name of this popular Italian vacation spot has a unique meaning, a special ring. It reminds one of the simcha of Sukkos, of the sweet smell of the esrog, the passion for *hiddur mitzvah*. It recalls the *mesiras nefesh* of generations of Rebbeim and their Chassidim who sacrificed so much to procure an esrog from this locale to fulfill Hashem’s command.

The Rebbe identifies this region as “איטליא של יון”, the “Italy of Greece”, the choice land Esav was blessed with in the *possuk* “משמני הארץ יהי מושבך” as cited by Chazal. This is consistent with the historical etymology of the name Italy, which was originally used for this region by the Greeks, when they conquered portions of it in the eighth century CE.

Esrogim from Calabria are more popularly referred to as ‘Yanover Esrogim.’ The term originates from the Yiddish pronunciation of the port city of Genoa, Italy (Yanoveh).¹ It was from that city that freshly harvested esrogim from throughout Calabria would be shipped off for sale to the rest of the Jewish world. This transit point has become forever associated with this special breed of esrog.

The first recorded instance of Yidden using the Yanover Esrog dates to the time of the Baalei haTosfos who are said to have insisted on using that breed of esrog to fulfill the mitzvah. This was recorded by the Chasam Sofer who advocated the use of these Esrogim by arguing that esrogim, like birds,

require a *mesorah* to secure their status as kosher. Thus, for hundreds of years, Yidden have gone to extreme lengths to bench esrog on this specimen.

In Chabad tradition however, the minhag dates to the beginning of the mitzvah: The Alter Rebbe related that when Hashem commanded Moshe Rabbeinu to take a “פרי עץ הדר” for the mitzvah, messengers were sent on clouds to Calabria to bring esrogim from there. The Rebbe Rashab would share this tradition every year at the Seudah on the first night of Sukkos.²

On one occasion, the Rebbe Rashab offered a different reason for this minhag: “The reason we prefer esrogim from Calabria despite their lack of beauty, is because there are no Jews living there, and therefore [one can fulfill the *possuk*] “ובקשתם משם את האלוקים”, to elevate the sparks of *kedushah* even in such a place.”³

Over the years, the Rebbeim continued to be *makpid* on the Yanover Esrog, even in times of extreme hardship and danger. The Alter Rebbe was so scrupulous about this minhag that he wanted to send shlichim to obtain them during the Napoleonic War, when travel was fraught with danger. Similarly, during the Russian Revolution, special efforts were made to obtain Yanover Esrogim for the Rebbe Rashab.

Likewise, when the Rebbe was in France during World War II, he is said to have placed himself in great danger, sneaking across the border to obtain an esrog from Calabria.⁴

In Elul 5704*, as the Allies advanced through Europe, pushing back the Axis forces, southern Italy was liberated. The Frierdiker Rebbe sent a letter to the War Department (today called the Defense Department) in an effort to obtain Yanover Esrogim. Here are some excerpts from that letter⁵:

“For several generations it has been the sacred custom of my ancestors, who have been the heads of the Chabad Hierarchy and the recognized leaders of world orthodox Jewry, to get the kind of citrus fruit known as ‘Ethrog’, which is needed for the ritual of our festival of Succoth (Tabernacles), from Calabria— the peninsula in the southeast of Italy. Even during the last war, facilities were granted to my saintly father to have a special emissary bring a number of those citrus fruits from Calabria to Stockholm and thence to Russia, so that my late father and I and some of our Hierarchy members could perform the sacred precept of our religion in accordance with the custom of our ancestors.

“Now that Calabria is liberated, thank G-d, I would deem it a great privilege to once again be able to observe this sacred and cherished precept of my faith on Calabria-grown ‘Ethrogs,’ and at the same time offer a special prayer for the speedy and complete victory of the Allies over fruit grown on liberated soil.

“I therefore venture to ask you for the great favor of cabling to the competent authorities in that particular district to send out per Air Mail some ten ‘Ethrogs’ grown in Calabria, so that I may get them before our Succoth Festival which takes place from October 2nd to October 10th.”

The response from the War Department was not long in coming. In a letter dated September 21 and addressed to the Frierdiker Rebbe, they expressed regret at being unable to fulfill his request, due to the fact that the airmail service was restricted to missions essential to the war effort. Any exception could set a precedent and invite a deluge of similar requests from other religious figures and denominations.

This is just a glimpse of the efforts the Rabbeim expended to obtain Yanover Esrogim even in times of upheaval, while people had other concerns on their mind. As in this case, their efforts were not always successful and the Rabbeim sometimes needed to use Esrogim from other locales. On one such occasion, when the Rebbe Rashab was unable to procure an esrog from Calabria, and instead used one from Eretz Yisroel, he wept as he made the *bracha*. The Rebbeim strongly advocated that Chassidim use Yanover Esrogim, considering them preferable even to those of Eretz Yisroel. (The Rebbeim themselves often made use of both, as we shall soon see).

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes in a letter, “In answer to his letter exhorting Anash to purchase Esrogim from Eretz Yisroel: If [this exhortation is] because of the preciousness of Eretz Yisroel, none other than the Alter Rebbe, who was

moser nefesh to strengthen the land and inhabitants of Eretz Yisroel, always chose Esrogim from Calabria for the mitzvah, saying: ‘When Hashem commanded Moshe “ולקחתם לכם” messengers were sent to the forests of Calabria to bring back Esrogim with which to fulfill the mitzvah.’ Why should this year be different than any other?⁶”

Challenges and Transportation

In the early years of the Rebbe’s *nesius* there was a discernible change in the esrogim being imported from Calabria. In past years, the esrogim were weak and dull, whereas now they were much more beautiful. This triggered doubts about their legitimacy and gave rise to suspicion that they had been grafted (*murkav*). The Rebbe first addressed these concerns in a letter to Reb Mordechai Perlow, then serving as the rav of the Chabad community in Milan, Italy: “Regarding the question of the Calabrian Esrogim: In truth I am not happy that he has doubts regarding this matter, but being that [this has already been raised] it is appropriate that he should travel there and determine the situation...”⁷

The Rebbe eventually sent Reb Yisroel Jacobson to determine the status of the esrog orchards in Calabria and ensure that the esrogim being harvested and sent around the world were not *murkavim*. After investigating the situation, Reb Yisroel concluded that there were indeed many farmers in Calabria who grafted their Esrogim. When he reported these findings to the Rebbe, the Rebbe instructed that from then on, esrog orchards should be supervised to ensure their kashrus.

As a result of these concerns, it was suggested to the Rebbe that Calabria Esrogim should be transplanted to an orchard



CHASSIDIM PURCHASE YANOVER ESROGIM, CROWN HEIGHTS, EREV SUKKOS 5737.

* 5704-1944

HALACHIC IMPLICATIONS OF MURKAV

The issue of an *esrog murkav*, an *Esrog* that comes from a grafted tree, is widely addressed in the halachic literature of modern times, though we find no mention of it in the *Gemara* or *Rishonim*. The agricultural process known as grafting consists of removing a branch from a tree and then attaching it to a tree of another species. The purpose is to shore up the genetic properties of the fruits, making them stronger, bigger or more beautiful.

This issue was first addressed by the *Acharonim* in response to the increasingly common practice among farmers to improve the *esrog's* appearance by grafting *esrog* branches onto lemon trees. Two issues were raised by the *Acharonim* regarding the *esrog murkav*:

- 1) It no longer has the status of an *esrog*.
- 2) Since grafting violates the *issur* of *kilayim*, it is a *mitzvah ha'baah ba'veirah*.

There are several reasons why the *esrog* might lose its status as the fruit designated by *Torah*. The most prominent reason, which seems to have been accepted by the *Tzemach Tzedek* (on the occasion that he used a *Corfu esrog*), is that the *Esrog* does not have a full *shiur*, since part of the fruit is a lemon. Thus, in the case of a bigger *esrog*, in which the "esrog portion" is large enough, it is fit for use. Another reason is that using a fruit that was grafted onto a lemon tree would violate the *issur* of "bal tosif", as it would be adding a fifth species (a lemon) to the *Daled Minim*.

Regarding the second concern, the *Levush* (*Orach Chaim* 649) rules that the issue with a grafted *esrog* applies even when the grafting was done by non-Jews, citing the *Gemara* in *Sanhedrin* that says that non-Jews are also prohibited from planting *kilayim*.

The *Ta'z* disagrees, citing the *Gemara* in *Sukkah* (30b) where *Rav Huna* instructs merchants who would purchase *hadassim* from local gentiles to insist that they not harvest the *hadassim* themselves, so as not to be guilty of potential theft. This demonstrates that a *mitzvah haba'ah ba'veirah* applies only to the one actually committing the *aveirah*. But in our instance, when the grafting was already done by a non-Jewish farmer, the *esrog* is still kosher.

in *Eretz Yisroel*, where they could be better supervised. The *Rebbe* approved this plan, which was implemented in the summer of 5716*.

It is important to note that the *Rebbe* clarifies⁸ that these *esrogim* do not have the same status as *esrogim* grown in *Calabria*. The reason for this is based on the above-cited *Midrash*, that considers *Calabria* "מטותי הארץ", the choicest soil, and therefore most proper for growing *esrogim*. Thus, although the transplanted *esrogim* are certainly kosher and not *murkav*, they lack the special quality of *Yanover Esrogim* grown on their original soil. This is also consistent with the *Rebbe's* *minhag* to only *bentch* on an *esrog* grown in *Calabria*, even though the *Rebbe* used *esrogim* grown in *Eretz Yisroel* as well, as we shall see.

The Corfu Esrog

In addition to the *Yanover Esrog*, there is another specimen of *esrog* with a special place in *Chabad* tradition. But whereas the *Yanover esrog* is famous for its positive qualities, the controversial *esrog* of *Corfu* is notorious for being deemed unfit for the *mitzvah*.

Esrogim grown on the Greek island of *Corfu* were preferred by much of European Jewry for many years. Ironically, it was the beauty of these *esrogim* that sparked speculation that they were *murkav* (grafted), and therefore *posul* for the *mitzvah*⁹.

The earliest *teshuva* on the subject was written by *Rav Daniel* of *Grodno* in 1808, who ruled that since they did not have a *chazakah* as non-*murkav*, one cannot make a *bracha* on them using *Hashem's* name, but should instead say, "ברוך רחמנא אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציוונו על נטילת", "לולב" to avoid making a *bracha levatalah*.



AN ORCHARD OF TRANSPLANTED YANOVER ESROGIM IN KFAR CHABAD.

In 1846 a major debate broke out on the topic of the Corfu esrog, with many rabbis taking different sides. The Chasam Sofer came out against the Corfu Esrogim, saying that it was preferable to take an esrog from Eretz Yisroel being that they have a *chazakah* of kashrus, even if they are less beautiful than the Corfu variety¹⁰.

In 1875 the Corfu farmers banded together to hike the prices of their Esrogim, reinvigorating the debate. The rabbonim of Europe responded by banning the Corfu Esrog until the price was stabilized and the kashrus status of the esrog was determined.

The final death knell of the popularity of the Corfu Esrog came in 1891, when a Jewish girl named Rubina Sarda, was found dead in Corfu. Upon finding the body, local Greek residents claimed that the girl was Christian and had been killed by the Jews in order to use her blood for matzah. In the ensuing pogrom, many Jews were murdered, and many others were forced to flee. The response of the global Jewish community was to boycott the Corfu Esrog, seeing it as “dripping with Jewish blood.” Thus, the issue of the Corfu Esrog was finally laid to rest.

An individual wrote to the Rebbe, asking why the Chabad custom is to use esrogim from Calabria, when it would seem more appropriate to use those grown in Eretz Yisroel, thereby supporting the Jewish homeland, etc. The Rebbe responded:

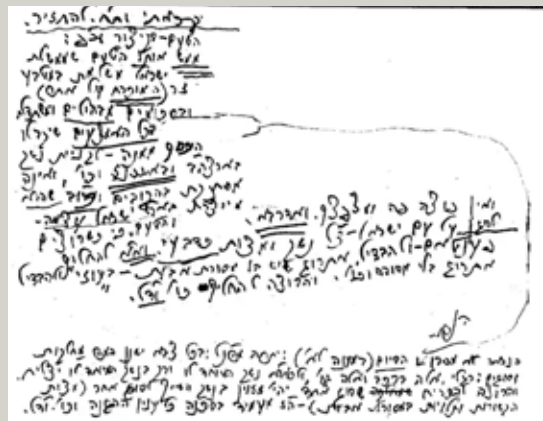
...הטעם - בקיצור עכ"פ: ממש אותו הטעם שממשלת ישראל משלמת במטבע זר (המוכר על אחר) ובסכומים מבהילים ומשתדלת בכל האמצעים שיקבלו הכסף ממנה - לקניית נשק בארצה"ב [= בארצות הברית] ובאשכנז וכו',

ואינה מסתפקת בהרובים וכיו"ב שהיא מייצרת בארץ ישראל עצמה. ואין פוצה פה ומצפצף. ואדרבא. והטעם כי כשרוצים להגן על עם ישראל - צ"ל [= צריך להיות] נשק ומצות כדבעי. וא"א [= ואי אפשר] להחליף פענטאם - ולהבדיל, אתרוג שיש בו מסורת אבות - ב"עוזי" ולהבדיל אתרוג בלי מסורה. והרוצה להחליף כו' וד"ל. [= ודי למבין]

כנראה לא מסרו הסיים (במענה לא): יתירה מהנ"ל: בכל צבא ישנן כמה מחלקות וסוגים: רגלי, אלה ברכב ואלה גו', ולכאור"א נשק המיוחד לו ורק בנשק המיוחד לו יצליח, והרוצה להכריח שסוג אחד יה' מזוין בנשק השייך לסוג אחר (מצות הקשורות ותלויות במסורת אבות) - ה"ז [= הרי זה] מעמיד בסכנה כל ענין ההגנה וכו'. וד"ל.

The reason—at least in brief—is: exactly the same reason why the Israeli government pays with foreign currency (which is otherwise **needed** locally), expending **astronomical** amounts of money and applying **all methods** of pressure that their money should be accepted—to purchase weaponry in the United States, in **Germany**, etc.

They do not suffice with the guns and such which **they** themselves produce in **Eretz Yisroel**. And no one seems to have a query with this—**on the contrary**. The reason is: when we want to protect the lives of the Jewish people, we need **suitable** ammunition, and [suitable] mitzvos. It would be **unconscionable** to replace a phantom or, *lihavdil*, an esrog with a



strong-rooted tradition, with an “Uzi” or, *lihavdil*, an esrog that is not in accordance with tradition. One who wishes to make this switch [is careless about protecting life] etc., this is sufficient for the wise.

[In the following section the Rebbe explains why this applies only to some people, and how it can be true that other Yidden fulfill their mitzvah with esrogim from Eretz Yisroel:]

It seems like you were not given the **conclusion** (of my response to question 1):

Moreover: In every army there are units and brigades: footsoldiers, some in chariots [and some on horses] etc. Each and every one has their own specific ammunition, and only with that ammunition will they succeed.

If someone wants to force members of one brigade to arm themselves with ammunition made for another (in our instance: [to force people to fulfill the mitzvah] in a way that is [contrary] to the tradition of their ancestors) — he is placing the entire strategy of defense in jeopardy. This is sufficient for the wise.



SELECT CHASSIDIM PASS BEFORE THE REBBE TO RECEIVE A YANOVER ESROG.

The Rebbeim's Attitude Towards The Corfu Esrog

The Rebbeim's opposition to the Corfu Esrog, however, dates to the times of the Tzemach Tzedek. The famed Chossid, Reb Dovid Tzvi Chein of Tchernigov, known as the Radatz, reported in the name of his father, Reb Peretz, who heard directly from the Tzemach Tzedek that "Esrogim from Corfu are certainly *murkav*."¹¹

The Rebbe Maharash was even sharper in his condemnation of the Corfu Esrog, saying, "There are three things that are beautiful, but it is doubtful whether they are the real thing: 1) A Corfu Esrog is very beautiful, yet it is in doubt whether it is in fact an esrog or merely a lemon¹²..."

On another occasion¹³ the Rebbe Rashab said, "I would wrap a Corfu Esrog in a machine-made tallis and throw it in a fire." Regarding the tradition that Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev used to use an esrog from Corfu, he said that a seed of an esrog fell in Corfu and it was from that specific tree that Reb Levi Yitzchak would take his Esrog.¹⁴

Nevertheless, there was one occasion on which the Tzemach Tzedek did use a Corfu Esrog: One year Yanover Esrogim were hard to come by. The Tzemach Tzedek related

that his Chossid, Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Vitebsk had once visited the famed Reb Ephraim Zalman Margulies, author of the *Beis Ephraim*. They discussed many Torah topics, including the status of the Corfu Esrog. They reached the conclusion that if the Esrog is large enough that there is a shiur esrog outside of the part that is *murkav*, it is kosher. The Tzemach Tzedek relied on their *psak* for this matter.¹⁵

The Rebbe's Selection Of Daled Minim

The Rebbe's selection of the Daled Minim would begin on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei, upon returning from the Ohel. Esrogim would be brought by Reb Yisroel Jacobson and his son in law, Reb Mordechai Altein. After Reb Yisroel's passing in the summer of 5735*, Rabbi Altein was joined by his son in law, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Gurary. In earlier years they would lay them out in the Rebbe's room, and after 5738* in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

In addition to the esrogim that were brought in on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei, Reb Leibel Bistritzky would bring an esrog, along with the other *minim*, to the Rebbe on Erev Yom Tov. Reb Sholom Hecht and Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky would also usually give the Rebbe esrogim at this time (Reb Binyomin would generally give three, through the Mazkirus).

The Rabbeim's Use Of The Esrog

It has been recorded that the Rebbe Rashab and the Frieddiker Rebbe would often make a bracha on a Yanover Esrog but then use an esrog from Eretz Yisroel for Hallel. In 5711*, it was observed that the Rebbe used two Esrogim, one with a *pitum* and one without. The former was assumed to be from Eretz Yisroel, since in those days, no Calabria Esrogim had *pitums*. In the morning, the Rebbe *bentched* on the one without a *pitum*, and then used the other one for Hallel. In later years, however, the Rebbe would use a Calabria Esrog both in the morning and for Hallel, using one from Eretz Yisroel at another point, without a bracha.

Reb Levi Bistritzky (Reb Leibel's son) relates: "One year, the Rebbe had an Esrog with a *pitum*, which fell off while someone was using it. The Rebbe would usually go down for davening while people continued to *bentch* on the Rebbe's Daled Minim. Before Hallel, they would bring the Daled Minim back to the Rebbe. This time, when they brought the Daled Minim to the Rebbe, they informed him that the *pitum* had fallen off. Nevertheless, the Rebbe took this esrog and used it during Hallel.


"My father heard about this immediately. He knew a Yid in Brooklyn who owned an unopened box of Italian esrogim. My father approached him and offered to buy his entire stock if the Rebbe would choose one of his esrogim. Before the Rebbe finished davening, my father was already waiting with the box of esrogim. The Rebbe thanked my father for his efforts, but said that since the first day of Yom Tov had passed, and there was no longer a requirement to own one's esrog (based on the *possuk* ולקחתם לכם), he could use the Rebbetzin's esrog at home. (Generally, the Rebbe would purchase a set of Daled Minim for the Rebbetzin at home, while the Rebbe's set would remain in 770)."¹⁶

Reb Meir Harlig shared another related story: "Once, an

PAYING FOR DALED MINIM

The Torah's requirement of "*U'lekachtem lachem*" is explained by Chazal to mean that one must be in full ownership of his Daled Minim in order to fulfill this mitzvah. Many *poskim* infer that one must pay for the Daled Minim before Yom Tov begins, in order to be fully in possession of it. Their rationale is that only a *kinyan mi'de'oraisa* (acquiring by paying with money) can be effective for the purposes of fulfilling a *chiyuv de'oraisa*. Other *poskim* disagree and say that *kinyan me'derabanan* is sufficient, so payment before Yom Tov is not necessary.

The Rebbe once related that in the first year after coming to America, he asked the Frieddiker Rebbe to pay Reb Yisroel Jacobson (who provided the Rebbe's Daled Minim in those years) before Yom Tov. The Frieddiker Rebbe responded "Does Reb Yisroel need the money for Yom Tov?" from which the Rebbe inferred that the Frieddiker Rebbe was not particular about paying for the Daled Minim before Yom Tov. The Rebbe however, was careful to pay in advance or immediately after receiving the Daled Minim.

elderly Chossid shook the Rebbe's lulav with much emotion and dropped the Rebbe's Esrog. To our shock and dismay, the *pitum* fell off. With no other option, I went to the Rebbe and told him what happened. Hearing this, the Rebbe said not to tell him who had dropped it, because 'it won't be good for me or for him,' and he gave us another esrog to use."¹⁷ 

1. Igros Kodesh, vol. 3 page 280.

2. Harav Yaakov Landau, *Lubavitch V'Chayaleha*, page 31.

3. From a letter of Reb Michael Vilensky, 6 Kislev 5708. Otzar Minhagei Chabad Elul - Tishrei, pg. 277.

4. Rabbi Menachem Teichtel in an interview with JEM.

5. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 8, pg. 409.

6. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 13 page 476.

7. Igros Kodesh vol. 7 pg. 161.

8. Igros Kodesh vol. 13 pg. 110.

9. The question of whether an Esrog *murkav* is kosher is debated by the Acharonim, but the consensus is that it is *possul*.

10. Shaalos U'Teshuvos Chasam Sofer Orach Chaim 207.

11. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad p. 281.

12. Ramach Osiyos #153

13. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRashab, vol. 1, pg. 926. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad pg. 278, fn. 4.

14. Igros Kodesh *ibid*.

15. Beis Rebbe part I, pg. 75, fn. 1.

16. Hiskashrus issue #481.

17. For further reading, see comprehensive article published in Heichal HaBaal Shem Tov, winter 5780, by Rabbi Boruch Oberlander. And Esrogim BeHalacha—Mesores Esrogei Calabria, published by Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof, 5783.

LUMINARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' דניאל זונדל הלוי
וזוגתו מרת ראובנה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גרודניצקי

Shimon HaTzaddik

In the years following the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah, the sole leader of the Jewish people was Shimon Hatzadik, student and great-nephew of Ezra HaSofer. He served as Kohen Gadol for forty years, and is considered the first of the *tana'im*.¹

Shimon HaTzaddik led his people through one of its most pivotal periods. He was responsible for transmitting the *mesorah* from the Sofrim and Anshei Knesses Hagedolah to the *tana'im*.

This was a fundamental transition, from the era of the Tanach when there were many open miracles and clear instances of *ruach hakodesh*, to the period of the *Zugos* (when the leadership of the Jewish people was shared by a pair of Chachamim), followed by the schools of Hillel and Shammai, when much of the awe-inspiring revelation was concealed.

Shimon HaTzaddik himself was part of this transition. According to the Rambam and Bartenura, he was the last member of the Knesses Hagedolah, while according to Rashi, he succeeded them. No matter how one looks at it, Shimon HaTzaddik's generation continued to benefit from the miracles that occurred throughout his *kehunah gedolah*. Moreover, as we will see in the Rebbe's *sichos*, his generation stood above the later ones, in its sense of clarity and unity.

In addition to the shifts in the Jewish community, the outside world was changing dramatically. Led by Alexander the Great, (*Aleksandros Mokdon*), the Greeks replaced the Persians as the rulers of Eretz Yisroel and as the era's superpower.

After foreseeing his death on Yom Kippur, Shimon HaTzaddik passed away on the twenty-ninth of Tishrei, one week after Sukkos.

His Role in the Torah's Transmission

The Rebbe discussed Shimon HaTzaddik several times. His title as 'tzaddik,' his place in the chain of *mesorah*, his encounter with Alexander the Great, and the meaning of his famous teaching in Pirkei Avos are all explained and expounded upon in the Rebbe's *sichos*.

The Rebbe explained that he earned the moniker 'tzaddik' both for his emphasis on tzedakah and acts of kindness and for his piety, 'tzaddik' being another term for Chossid, someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty.²

Additionally, his special position as "Mishyarei [one of the last of the] *Knesses Hagedolah*" meant that he was tasked with carrying the Jewish people from one stage to the next, that of his *talmid* and colleague Antignos Ish Socho, and the period of the Zugos.³

When the *Knesses Hagedolah* was active, there was a collective effort that included and incorporated all 120 members, the largest number of Jewish representation in one group. This gave stability to the Jewish community and the world at large, because opposing factions, perspectives, and personalities worked in harmony as part of the *Knesses Hagedolah* institution.

Later, it became Shimon Hatzadik's mission to keep the world in general, and the Jewish community in particular, from going off the rails by following any perspective or faction to its extreme. This explains his message in Pirkei Avos, teaching how to keep the world 'standing,' i.e. in a state of stability.⁴

We can see how successful he was by noting that every Yom Kippur throughout his *kehunah gedolah*, the *goral* (lot) for the goat that was 'for Hashem' would fall on his right hand side, a sure sign of the solid and positive state in which he kept the world.⁵

HaTzaddik - Man of Yemin

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe explained the difference between his teaching, and that of his student Antignos Ish Socho.

Antignos speaks to an advanced level of *ahavas Hashem*, to serve Hashem "*Shelo al menas lekabel peras*," not for the sake of reward. The true motivator should be, as his teaching continues, "*yehi mora Shamayim aleichem*." If *yiras Shamayim*

is missing, there can be a breakdown, as happened to his students, Tzadok and Baisos, who ended up founding the sects of *Tzedukim* and *Baisosim*.

However, Antignos's teacher Shimon HaTzaddik sang an entirely different tune. As a 'tzaddik' operating in the sphere of *gemilus chassadim* and positivity, similar to other people called 'tzaddik' like Yosef and Binyamin, he was used to dealing with people who were not ready to serve Hashem without reward. He therefore spoke of the world's need for Torah and mitzvos as pillars on which to stand, with a special emphasis on *gemilus chassadim*.

Shimon HaTzaddik's bearing as a man of "yemin", the right side, signifying kindness, is seen also in the Gemara cited earlier, that his *goral* would always come out on *tzad yemin*, the right side.⁶

Kohen Gadol

As Kohen Gadol for forty years, Shimon HaTzaddik was one of only four *kohanim gedolim* in *Bayis Sheini* that survived more than one year in their illustrious position.

His *kehunah gedolah* was extraordinary in other ways as well. He was known to have prepared and offered two of the *paros adumos*, he was the last to use the *Shem Hameforash* during Birkas Kohanim, and many miracles were known to recur in the Beis Hamikdash in his time. One example is the *ner maaravi* of the menorah which kept burning steadily throughout the day and night. Another is the 'red string' which would turn white every Yom Kippur.

Unlike the *yahrtzeits* of most members of Chazal, we know the date Shimon HaTzaddik passed away. The Gemara tells us that one Yom Kippur he told the sages that he was going to pass away that year, explaining that every year he was accompanied into, and out of, the *Kodesh Hakodoshim* by a man dressed in white. That day the man entered with him but did not escort him out. After Sukkos he fell ill and a week later he was *nistalek*.

Shimon HaTzaddik and Alexander the Great

In *Maseches Yoma*, the Gemara recounts the legendary story from *Megillas Taanis* about the miraculous encounter between Shimon HaTzaddik and Alexander the Great. The Rebbe discussed this story more than once and learned

powerful lessons from it about Shimon HaTzaddik's bravery and conviction.

When the warrior and conqueror, Alexander the Great, (or *Alexandros Mokdon* - the Macedonian) conquered Eretz Yisroel from the Persians, he was approached by the *Kutim*, who, by libeling the Jews, received his permission to destroy the Beis Hamikdash.

Shimon HaTzaddik heard of this and immediately sprang into action. He donned the priestly garments and set out from Yerushalayim, escorted by the nobles of the Jewish people carrying torches. Seeing them from a distance, the *Kutim* said to Alexander, "These are the Jews who rebelled against you."

When, at dawn, Alexander saw Shimon HaTzaddik, he got off his chariot and bowed down before him. His surprised entourage asked why an important king such as he would bow to this Jew. He responded that before every battle he would see a vision of this man's face. That image would lead him to victory.

The Jews told Alexander why they had come. They asked, "Can it be that gentiles can mislead you into destroying the very Temple in which we pray for you and for your kingdom to not be destroyed?!"

At that point, Alexander told the Jews to do as they pleased with the evil *Kutim*. They proceeded to punish the *Kutim*, dragging them over thorns and thistles to *Har Gerizim* [the site of the *Kutim's* temple], where they destroyed and plowed the entire area and seeded it with leeks, doing to them, what they had sought to do to the Beis Hamikdash.

It is also written that when *Alexander Mokdon* would see Shimon HaTzaddik, he would say "Blessed is Hashem, the G-d of Shimon HaTzaddik."

The Rebbe finds several lessons in this fascinating story: First, it is not enough to keep and safeguard the real Beis Hamikdash, a false "beis hamikdash" cannot stand and must be destroyed.

Second, the way to destroy falseness was not through waging war, but rather by Shimon HaTzaddik proceeding fearlessly in his *avodah*. When Shimon HaTzaddik wears his priestly garments, Alexander bows and the *Kutim* fail.

The 'priestly garments' refer to *pnimius haTorah*, Chasidus. In order to destroy the temple of falseness, we must go out into the world with the words of Chasidus, words of truth, and spread them everywhere, allowing truth to prevail.⁷

Additionally, the Rebbe explained that when enemies seek to destroy our Beis Hamikdash, we should not cower or compromise, but rather stand strong and proudly display our colors.

When Shimon HaTzaddik went to meet Alexander, he didn't dress in royal garments or fashionable clothes. Instead, he wore his holy *bigdei kehunah*, in which he prayed and served Hashem. When one shows up this way, Alexander dismounts and bows, realizing that it is thanks to this Yid's *avodah* that he is successful in his conquests.

By displaying one's Yiddishkeit proudly, one earns respect from others, and shows them the true source of their blessings.⁸

1. For most of the *nigleh* sources below, see Mishnayos, Parah 3:5, Avos 1:2. Gemara, Yoma, 9a, 39a, 39b, 69a. Yerushalmi Yoma 6:3. Vayikra Rabbah 13:5.

2. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5740.

3. There is an opinion that says that Yose ben Yoezer and Yose ben Yochanan, received their Torah from both Antignos and Shimon, as it says "*Kiblu meiheim*" [received from them]. According to others, "them" just means Antignos and his Beis Din. See Maharal on Pirkei Avos.

4. See a similar theme in the Maharal - Derech Chaim on Pirkei Avos.

5. It is interesting to note that following Shimon HaTzaddik and Antignos Ish Socho is when we begin to see an escalation of rifts in the Jewish community, starting with Shimi and Chonyo, sons of Shimon

HaTzaddik, when Chonyo runs to Alexandria and opens his own *mikdash*, on to Tzadok and Baitos, students of Antignos, and even the splitting of the Tanaim into Zugos - creating a split version of leadership. All these splits happened shortly after Shimon HaTzaddik's times.

6. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Naso 5742.

7. Sicha 25 Teves, Shabbos Parshas Vaaira 5717. See following footnote.

8. Sicha 21 Kislev, Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev 5745. In this *sicha* the Rebbe concludes that the correct day to commemorate this miracle, is 21 Kislev (Megillas Taanis), and not 25 Teves (Gemara Yoma).

9. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5740.

IN HIS TORAH

The Rebbe notes that there are no *piskei dinim* (halachic rulings) quoted in his name. There are, however, stories and anecdotes told of him that provide us with lessons. Of course, his most famous teaching is the first named quote in Pirkei Avos:

עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים:
The world stands on three things, on Torah, on Avodah (prayer),
and on Gemilus Chassadim (acts of kindness).

The Rebbe explains the background and premise of this fundamental statement. The world was created through the channels of the various *sefiros*. Each of the seven millennia, and each day of the week, corresponds to a different *sefirah*. Sunday is Chesed, Monday is Gevurah, and so on. Each of these attributes is wholly good, but the variation of often conflicting energies can create a turbulent and unstable system. Torah and mitzvos are the stabilizing force that Hashem gave us to help keep the world in check.

The world at large mirrors the ‘world in miniature,’ the inner world of each person. Shimon HaTzaddik’s statement suggests that the way to stabilize one’s inner world is by creating consistency in one’s personal work. This comes through the three pillars:

Torah – Using the Torah’s wisdom and guidance as life’s compass, instead of resorting to one’s natural tendencies and temperaments, (Chessed, Gvurah, etc).

Avodah – Taking the Torah’s teachings from general to personal.

Gemilus Chassadim – bringing them down to the practical level, actually living life in a way that follows Hashem’s will, and not being swayed by one’s mood or personal dispositions.

אָמַר שְׁמַעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק: מִיָּמַי לֹא אֲכַלְתִּי אֶשָׁם נָזִיר טָמֵא
Shimon HaTzaddik said: In all my days as a Kohen, I never ate
the Asham of a ritually impure Nazir. (Nedarim 9b)

The Rebbe demonstrates how this declaration of Shimon HaTzaddik is in line with his emphasis on consistency. The reason he wouldn’t eat the *korban* of an impure *nazir*, is, as the Gemara explains, because he didn’t believe in their *nezirus* in the first place. He was worried that they didn’t really mean wholeheartedly to become *nezirim* when they took it upon themselves.

The type of person who gets inspired to become a *nazir* one day, might regret it the next day, and become impure. This is the exact opposite of what Shimon HaTzaddik stood for, and it is this ‘wild’ kind of behavior that he was educating against.

We see this in the reward for his *avodah*: the miracles that took place in the Beis Hamikdash during his leadership were on a steady and consistent basis whereas in later periods these miracles would sometimes occur and sometimes wouldn’t. The Rebbe concludes that while there is an advantage in mood-based bursts of energy, fiery but uneven passion, it is outweighed by an *avodah* that is consistent and stable.⁹

מוקדש לחיזוק
ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

QUOTING FROM NON-KOSHER SOURCES

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

On a number of occasions, the Rebbe made clear that when writing papers or articles, not only must the content itself be acceptable, but the source material quoted and referenced must be kosher as well.

As a student of sociology at Brooklyn College, Mrs. Chana Sharfstein once sent the Rebbe a paper she had written about the Lubavitch movement. Among other comments and corrections on the paper, the Rebbe wrote, "In the notes and the bibliography, leave in only the kosher books, of course."¹

Rabbi Immanuel Schochet wrote and spoke extensively about the Baal Shem Tov, quoting a variety of sources. After reading one of Rabbi Schochet's newspaper articles, the Rebbe sent a letter with some corrections, beginning with a general comment:

"You quote in the notes and in the text itself from a number of compilers, including some whom it is doubtful whether it is appropriate to mention even in the footnotes (although not everyone pays attention to these), and all the more so in the text itself. This is especially true when you can use — for the things you're writing and noting — sources whose names and books can be mentioned without any doubts ... In the case of any doubt in this, you should be stringent, as the readers come from all sorts of backgrounds."²

WHERE IS THE JEWISH PRIDE?

Mr. Avraham Yaron hosted a gathering in Eretz Yisroel and sent the Rebbe a copy of an English letter that had been distributed. The letter began by quoting Shakespeare. The Rebbe replied (in a postscript on a separate piece of paper, in case Mr. Yaron would want to separate it from the rest of the letter):

"I'm certain that most — if not all — of those gathered are aware that before Shakespeare was born, and before the culture from which he developed was created, the Jewish People had — two thousand years earlier — the Torah and Mitzvos ... for which the Jews suffered persecution by these so-called 'cultured nations.'

"The question is: Is it necessary that when Jewish people gather for a Jewish purpose — which, as you write, must emphasize the truth that Hashem chose us from all the nations — that a quote must be used from a non-Jewish source? This would be true even if that source was someone who was one of the righteous among the nations, and is all the more true in this instance when, according to his works, he was an antisemite."³

In another letter to Rabbi Immanuel Schochet, after Rabbi Schochet sent clippings of a number of newspaper articles he had authored, the Rebbe wrote:

“I wrote to someone else a while ago about those individuals and offices in Eretz Yisroel to whom internal *galus* has reached and they feel lowly before any non-Jew. Whenever they can, they try to use specifically non-Jewish source material ... [These choices of source material] have an influence on the readers, who will rely upon a book whose author is from this side, and not the other.”⁴

SOME READERS WILL TAKE QUOTATION AS APPROVAL

Another concern with quoting non-kosher sources is the potential that readers might equate the quotation with implicit approval of its author. For example, in a letter to Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel, after commenting on his recently-published *sefer Hedyonei Uziel*, the Rebbe gives “a minor note, but one that is crucial because of those in our nation who breach [acceptable conduct].” The Rebbe lists a number of publications⁵ Rabbi Uziel quoted and says:

“Although everything in the world has good in it, not every mind can grasp how to throw away the shell, seek out and find the good, and consume only that. The fact that you quote these books — even though you disagree with them — will serve as an approbation for them to some of your readers. They’ll take for granted that these books should be in their homes as well — this even as those living in Russia and Poland know the tremendous destruction that these books — and others like them — have caused, may Hashem save us.”⁶

In another letter to Mr. Eliezer Steinman, a journalist and writer, the Rebbe points out the unforeseen consequences that can take place when one is not careful whom they quote:

“When he sees a certain name mentioned in your book, the reader may come to conclusions, and it has always been human nature — and especially nowadays — that the reader does not seek and delve into the depths of the matter or the precise wording that is used, to see how much praise is given to the individual and to determine whether there are any disclaimers”⁷

The Rebbe objects to Steinman’s statement that he has to acknowledge and thank anyone from whom he learned anything. The Rebbe points out that there’s an exception to this rule when it comes to matters of *emunah*. The zeal with which we approach matters of *emunah*, the Rebbe concludes, has kept us throughout the generations.

THE LINES ARE ALREADY BLURRED

In a letter to Rabbi Zev Aryeh Rabbiner, the Rebbe

explains why nowadays it’s especially important not to mix in non-kosher source material:

“Another point here — that is unique to this — is that nowadays the malady that is especially prevalent is the blurring of lines and the admixture of good and evil, to the point that one is switched with the other. This emphasizes the necessity of not mixing the straw and the fodder, and all the more so not to introduce a strange vine into the holy vineyard — not even the good in [the strange vine].”⁸

A FEW QUOTES WON’T HELP

In the same letter to Rabbi Zev Aryeh Rabbiner, the Rebbe makes another point. Rabbiner quotes non-kosher sources to say, “this source also agrees with my points,” but the Rebbe explains that for the intended audience, these few quotes won’t be of benefit:

“A few quotes won’t be of benefit when the vast majority of the *sefer* is based on *sifrei kodesh*. For someone for whom this [the *sifrei kodesh*] is not enough, these few quotes won’t be of much benefit.”⁹

PEOPLE WON’T BUY THE BOOK

Lastly, the Rebbe also points out that quoting from non-kosher sources may be to the detriment of the author, as many may choose to avoid the book because of the objectionable content.

“Although yes, one should accept the truth from whoever says it, it’s still a shame that you quoted from a number of *sefarim* that are not accepted by many Yidden, as well as some authored by non-Jews, for because of this, many will hold back from buying this *sefer*, and therefore they won’t read it and won’t benefit from what is written in it.”¹⁰ **T**

1. *Teshurah Unschorfer - Shapiro* 5763.

2. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 19 pg. 347.

3. *Ibid.* vol. 31 pg. 281.

4. *Ibid.* vol. 19 pg. 383.

5. Namely: *Moreh Nevuchei Hazman* (authored by Nachman Krochmal, a prominent leader of the Haskalah movement) and *Hatkufah*, a periodical collection of Hebrew literature edited by David Frishman, a secular Hebrew thinker and writer.

6. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 7 pg. 292.

7. *Ibid.* vol. 18 pg. 330.

8. *Ibid.* vol. 12, pg. 303.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

לעילוי נשמת
ר' יצחק ליב
בן ר' חיים אהרן ע"ה
בלאק
גלב"ע ערב חגה"ס י"ד תשרי ה'תשע"ח
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

Simchas Torah
moments *with*
the Rebbe

Up
Close
And
Personal

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 201615 (7 TISHREI 5742)



By: Mendel Slavaticki
and Mendel Zaklikovsky

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Few moments in the Rebbe's presence can compare to hakafos. The feelings of those present of the Rebbe transporting them to an otherworldly sphere, elevating them to his reality, all this in an aura of pure and heavenly joy, can go on and on for pages.

While uplifting myriads of Chassidim packed into 770 as one collective entity, a singular singing mass of body and soul, the Rebbe also reached out to the individual participant, allowing every Chossid to feel a personal connection and inspiring each individual to transcend their limited existence.

Those who merited to partake in hakafos recall that the Rebbe would lock eyes with each person present as he danced with the Torah. Amid the large crowds, thunderous singing and general tumult, every person had their place.

In that spirit, we present a small selection of short vignettes portraying personal interactions between the Rebbe and Chassidim during these precious moments.

For a broader overview of hakafos with the Rebbe, see "Uniting. Uplifting. Transcending. - Simchas Torah with the Rebbe," Derher Tishrei 5778.

Learn From The Children!

During the month of Tishrei 5747*, Chassidim took the old *niggun* with the words “*Kemofeis hayisi lerabim*” and sang the words “*Tehei zu shnas Moshiach – didan notzach*” to that tune.

During the fifth *hakafah* on Leil Simchas Torah, as Chassidim spiritedly sang this *niggun*, the Rebbe turned to Reb Meir Harlig and began clapping in his direction, signaling for him to dance. Reb Meir immediately began dancing, though somewhat halfheartedly. A few moments later, the Rebbe again turned to Reb Meir and exclaimed “Learn from him!” referring to his young son standing beside him dancing with excitement. The Rebbe then looked at the child and told him to teach his father to learn from his example.

Afterwards, the Rebbe turned back to the crowd with a broad smile on his face and began clapping his holy hands, copying the way Rabbi Harlig had been clapping. The Rebbe slowly brought his hands to and fro in an exaggerated manner, and finished by putting his holy hands together, and bringing them up to his cheek, the universal sign for someone sleeping! With a gesture ‘waving away’ the idea of being *farshlofen*, he started clapping faster and faster until the crowd couldn’t keep up.

“Where is Yosef Hartman?”

From the diary of Rabbi Yosef Hartman, Shemini Atzeres night 5723:*

“Before the second *hakafah* I suddenly saw the Rebbe turn around from his *shtender*, look at the *bochurim* surrounding him, and then ask Rabbi Groner: ‘Where is Yosef Hartman?’

“I heard the Rebbe’s words and froze in my place, a shiver going down my spine. I thought that maybe I had misheard, but then I heard the Rebbe repeat the question.

“Rabbi Groner began looking for me in the crowd. *B’hashgacha protis* I was standing right next to him beside the *aron kodesh*. The people blocking me moved to the side so the Rebbe could see me. The Rebbe looked at me with his pure and penetrating gaze, smiled at me with his famous “million-dollar smile” and swung his arm in my direction signaling for me to be *b’simcha*. The *bochurim* moved aside to let me stand in the front row, but the Rebbe signaled for me to remain in my place and be happy.

Every time I recall the Rebbe uttering my name during this sacred time, I am moved once again by the sheer power of that memory.

An Uplifting Gaze

During *hakafos* on Simchas Torah 5734*, before walking to the *bima* for his *hakafah*, the Rebbe stopped and began scanning the crowd in search of a specific *bochur*.

As the seconds ticked by and the *bochur* was yet to be located, people began going down from the bleachers to let the Rebbe see who was behind them. Only when the *bochur* was found, did the Rebbe continue to his *hakafa*. Understandably, during *hakafos*, the other *bochurim* made sure that this *bochur* had a place up front where the Rebbe could see him.

Later they found out that this *bochur's* mother asked the Rebbe to be *mekarev* her son by *hakafos*, since he had recently begun slipping in his *avodas Hashem*.



Everyone From Eretz Yisroel

During *hakafos* on the night of Shemini Atzeres 5752*, the guests from Eretz Yisroel were honored with the third *hakafah*. As they began making their way to the *bima*, the Rebbe turned to his left and motioned for Rabbi Yitzchak Yehuda Yeruslavsky to go up to the *hakafah*. The Rebbe then turned to Mr. Ovadia Eli, Israel's Minister of Defense at the time, and motioned for him too to go up to the *bima*.

The Rebbe continued to scan the crowd for guests from Eretz Yisroel, gesturing for them to take part in the *hakafah*, until the crowd realized the Rebbe's intent and all the Israeli guests began streaming to the *bima* from all corners of the shul.

Due to their large numbers, the *hakafah* spanned over a quarter of an hour as the guests kept switching places, allowing room for others on the *bima*.

“He is Already Healthy”

On the night of Shemini Atzeres 5747*, as the Rebbe was returning to his place after the first *hakafah*, a tumult began in 770. Rabbi Berel Levy suddenly felt weak and Reb Chaim Blachman from Hatzalah along with Dr. Weiss ran towards him to provide medical assistance. The Rebbe saw what was happening and signaled to them twice that they should check his heartbeat. After some time, the Rebbe made a motion with his hand, as if dismissing the ordeal, and turned back around to his *shtender*.

One of Rabbi Levy's children (Rabbi Don Yoel) approached the Rebbe to ask a *bracha* for his father. The Rebbe answered with a smile, while making a dismissive motion with his hand: “He is already healthy, you should give a *hechsher* on this.”

Rabbi Levy's son followed by saying “the Rebbe should be healthy” to which the Rebbe answered: “You should give a *hechsher* on this.” (Rabbi Don Yoel Levy ran the O.K. *kashrus* organization along with his father). Rabbi Don Yoel responded that he gives a *hechsher* and that there should be *didan notzach* (according to another account: “that Moshiach should come now”), and the Rebbe answered “amen.”

In the interim his father regained his strength, approached the Rebbe and gave a *bracha*, to which the Rebbe also responded “amen.”

Meanwhile the Rebbe called for Reb Chaim Blachman from Hatzalah and told him to ask a *rav* whether he is allowed to wear his earpiece (connected to the Hatzalah intercom) on Yom Tov.



Let Them Be Seen!

On the night of Shemini Atzeres 5741* after the recital of “*Atah horaisa*,” the Rebbe instructed those selling the *pesukim* to bend down, in order not to block the crowd and allow the Rebbe to see the whole shul.

During *hakafos* on both nights, the Rebbe motioned towards the *hakafos bima* at the elder Chassidim holding the *sifrei Torah* to move aside, allowing him to see every person in the crowd.

Stay Young

During the seventh *hakafah* on the night of Shemini Atzeres 5735*, the Rebbe motioned toward Reb Reuven Dunin who was standing among the elder Chassidim. Reb Reuven didn't understand why the Rebbe was motioning and what he should do.

As the Rebbe walked back from his *hakafah*, Reb Reuven approached the Rebbe and kissed the Rebbe's Sefer Torah. The Rebbe asked him: “What are you doing here? This is a senior home!” (referring to his spot among the elder Chassidim).



Attention to Detail

It was Shemini Atzeres night 5743*, and Reb Zalmon Jaffe was returning from the seventh *hakafah*. As he passed the Rebbe's place, the Rebbe held onto Reb Zalmon's sweat-drenched jacket and asked: "Did your jacket rip already?"

Reb Zalmon couldn't hear the Rebbe over the loud din of the crowd, and the Rebbe repeated the question. When Reb Zalmon finally heard the question, he answered that his jacket still didn't rip, although he did lose his *yarmulka*.

The Rebbe lifted both hands and exclaimed: "Ah! This should be the worst thing that will happen to you."

Personalized Brachos

During *hakafos* on Simchas Torah day 5745*, the Rebbe *bentched* someone from the crowd that he should be a Chossid, *yarei Shamayim* and a *lamdan*. To another, the Rebbe turned and asked if he had already learned the day's *shiur* of *shloshah prakim Rambam*.

Teach Him

On Shemini Atzeres night 5748*, Crown Heights activists were honored with the second *hakafah*, and the crowd began the famous *niggun* "*Yiddelach shreit ad mosai*." Amid the singing, the Rebbe motioned for Reb Chanina Sperlin to go over to Rabbi Nissan Mindel and teach him the words of the song.





“Also A Spectator?”

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Jacobson relates:

“When I was a young boy, the children used to sit on the floor next to the *bima* on Simchas Torah day, mere feet away from the Rebbe dancing *hakafos*. My older brother Simon and I used to sit there every year, and dance *hakafos* with the Rebbe.

“The year that Simon became Bar Mitzvah, he felt too old and mature to join me near the Rebbe’s *bima*, and instead found himself a place on the bleachers like all the *bochurim*. As the Rebbe approached the *bima* for his *hakafah*, the Rebbe noticed my father Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson and said, ‘Your son is here [by the *bima*] every year and dances with us, where is he this year?’

“My father pointed in the direction of the packed bleachers and told the Rebbe that Simon was there with all the *bochurim*. The Rebbe waved his holy hand and replied, ‘He also became a spectator?’”

Nothing Unnoticed

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Jacobson relates:

During the Rebbe's *hakafos*, there was always someone from the Vaad Hamesader on his *bima*, to maintain order and keep the crowds at bay.

I have a distinct memory of one year, when the Rebbe had reached the *bima* and began dancing the *hakafah*, an especially athletic French guest vaulted himself right into the thick of the dancing directly beneath the Rebbe's feet. He must have thought that since the Rebbe had already reached the *bima* and begun the *hakafah*, no one would dare shove him away and create a scene.

The Vaad Hamesader member, however, wouldn't let such behavior go unpunished in 770. He planted himself right in front of this guest, blocking his view of the Rebbe. The entire episode happened so quickly – merely a few seconds – that almost no one from the crowd noticed what had happened.

As was the Rebbe's custom, as he circled the *bima*, he looked eyes with all around. When the Rebbe turned in the direction of this person from the Vaad Hamesader, he held his gaze on him and kept it there. This person thought that the Rebbe was signaling for him to dance more enthusiastically and began jumping and clapping his hands. The Rebbe however would not look away, until this person realized what the Rebbe wanted and moved off the French guest.

Draw Us Close

Rabbi Reuven Matusof relates:

My father, Reb Shlomo Matusof, one of the first shluchim to Morocco,¹ came to spend Simchas Torah 5735* with the Rebbe. Those who knew my father will recall that he was not one who felt like he needed *kiruvim* from the Rebbe. As a Chossid, he did all he could to give the Rebbe *nachas ruach* and that was his entire objective. However, due to the fierce pushing during *hakafos*, he endured much discomfort and felt as if he was going to faint.

Suddenly, as he was holding on to his last ounce of strength, the Rebbe walked to the edge of the *bima*, leaned over towards him and looked in his direction, and began clapping and waving his hands in an exceptional manner to the tune of *Ufaratzta*. I never saw anything like it throughout all the years I spent by the Rebbe, it was absolutely amazing!

Of course my father regained his *kochos* and completely forgot about all the pushing around him.

1. See *Mosdos Oholei Yosef Yitzchok—Morocco*, Derher Adar 5783.

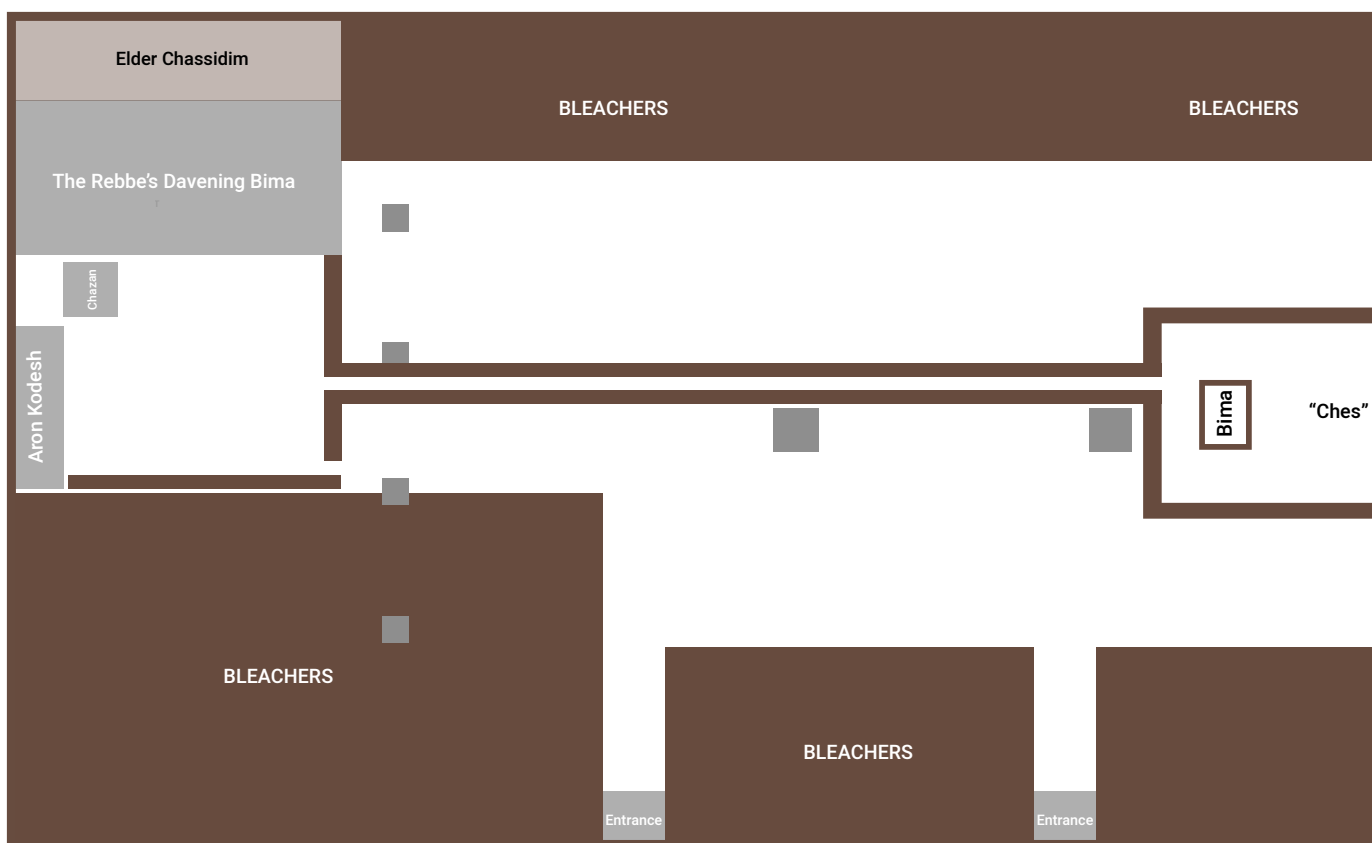
Hakofos with the Rebbe

Approximate
Depiction of
the Shul Setup

To accommodate the massive crowds who streamed to 770 to celebrate Simchas Torah, and to enable as many people as possible to see and experience the proceedings, the main shul would be transformed from its regular year-round setup. Throughout the years, and especially as 770 expanded to its current size, the setup of *hakofos* changed and varied slightly.

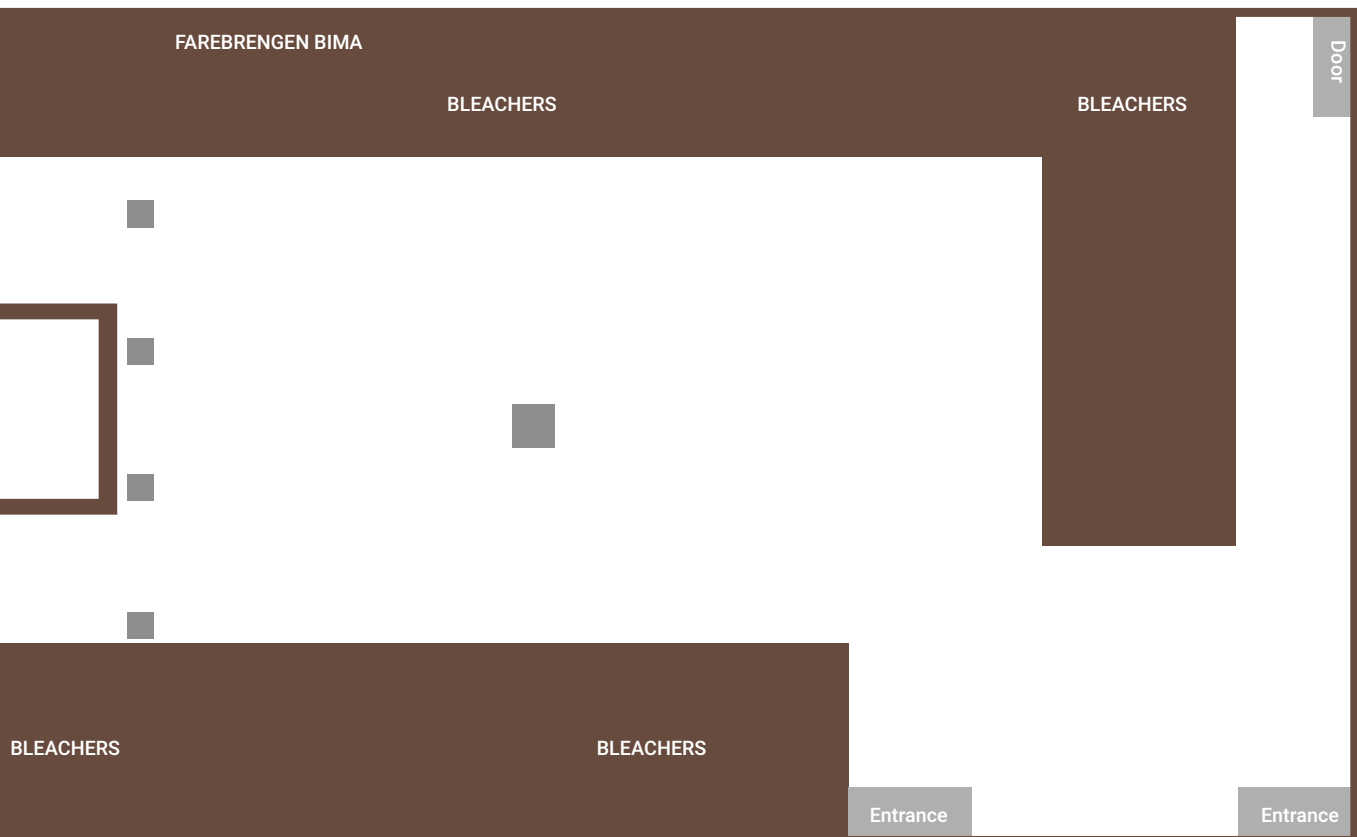
We present a schematic of the general setup of 770 during *hakofos*, mainly illustrating the *hakofos* from after the third expansion of 770 in 5733, until 5751, when the *hakofos* setup was once more upgraded to accommodate the growing crowds.

- » The Rebbe would enter *hakofos* from the entrance in the rear of the main shul. A *shvil* was formed in the crowd for the Rebbe to reach his davening *bima*.
- » The Rebbe's davening *bima* was raised higher than the rest of the year, allowing Chassidim around the room to see the Rebbe.
- » A small area alongside the Rebbe's davening *bima* was reserved for elder Chassidim. During the Rebbe's actual (first and last) *hakofos* (which were held in the center of the shul) many of them would move onto the Rebbe's *bima* to see.



- » All the sides of 770 were covered in bleachers. Many sections of the bleachers were reserved for groups from different places. Until 5738, the bleachers reached up to the ceiling. Later, the bleachers in front of the shul were built shorter allowing air to cross over the top.
- » During the Ata Hareisas and most of the *hakofos*, the Rebbe stood on his davening *bima*.
- » For the first and last *hakafah*, the Rebbe would dance in the center of the shul. The Torah was brought and handed to the Rebbe while he stood on his davening *bima*, and then the Rebbe would proceed down a narrow *shvil* lined with metal tables and heavy chains, as the crushing crowds would push to have a chance to kiss the Rebbe's *sefer Torah*.
- » In the center of 770 was a square surrounded by metal tables, known as the "ches." Inside the "ches" was the *shulchan hakeriah* and an empty space where the Rebbe would dance *hakofos* (in later years the dancing area was on top of a heightened *bima*). For many years the entire inside area of the "ches" was on ground level, until the later years when it was gradually raised.
- » Upon reaching the "ches" the Rebbe would make a half-circle around the *shulchan hakeriah* while reading from his siddur the *pesukim* of the *hakafah*, and then the Rebbe would begin dancing (with Rashag, until 5747). The Rebbe would complete the circle around the *bima* on his way back from the *hakafah*.
- » Throughout his *hakofos*, as the Rebbe would hold his hand on the shoulder of Rashag and dance in circular motion, he would gaze at all of the participants. In years when Rashag was not present, and the Rebbe danced on his own, the Rebbe would dance heavily with the Torah as he slowly moved around in a circle motioning with the Torah toward every part of the shul, and to each person in every row.

Special thanks to Rabbi Mendel Feller and Rabbi Eliezer Zaklikovsky for reviewing this material.



מבית הגזע
TREASURES
FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY



THE SEFER HAFTAROS

THE HAFTARAH SCROLL

For many years, there was a scroll that looked like a *Sefer Torah* in the Rebbe's room. Actually, it was a *Sefer Haftaros*—written on parchment and wrapped around *atzei chayim*, with a velvet mantle.¹ The scroll sat on a table built by the Rebbe Maharash², alongside a walking stick that had belonged to Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev.

Many *sefarim* used by the Rebbe over the years were piled on this table as well. The Rebbe instructed his *mazkir*, Rabbi Leibel Groner, to not place any *sefarim* on top of this scroll.

The origin of this scroll remains unknown. One of the *atzei chayim* bears the following inscription:

Donated by Mrs. Toiba bas Reb Yoel in the year 5687. May this merit protect her and her husband Dovid ben Reb Meir Shlomo Rubin, and their sons and daughters, amen.

There is also a sticker that reads:

Reb Gershon Galin sheyichye, year 5718.

Reb Gershon was a wealthy Jew who lived in Crown Heights and contributed generously to Chabad institutions.

Over the years, many people noticed this scroll in the Rebbe's room during *yechidus*, and assumed it was a *sefer Torah*. The gabbai Reb Yankele Lipsker, once built a miniature *aron kodesh* to house this scroll and brought it to the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe told him that the scroll was actually a *Sefer Haftaros*, and instructed that the *aron* be stored in the library for safekeeping.

MiBeis Hagnazim, article 110, p. 284.

1. See Shulchan Aruch Admur Hazaken, Orach Chaim vol. 2, 284:4.

2. See *Mibeis Hagnazim*, article 103, p. 277.

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS



Retroactively Disappeared

Rabbi Ephraim Rosenblum a"h from Pittsburgh shared the following story:

In 5714*, I was learning in 770. During the summer of that year, I went with a few *bochurim* on Merkos Shlichus to disseminate books from Merkos and to talk to people about Yiddishkeit, etc. There were four of us: Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson, Reb Sholom Feldman, Reb Azriel Chaikin, and myself. We first traveled to Washington and then to Virginia.

On the I-95 North on our way back from Virginia, near Elkton, Maryland, we got into an accident. It seems that everyone in the car had fallen asleep, and the car rear-ended a truck and was totaled. Unfortunately, we all had injuries; Gershon Ber broke his nose and a few teeth, Azriel Chaikin had a fractured thigh, and I was unconscious for a while. We were taken to the Elkton hospital.

This happened on a Thursday night. On Friday, we received a telegram from the Rebbe wishing us a *refuah shleimah*. The next day was Shabbos Mevarchim Av, Parshas Matos, and the Rebbe held a farbrengen. At the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about two levels of *teshuva*; one level does not entirely remove the effect of the sin, while the second level, *teshuva me'ahava*, eradicates the sin entirely and retroactively, to the point that *zedonos naasos lo k'zochios* (willful transgressions are transformed into merits).

The Gemara says, the Rebbe continued, that *teshuva* brings *refuah* to the world. Thus, it is understood that *refuah* contains two stages as well: one level of healing cures the ailment, and a higher level removes it entirely, just like *teshuva* retroactively erases the *aveirah*.

Then the Rebbe said, "Since there are a few *bochurim* in

need of a *refuah*, may they have their *refuah*, not only by being completely healed of their injuries, but also to the extent that their health and strength should be even stronger than before." The Rebbe instructed everyone to bless them and wish them a speedy recovery and increased strength.

I went home to Montreal. Unfortunately because of the accident I was off my legs for six weeks. When I returned to 770, Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson came over to me and said, "The Rebbe wants you to come into *yechidus*." I was stunned.

I went into the Rebbe's room. When I came into *yechidus* the Rebbe said, "*Ich vill dir poshut freggen vos du machst...*" (I just want to ask you how you are faring). To me it seemed that the Rebbe was asking this out of concern, since I had been on his shlichus when the accident happened. So I told the Rebbe how I was doing, and the situation with my health.

When my mother went into *yechidus*, the Rebbe told her, referring to me, "I want to take part in his simcha." She understood this to mean that the Rebbe would participate in my wedding. When the time of my wedding came, the Rebbe was no longer being *mesader kiddushin*. My mother asked the Rebbe, "The Rebbe said he would participate in the wedding..."

The Rebbe said, "I will participate; when they are going to the *chuppah* someone should call 770 to notify [the Rebbe] that they are going to the *chuppah*." This was the Rebbe's way of participating in the wedding.¹ **T**

1. Based on Reb Ephraim's My Encounter interview, Living Torah disc 197, program 785. It should be noted that the Rebbe gave similar instructions to other *chassanim* as well.



SACRIFICE REB DOVID BRAVMAN & DEVOTION

BY: RABBI BENTZION SHTROKS

לזכות ילדינו היקרים
יצחק צבי, מנחם מענדל, אברהם
מאיר, יהודית, וישראל ארי' לייב
שיחיו
שיגדלו להיות חסידים יראי
שמים ולמודנים
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אליעזר וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו
וואלף

One evening in the winter of 5683*, a young Dovid was strolling the streets of Rostov when he suddenly heard the captivating melodies of a profoundly exquisite chassidisher niggun. The soul-stirring tune intrigued him to find the source of the heartfelt singing, which turned out to be a farbrengen of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Dovid entered the room where the farbrengen was held and a Chossid sat him down under the table. At one point during the evening someone accidentally stepped on him, causing him to jump up and cry out in pain. Reb Yonah Eidelkopf started escorting the young boy out of the house so that he wouldn't disturb the farbrengen. When the Frierdiker Rebbe noticed this, he remarked: "An eideler kind—A refined child." He looked intently at Dovid for a few moments and said: "Ich hodeveh em mit di oigen—I am raising him with my eyes."¹

The story of Reb Dovid Bravman, a prominent Chossid, paragon of mesiras nefesh and absolute bittul to the Rebbeim and their directives.²

Youth

Reb Dovid Bravman was born in Kherson, Ukraine, on Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5670* to his parents, Chaim and Golda Bravman. With the onset of the Bolshevik pogroms, the family moved to Yekaterinoslav and from there to Rostov, where the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe lived at the time.

After his first encounter with the Frierdiker Rebbe (see above), Chassidim gave Dovid much attention and slowly educated him in the ways of Chassidus and *hiskashrus*. Several months later, instead of having the Bar Mitzvah celebration his parents had planned for him, he opted to spend the day in the Frierdiker Rebbe's shul.

During summer vacation of that year, Dovid's parents agreed to send him to Tomchei Temimim in Nevel for several weeks. When vacation was over and Dovid's parents sent him telegrams to return home, he refused to leave the yeshiva.

A few months later, Dovid traveled to the Frierdiker Rebbe in Rostov where the Frierdiker Rebbe told him he could return home and continue studying at the "gymnasium" (a secular school that prepares students for university) where he had been until then. Dovid chose instead to continue learning in Tomchei Temimim where he remained for another ten years until 5694*.

Tomchei Temimim

Reb Dovid excelled in Tomchei Temimim and received special attention and mentorship from Reb Yisroel Neveler and Reb Chatche Feigin. He was an exceptional *oved* who would often be seen davening for many hours deep in thought and *dveikus*.

Reb Leibel Mochkin related:

"I once visited Reb Dovid in his home in Malachovka, to



REB DOVID BRAVMAN (SEATED ON THE FAR RIGHT) WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER SHORTLY AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL IN POCKING. HIS PARENTS IN LAW, REB YAAKOV YOSEF RASKIN AND HIS WIFE, ARE TO THEIR LEFT. BEHIND THEM ARE MEMBERS OF THE RASKIN FAMILY.

bring him a letter from Reb Nissan Nemanov. Reb Dovid's mother told me her son was davening Maariv. I waited roughly 45 minutes, and Reb Dovid did not even realize I was standing there."

Reb Dovid once shared that the Frierdiker Rebbe gave him specific instructions regarding his *avodah*. For example, he could minimize the amount of time he slept at night but should not cut back on his eating.

He became very friendly with the older *bochurim* in the yeshiva, sharing an exceptional friendship with Reb Mendel Futerfas, Reb Avrohom Drizin, and Reb Bentzion Shemtov.

When the Soviet authorities shut down the Tomchei Temimim branch in Nevel, Reb Dovid traveled together with the other *bochurim* to learn in Kharkov. The yeshiva did not last very long there before the Yevsektzia caught up with them, and the students were forced to scatter amongst the other branches of the yeshiva in various cities.

At All Costs

When most of these underground branches of Tomchei Temimim eventually shut down, Reb Dovid traveled home to Malachovka, a suburb of Moscow.

At the time, having a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe in one's possession was considered a serious crime so we unfortunately do not have many of the Frierdiker Rebbe's letters from that time period.

In the only extant letter to Reb Dovid from then, the Frierdiker Rebbe instructs him to register as a resident of Moscow for three months so he can be eligible to receive a passport to immigrate to Eretz Yisroel.

Shortly after arriving home in Malachovka, he became the director of a government-operated textile factory network. In this position he merited to employ many members of *anash*, enabling them to earn a living stress-free without working on Shabbos.

Many Jews came to Moscow to arrange for passports in order to leave Russia. As mentioned, one needed to be a registered resident of Moscow to apply for one, and to be a resident one needed to be locally employed. The most popular solution was to turn to Reb Dovid who graciously, and with much *mesiras nefesh*, granted documents stating they were employees of the textile factory. This ruse was extremely dangerous as it jeopardized his own livelihood and was a crime punishable by death.

Reb Dovid established an underground cheder in Malachovka for thirty young children. Eventually, he also became active in the broader operation of underground yeshivas, maintaining them financially and coordinating their relocation when necessary.

Marriage

In 5706*, Reb Dovid became engaged to Tzivya, the daughter of Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin. The couple wrote a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe asking for a bracha for the shidduch, even though it was impossible for the Frierdiker Rebbe to respond to them by mail or telegram. After leaving Russia the following year, the couple received the response the Frierdiker Rebbe had written for them with his approval and blessings for the shidduch.

The wedding took place on 8 Teves 5706* at the Bravman residence in Malachovka. "It was a very *chassidische* wedding, with lively dancing that lasted late into the night," shared the kallah, Mrs. Tzivya Bravman.

Immediately following their wedding Reb Dovid became intensely involved in the famous escape of Chassidim from Russia known as the "Eshalonen." He was from the leaders of the effort and risked his life on many occasions.³

First Encounter

Reb Dovid and his family left Russia in 5706* together with hundreds of other Lubavitcher families. They arrived at a DP camp in Pocking, Germany, the same location where



When the Frierdiker Rebbe asked the Chassidim in Russia to send him pictures of themselves, Reb Bentzion Shemtov sent a picture of himself together with Reb Dovid. When the Frierdiker Rebbe received the photo, he wrote on the back of it: "תרין ריעין דלא מתפרשין" ("Two friends who do not separate").

Although they had different temperaments, Reb Dovid and Reb Bentzion shared a strong friendship.

the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, resided at the time.

In 5707*, the Rebbe traveled to Paris, France to greet his mother and spent several months there arranging for her travel to the United States. During that time Reb Dovid traveled to Paris and merited to spend precious time with the Rebbe. This was the first time Reb Dovid met the Rebbe.

Reb Elchonon Yehuda Leib (Chonye) Raitzes related:

"When Reb Dovid returned to Pocking after his visit in Paris, several Chassidim asked him to share what he saw and heard from the Ramash. One of the things he mentioned was that it is known that each of the Rabbeim had one Chossid who was completely aligned with the Rebbe's will. He always wondered who this Chossid was in relation to the Rebbe. When he saw the Ramash, he immediately realized that this was the true and complete Chossid of the Rebbe."

Printing Sefarim

After their defeat in WWII, Germany's economy was in shambles. Since their currency was very low and the demand for employment was exceptionally high, the cost of production there was very cheap and, with their advanced technology, it was the ideal place to publish books at the time.

The Rebbe decided to seize this opportunity to print many *sefarim* of the Rabbeim and during Reb Dovid's visit to Paris, he was appointed to oversee the printing of Kehos *sefarim* in Germany.

The Rebbe would prepare the *sefarim* and then send them to Reb Dovid with detailed instructions on how to print and distribute them. Many of the *sefarim* were published via offset from older prints and the Rebbe would provide instructions for the Shaar Blatt (the title page) in accordance with the new standards set by the Frierdiker Rebbe for the publication of the Rebbeim's *sefarim*.

Amongst the *sefarim* Reb Dovid printed were Tanya, Shulchan Aruch, Torah Ohr, Likkutei Torah, the *sifrei Chassidus* of the Mitteler Rebbe, Piskei Dinim of the Tzemach Tzedek, Sefer Hamaamarim Yiddish of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and others.

Reb Dovid would send these *sefarim* to Germany, France, Belgium, England, the United States and other countries.

The Rebbe corresponded with Reb Dovid frequently regarding the printing operations. In almost every letter, the Rebbe encouraged speeding the printing process and coordinated an intricate system involving Chassidim throughout Europe to ensure the printings could happen in a timely manner.

Reb Dovid was also one of those to whom the Rebbe would send the new *sichos* and *maamarim* of the Frierdiker Rebbe to be shared with the Chassidim in Pocking.



REB DOVID IN POCKING, 5709*.

Rescuing The Sefarim

At one point, the newly printed *sefarim* failed to arrive in New York, and the Rebbe's letters to Reb Dovid assumed an urgent tone and started to investigate the cause for the delays.

Two of the factors that caused the delays were: The German economy stabilized fairly quickly and their currency was rising in value. As a result, the American currency Kehos was using to pay for the publication did not have the same value in Germany as it did right after the war.

Secondly, the printer mixed the outstanding bills of several Jewish entities with the bills of Kehos. He considered all of the Jews in Pocking as one unit, and refused to release the *sefarim* of Kehos until the others paid their dues.

In the beginning of 5711*, after extensive efforts and after Reb Dovid gave the printer all of his own money, the newly published *sefarim* were finally released.

Reb Dovid and his family had been waiting to move to Eretz Yisroel, and as per the Rebbe's request, remained in Germany until the efforts to retrieve the *sefarim* were successful.

Now that the task was finally complete, Reb Dovid asked the Rebbe if it was appropriate for his family to move to Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe responded that he should ask the opinion

“When he saw the Ramash, he immediately realized that this was the true and complete Chossid of the Frierdiker Rebbe.”

of his family in Eretz Yisroel, and then let the Rebbe know. The Rebbe added that Reb Dovid should notify the Rebbe of how much money he was owed for rescuing the *sefarim*.

“From what I heard,” the Rebbe wrote to Reb Dovid, “you invested your own money [into this project] and much effort. I doubt you actually included the payment for your time in the [previous] account you sent...”⁴

Kfar Chabad

After over five years in Germany, Reb Dovid and his family received the Rebbe's *bracha* to relocate to Eretz Yisroel, arriving in Kfar Chabad several days before Shavuos 5711*. They moved into the house of Mrs. Bravman's parents Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin and his wife, who moved there in 5709* as early pioneers of the new town.

After settling in Kfar Chabad, Reb Dovid was asked to fill the position of *mazkir* for Agudas Chassidei Chabad of Eretz Yisroel. Reb Dovid asked the Rebbe whether to accept the position. The Rebbe advised him to earn a livelihood through another capacity, and to find an opportunity for a position connected to *hafatzas hamaayanos* as a secondary income.

His good friend Reb Nochum Goldshmid helped him find employment at the Bank Hamelacha in Tel Aviv.

Every morning, Reb Dovid took the 6:00 bus to Tel Aviv from Kfar Chabad and returned in the late afternoon to participate in *shiurei Torah*.

Reb Dovid himself did not feel fulfilled with his work at the bank. He viewed it as temporary since he preferred to be involved in *hafatzas hamaayanos*. Reb Dovid was happy to

be offered the opportunity to teach *shiurei Chassidus* in the yeshiva in Lod but the Rebbe instructed him that his primary occupation should be at the bank and his involvement in *hafatzas hamaayanos* should be in his spare time.

“I don’t know for certain why the Rebbe gave my husband this directive,” said Mrs. Tzivya Bravman. “I speculate though, that the Rebbe foresaw what was to come in a few years. When my husband passed away at an early age, I was left to care for five children. The financial benefits I received from the bank helped our family tremendously through the years.”

During the early years of Kfar Chabad, a new housing project was developing but although Reb Dovid wanted to purchase a home there, he did not have the 500 *lira* for the down payment. Someone recommended he purchase a home in Rishon Letzion with a financial plan that he could manage. This home also had the advantage of being near a Beis Yaakov school where his daughters could be educated.

When Reb Dovid asked the Rebbe whether to pursue this, the Rebbe sent him a letter and asked that it be publicized. In the letter, the Rebbe explained that the channel to receive the *brachos* that the Frieddiker Rebbe arouses on high for his Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel is specifically through living in Kfar Chabad. Even those who need to work for the time being outside of Kfar Chabad, should make every effort to eventually find work in Kfar Chabad, especially as the city continues to grow and more opportunities open up. The only reason to live outside of Kfar Chabad is if one is tied to another area by their communal position.

The Rebbe expounded on the great value of living in Kfar Chabad and foretold that it is only a matter of time until people come to this appreciation themselves.

The Rebbe concluded that this message should be publicized amongst *anash* and since the Torah values the money of Yidden, they should not waste it on writing these questions [to the Rebbe] to which the response is self-understood.

After receiving this letter, Reb Dovid and his family continued living in Kfar Chabad.

Communal Activist

When Reb Dovid arrived in Kfar Chabad in 5711*, he quickly became an essential part of the town’s heartbeat. Reb Dovid was from the lead voices during *chassidische farbrengens*, and he delivered a *shiur* in Chassidus every Shabbos morning with dozens of attendees. *Yungerleit* and *bochurim* clung to Reb Dovid and gleaned much inspiration from him.

Reb Dovid took the initiative in pursuing the establishment of a Lubavitch girls’ school in Kfar Chabad, which opened under the name Beis Rivka, as well as the establishment of a preschool. Reb Dovid invested much effort into

TWO LETTERS FROM THE REBBE TO REB DOVID, WINTER 5711, ADDRESSING THE RETRIEVAL OF THE SEFARIM AND REB DOVID’S SETTLING IN KFAR CHABAD.



TESHURA, MONDSHINE, 5782

these projects and received much encouragement from the Rebbe.

Aside from the abovementioned efforts, Reb Dovid was also the first to arrange and deliver a *shiur Chassidus* for women in Kfar Chabad. Many of the letters the Rebbe sent to Reb Dovid address the manner in which this should be conducted.

His wife helped him arrange the *shiurim* for women. In a letter dated 18 Shevat 5712*, the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana, wrote to Mrs. Bravman informing her that a special package was sent from New York with *sefarim* for the women’s *shiurim*.

In addition to a *shiur* for women, Reb Dovid also delivered a *shiur* to the girls. The Rebbe wrote to Reb Dovid several times about this *shiur* with specific interest in the effect it was having on the girls. The Rebbe also sent two letters to the girls

* 5711-1951, 5712-1952

in the *shiur* for Reb Dovid to learn with them.⁵

In 5715*, Vaad Kfar Chabad - the leadership committee or board of the town - was established. Naturally, Reb Dovid was appointed to be involved in the spiritual matters pertaining to the Vaad. In 5717*, Reb Dovid was appointed chairman of the board and he became responsible for and involved in the spiritual well-being of Kfar Chabad as well as its physical well-being.

Reb Dovid Chein once described Reb Dovid's dedication to the Rebbe's village:

"In 5717*, the Rebbe instructed that new housing should be built for the newly arrived Moroccan immigrants who were moving into the old Arab houses near Kfar Chabad. This directive seemed to be impossible for us to carry out. How would we manage to build new apartments when each of us were busy with the debts we had accumulated building our own houses, and the accounts of Vaad Kfar Chabad were completely empty?

"I can still hear the words of Reb Dovid ringing in my ears, as he told me: 'If you want to be included in "those that bear the title of a Jew," you ought to build! I am not referring to being a Chossid, but if you want to be a Jew! We need to build. Plow the ground with your nose. There are no excuses; if the Rebbe says that we should build, then we can build and we must build.'

"A meeting was held concerning this project. A prominent Chabad activist who was the Chabad connection to the government stood up and explained that there was no chance of gaining government support for building additional housing as the government had just recently supported the building of houses in Kfar Chabad. Furthermore, the fellow argued that it would be brazen to even request such support.

"Hearing these remarks triggered a soft spot for Reb Dovid. Reb Dovid jumped up and said: 'How can you think, let alone utter, such words?! If the Rebbe said that we should build, we will build! We are to put all logic aside, since our entire existence must be set aside when it comes to the view and the will of the Rebbe. Our entire being is not relevant in relation to the Rebbe.'

"Reb Dovid sat down completely shaken and started delegating jobs. I was given the duty of contacting the government offices that would be instrumental in making the project happen. For three months, I was sent from office to office, with my requests consistently falling on deaf ears. Every official sincerely advised me to give up on my 'unrealistic' project.

"Each time I returned to Reb Dovid and reported that we had pursued all possible avenues, but Reb Dovid would not hear of it and said if the Rebbe said we should build, we will build. In the end, Reb Dovid's determination paid off, and the houses were built. I learned from the experience that when the Rebbe's will is important to someone, one can accomplish

even that which is unrealistic in the natural order of things.

"This was Reb Dovid's attitude to all of the Rebbe's matters. Much like a business person is concerned with their business, Reb Dovid was completely dedicated to fulfilling the Rebbe's will."

Traveling to the Rebbe

In the month of Tishrei 5717*, Reb Dovid merited to fulfill his life's dream—to travel to the Rebbe. Not many guests traveled from Eretz Yisroel to the Rebbe for Tishrei in those years, and Reb Dovid was one of the few who came that year. During the festive month, Reb Dovid merited to receive special attention from the Rebbe.

Reb Dovid Chein related:

"I remember when Reb Dovid traveled to the Rebbe. Before his trip, Reb Dovid became a different person. He walked and talked differently. Everything changed; it seemed like he was in another world. It was clear that his mind was in another place. He was fully engrossed in one thing, traveling to the Rebbe."

Reb Yitzchok Dovid Groner related: "At the first Shabbos farbrengen after he arrived, Reb Dovid stood behind me. Being that I am tall, he could not see the Rebbe well and he asked me, 'Can you be so kind and allow me to see the Rebbe? I have been waiting for this moment for thirty years already!' (It was then thirty years since the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia)."

Several times throughout the month, the Rebbe instructed the guests from Eretz Yisroel to say *l'chaim* and start an *Eretz Yisroel'dike niggun*.

On Shabbos Bereishis, which came directly after Simchas Torah, the Rebbe farbrenged for eleven hours. During the farbrengen, the Rebbe said that the guests from Eretz Yisroel needed to be *niskarev*, and the Rebbe distributed mashke and challah to them. The Rebbe called upon Reb Foleh Kahn, Reb Avrohom Drizin, Reb Dovid Bravman, and others.

Mrs. Tzivya Bravman related:

"During his stay near the Rebbe, my husband wrote to me: 'I can't tell you when I will return to Eretz Yisroel, as for now I am in the hands of the Rebbe.'"

Towards the end of the month of Tishrei, the guests who came entered into *yechidus* with the Rebbe. In the notes that Reb Dovid recorded from his *yechidus* it is apparent that most of the *yechidus* revolved around Kfar Chabad and maintaining it spiritually and physically.

The Rebbe gave Reb Dovid two specific directives in the

“I can still hear the words of Reb Dovid ringing in my ears, as he told me: ‘If you want to be included in those that bear the title of a Jew you ought to build!’”

yechidus. Firstly, he should learn two chapters of Tanya by heart each week. Secondly, when thinking Chassidus, he should connect it with the written words of the *maamar* by keeping the *sefer* open. This way, the mind does not wander and can absorb the written words.

When Reb Dovid returned from the Rebbe to Kfar Chabad, he exuded an extraordinary joy from his time near the Rebbe, repeating the instructions that the Rebbe gave him for Kfar Chabad.

Upon his return, Reb Dovid decided that if the Rebbe allowed his leadership to be officially incorporated into Kfar Chabad, the town would receive a whole new breath of life, both physically and spiritually. As a preparation for this, Reb Dovid initiated several meetings where the locals took upon themselves serious *hachlatos* to give the Rebbe much *nachas*.

After the meetings, Reb Dovid wrote a letter on a new letterhead for Kfar Chabad which had the words “Under the leadership of the Lubavitcher Rebbe” and conveyed the *hachlatos* the villagers made. Reb Dovid was saddened and disappointed when the Rebbe instructed him to destroy the new letterheads.

Reb Dovid Chein related: “I will never forget the pain that Reb Dovid expressed. He cried bitterly as he related to us the Rebbe’s answer. I do not know if Reb Dovid ever recovered from this difficult incident.”



REB DOVID SPEAKING AT A PUBLIC EVENT IN KFAR CHABAD.



REB DOVID SPEAKING AT THE FIRST KINUS OF TZEIREI AGUDAS CHABAD DURING HIS VISIT TO THE REBBE, TISHREI 5717*.

End of Life

In the winter of 5719*, Reb Dovid became ill. After undergoing a medical operation to examine his condition, the doctors determined that Reb Dovid had a severe brain tumor that had gone unnoticed for a long time. It soon became apparent that the growth had spread significantly and Reb Dovid needed a miracle.

During the early stages of his illness, when Reb Dovid was still capable of writing, he wrote a letter to the Rebbe explaining his dire situation. Reb Dovid asked for a *bracha* that he should have a complete recovery so that there should be no holdback to the Rebbe’s work.

Throughout the few months that Reb Dovid was unwell, *anash* in Kfar Chabad and in New York davened for him. Reb Dovid’s brothers-in-law, Reb Dovid Raskin and Reb Leibel

“I will never forget the pain that Reb Dovid expressed. He cried bitterly as he related to us the Rebbe’s answer.”

Raskin, as well as others, mentioned Reb Dovid’s name to the Rebbe frequently in letters, during farbrengens and even in *yechidus*.

On 4 Teves 5719* the Rebbe turned to Reb Dovid Raskin—who was the *baal koreh* for the Rebbe on weekdays—after Krias HaTorah, instructing him to make a *mi shebeirach* for Reb Dovid. The Rebbe remarked: “They have added a name to him—Boruch.” When Reb Dovid Raskin forgot Reb Dovid’s mother’s name, the Rebbe interjected: “Ben Golda.”

In a heartfelt letter to Reb Dovid and Reb Leibel Raskin, their father, Reb Yaakov Yosef (Reb Dovid’s father-in-law) pleaded with them to beg the Rebbe to guarantee that Reb Dovid will have a complete recovery.

Reb Dovid and Reb Leibel entered *yechidus* on 17 Teves 5719*, asking the Rebbe to guarantee their brother-in-law Reb Dovid’s complete recovery. The Rebbe told them that only the Aibershter could guarantee and that he would read their letter at the Ohel of the Friediker Rebbe.

When it seemed that the Rebbe finished the *yechidus*, Reb Dovid repeated: “The Rebbe should guarantee.” The Rebbe responded in a more serious tone: “This is a *poilisher* way. To guarantee only the Aibershter himself can. You should share good news.”

On the evening of 24 Sivan 5719*, at age 50, Reb Dovid passed away. Many residents of Kfar Chabad and other Chasidim participated in his funeral from Kfar Chabad to Tzfas where he was laid to rest.

Before Reb Dovid’s tombstone was erected, the Rebbe gave an instruction that included in the words being inscribed on it should be written: “from the prominent students of Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch.” **T**



NICHUM AVELIM LETTER SENT BY THE REBBE TO THE BRAVMAN FAMILY DURING SHIVA FOR REB DOVID.

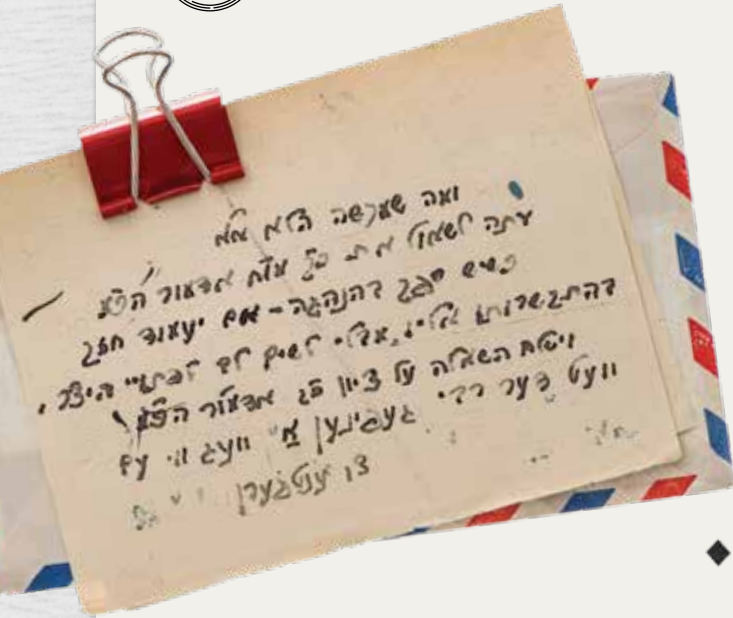


THE INSCRIPTION ON HIS TOMBSTONE REQUESTED BY THE REBBE, “מחשובי תלמידי תומכי תמימים ליובאוויטש”

1. This version of the story was shared by Reb Yitzchok Axelrod in the name of Reb Shmuel Taichman.
2. Much of the information in this article is culled from *Teshura—Bar Mitzvah, Mondshine 5782*.
3. See *The Great Escape*, Derher Adar II, 5782.
4. Letter dated 22 Sivan 5711.
5. 22 Elul 5714, Igros Kodesh vol. 9, #2942.



לזכות
דוד בן שיינא לרגל יום
הולדתו, לשנת הצלחה בכל
מכל מכל כל, אמן, והצלחה
מרובה בעבודת השליחות



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Meeting



AS TOLD BY
RABBI RUVY NEW
(Boca Raton, FL)

My mother, Mrs. Assia New, was the daughter of Reb Isser Klugant, who was a first cousin of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana. Once, when she and my father, Reb Mendel New, went for dollars, the Rebbe told her, "מיר, זאלן זיך טרעפן אלץ משפחה און גוטע פריינט - we should meet as family and good friends."

Earlier this year, on 25 Teves, my mother passed away in Melbourne, Australia. At the time, her grandson's wife, Shira Gutnick from South Africa, was going through a grave medical situation.

During her pregnancy, Shira had been diagnosed with *yeneh machla* and needed surgery soon after she gave birth. On the operating table, her heart failed, and for several

weeks, a series of miracles kept her alive, on life support. A crucial operation was scheduled for the day of my mother's funeral in Australia and Shira's life depended on it. However, it was so complicated and dangerous that the surgeons were hesitant and needed convincing to go ahead with it. The prognosis was bleak.

At the funeral, we recited Tehillim for Shira, who needed miracles, and asked my mother to intercede on High on her behalf. At that very moment, 6,000 miles away in Johannesburg, Shira was being wheeled into the lengthy and complicated surgery.

Approximately an hour after the funeral, my mother's great-grandchildren, Shira's niece and nephew living in



RABBI NEW'S PARENTS RECEIVING DOLLARS FROM THE REBBE, 22 ELUL 5751.

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 84389

Crown Heights, Zevi and Etti Krinsky, went to the Ohel to daven for a successful surgery.

As they left the Ohel and entered the house by the Ohel, they were shocked to see the video that was playing. It showed both of my parents receiving dollars from the Rebbe on 22 Elul 5751*.

Following is a transcript of their exchange with the Rebbe in Yiddish: (Living Torah #122)

Rebbe: You should have a ksiva vachasima tova.

Mother: I request a blessing for my work supporting the children from Chernobyl who have been brought to Eretz Yisroel. I send money to them in Eretz Yisroel.

Rebbe: It should be with much success.

Mother: I request a blessing for all my undertakings.

Rebbe: (Handing my mother another dollar) Add this to the funds you send the children from Chernobyl, it will be a dollar more. (Turning to my father) You probably take part, as well?

Father: I help a little...

Mother: He helps a lot.

Rebbe: (Handing my father a dollar) Give this to your wife to make things easier for her, it will be one less dollar for her to worry about.

Father: Thank you.

Rebbe: Good Tidings.

Mother: Ksiva Vachasima Tova.

Father: I ask a blessing for health and livelihood and a blessing for our children who are shluchim, and for our

other children who support their siblings as shluchim.

Rebbe: There should be good tidings, and may they go from strength to strength.

Father and Mother: Amen.

Rebbe: Take advantage before Moshiach comes. When Moshiach will come, we will all go to Eretz Yisroel and you will not need to do more work in Australia.

Overcoming her shock, Etti immediately recorded what was playing on the screen and shared it with the family, writing, "Zevi and I just came to the Ohel for Shira's surgery, and this was playing on the screen. Absolutely incredible. We're speechless."

On the day of my mother's funeral, her great-grandchildren stood near the Rebbe's *Daled Amos* after beseeching the Rebbe for salvation for her granddaughter, and witnessed her encounter with the Rebbe and the powerful *brachos* the Rebbe showered on her family!

When the family heard the story, the Rebbe's *bracha* to my mother that "we should meet as family and good friends" resonated in a very special way.

Baruch Hashem, Shira's operation was a miraculous success and she went on to make a complete recovery.

YOUR STORY

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





6 TISHREI 5742 LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 201654

לזכות
 הבחור אברהם שמואל שיח'ל
 סלונים
 לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות כ"ח תשרי ה'תשפ"ד
 שיגדל להיות חסיד ירא שמים ולמדן כרצון כ"ק
 אדמו"ר ויגרום נחת רוח רב לכ"ק אדמו"ר
 נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

VOV TISHREI

YAHRTZEIT OF REBBETZIN CHANA

Following her passing in 5725 the Rebbe marked this day annually, by davening at the *amud*, reciting Kaddish and holding a farbrengen.

We present a pictorial overview of this special day in the Rebbe's presence.

Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer



The Rebbe davens all the Tefillos at the amud, and recites Kaddish.

6 TISHREI 5740 LEVI/FREIDIN VIA JEM 10/2/11



6 TISHREI 5747 LEV FREIDIN VIA JEM 8/48



6 TISHREI 5743 RABBI MICHAEL ZELIGSON



6 TISHREI 5750 LEV FREIDIN VIA JEM 227056



The Rebbe enters the shul for the farbrengen.



6 TISHREI 5744 LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM194932

Visitors from far and wide participate. In the late years, the farbrengen was televised as well.



6 TISHREI 5748 LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM18144

The Rebbe would often devote time to the topic of Jewish women, and specifically, the mitzvot pertaining to them, of which the name Chana is an acronym: ח' - חלה, נ' - נדה ה' - הדלקת נר [Kashrus, Taharas Hamishpacha, and Neshek].

At times, the Rebbe also shared personal memories about his mother's life, and their lesson to us.





JEM 13120



6 TSHREI 5747 LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 8259



LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 194938 (6 TSHREI 5744)

The Rebbe leaves the Farbrengen



6 TISHREI 5742



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 114259 (6 TISHREI 5738)

After which, the Rebbe heads home.

Letters

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

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

The Rebbe and the Yom Kippur War

Dear Editors,

In connection with the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War in 5734*, much has been written about how the Rebbe prepared for the war by maximizing the *ruchniyusdike zechusim* of *klal Yisroel* so that they would come through victorious in a war when all the chips, *al pi teva*, were stacked against them.

I would like to add some information “from behind the scenes” that I heard from my late uncle Yehuda Avner *alav hashalom*. His diplomatic career included postings as Israeli consul to New York (1967-70), First Secretary to Ambassador Yitzchak Rabin in Washington D.C. (from 1970), Israeli ambassador to the UK (1982-7), Israeli ambassador to Australia (1988-93), and at various times advisor to five Israeli Prime Ministers.

Parenthetically, Yehuda Avner was *zoche* to many hours of *yechidus* with the Rebbe as he was chosen by Menachem Begin (after the Rebbe requested it) to report back to the Rebbe about the Camp David discussions with President Carter. He was the guest speaker at the Kinus Hashluchim in 2008 and was interviewed by JEM for about six hours around that time. He passed away in 2015.

Being my mother’s youngest brother

and my family hailing from Manchester UK, he would try to visit as often as possible and on one memorable occasion in 1970 he appeared in Manchester for a short visit. The family would always try to pump for inside information and on that occasion he revealed the following, warning us not to share it outside the family.

One morning in 1970, Arik Sharon turned up in the Israeli embassy in Washington looking extremely tired.

My uncle asked him, “Arik, why are you looking so worn out?”

Arik: “I’ve been up all night.”

Yehuda: “Doing what?”

Arik: “I was with the Lubavitcher Rebbe for a few hours.”

Yehuda: “What were you talking about?”

Arik: “Well, first of all he took out a map of the Sinai desert and started talking about how I had conducted the attack on Abu-Ageila during the Six Day War, pointing out that had we attacked from a different direction our casualties would have been less.”

Yehuda: “Was he right?”

Arik: “With hindsight I had to admit that he was right. Then he began to talk about the viscosity of the sand in Sinai and how it affects tank mobility and what can be done to the tracks on the tank to improve grip!

“After that he says to me, ‘Tell me what

do you think of the Bar Lev line?’ I replied that I have doubts about its effectiveness. [In the event, the Bar Lev Line, a very long mound of sand along the Israeli side of the Suez Canal, proved useless as a defense as the Egyptians simply hosed it away with high powered water jets.] “Then the Rebbe said, ‘How would you get over the Suez Canal if the Bar Lev Line is in the way? I replied, ‘Why would we want to cross the Suez Canal?’”

Rebbe: “It may be necessary one day. I suggest that you, as Commander of the Israeli Army in Sinai, arrange for a camouflaged breach point in the Bar Lev line to the south of the Suez Canal that will enable you to get across in a clandestine way, with camouflage pontoon bridges ready to deploy across the Canal. And please do not ask the politicians for permission!”

It transpired that Arik Sharon listened to the Rebbe’s advice. During the Yom Kippur War, after the Egyptians swarmed across the Sinai desert and initially pinned down the IDF, Arik Sharon took twelve tanks and daringly crossed the Suez Canal at the prearranged point. He managed to blockade the three roads leading from Egypt to the Sinai Desert so that supplies could not get through to the Egyptian 3rd Army in Sinai. The 3rd Army was completely cut off and the UN and US began begging Israel not to starve them out.

The story of the Yom Kippur War includes many other miracles but basically it was Arik Sharon’s move behind the Suez Canal that clinched the Yom Kippur War in Israel’s favor.

So we now know that in that fateful *yechidus* in 1970 the Rebbe was preparing for the war *begashmiyus* also, not just *beruchniyus* - a full three years before the actual war!

B’virchas hatzlacho rabba,

Ephraim Potash

LONDON UK

The Rebbe’s Walk On Brooklyn Avenue

I’d like to relay my thanks for the Derher issue of Tammuz including the interview with Rabbi Shlomo Zarchi.

These memories inspire Chassidim with *hiskashrus* and are a major tool to *leben mit’n Rebbe’n* today.

In the article was written about the Rebbe walking on Brooklyn Ave., that he would cross diagonally from the side of the church. However, we remember seeing that the Rebbe would not cross there but at President Street. The only exception was that if an event was taking place on the block, the Rebbe would cross already by Eastern Parkway and walk on the other side of Brooklyn Ave.

The mention of two *bochurim* escorting the Rebbe brings to memory a personal experience. It was Shabbos Breishis 5739 (late 1978) when another *bochur* and myself waited at the Rebbe’s house at 8:20 a.m. to escort the Rebbe to 770.

As known, the escort was set up as a result of the Rebbetzin’s request.

We stood across the street and when both of us were present, we saw the window shade going up and then down. A minute later, the Rebbe walked out and crossed President Street and began walking to 770. I distinctly recall the Rebbe saluting to non-Jewish neighbors as he went on his way.

Wishing you hatzlacha rabba!

Michael A. Seligson

CROWN HEIGHTS

