

Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער

Yerushalayim

HASHEM'S CAPITAL

“I Have Planted a
Cedar in
Eretz Yisroel”

REB EPHRAIM WOLFF

WHEN I
WENT ON
SHLICHUS...

STORIES SHARED BY SHLICHIM
ABOUT HOW THEIR SHLICHUS BEGAN



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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



As Chassidim, reciting the Rebbe's *kapitel* is one of the ways we maintain our connection with him, and channel his *brachos* into our lives.¹

The Rebbe explains that because this *kapitel* is recited every day of the year, its contents must be relevant throughout the year, serving as a lesson in *avodas Hashem*.²

This year's *kapitel*, קקב, is filled with important lessons elucidated throughout all of Chassidus. One theme that stands out is the significance of the city of Yerushalayim—ירושלים הבנויה כעיר שחבורה לה יחדיו.

The city is special in many ways, but the Rebbe points out something that seems contradictory:

On one hand, the walled city represents a sense of unity within the Jewish people: the wall insulates its inhabitants from the outside world and brings them close to each other.

In the times of Moshiach, however, we are promised that פרזות תשב ירושלים—the city will be unwalled, transcending its current physical boundaries and opening up the infinity of *Elokus* to the world.

The truth is, both elements are important. The revelation at the time of *geulah* will provide all the advantages and unifying factors that the wall does. In fact, the wall will be a “חומת אש—a wall of fire,” uncovering intense levels of *Elokus*. And at the same time, the energy of Yerushalyim will exceed all ‘walls’ and boundaries, spreading its light to the entire world.

A taste of this truth, says the Rebbe, is brought about through our *avodah* while still in *golus*. By staying true to who we are despite being surrounded by other nations, allowing the special notion of “ונפליו אני ועמך”, being distinguished as a people, to shine, even during *golus*, we demonstrate that we can defy all physical boundaries and connect to *Elokus*.³

This lesson comes at an appropriate time, on the eve of the International Kinus Hashluchim. As related in some of the stories in this issue, the Rebbe's earliest shluchim embarked on a journey to the unknown, arriving in spiritual (and at times, physical) wastelands. But taking pride in who they were and whom they represented, with the *kochos* and direction of the *nossi hador*, they managed to break through and illuminate the darkest of spaces with the infinite light of *Elokus*.

This is what fuels our *shlichus*, today, bringing the message of our Rebbe to the furthest corners of the world, illuminating it with the light of the *geulah*, may it come *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

The Editors

בשם השם, מחרת יום הכיפורים ה'תשפ"ד

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 357, et. al.
2. Chof Cheshvan 5742.
3. Maamar Amar R. Oshia, 19 Kislev 5748.



דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word on the Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

נח

בְּאֵי-אֶתָּה וְכָל-בֵּיתְךָ אֶל-הַתֵּבָה (ו', א)

"Come into the *teiva*, you and
all your household..."

There's a well known explanation of the Baal Shem Tov on this *posuk*: 'Teiva' also means 'word'. Entering the 'Teiva' means going into the words of Torah and *tefillah*, to invest ourselves in them.

According to this, though, it seems curious that later in the *parsha*, after the water subsides, Noach is instructed: "צֵא מִן הַתֵּבָה"—to leave the *teiva*. If *teiva* means words of davening and learning, why would someone ever be told to leave them?

Yet, this is indeed the case, because in order to achieve the goal of transforming this world into a *dira b'tachtonim*, we need to go out into the *tachton*—the world—and bring to it the purity and holiness of Torah and *tefillah*, thereby transforming the *tachton*. In terms of day-to-day living, this means that after davening and learning one must *leave* the

walls of the shul and *beis midrash* in order to deal with—and transform—the *gashmius* of our world.

In order for this exit into the world to be successful, however, there needs to be the preparation beforehand of אל בּוֹא "התבה, to spend a while in the safe confines of Torah and *tefillah*. Only then can the *avodah* in the outside world be the way it should.

Takeaway:

Just as Noach and his family stayed in the *teiva* for a full year, a period that includes all the different seasons and circumstances possible (summer, fall, winter and spring); so must one stay inside the "teiva" of Torah and *tefillah* until it is absorbed in all of one's own private different 'seasons' and facets of life. Only then can we go into the external world and influence it.

(Sichas Motzei Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara
5740; Hisva'aduyos 5745 vol. 1, p. 516)

לזכות
 הרה"ת שולם דובער שיחי' נמדר
 הרה"ת חיים שיחי' ווייטמאן
 הרה"ת מנחם מענדל שיחי' באראן
 לרגל ימי הולדתם בחדש חשוון

שיהיה להם שנת ברכה והצלחה, בני חיי ומזוני רוויחי, ושירו נחת רוח רב ממשפחתם ויצליחו בשליחותם מתוך הרחבה.

נדפס על ידי חותניהם
 הרה"ת יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר שיחי' טייכטל
 נאשוויל, טענעסי

לך לך

והנה אימה חשכה גדלה נפלת עלינו (טו, יב)

“...And behold, a fright, a great darkness was falling upon him.”

The Torah relates that during the *bris bein habesarim*, a great dread and darkness befell Avraham Avinu. Rashi explains that this is an allusion to the tribulations and darkness of the Yidden’s future exiles.

This seems puzzling: How can it be that precisely at a time when Hashem is making a covenant with Avraham, expressing His deep love for him—a love which knows no limit and is unbreakable—He also brings up the darkness and suffering which Avraham’s descendants would endure? How is this compatible with the great love and closeness of the *bris*?

The truth is that in essence, it is specifically in *galus* where the deepest love of Hashem for Yidden is expressed. This can be understood by way of analogy from a teacher–student relationship. At times, while teaching, a new idea arises in the teacher’s mind. When this occurs, the teacher turns his attention to the new idea. The deeper the idea is, the more the teacher must concentrate on it. During these moments, the teacher’s attention to the student weakens and the student may feel that the teacher has become distant.

The reality is, however, that the “weakening” in the teacher’s attention to the student is actually for the student’s benefit, since the effort to understand and develop the new idea is for the sole purpose of transferring it to the student. In other words, it is precisely because of the teacher’s love for the student and his desire that the student should also comprehend the new idea, that he *seems* to distance himself for a time.

The same is true of *galus*: Though, externally, *galus* is a very painful experience, at its core it is a preparation for the sublime revelations which will be experienced with the

coming of Moshiach. These revelations will be so great that it is worth going through *galus* to experience them.

Therefore, it is precisely during the covenant Hashem made with Avraham, an event which expressed His boundless love to Yidden, that *galus* is evoked.

Takeaway:

We must not be fazed by the darkness of *galus* and realize that the darker it gets, the closer we are to the light of Moshiach. In order to bring about the *revelation* of that light, we, the ‘students’ need to have two things: 1. The knowledge that the darkness we see is only external, but that in truth, therein shines the brightest light. 2. A deep desire to receive more wisdom from the teacher, and a strong *hiskashrus* to him—despite the apparent distance. This brings the revelation of the great and never-before seen light, with the coming of *Moshiach tzidkeinu*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 359)

וירא

וירא אליי יהוה באלני ממרא (יח, א)

“And Hashem appeared to him in the plains of Mamrei...”

Rashi tells us the reason Hashem revealed himself to Avraham Avinu in this specific location: When Hashem commanded Avraham to give himself a *bris*, Avraham consulted Mamrei, and only after Mamrei gave his opinion did Avraham perform the *bris*. In this *zechus*, Mamrei merited that Hashem revealed himself on his land.

An obvious question can be asked: How can it be that Avraham Avinu should consult with someone else about fulfilling Hashem’s commandment?

In order to understand this, we must take into account the very purpose of creation, that *Elokus* should be revealed throughout creation, even in the lowest realms. The objective is that through Torah and mitzvos, we should reveal *Elokus* in every situation, every location and every person—non-Jews included.

That’s why when it came time to perform a *bris*, an act which laid the foundation for *Am Yisroel*, Avraham Avinu sought the counsel of a non-Jew, to highlight this very idea—that by doing the *bris* he is affecting the entire world around him. Thus, the *possuk* mentions the location where Hashem revealed himself—אלני ממרא to highlight the concept that *Elokus* has an effect on the physical world.

Takeaway:

Elokus needs to permeate every aspect of the world, and there is no thing, no place and no person which is not included.

(*Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 1, p. 358*)

חיי שרה

וַיְהִי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה

וְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה (כג, א)

“And the life of Sarah was one hundred years and twenty years and seven years; [these were] the years of the life of Sarah.”

The Midrash tells us something fascinating: In the Purim story, Queen Esther ruled over 127 provinces. The number 127 is not random, however. Since Esther is a descendant of Sarah Imeinu who lived for 127 years, she came to rule over 127 provinces.

There must be something deeper here, something more meaningful than two identical numbers. What is the deeper

connection that the number 127 conveys?

Rashi comments on our *possuk's* seeming redundancy, repeating the word “שנה” multiple times. From this we learn something unique about the life of Sarah. For most of us, our lives are filled with transitions and changes, both physical and spiritual. No two years will be the same. This was not so with Sarah Imeinu, Rashi says. *All* the years of her life were exactly the same in terms of their goodness and perfection—כולן “שוין לטובה”.

This supernatural equivalence can also be found in the provinces over which Queen Esther reigned: The Yidden were spread throughout all 127 provinces of the Persian Empire. Naturally, there were differences between them—even extreme differences—in their opinions and behavior, depending on where they lived. Yet, despite their differences, *all* the Yidden in *all* 127 provinces—without exception—were equally steadfast in their decision to defy Haman’s decree, to live with *mesiras nefesh*, day in day out, for almost an entire year.

This is the similarity between Esther’s provinces and Sarah’s years: Despite all the different events which occurred throughout Sarah’s lifetime, and despite all the differences between the various provinces under Esther’s reign, they were all equal in goodness—“כולן שוין לטובה”.

Takeaway:

Though there may be differences between Yidden—depending on where they live they might have different behaviors, customs and languages and indeed, Torah instructs us to follow the customs of the land, *dina d’malchusa dina*—nevertheless, when it comes to our commitment to Hashem and to His Torah, we rise above all differences and are united as one.¹

(*Sichas Purim 5730*)

1. In the *sicha*, the Rebbe concludes with an additional lesson for the way Hashem should treat the Yidden; see there.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 209533 (2 CHESHVAN 5746)

“SIMICHLA!”

CHESHVAN 5746

A description of events at the end of Cheshvan 5746, as recorded in the diary of Meir Yechiel Hershkowitz, a bochur in 770 at the time.

Set in the background of the Kinus Hashluchim, the ongoing Sefarim case was on everyone's mind. As Rosh Chodesh Kislev approached, the Rebbe repeatedly emphasized the importance of Simcha in this special time.

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 | תנ"צ'בה

Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, Chof-Hei Cheshvan

On Friday night, shluchim from all over the United States, here for the third annual Kinus Hashluchim, farbrenge until the wee hours of the morning in Oholei Torah.

In the first *sicha* at today's Shabbos Mevarchim farbrengen, the Rebbe discussed the upcoming month of Kislev, the only month that ends with a Yom Tov (Chanukah). Kislev is also a month of *Chassidische Yomim Tovim* and Chassidus places an emphasis on joy. We must increase in *simcha*. Everything happening in the world is due to the darkness of *galus*, a sign that our *simcha* until now isn't enough!

We will definitely succeed in making increased *simcha* a reality. Faced with the "glinting sword" of our joy, the "menaged" (opponent) will be unable to disrupt. The Rebbe also mentioned special dates in Kislev that are associated with increased joy, "especially Rosh Chodesh Kislev."

After the *sicha*, the Rosh Chodesh Kislev niggun was sung and the room was filled with a special atmosphere of joy.

During the second *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke at length about current events in Eretz Yisroel, the importance of *Shleimus Ha'aretz*, and not to be intimidated by other nations. (A representative of the Israeli government was present at the farbrengen.)

The Rebbe then said a *maamar k'ein sicha*, titled *V'Avraham Zakein*.

The Rebbe explained the passage in Zohar "שעתא חדא ויומא חדא ריגעא חדא" ("One hour, one day, one moment...") according to Kabbalah. The Rebbe then connected this with the third annual Kinus Hashluchim taking place this weekend, "being that I'm also a shliach of the (Friediker) Rebbe."

In the context of this Zohar, the Rebbe explained that the word shliach stands for "שעתא לימוד יומא חדא". The Rebbe expounded on each word and connected it with the above mentioned Zohar. This ties into what was spoken about (in the previous farbrengen), that "shliach" plus ten (*kochos hanefesh*) has the numerical value of Moshiach.

The letter *mem* (of Moshiach) represents the unification within Torah itself; the revealed parts of Torah (open *mem*), and the hidden parts of Torah (closed *mem*).

As the farbrengen went late, the Rebbe spoke more



concisely and quicker than usual, mentioning that we will have to daven "at least a delayed Mincha" due to the late hour. Nevertheless, with many happy occasions coming up this week, the Rebbe said that those who gave bottles of mashke to *Mazkirus* (to be distributed by the Rebbe at the farbrengen as is customary), should come up quickly and in an orderly fashion. When Moshiach sees how everything is done with *zrizus*, he will come immediately as well.

The first one to receive *l'chaim* from the Rebbe was Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz who announced a gathering for the collection of *maamad* which would take place on Motzei Shabbos at 9:00 p.m.

Afterwards, Reb Yudel Krinsky announced that "the Kinus Hashluchim will take place on Motzei Shabbos, into Sunday and Monday, with a continuation throughout the entire year."

The Rebbe asked: "When does (the Kinus) begin?"

Reb Yudel responded that it began today with the Rebbe's farbrengen.

The Rebbe responded: "That already happened. When is the continuation going to start?"

Reb Yudel announced that it would begin tonight at 8:00 p.m.

The Rebbe remarked that 8:00 comes before 9:00 (as



KINUS HASHLUCHIM 5746. THIS WAS THE FIRST YEAR THAT THE GROUP PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN FRONT OF 770.

if to say that the announcement of the Kinus should have been first).

Subsequently, Reb Meir Harlig announced the *Seudas Hodaah* (for Rosh Chodesh Kislev).

The Rebbe asked him: “Who’s invited?”

He announced with excitement that all *Anash* and *Temimim* are invited to participate.

The Rebbe then finished his cup and began his father’s *Hakafos niggun*, strongly encouraging the singing.

The farbrengen concluded a few minutes after *shkiah* at 4:50 p.m., and was followed by Mincha.

After Mincha, Chassidim danced joyously until after Maariv, when the Rebbe left 770 to go home. As the Rebbe left, he encouraged the singing with his hands.

Kinus Hashluchim

On Motzei Shabbos, the Kinus began with Reb Moshe Kotlarsky as emcee introducing the Chairman of the Kinus, Reb Yudel Krinsky. Reb Yudel related that on Friday the Rebbe had asked him “how many shluchim came in.” When he answered about a hundred, the Rebbe replied: “It should be with a טראסק (a splash), after all it’s Shabbos Mevarchim Kislev.”

After Shabbos, the Rebbe told him that he wanted to give every shliach who came to the Kinus 100 dollars. The Rebbe also inquired as to how the Kinus was being paid for, to which he responded that every shliach chipped in 100 dollars. Hearing this, the Rebbe said, “If so, we have

to give them each 200 dollars.” Additionally, the Rebbe said that since shluchim will not want to spend the money that they received from the Rebbe, they should each be given an extra dollar to hold onto instead.

The Rebbe also instructed him to update the shluchim on all the details of the *sefarim* case because it is relevant to them for both physical and spiritual reasons, and that should be discussed during the Kinus.

Sunday, Chof-Vov Cheshvan

In the morning, as the Rebbe entered 770, he distributed nickels for tzedakah.

When Reb Shlomo Cunin passed, the Rebbe smiled at him and asked: “Do you still have כלים רקים - empty vessels?” When he replied that he did, the Rebbe told him, “If so, you should fill them up.”

As the Rebbe distributed the nickels, the Rosh Chodesh Kislev niggun was sung, and right before the Rebbe entered his room, he strongly encouraged the singing.

Continuation of the Kinus

A time was set aside at the Kinus to discuss the *sefarim* case, as the Rebbe instructed. Reb Yudel Krinsky went over the ongoing case in great detail. While talking, he burst into tears.

After his remarks, all the shluchim took upon themselves to increase in the recitation of Tehillim and giving tzedakah.

At 2:00 pm, the shluchim posed in front of 770 for a group photo. Afterwards they broke out in a dance to “Napoleon’s March.” Amidst the singing, Reb Sholom Posner was lifted up and he announced three times in a loud voice: “*Didan Natzach!*” After each proclamation, everyone responded “Amen!”

As *bochurim* standing nearby, seeing the shluchim, our only wish was to be part of this picture in the future.

After the photo, Reb Shlomo Cunin announced that Mincha would take place downstairs at 3:15 (although it’s usually upstairs) in a spirit of joy and victory.

Both before and after Mincha, we sang “Napoleon’s March” and the Rebbe encouraged the singing. As the Rebbe was leaving, he stopped to speak to Rabbi Berel Levy near the elevator.

Maariv also took place downstairs, and before and after the davening we sang and danced joyously, with the Rebbe encouraging the singing.

Monday, Chof-Zayin Cheshvan

In the morning, *Krias HaTorah* was held downstairs in the main shul, unlike the norm.

Before and after Mincha, the Rebbe vigorously encouraged the singing.

In the evening, when Reb Yudel Krinsky drove the Rebbe home, he told the Rebbe that on Sunday a picture was taken of all the shluchim in front of 770. A copy of the picture was also sent to Eretz Yisroel, to be printed in the Kfar Chabad magazine.

The Rebbe noted that when the picture goes to print, it should be specified that it was taken in front of 770 in Brooklyn, because there is another 770 in Kfar Chabad (then under construction).

Tuesday, Chof-Ches Cheshvan

In the morning, when the Rebbe arrived at 770, he strongly waved his arms to encourage the singing.

Waiting in *Gan Eden Hatachton* for the Rebbe were members of Aguch: Rabbis Binyamin Gorodetzky, Moshe Pinchas Katz, Mordechai Mentlik, Dovid Raskin, Yudel

Krinsky, Avrohom Shemtov and Zalman Gourarie.

The Rebbe spoke to them for about 10 minutes about the *sefarim* case. The Rebbe then came out into the lobby of 770 to distribute coins to children for tzedakah, looking very serious.

The Rebbe then returned to his room, and on the way, spoke again briefly with the members of Aguch who were still in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

Later Rabbi Gorodetzky entered the Rebbe’s room for about five minutes.

When the members of Aguch emerged from *Gan Eden Hatachton*, Reb Avremel Shemtov said that it was “fire.” When we asked what the Rebbe said, we were told to go to the zal and instruct everyone to say Tehillim and give tzedakah. Hearing this, we realized that something serious and deeply important to the Rebbe was taking place.

Mincha was held in the small *zal* as usual, and we sang and danced with much joy. The Rebbe encouraged the singing.

Maariv was held at 5:30 pm in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, and afterward, the Rebbe immediately went home.

In the evening, the *maamar* which the Rebbe said last Shabbos, “*V’Avraham Zakein*,” edited by the Rebbe, was distributed.

This was the first *maamar* in about five years that the Rebbe looked over and edited for print, and Chassidim in 770 danced with joy for over an hour at this great new revelation of light.

Already today, the big shul downstairs was prepared for the grand *Seudas Hodaah* in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev that will take place tomorrow.

At some point during the day, the lawyers from each side came to the Rebbe’s house to interview the Rebbetzin for the upcoming court case. *B’hashgacha protis*, the case has been scheduled by the non-Jewish judge for Yud-Tes Kislev, may it be a *didan natzach*.

Wednesday, Chof-Tes Cheshvan, Erev Rosh Chodesh Kislev

In the morning, when the Rebbe arrived at 770, he encouraged the singing.

The Rebbe went to the Ohel today, and came back about an hour after *shkiah*.

The chazzan for Maariv was Reb Sholom Dovber



CHASSIDIM FARBRENG ON ROSH CHODESH KISLEV, CIRCA 5740s

Friedman (from Italy) who led the davening with the Yom Tov tune in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

As the Rebbe left the shul after Maariv, he waved his hands to encourage the singing. Then everyone went outside and we danced for over an hour. When the Rebbe walked by on his way out of 770, he strongly encouraged the singing.

Today we found out that the Rebbe was going to edit the *sicha* from this Shabbos (Chayei Sarah) about shlichus. The Rebbe instructed that the *sicha* be printed together with the *sicha* from Simchas Torah this year (also about shlichus), which had been printed last week.

Seudas Hodaah

At 9:00 p.m., a large crowd started filling up the main shul of 770 for the grand *Seudas Hoda'ah* in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev. Reb Meir Harlig, as emcee and organizer of the *Seudas Hoda'ah*, began by wishing everyone a Gut Yom Tov.

Among the other speakers, Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz and Reb Zalman Gourarie shared what the Rebbe had said to them and the other members of Aguch on Tuesday morning. The Rebbe spoke with a lot of emotion and in the strongest possible tone, asked the members of the *vaad*: "Are you saying Tehillim and giving tzedakah?" Then the Rebbe banged on the table with his fist and said: "*Taparu Da Plachul!* 'From your cries come salvation!'"

Hearing this, Chassidim at the *seudah* decided to say Tehillim right away after *chatzos*. People also took upon

themselves to say *kapitelach* 100, 20, 22 and 69 every day, and give tzedakah daily.

Later on, Reb Berel Levin spoke about the history of the library, specifying that the manuscripts passed exclusively from Rebbe to Rebbe. At the end of the official event, the entire crowd stood up and recited the above-mentioned *kapitelach* of Tehillim, led by Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz.

Then Chassidim broke into joyous dance, *l'chaim* was said, and we danced for over two hours. After the dancing, we broke into smaller groups with different *mashpi'im* and farbrenged until the morning.

Thursday, Rosh Chodesh Kislev

Today, when the Rebbe arrived at 770, he encouraged the singing. Also before Mincha, and before and after Maariv, the Rebbe encouraged the singing.

Since today is a Chassidishe Yom Tov, all of the *bochurim* went on *mitvtzoim*. We rented eight Mitzvah Tanks corresponding to the eight years since the miracle in 5738.

Before *shkia*, as per the Rebbe's instruction, a printer was taken down from Vaad L'hafatzas Sichos to the Friediker Rebbe's Library (near the elevator), and three hundred copies of the Tanya were printed. The printing lasted well into the night. **1**

לזכות הרה"ת שלום דוב בער שיחי'
שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתו י"ז מרחשון
לשנת הצלחה בגו"ר



YERUSHAI

HASHEM'S
CAPITAL

ירושלם הבנויה בעיר שחברה לה יחדיו

(תהלים קכב, ג)

YERUSHALAYIM

An overview of the city of Yerushalayim, its significance in the Rebbe's Torah, and his relentless call for its integrity. Presented in connection with the Rebbe's kapitel this year—Tehillim 122.

Compiled by: Rabbi Yossi Katz | Written By: Rabbi Zelig Katzman

Yerushalayim. The very name evokes reverence, and love, in the Jewish heart. It is synonymous with holiness, with beauty, and is tied up in millennia of hopes and aspirations. Millions have longed to get but a glimpse of the city. Those unable to reach it in life sought to do so in death.

So central is this city to Yiddishkeit, that its name is repeated over and over in Jewish prayer, every single day. In Shemoneh Esrei we pray for the restoration of Hashem's Shechinah to Tzion, in Birchah Hamazon we ask for the rebuilding of Yerushalayim.

Its significance goes back to the beginning of time, when Hashem took soil from Har Hamoriah and used it to form the first human. It was the place where Avraham Avinu displayed his devotion to Hashem by binding his son Yitzchok as a sacrifice, where Yaakov Avinu dreamt of the ascending and descending angels and was told by Hashem of his place in creation and the destiny of his children.

The sacred city was later transformed into a base of power, where Dovid Hamelech set up his court. It was from there that he waged war against the enemies of Hashem and the Jewish people.

Upon achieving peace and supremacy in the region, his son Shlomo Hamelech set out to complete the monumental task of building a home for Hashem on earth, a physical

structure to contain a spiritual and unfathomable being. Shlomo expressed the paradox in his exclamation "האמנם ישב אלוקים על הארץ-הנה השמים ושמי השמים לא יכלכלוך, ואף כי י?—Has Hashem indeed settled on earth? Behold, the heavens cannot contain You, can it be that that this house can?!"

This paradox was especially clear in the placement of the Aron in the Kodosh Hakodashim, which didn't take up any physical space, a violation of the most basic laws of physics. This supernatural phenomenon highlighted the uniquely sublime nature of the place, where nature was suspended to make space for the Divine.

Another special quality of Yerushalayim is mentioned in Tehillim: "ירושלים הבנוי כעיר שחבורה לה יחדיו".¹ The Yerushalmi comments on this possuk "עיר שחבורה לה יחדיו-עיר שהיא עושה" "כל ישראל חברים". Yerushalayim has an extraordinary ability to effect unity among the Jewish people. The Rebbe points out that this function of Yerushalayim has practical ramifications in the physical world, regarding the consumption of korbanos, and the trustworthiness of all Yidden in Yerushalayim² regarding the Tahor status of Trumos and Maasros³. Another way to highlight this concept is the fact that ירושלים לא נחלקה לשבטים—it was not included in the division of

THE NAME "YERUSHALAYIM"

What is the source of its name?

Its first mention in the Torah is when Malchitzedek, identified by Chazal as Shem ben Noach, brings a tribute of bread and wine to Avraham Avinu after his victory over the four kings. Malchitzedek's title is king of Shalem, Yerushalayim's original name.

After Akeidas Yitzchak, the Torah tells us that Avraham renamed the site of the Akeidah as "Hashem Yireh," to symbolize how this is a mountain where Hashem can be seen. Putting the two names together gives us the name Yerushalayim, honoring the two tzaddikim, Malchitzedek and Avraham.

Looking deeper, the composite word Yerushalayim, Yireh and Shalem, can be read as 'complete awe.' This points to a special quality of the city. It empowers its inhabitants to attain a full measure of yiras Shamayim.⁴



RABBI SLONIM (CENTER) PICTURED WITH SEVERAL ASKANIM IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING PROJECT



SEEN FROM BEHIND YESHIVAS TORAS EMES ARE THE BUILDINGS THAT MAKE UP THE SHIKUN CHABAD NEIGHBORHOOD. AN ENTRANCE SIGN TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD BEARS THE NAME OF REB EZRIEL ZELIG SLONIM.

the land between the Tribes, for every Jew has ownership of this holy city.

CHABAD IN THE HOLY CITY

From already the early years of the Rebbe's nesius, the Rebbe urged Chabad askanim in Eretz Yisroel to found a Chabad neighborhood in Yerushalayim. Led by Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim, this effort was initially hindered by bureaucratic obstacles and lack of initiative on the part of many members of the committee dealing with this issue. The Rebbe expressed his frustration about the lack of progress in a letter to Member of Knesset Zalman Shazar (later Israel's president) dated 22 Cheshvan 5720: "I must express my pain from the fact that... Shikun Chabad in Yerushalayim has not yet begun even the first stages of construction..."⁵

Later that year in 5720, the 200th anniversary of the Baal Shem Tov's passing, the cornerstone was finally laid. The Rebbe sent a special letter of bracha to the project's vaad (dated 9 Adar). The Rebbe also gave special instructions regarding the laying of the cornerstone, including that it be done by children, tinokos shel beis rabban. In the following days the Rebbe asked for detailed reports of the Hanachas Even Hapina.

On 4 Sivan, the Rebbe sent a telegram to Rabbi Slonim, urging him to, at the very least, begin the construction within the Yemei Tashlumin of Shavuos.

On 12 Sivan, the Rebbe held a special surprise farbrengen, a rare occurrence in those days. Among the reasons for it the Rebbe mentioned that "there was a desire that before Shavuos, construction should begin on a new Chabad neighborhood in Yerushalayim... However, as in all positive things, there were several obstacles [to this project]... I have now been notified that it was done within the Yemei Tashlumin, which have the same status as that of Shavuos.

Over the course of that summer, the Rebbe sent several telegrams to Rabbi Slonim, asking about the progress. The spiritual gravity the Rebbe placed on this matter was on full display in an astonishing telegram from 28 Av: "Telegram [to me] the state of construction. [It is] necessary

for a pidyon at the Ohel on Erev Rosh Chodesh Ho'rachamim." Rabbi Slonim received the telegram a day later and immediately responded that the foundation had been poured. Several days later, on 17 Elul, the Rebbe sent another letter requesting an update, "No later than the following Erev Shabbos Kodesh, and again for the first day of Selichos, since then too a pidyon will be read by the Ohel."

The new neighborhood was located in a sparsely populated area very close to the Jordanian border. In those days, there were numerous terrorist infiltrations from Jordan and occasional artillery shelling. In *yechidus*, Rabbi Slonim brought this concern to the Rebbe, mentioning that many Lubavitchers were reluctant to commit to the project because of its proximity to the Jordanian border. The Rebbe smiled and said, "When you build the neighborhood there, it will require the border to move forward within a short amount of time." This remarkable prediction was soon realized with the victory in the Six-Day-War some seven years later, when Israeli forces reunited Yerushalayim and pushed the Jordanian army past the Jordan river.

The project progressed throughout the 5720s, and the Rebbe continued to encourage Rabbi Slonim in letters and telegrams. On Shavuos 5722, the Rebbe publicly praised Rabbi Slonim for his tireless efforts: "He decided to build in Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh, although he was lacking funds and is not a 'businessman' etc. and because of this many people laughed at him, saying that he will certainly not succeed. Nevertheless, in a short time he succeeded in constructing buildings, residences, a Shul and Beis Midrash, which are already standing, and he will certainly add..."⁶

AFTER THE SIX DAY WAR

After the Six Day War and the liberation of the Old City, its Arab inhabitants constituted the overwhelming majority. The Rebbe wanted to change this and restore the Jewish character of the Old City but was met with fierce resistance. In a *yechidus* with the Israeli reporter Hillel Zeidman, the journalist told the Rebbe that Israel's president, Zalman Shazar, was requesting that



* 5720-1959/1960, 5720s-1960, 5722-1962

the Rebbe encourage Chassidim to populate the Old City and restore its Jewish character. The Rebbe responded that he was prepared to do so, but that “they [the current government] are looking for a way to keep the Old Quarter Arab. It is obvious that no government can compromise on Yerushalayim, but they are seeking a way that Yerushalayim should formally be in Jewish hands, but to practically preserve the status quo, and that no Jews should dwell there. If Lubavitch had a lot of money we would risk it, but we do not, and it is unwise to invest money in a *safek* (questionable situation)...”

The Rebbe spoke publicly many times against the idea of ‘giving back’ any part of Yerushalayim.⁷

Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen was deputy mayor of Yerushalayim at the time, and would discuss many issues related to the city in *yechidus*. When the notion of splitting Yerushalayim between Jews and Arabs arose after the war, the Rebbe told him to strenuously object to it. The Rebbe told him that “Yerushalayim is the heart of *Am Yisroel*. *Har Habayis*, the site of the *Beis Hamikdosh*, is the head of *Am Yisroel*, and a body cannot exist without its head and its heart!”⁸

TZEMACH TZEDEK SHUL

Yerushalayim’s main Chabad Shul, Tzemach Tzedek, was founded in 5618 by a group of Lubavitcher Chassidim. Although Chassidim had lived in the city for many years prior, they had not had their own Shul. This project was funded by a generous grant from the Sasson family of India and a loan from the renowned Jewish philanthropist, Sir Moses Montefiore.

During World War II, as the Jewish population in the Old City dwindled and there were no regular *minyanim* in the Tzemach Tzedek Shul, the Friediker Rebbe wrote a letter to Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel requesting that they hire *minyanim* of people to daven there regularly.

In 5708, as Jordanian legions conquered the Old City, they destroyed many ancient and historic Shuls, including the famed Churva Shul. The only Shul to remain standing was the Tzemach Tzedek Shul.

Immediately after the Six Day War, with the Old City once again in Jewish hands, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Slonim to start *minyanim* there right away. Even though the Shul was in disrepair, having been used as a goat pen in the interim, and notwithstanding the unsafe conditions in the city, which had no Jewish inhabitants at the time, Rabbi Slonim immediately began arranging rides for Chassidim to come daven there three times a day.

With all the bureaucratic hurdles in ensuring the ownership of the Shul, Chassidim failed to ensure that the general



EXTERIOR OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK SHUL IN YERUSHALAYIM. SEEN IN THE FOREGROUND IS A PORTION OF THE ‘CARDO’, A 2000 YEAR OLD BOULEVARD THAT RAN THROUGH THE OLD CITY.



INTERIOR OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK SHUL, HOUSED ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE BUILDING

character of the Shul should follow the spirit of *Chassidus Chabad*. The Rebbe was greatly pained by this and wrote to leading Chassidim in Yerushalayim to work on restoring the Shul’s Chabad character. A meeting of *askanim* was called and a plan was set in motion to rectify the situation. A Chabad Gabbai, Reb Yehoshua Yusevitz was appointed. Every Chossid in Yerushalayim committed to coming to the Shul at least once every two weeks, this way the atmosphere of the Shul would indeed change for the better.

On Shabbos Bereishis 5729, Chassidim from across the country gathered in the home of Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim, from which they marched together to the Shul with joyful singing. One of the Chassidim went up to the *amud* and began to daven in the Chabad way. As the newly appointed *gabbai* called up the *olim* at the time of *Krias HaTorah*, the status of the Tzemach Tzedek Shul as a Chabad institution was firmly reestablished.

The Rebbe saw great significance in this Shul and viewed it as the property of the *Rabbeim* and their Chassidim. This came up in a property dispute with tenants on the first floor, who claimed the property as their own, having bought it from the government. Reclaiming the property from this family was a very complex process. The Rebbe was adamant

that the property must be returned to its rightful owners, Chassidei Chabad, in its entirety, saying "דאס איז מיין חלק" ("This is my portion and inheritance!")

The devoted Chossid Reb Avraham Parshan heard this and decided to act. He flew to Eretz Yisroel from his home in Canada and negotiated with this family, ultimately granting them his own home in the Old City, directly across from the Kosel, in exchange for vacating the premises of the Shul. Thus, the issue was resolved peacefully.

THE CHABAD NEIGHBORHOOD

On the fifth night of Chanukah 5740, the Rebbe launched a new project (referring to it as a "wild idea"), to build a Chabad city in Yerushalayim. After a year of correspondence and discussion between the Rebbe, the Chabad activists and the relevant offices, the Rebbe shelved it for the time being, writing that they are either unable or unwilling to pull it through. On 13 Nissan 5747, the Rebbe relaunched this effort for the immigrants who would very soon come from the Soviet Union, which ultimately resulted in the Shamir settlement in Yerushalayim.⁹

THE HOLINESS OF THE CITY

The Rebbe's reverence for the city of Yerushalayim can also be seen in his adamant stance on the issue of building secular and cultural institutions within the city.

An instance of this can be seen in the correspondence



THE REBBE WATCHES AS A FLOAT PASSES BY AT THE LAG B'OMER PARADE, DEPICTING THE REBBE'S RECENT CALL TO BUILD A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD IN YERUSHALAYIM FOR IMMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

TEARING KRIAH UPON SEEING THE CITY

Halacha mandates that one must rend their garments when seeing the city of Yerushalayim in its ruined state, as a sign of *aveilus*. Additionally, there is a special *bracha* which must be recited upon seeing the holy cities that have been destroyed.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe visited Yerushalayim in 5689, he wrote a vivid letter to his youngest daughter, Rebetzin Sheina, describing his feelings while approaching the city and performing the ritual: "The journey from Lod to Yerushalayim takes about a half hour... As we got closer to Yerushalayim, waiting to tear *kriah* (it is written that when one sees Yerushalayim one should tear *kriah* (and in the present Yerushalayim, where theaters etc. were built, one is allowed to tear *kriah* twice))..."

In modern times, after the founding of the state and especially after the Six-Day-War, when the Old City of Yerushalayim was again in Jewish hands, many suggested that the traditional *kriah* must no longer be performed and the *bracha*-no longer recited.

The Rebbe sharply rejected this view on several occasions, positing that the present conditions in Eretz Yisroel do not constitute a "rebuilding of Yerushalayim." This is consistent with the Rebbe's general opposition to the idea of the state as the "*aschalta de'geulah*." In one letter the Rebbe writes, "Now it is even more important [to emphasize the need to recite these *brachos* upon seeing the holy cities] to negate the opinion that a UN decision in 1948 nullified these *brachos*."

It should be noted that when the Rebbe sent *Talmidim Hashluchim* to Australia, they would sometimes stop in Eretz Yisroel as part of their *shlichus*. The Rebbe instructed that the *shluchim* should visit the *Kosel HaMaaravi* in Yerushalayim and recite the *tefillos* that are customarily said there. On one occasion, the Rebbe added that they should follow the practice of writing "*kvitelach*" to be placed in the wall, requesting a special *bracha* for success in their *shlichus*. (See *Venichbesha Haaretz*, p. 100).

* 5740-1980, 5747-1987, 5720-1960, 5689-1929

of the Rebbe with the famed Jewish sculptor Jacques Lipchitz. In 1972, the new Israel Museum was set to host a sculpture garden in Yerushalayim. This effort was opposed by many frum groups in Eretz Yisroel and around the world. Mr. Lipchitz wrote to the Rebbe requesting that he settle the issue with a public endorsement.

The Rebbe sent a lengthy response in which he detailed his opposition to the project, writing that “a ‘Sculpture Park’ in Jerusalem is quite incongruous with the character of the Holy City, which has a tradition of holiness, not only for Jews but also for gentiles, for a period of the past 4,000 years. It has always been the symbol of monotheism, free from graven images of any form. You surely know as anyone else, how much blood was shed by Jews for the preservation of the sacred status of the city when the Romans tried to make it Aelia Capitolina [a pagan city founded by the Romans on the ruins of Yerushalayim].”

Lipchitz responded with a letter in which he claimed that “our bad memories of the Romans should not overshadow our responsibility to fulfill the prediction of Isaiah that Torah will emerge from Zion.” Lipchitz claimed that Torah includes not only halacha but “knowledge, light and progress,” meaning that displaying culture and art was part of the Jewish people’s mandate and the purpose of Yerushalayim.

The Rebbe responded by saying that he had brought up the Roman attempt to paganize Yerushalayim to underscore that “the Roman Empire knew well that the most deadly blow it could deal to the Jewish people was to convert Jerusalem into a city of idols.” In a later letter the Rebbe added that “I sincerely hope that eventually you will also come to agree with the opinions which I have cited, and which strongly oppose the idea of a Garden of Sculptures In Jerusalem.”

UNITING ALL THE JEWISH PEOPLE

One of the most demonstrative projects that the Rebbe connected with the city of Yerushalayim is the Sefer Torah L’Yaldei Yisroel—the special Sifrei Torah containing letters owned by each and every Jewish child across the globe, which the Rebbe insisted must be written within the city walls of Yerushalayim.¹⁰ “Eretz Yisroel is ‘singled out’ from all other lands,” the Rebbe explained, “thereby signifying the idea of *achdus*. However, within the land itself, the most unifying city is Yerushalayim—עיר שחברה לה יחדיו...”¹¹

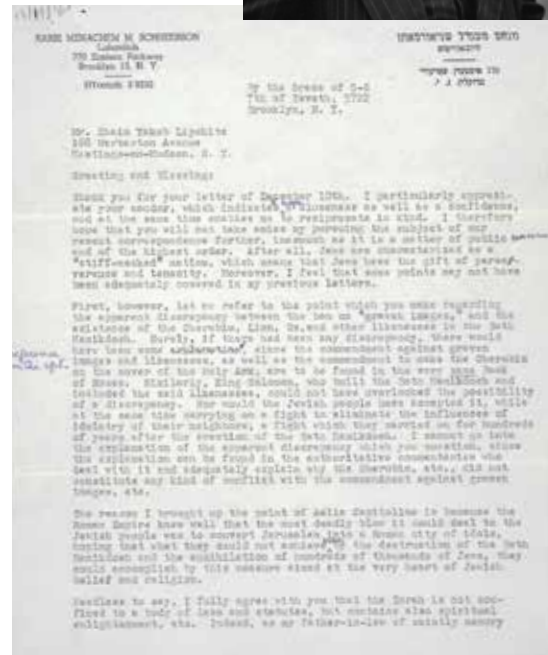
Indeed, nine Sifrei Torah have since been written within the city walls, uniting Jewish children, and by extension, all of *Am Yisroel*, through this special project.

The Rebbe once explained that by having the Sifrei Torah

JACQUES LIPCHITZ



AN EXCERPT OF ONE OF THE REBBE’S LETTERS TO JACQUES LIPCHITZ EXPLAINING HIS OPPOSITION TO THE PROJECT



written specifically in the walls of Yerushalayim, we ensure that the “protective walls” around our faith remain intact, in the spirit of Yerushalayim—*yirah-shalem*, complete and wholesome fear of Heaven. This will in turn lead to the rebuilding and completion of the holy city’s walls, speedily in our days!¹² ①

1. Tehillim, 122:3, The Rebbe’s *Kapitel* (5783-5784).
2. Even those who cannot be relied upon in this regard when they are elsewhere.
3. Sicha of 20 Cheshvan 5742.
4. Shabbos Bereishis (2) 5717.
5. Igros Kodesh vol. 19, p. 55.
6. Eved Melech (Sholom Ber Wolpe) chapter 26.
7. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Noach 5734.
8. Kfar Chabad #827 page 40.
9. See Sichas Yud-Gimmel Nissan 5747; Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. p. 92.
10. See, *Unite the Children*, Derher Teves 5776.
11. Sichas Yud-Aleph Nissan 5741; Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2, p. 132.
12. Sichas Shivah Asar B’Tammuz 5741; Likkutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 295.



כתב יד קודש



לזכות הילד
ישראל שלום נ"י
לרגל יום הולדתו י"ז חשוון

יה"ר שידגל לתורה לחופה
ולמעשים טובים מתוך בריאות
נכונה ושפע בגו"ר

לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר והוריו הי"ו

הרי יפה להיאר אהלו שפייעת
היא דניא יארק וסאזופות
ותמורת זה יוסיף
ויהי עדיה ושלם.

HERE, TOO

The Rebbe's response to a bochur who wrote to the Rebbe after an illness that he feels healthy enough to go on Merkos Shlichus in the summer to any place:

You can be one of those who travel here in New York and its surrounding areas. Instead [of spending more time traveling far] you can invest extra time and energy [in your work here], and you should be healthy and whole.¹

הרי יכול להיות
מאלו שנסיעתם
היא בניו יארק
וסמוכות'ל גופא.
ותמורת זה יוסיף
בזמן ומרץ. ויהי
בריא ושלם.

1. Teshura Gourarie-Simpson 5783.

LUMINARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת השליח ר' שמואל בן הרה"ח
הרה"ת ר' חיים הלל ע"ה
גלב"ע י"ב מר חשון ה'תשע"ה

ולע"נ זוגתו
מרת בתי' בת הרה"ח הרה"ת שד"ר ר' בנימין ע"ה
גלב"ע י"ז מר חשון ה'תשע"ב

אזמאוו
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדבת משפחתם שיחיו

Rebbi Meir

Rebbi Meir was one of the foremost Tannaim of the Mishnah and a vital link in the transmission of *Torah Sheba'al Peh*. He is the largest contributor of teachings in the Mishnah. Many of his teachings are recorded in his name, but many more are anonymous, as the Gemara famously asserts, "*Stam Mishnah Rebbi Meir hee* - Anonymous Mishnah records are in reality by Rebbi Meir."¹

His true name was Nehorai, but he was called Meir for "illuminating the Sages' eyes (*meir einei chachamim*) in halacha."²

His wisdom was so exceptional, that even though he would explain himself to his colleagues, they could never completely understand his reasoning and would be forced to disagree. Thus, in halachic disputes with his friends Rebbi Yehuda and Rebbi Yosi, the halacha follows the majority, usually not in Rebbi Meir's favor.³

He was part of the fourth generation of Tannaim and a prominent member of the Sanhedrin when it reopened in Usha after Yavne was shut down, following Hadrian's anti-religious decrees and the crushing of the Bar Kochva Revolt. He was a close *talmid* of Rebbi Akiva, and also studied with Rebbi Yishmael and Elisha ben Avuyah (*Acher*).

Rebbi Meir's wife, Beruriah, was an extraordinarily wise Torah scholar in her own right. Her father was Rebbi Chanina Ben Tradyon, one of the *Assarah Harugei Malchus*. Rebbi Meir's own family descended from *Geirei Tzedek*, most notably, the Roman Emperor Nero.

Rebbi Meir's *talmidim* included Sumchus, Rebbi Dostai ben Rebbi Yannai, and Rebbi Yehuda Hanasi (Rebbi). Rebbi Yehuda Hanasi famously said, "I am sharper than my friends

because I saw Rabbi Meir from behind (I sat in the row behind him – Rashi). Had I seen him from the front, I would be even sharper.²⁴

Rabbi Meir was a giant not only in halacha, but in *aggadah* as well. He was known as a great *darshan*, and lauded as a master of *meshalim*. The Mishnah in Sotah says that when Rabbi Meir passed away, *moshlei meshalim* (creators of wise parables) were lost.

Stories about Rabbi Meir abound in the Gemara, many covering his interactions with philosophers and Roman officials. Perhaps the most well-known story tells of how he went to save his sister-in-law from Romans captivity. He bribed a guard to set her free but the man was concerned that he would be punished. Rabbi Meir told him that if he was ever in trouble he should say the prayer, “*Eloka d’Meir aneini*” (G-d of Meir answer me) and he would be saved, and that is exactly what happened.

In honor of this miracle, Rabbi Meir is called Rabbi Meir *Baal Hanes* and tzedakah collections for the inhabitants of Eretz Yisroel are given in his honor.

After this episode, Rabbi Meir was forced to escape the Romans and flee to Bavel, where it seems he passed away. Nevertheless, Rabbi Meir is buried in the Galilean city of Teveriah, where he lived and taught Torah.

The Great Tanna

Rabbi Meir’s place in the transmission of *Torah Sheba’al Peh* was pivotal. He was one of the seven students that Rabbi Akiva gathered and taught after the death of 24,000 students.⁵ It was in the hands of these select *talmidim* that *Torah Sheba’al Peh* was entrusted and transmitted.⁶

As a *talmid* after this tragedy, Rabbi Meir emphasized, both in his life and his learning, a devotion to *ahavas Yisroel* and respect for others. He emphasized the aspect of *avodas Hashem* called “*shuv*,” return, meaning to bring *Elokus* down into the world, and exemplified *mesiras nefesh* that brings about *Tikkun* in place of *Tohu*.⁷ He and his colleagues also excelled in *kabbalas ol*, and, as a student of Rabbi Akiva, he placed strong emphasis on the *middah* of *emes*.⁸

The post-*churban* era was a tumultuous time. Rabbi Meir’s father in law, Rabbi Chanina Ben Tradyon, and his teachers Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Yishmael, were killed by the Roman regime, included in the list of the *Assarah Harugei Malchus*.

Rabbi Meir’s *semicha* and induction into the ranks of prominent Tannaim was itself an act of *mesiras nefesh*. The Romans banned *semicha*, decreeing that anyone granting or receiving *semicha* would be killed, and that the town in which



A UNIQUE SEFER PRINTED IN BAGHDAD IN 5665 (1905) COLLECTING ALL THE TEACHINGS OF REBBI MEIR BAAL HANES THROUGHOUT SHAS AND MIDRASHIM.

it happened would be destroyed. Rabbi Yehuda ben Bava, also one of the *Harugei Malchus*, gathered five *talmidim*⁹ in a secluded area far from any town, and proceeded to give them *semicha*, assuring the continuation of the *mesorah*. Rabbi Yehuda Ben Bava made certain that the *talmidim* escaped, at the cost of his own life.¹⁰

When the persecution eased up somewhat, the Sanhedrin was reinstated in the town of Usha. There, Rabban Shimon Ben Gamliel was appointed *Nossi*, Rabbi Nosson, *Av Beis Din*, and Rabbi Meir, *Chacham*.

The Gemara at the end of Horayos tells us that Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Nosson once tried to have Rabban Shimon Ben Gamliel removed as *nossi*. When it was discovered, they were evicted from the Beis Midrash and penalized: their Torah would not be said in their name, but rather Rabbi Meir would be quoted as “*Acheirim omrim* (others say),” and Rabbi Nosson as “*Yesh omrim* (some say).” Rabbi Nosson later apologized, but Rabbi Meir did not.¹¹ (The Rebbe explains their *machlokes* based on the debate of *Sinai vs. Oker Horim*, see below).

Rabbi Meir lived and taught Torah in the Galil – the new center of Torah in Eretz Yisroel. For a time he lived in Teveriah¹² and taught in Cheimes¹³, and we find him visiting Tzipori, Tivon, Aradiskos and Beis Shean. In these cities and towns, Rabbi Meir taught halacha and *aggadah*, specializing in *meshalim* and *drashos* and passing on the holy *mesorah* to his *talmidim* and the entire Jewish people.

Rebbi Meir - Maor

Rebbi Meir is a very interesting Tanna. On the one hand, he is described as above the level of his colleagues. As mentioned, the halacha doesn't follow his opinion, because his friends could not fully grasp his ideas, which are too spiritual to be explained in the material world.

At the same time he is the basis of the entire Mishnah—“*s-tam Mishnah Rebbi Meir*.” His name, which means to illuminate, also shows us that he had a profound influence on the world around him.

This dichotomy is highlighted in the Rebbe's Torah as well.

The Rebbe explained that the primary mission of most *tzaddikim* is to bring G-dliness into the world – uplifting the mundane and inspiring the physical.

However, Rebbi Meir also comes across as being entirely beyond the world, heavenly, and spiritual, representing not the “*tachton*” but the “*Maor*,” the Torah as it is above.

His name¹⁴ Meir points to *Maor*, the source of light. In him shines the original divine light of the Torah before it is invested in this world.

Not only did Rebbi Meir possess an exceptional *neschama* and spiritual character, he also reached a powerful level of *birur*, refinement of light, as is reflected in the name of his life partner, Beruriah. In this highly refined state, Rebbi Meir could see a deeper perspective. With this perspective, even things that seem *tamei* to everyone else, are in reality *tahor*. On this exalted level, *Maor*, there is less emphasis on the lower realms, and less tolerance for the mishaps and mistakes of the mundane world. Rebbi Meir's friends studied Torah on a more basic level, and couldn't even 'grasp his coattails.' The Mishnah therefore uses the term “*modim*” when they agree with him (“*modim Chachamim l'Rebbi Meir*”), showing that their agreement was with *hoda'ah* (submission) rather than equal agreement.¹⁵

In more Kabbalistic terms, Rebbi Meir's represents *Chochmah*, Divine Wisdom, which is why he had the title of *Chacham*. He represented the level that Chassidus calls *Yisroel*, while Rebbi Akiva represented the more earth-bound 'Yaakov.'

Rebbi Meir, therefore, was less keen on tolerating mistakes and allowing *Tikun*, mending, because from his lofty view, the confines of the lower realms are too much, and there is no room for failure.¹⁶

Rebbi Meir's strong association with *Ohr* (divine light) can also be seen in the Sefer Torah that he wrote. Rebbi Meir replaced the *Ayin* in *Kasnos Ohr* (garments of leather) with an *Alef*, changing the meaning to garments of light, symbolizing



THIS PICTURE FROM 5654 (1894) SHOWS THE TZIYON OF REBBI MEIR BAAL HANES AND A YESHIVA BUILDING ON SITE BUILT APPROXIMATELY 25 YEARS PRIOR.



THE TZIYON OF REB MEIR BAAL HANES AS IT APPEARS TODAY.

his direct connection with the source of light, not with lower, filtered levels.

Although his lofty stature makes him seem more removed from this lowly world, the opposite is true. He ended up having an even greater impact thanks to the incredibly powerful Divine light that he drew down. He never forgot that the ultimate purpose is to transform the world. The Rebbe points out that the afore-mentioned principle, that the halacha does not follow Rebbi Meir, applies only to rulings in which he is quoted by name. *Stam Mishnayos*, on the other hand, are followed. In other words, it is on the level of his 'name' that Rebbi Meir is removed from his colleagues. But in the rulings where his essential source, beyond his name, is evident, the halacha accords with him and his exceptional ability to bridge the gap between Heaven and Earth, the purpose of halacha.¹⁷

REBBI MEIR FACTS AND STORIES:

Oker Harei Harim - “Anyone who sees Rebbi Meir in the Beis Midrash, would see him uprooting ‘mountains upon mountains’ and grinding them together.” Rebbi Meir is described as one who learns Torah in an analytical and penetrating way, going through each point, and asking questions, arguing, and taking it apart until reaching clarity.¹⁸

This style of learning is in line with his emphasis on *eichus* over *kamus*, quality over quantity. There is a well-known question as to whether quantity overrides quality, explored at length by Reb Yosef Engel in *Lekach Tov*. The Rebbe connected the dispute between Rebbi Meir and the *Nossi*, to the quantity vs. quality debate. Their real disagreement, the Rebbe explained, concerned the proper method of learning. Rabban Shimon was in the category of ‘*Sinai*,’ with its emphasis on broad knowledge of Torah. This side of the debate sees the main goal as knowing as large a *quantity* of Torah as possible, in other words, everything given at Sinai.

Rebbi Meir, on the other hand, was an “*oker harim*,” someone who takes the ‘*Har Sinai*,’ the repository of knowledge and ‘grinds them together,’ probing and analyzing in order to reach the best *qualitative* understanding.¹⁹

Furthermore, the Rebbe said that while Rabban Shimon penalized Rebbi Meir and decreed that his Torah not be repeated in his name but rather as ‘*Acherim*,’ this is only when the subject at hand is based on this disagreement of quality vs. quantity. In all other cases, however, he is still referred to by name.²⁰

Student of Acher – One of Rebbi Meir’s teachers was the famous Elisha Ben Avuyah, one of the *Chachamim* who abandoned Torah and *mitzvos* and became known as “*Acher*,” the other.

The Gemara compared Rebbi Meir’s learning from him, using the example of a pomegranate. Rebbi Meir discarded his teacher’s ‘peel’ and ate the fruit.

Rebbi Meir greatness as a Tanna lay in being able to find, and learn from, the good that was inside Elisha ben Abuyah. Additionally, the Gemara tells us that Rebbi Meir promised to bring a *tikkun* to his *neshama*, and after Rebbi Meir passed away, smoke began to rise from Elisha ben Avuya’s grave, showing that the process of *teshuva* had begun.

The Rebbe explained that Rebbi Meir was able to bring him to *teshuva* due to the strong element of positive light that he possessed, similar to the light of the Alter Rebbe, whose name also means light, (*shnei-ohr*), and the Baal Shem Tov whose teachings of Chassidus are the *Maor* of Torah and allow every single person to return.²¹

Ben Geirim - Rebbi Meir came from a family of converts.²² The Gemara says that when the Roman emperor Nero was on his way to conquer Yerushalyim, he asked a young boy to recite a *possuk*, to which he responded “*Venosati nikmasi b’Edom*—and I (Hashem) will have my revenge on Edom (Rome).” Hearing this he decided to run away and convert. His descendant was Rebbi Meir.²³ The Maharasha quotes Sefer Yuchsin that this story fits with the stories commonly told about Nero whose last days are shrouded in mystery.²⁴

Rebbi Meir’s greatness came specifically from this descent from *geirim*. The Rebbe explains that a *ger*’s choice to embrace Yiddishkeit reaches into the depths of the *yeridah* (descent) of the nations of the world, and results in an even greater *aliyah* (ascent).²⁵

TORAH OF REBBI MEIR:

רַבִּי מֵאִיר אֹמֵר כָּל הָעוֹסֵק בְּתוֹרָה לְשִׁמָּה, זֹכֶה לְדַבְרִים הַרְבֵּה. וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שְׂכָל
הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ כְּדֵי הוּא לוֹ.

Rebbi Meir said: All who occupy themselves with Torah lishmah, for its own sake, merit many things, and not only that, but the entire world is worthy for him. Avos, 6,1.

As explained in the previous section, Rebbi Meir was an otherworldly sage, yet, at the same time, specifically because of his high state, he was able to draw from the greatest spiritual levels down into the simple and the mundane.

The Rebbe explains how this can be seen in Rebbi Meir's opening line to *Perek Vov* of *Pirkei Avos*: "All who toil in Torah *lishmah*, for its own sake" - referring to Rebbi Meir's heavenly way of learning - "merit many things" - will receive infinite *hamshachos* (manifestations of Divine energy) from on high." Then the focus shifts to "the entire world is worthy for him." Rebbi Meir drew down these limitless *hamshachos* into the materiality of the world.²⁶

בְּעֶשְׂרִים בּו בְּנֵי פַחַת מוֹאֵב בְּן יְהוּדָה. תָּנָא: בְּנֵי פַחַת מוֹאֵב בְּן יְהוּדָה — הֵן הֵן בְּנֵי
דָּוִד בְּן יְהוּדָה, דְּבַרְי רַבִּי מֵאִיר. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אֹמֵר: הֵן הֵן בְּנֵי יוֹאֵב בְּן צְרוּיָה.

On the twentieth of Av, the wood offering was brought by the descendants of Pchas Moav ben Yehuda. The Tanna taught: The descendants of Pchas Moav ben Yehuda are the descendants of Dovid ben Yehuda. This is the statement of Rebbi Meir.

Rebbi Yosei says: These are the descendants of Yoav, son of Tzruiah. Taanis 28a.

The Rebbe connects their *machlokes* with a Gemara that says that if not for Dovid's learning, Yoav would not be able to do battle, and if not for Yoav going to war, Dovid would not be able to study Torah.

The Rebbe framed their *machlokes* as a disagreement about the ideal state of *bittul*. Is Dovid's commitment to Torah the higher level, or is Yoav's battle with the mundane world, conquering materiality and transforming it the ideal? Rebbi Meir as the heavenly figure that he was, saw Dovid's *bittul* in *limmud haTorah* as higher than, and the true cause of, Yoav's impact on the world.²⁷

רַבִּי מֵאִיר אֹמֵר, אַל תִּסְתַּכֵּל בְּקַנְקַן, אֶלָּא בְּמָה שֵׁישׁ בּוֹ. יֵשׁ קַנְקַן חֲדָשׁ מְלֵא יֵשֶׁן,
וְיֵשֶׁן שְׂאֵפְלוֹ חֲדָשׁ אֵין בּוֹ:

Rebbi Meir said, don't look at the flask but at what is in it: there is a new flask full of old wine, and an old [flask] in which there is not even new [wine]. Avos 4:20

Firstly, it is interesting to note that in most editions of *Pirkei Avos*, the Tanna quoted here is not Rebbi Meir but Rebbi. In his *Siddur*, the Alter Rebbe added Meir, and taught that this Mishnah is actually from him.

The Rebbe connects this teaching with the previous part of the Mishnah, and explains why Rebbi Meir learned from Elisha Ben Avuyah: The Mishnah begins with Elisha Ben Avuyah's parable about grapes and wine, touting the advantage of learning at a young age, something he had done. Rebbi Yosi Ben Yehuda follows by saying, using a similar analogy of grapes and wine, that one should learn from an older, more mature teacher, rather than from a young one. Rebbi Meir follows by saying that

one should not judge wine by its flask, and he felt it necessary to learn from Elisha ben Avuya, who had the advantage of learning from a young age.

The Rebbe also connects this to the *teshuva* and *tikkun* that Rabbi Meir brought to Elisha ben Avuyah. The *possuk* says וְנִקָּה לֹא יִנְקָה [and clean, He shall not clean] which implies that there is no room for *teshuva*. Rabbi Meir says, don't just look at the קִנְיָן – the *Kuf* and *Nun* in each word, but at the other letters, which spell out Hashem's holy name – the name “מֵה” that is inside it. Even in the place of judgment, Hashem waits with open arms for His children to return.²⁸

LESHITASO

The Rebbe explains many of Rabbi Meir's *dinim* and opinions in *machlokes'n* based on consistent approaches of his (*l'shitaso*).

A few examples out of many:

- Rabbi Meir considers the minority factor. He does not however consider a minority of a minority.
- Rabbi Meir would judge cases of *Garme'i* – causation.
- The current state of affairs overrides the future.
- The community overrides the private person.
- Details (*protim*) need to be on the same level as the rule (*klal*) – therefore teachers need to transmit their entire understanding – this fits with Rabbi Meir's unique and lofty way.
- Rabbi Meir holds *eichus* (quality) prevails over *kamus* (quantity), and therefore *Oker Harim* trumps *Sinai*.
- Rabbi Meir examined the meaning of names.
- He holds that things stay the way they are for a long time.
- A guest must follow the conduct of the host.
- When Moshiach comes there will be both the drawing down of spirituality and uplifting of the mundane, but not simultaneously.²⁹

1. Rav Yochanan. Sanhedrin 86a.

2. Eiruvim 13b.

3. Ibid.f 46b.

4. The Rebbe quoted this in context of looking at the Baal Toke'ia after Tekios (second day Rosh Hashanah 5752).

5. Breishis Rabbah 61:3, Yevamos 62b.

6. Likkutei Sichos, vol.7, pg. 126.

7. Likkutei Sichos Chelek 22, pg. 138.

8. Lag Baomer 5711.

9. R. Meir, R. Yehuda, R. Shimon, R. Yose, and R. Elazar ben Shamua. According to the Amora Rav Avia, R. Nechemiah was also part of the group.

10. Sanhedrin 14a. This is the opinion of Rav.

There is another opinion that he got semicha from his Rabbi, R. Akiva.

11. Horiyos 13b.

12. Yerushalmi Chagigah 77b.

13. Yerushalmi Sotah 164.

14. Likkutei Sichos vol. 18, pg. 75.

15. Maamar Deu Ki Hashem 5731.

16. Reshimos, Choveres 117.

17. Sefer Hasichos 5751, Chelek 1, Pg. 13.

18. Sanhedrin 24a.

19. The Gemara places the Sinai vs. Oker Harim dispute right after the Rabbi Meir vs. Rabban Shimon story, showing that there is a connection.

20. Likkutei Sichos vol. 12, Bechukosai 1.

21. Chai Elul 5743.

22. The Rambam says about Rabbi Meir that he was Ben Ger Tzedek, which would seem like he was the actual son of Niron.

23. Gittin 56a.

24. Maharasha ibid. Sefer Yuchsin Maamar Rishon, Elef Hareviei.

25. Maamar Ani Hineih brisi itach, Lech Lecha 5744.

26. Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol. 2, pg. 482-3.

27. Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, Chof Av, pg. 1106.

28. Sicha Emor 5742.

29. For detailed sources of these sichos, see Mishnas Menachem, compiled by Pesach Fishman, Johannesburg, 5780.

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

A GEMACH IN EVERY CHABAD HOUSE

THE REBBE'S HORA'OS TO ESTABLISH
A FREE-LOAN TZEDAKAH FUND
AT EVERY CHABAD CENTER.

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI TZEMACH FELLER



Several times in 5746 and 5747, the Rebbe spoke about opening free-loan funds at Chabad Houses. These free-loan funds serve as a way to give tzedakah and do *chessed* for rich and poor alike, and have far-reaching effects on the rest of the Chabad House's *peulos*. In a *sicha* on Yud Shevat, the Rebbe encouraged every Chabad House to open a *gemach* — or to expand their existing one.

As there are still some Chabad Houses in which a free-loan (or tzedakah) fund has not yet been established, here and now is the place and time to encourage that there should be a *gemach* (free-loan fund) in every Chabad House, to help all those in need, including wealthy people who need a temporary loan.

Of course, these words apply to all those places that already have a *gemach*: they should expand and increase it both in terms of the funds available and, more importantly, in terms of giving tzedakah and free loans to all those in need. As is the case in all matters of holiness, we are instructed to “increase in that which is holy.”

To all those who inform me that they are opening or expanding a *gemach* in their local Chabad House, a

לזכות הורינו
ר' אברהם שמואל זוזגתו מרת
רבקה מירל שיחיו שפאלטר
ר' משה חיים זוזגתו מרת שרה שיחיו גיפּען

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

participatory donation will be sent from here, from the main Chabad House.¹

During the next farbrengen, on Shabbos Mevarchim Adar, the Rebbe again spoke on this topic:

In continuation to what was discussed earlier regarding tzedakah and *gemilus chassadim*, I am going to remind about, and encourage, what we discussed during the previous farbrengen - the need for a free loan fund at every Chabad House, and that therefore, *gemachs* should be founded in every Chabad House that doesn't yet have one, and that those that already have one should expand and increase it.

My father-in-law, the [Friediker] Rebbe wrote in his *Reshimos* that in *Beis Harav* they would educate and train the children to give free loans (in addition to giving tzedakah) by giving them money for the purpose of lending to those in need — in other words, to educate them to do *chessed*.

May it be Hashem's will that very soon we will merit the fulfillment of the *possuk* that assures us that "...there will be no needy among you,"² and there will be *gemachs* only,

which can be used by wealthy people as well.³

On Simchas Torah 5747 the Rebbe again addressed this theme, describing the elements of Torah, *tefillah* and tzedakah found in a Chabad House. The Rebbe noted when a person visits a Chabad House for one purpose — such as to daven Mincha — and sees *sefarim* and a *pushka*, he will ask about their purpose and be told that there is a *shiur* he can join. If he enters the Chabad House to give tzedakah as a *bracha* for success in business, or for a positive outcome at a doctor's appointment, he may be inspired to do other good things as well. The person who wishes to give tzedakah before his appointment and the like doesn't have the time to find a poor person. Instead, he enters the nearby Chabad House and relies on the Chabad House to disburse the funds to those in need.⁴ **T**

1. 10 Shevat, 5746.

2. Devarim 15, 4.

3. Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim, 5746.

4. Simchas Torah 5747.

“I HAVE
PLANTED
A CEDAR
IN ERETZ
YISROEL”

REB EPHRAIM WOLFF

By: RABBI TZEMACH FELLER



MISHA

PRINTING SE

לזכות החיילים בצבאות ה'
מנחם מענדל בן חי' מושקא שי'
לרגל יום הולדתו בז' מר-חשון
אסתר הנג' רחל בת חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה בי"א מר-חשון

שמעון בן חי' מושקא שי'
שיינא בת חי' מושקא תחי'
אליהו שמואל בן חיה מושקא שיחי'
יה"ר שיגדלו חי"לים בצבא כ"ק אדמו"ר
מתוך שמחה, בריאות והרחבה



Celebrating his Bar Mitzvah alone in Heide, Belgium in 1933, the young man whose father forbade him from going to Tomchei Temimim would never have dreamed that one day he would head its central yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, a town he would help found in a country he would fight to defend.

The 13-year-old orphan would make his way from Nuremberg, Germany, to Heide, Belgium, where he would celebrate his Bar Mitzvah alone. He would eventually reach the Frieddiker Rebbe's holy court in Otwock, Poland. Escaping the inferno that consumed his home, he would become a pioneer, founding mosdos with dozens of branches that educate thousands of Chassidim each year, and becoming known simply as the Menahel – the Director.

FROM NUREMBERG TO OTWOCK

Rabbi Ephraim Wolff was born in Nuremberg, Germany, on 21 Av 5680. His parents, Reb Benyomin and Breindel Wolff, were well-to-do pillars of the community and famous for their generosity. In a city largely dominated by the *Haskalah* (Enlightenment) movement, their home was an oasis of Torah-true Yiddishkeit.

Reb Benyomin was one of the most respected members of Nuremberg's Orthodox community, supporting the Adas Yisroel shul, and assiduously studying Torah. An example of *Torah u'gedulah bemakom echad* — Torah and prosperity in one person, he was fluent in all of *Shas* and was quite wealthy, owning a metalworking factory whose towering structures in central Nuremberg created goods of silver and steel that were famous throughout Germany.

From a young age, Ephraim's parents showed him that physical comfort and wealth paled in importance next to living as a G-d-fearing Jew. As a child, Ephraim would travel every day to attend the nearest Cheder that taught authentic Yiddishkeit, a trip of an hour and a half in each direction. At age 10, he left home to learn in Mannheim, 150 miles away. At age 12, he journeyed to Heide, Belgium, a small village outside Antwerp with a renowned yeshiva.

In Heide, young Ephraim first met Chabad Chassidim and developed an interest in Chassidus. Some of them served as *rabbonim* and educators in the area, and, most notably, he met Reb Itche Der Masmid, (Reb Yitzchok Hurwitz) — who left a deep impression on Ephraim during these



REB EPHRAIM AS A YOUNG BOY WITH HIS PARENTS AND AUNT

formative years.

The influence of the Chassidim he met in Heide gave him a thirst for Chassidus. He wanted to go to Poland, where Tomchei Temimim had relocated following the Frierdiker Rebbe's liberation from Russia, but his father opposed the plan, pleading with him to not be so hasty in abandoning the *Litvishe* way of life and learning. So instead Ephraim went to the yeshiva in Telshe, Lithuania.

There too, however, his thirst for Chassidus continued. He soon met another legendary Chossid, the rav of nearby Rakshik (Rokisis), Reb Shmuel Levitin. Rakshik boasted a sizable Chassidish community and was known as the most Chassidish town in Lithuania. Reb Shmuel took it upon himself to share the light of Chassidus in nearby *yeshivos* and Ephraim soon became a regular at Reb Shmuel's *shiurim*.

Inter-war Germany was not always a comfortable place for Jews, and antisemitism in Nuremberg became increasingly worrisome and unbearable. With the rise of the Nazis to power in 1933, gangs began boycotting and terrorizing Jewish businesses. *B. Wolff & Co, Metallwarenfabrik* was no exception. The Wolff family quickly

realized that there was no future in Nuremberg, and Reb Benyomin began to liquidate his assets, selling what he could for whatever price he could get. In 1935, Reb Benyomin and his family escaped Germany, a harrowing journey that involved sneaking into a cafe on the border between Germany and Belgium: they entered the front door in Germany and exited into Belgium through the backyard, evading customs officials by claiming they were planning to return.

From there they continued to the Netherlands, settling in a suburb of The Hague. But, following the loss of their home and business, they now suffered a much greater loss: Breindel, the matriarch of the family who was always doing *chessed* passed away suddenly from a hemorrhage. Upon receiving news of his mother's passing, a grief-stricken Ephraim hastened to Holland, but could not make it in time for the *levaya*. He soon returned to Telshe and continued his studies.

In the course of learning with Reb Shmuel Levitin, the *mashpia* realized that it was time for his young protege to take the next step in *hiskashrus*. He suggested that Ephraim travel to the Frierdiker Rebbe, then in Otwock, Poland, for the month of Tishrei 5699.



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AT A HEALTH RESORT IN THE LATE 5690s



A LETTER FROM THE FRIERDIKER REBBE TO REB EPHRAIM IN THE SUMMER OF 5699 INQUIRING ABOUT THE WELLBEING OF HIS FATHER AND UNCLE.

Though he was new to the Frierdiker Rebbe's *chatzer*, the Wolff name was familiar to the Rabbeim of Chabad. In 5667, the Rebbe Rashab had stayed at the home of Reb Elyakim Wolff, Ephraim's uncle, in Wurzburg, Germany. This launched a connection that continued with the Frierdiker Rebbe, with whom Reb Elyakim corresponded a number of times. When Ephraim Wolff arrived in Otwock, the Frierdiker Rebbe asked his secretary, Reb Yechezkel "Chatche" Feigin, whether this *bochur* was related to Reb Elyakim. Hearing that he was his nephew, the Frierdiker Rebbe immediately approved Ephraim's entry into Tomchei Temimim.

THE REBBE ASKED HIM TO COME IN

Reb Ephraim once related that on Beis Nissan 5699, the Rebbe Rashab's *yahrtzeit*, *bochurim* were asked to come make a minyan at the health resort where the Frierdiker Rebbe was staying, so that the Rebbe could daven at the *amud* and say *kaddish*. The Frierdiker Rebbe davened in a seated position, and after davening, he told a number of stories about the Rebbe Rashab and said *l'chaim* with the *bochurim*.

At the time, Reb Yechezkel Himmelstein's wife found out that the Frierdiker Rebbe was in town, and wanted to go into *yechidus* to ask a *bracha* for children, something they had not been blessed with. Her husband protested that the Rebbe was there to relax, not to listen to *tzaros*, but she insisted. Since the road was dangerous, Reb Yechezkel asked young Ephraim to accompany her to the Rebbe.

After her *yechidus*, the *mazkir* approached Ephraim and asked him whether he'd like to go into *yechidus*. Ephraim realized that this was not the *mazkir's* idea, but that it had come from the Rebbe. Indeed, he later found out that the Rebbe had asked Mrs. Himmelstein how she had gotten there, and when she replied that a *bochur* had accompanied her, the Rebbe called the *mazkir* and asked him to bring the *bochur* into *yechidus*.

But Ephraim felt that he could not accept the invitation. For one thing, the Frierdiker Rebbe was there to relax and recover; the *yechidus* could be a strain on his health. In addition, Ephraim was in winter clothing — not dressed the way he would feel comfortable entering *yechidus* — and had not gone to the *mikvah*, since they had left long before dawn to begin their journey. So Ephraim asked the *mazkir* to tell the Frierdiker Rebbe that he was still traveling, and had just stopped in Riga for a short time to get his papers in order.

Having recently been in *yechidus* in Otwock and receiving a *bracha* for his journey, Ephraim was very taken by the attention that the Frierdiker Rebbe was giving him by inviting him for another *yechidus*. Indeed, the Frierdiker Rebbe's *bracha* accompanied Ephraim throughout the perilous train ride from Riga to Odessa, and the sea voyage from Odessa to Haifa.

Ephraim was so taken by the experience of the *tefillos*, *farbrengens* and other happenings during Tishrei that he decided he wasn't going back to Telshe, remaining in Otwock until Kislev. Joining Tomchei Temimim was quite an adjustment for this scion of German Jews. The yeshiva could barely afford to feed the *bochurim*, and hiring cleaning help was out of the question so the *zal* would be quite messy by the time the day was done. Coming from a *Yekkishe* background, a dirty *beis medrash* was simply unconscionable. So Ephraim would wait until the others were asleep and then secretly clean the *zal* himself.

In Kislev, Ephraim was *zoche* to go into *yechidus* for the first time, beginning a deep connection with the Frierdiker Rebbe. In that *yechidus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe told young Ephraim, whose davening would often be far louder than his peers, that one must daven out loud from the Siddur, but in such a way that others don't hear you.

In that *yechidus*, Ephraim also asked a bracha for the next chapter in his family's journey. The Wolff's had realized that nowhere in Europe would be safe from the Nazis, and despite Ephraim's deep desire to stay near the Rebbe, Reb Benyomin had decided that the family would make the difficult journey to Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe gave his bracha and Ephraim began his voyage.

His first stop was Vilna (Vilnius), capital of Lithuania, where he began the arduous process of obtaining an exit visa from Lithuania, an entry visa into the British Mandate of Palestine, and transit visas for the countries in between. His father, still in Holland, sent money and paperwork to smooth the process, but the bureaucracy would move only so fast. From Vilna, young Ephraim traveled to Riga in nearby Latvia, where he spent about a year waiting for his entry visa to the British Mandate of Palestine.

In Riga, Ephraim joined the local Tomchei Temimim, where he again encountered crushing poverty and need among the other *bochurim*. As a scion of a well-to-do family, Ephraim had arrived with 15 suits of high-quality fabric. But seeing his fellow *temimim* lacking basic items of clothing, within days he had distributed 14 of them, keeping only one for himself.

During his time in Riga, Ephraim met notable Chassidische personalities like Reb Chatche Feigin and Reb Yechezkel Himmelstein, as well as Reb Mordechai Dubin, who served at the time as a member of the Latvian Parliament, the Saeima. Ephraim also met Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov, later the Rebbe's *mazkir*. In Riga, Rabbi Hodakov served as representative of the Agudas Yisroel party to the City Council and was responsible for Jewish education in the area. But the highlight of Ephraim's stay were the months that the Frierdiker Rebbe spent at a health resort in Riga during the winter of 5699.

When he finally received his entry visa to Eretz Yisroel, Ephraim boarded a train to the Ukrainian port town of Odessa, where he embarked on a ship bound for Eretz Yisroel. By the time

he arrived, Germany had invaded Poland and the war had begun. Ephraim's father and sister also successfully escaped Europe and settled in Yerushalayim.

There Ephraim joined the Chabad Yeshiva, Toras Emes. He developed a friendship with the longtime *rav* of the Tel Aviv's Chabad community, Harav Moshe Ashkenazi. Ephraim informed the Frierdiker Rebbe of his arrival, and received *brachos* in return. His correspondence with the Frierdiker Rebbe would continue when the Rebbe settled in the United States and wrote letters providing Ephraim with guidance, encouraging him to study *nigleh* and Chassidus, and a letter advising him to look into *shidduchim*.

I HAVE PLANTED A CEDAR IN ERETZ YISROEL

Reb Ephraim soon met Pessia Pariz, whose father, the famed *chossid* Reb Avrohom Pariz, was in New York near the Frierdiker Rebbe at the time. Upon hearing about the prospective *shidduch*, Reb Avrohom immediately





REB EPHRAIM WOLFF IN HIS OFFICE AT THE YESHIVA

asked the Frierdiker Rebbe about it. The Frierdiker Rebbe approved the *shidduch* and went on to praise Reb Ephraim, saying in Yiddish, “איך האב אײנגעפלאנצט א ארז אין ארץ הקודש” — “I have planted a cedar tree (*erez*) in *Eretz Hakodesh*.” After such a warm approval, Reb Avrohom rushed to telegram his wife, who was in Petach Tikva, to go ahead with the *shidduch*.

The couple was engaged in the winter of 5702, and married that spring in the Gestetner Banquet Hall in Yerushalayim. Their first son, Nosson, was born soon after and six more followed. Following each birth, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent letters of bracha and advice, as he did when Pessia was unwell and briefly hospitalized.

As a *yungerman*, Reb Ephraim ran a courier service, but soon found himself pulled into communal activism, in which he would find his life’s calling. The Frierdiker Rebbe was calling for *Lalter l’teshuva*, *lalter l’geula*, encouraging everyone to do *teshuva* and help alleviate the birth pangs of Moshiach that the world was experiencing. Reb Ephraim’s father-in-law, the devoted *chossid* Reb Avraham Pariz, recruited him to reach out to news outlets and spread the Rebbe’s message.

Following World War II, as Eretz

Yisroel became embroiled in conflict leading to its declaration of independence, and then when war broke out in 1948, Reb Ephraim served in the Hagana. His unit helped defend the Jerusalem Corridor, the road between Yerushalayim and the Shephelah, a lifeline for the city that was otherwise cut off by Jordanian forces.

The Frierdiker Rebbe sent a bracha for the family’s safety, and indeed, despite a number of close calls, they emerged from the war unscathed. On one occasion, the Wolffs were hiding in a shelter during a bombardment and a shell scored a direct hit on the structure, blasting open the sandbags that had been placed over it. Miraculously, no-one was hurt. Another time, Reb Ephrayim ventured out to get food for four-month-old Elyakim, and was fired upon by Jordanian Legionnaires. The bullets whizzed past his shoulders but did not strike him.

THE YESHIVA IN LOD

The new State of Israel saw an influx of Jewish immigrants, and in 1949, after many Chabad families

escaped the Soviet Union using false Polish passports, a number of them made their way to Eretz Yisroel. Yerushalayim’s Chabad community could not absorb all the refugees and soon a number of families settled together in an area outside Lod, some 15 kilometers from Tel Aviv.

The legendary Reb Zushe Wilmovsky secured a building that had served as a guesthouse near the Lod train station. In fact, when the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled through Lod on his way from Alexandria, Egypt to Yerushalayim in 5689, he stopped at the train station, pointed to that very building, and said that it would be a yeshiva. Twenty years later, the *nevuah* was fulfilled as Tomchei Temimim found a home there. In that small guesthouse grew a yeshiva that today has thousands enrolled in its various branches.

As it quickly grew, the yeshiva’s need for a full-time *menahel* — director — became apparent, and Reb Ephraim was asked to temporarily fill the position for a designated trial period. Every Sunday he would set out from Yerushalayim and stay in Lod through the week, going home only for Shabbos, while his wife cared for their four young children. At the end of the trial period, Reb Ephraim wrote to the Frierdiker Rebbe about his work in the yeshiva: “For me, the main challenge is leaving my wife and children behind all week, which is very difficult for my wife, and a proper home is very difficult to find in Lod.”

The Frierdiker Rebbe replied with what turned out to be his last letter to Reb Ephraim, instructing him to continue his work in Lod and blessing him and his family. After receiving this letter, Reb Ephraim formally accepted the position of *Menahel* — Director of the Yeshiva, a position he would fill for over five decades.

A YESHIVA FOR IMMIGRANTS

From the start, the yeshiva placed emphasis on the absorption of Jewish immigrants, particularly those emigrating from Yemen and Russia. In fact, the yeshiva's legal name was "Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, Kollel Olei Rusya, Olei Teiman."

When the State of Israel was founded, there was a wave of immigration from Yemen, Morocco and Tunis. Rabbi Yisroel Grossman, who was Rosh Yeshiva in Lod for many years, would travel from village to village and persuade the new immigrants to send their children to yeshiva. His son, Rabbi Yitzchak Dovid Grossman, Chief Rabbi of Migdal Haemek, related that when his father had gathered a sizable group of immigrant children and sought to find them a yeshiva, he was rebuffed by a number of *yeshivos*. "You want us to create a *Sephardishe yeshiva*?" the *roshei yeshiva* would ask.

But when he asked Reb Ephraim, the response was very different.

From the earliest years of his *nesius*, the Rebbe had encouraged the *hanhalah* of Tomchei Temimim to include the Yemenite children in their activities and ensure that they would receive a proper Jewish education.¹

So when Reb Ephraim was approached about this issue, not only did he immediately welcome all the *talmidim* to the yeshiva, but he accompanied Reb Yisroel's fundraising from *shul* to *shul*, so that the new students — who of course could not pay tuition — should have beds and mattresses and everything else they'd need to feel welcome and comfortable in the yeshiva.

The Rebbe encouraged the yeshiva to pay heed to the education of these

young men, with the aim that they would soon become educators themselves. "It's obvious how necessary this is and how great are the benefits that can be expected from them," the Rebbe wote.

Indeed, many of these students soon went on to serve as mentors to their younger peers, creating a culture of growth that allowed immigrants from backgrounds both physically and spiritually disadvantaged, to see their potential as teachers and *mashpi'im*.

BUILDING UP Kfar CHABAD: THE YESHIVA AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

In 5723, the central yeshiva in Kfar Chabad was inaugurated. Its cornerstone had been laid five years previously, at the Rebbe's behest. Every step of the process was overseen by Reb Ephraim, who reported constantly to the Rebbe. Upon completion of the new building, the *bochurim* in *yeshiva gedolah* moved from Lod to Kfar Chabad, enabling Lod to welcome additional students to the *yeshiva ketana*.

But as both *yeshivos* flourished, it was just a few months before the brand-new building was bursting at the seams. And so, in 5723, the cornerstone was laid for a second building, which would be named "Beit Pinchas" after the legendary Chossid and member of the yeshiva's administration, Reb Pinchas Althaus, who passed away a month after the cornerstone was laid. In the early 5730s, the Lod yeshiva added new buildings as well, to house the kitchen and dining room, as well

as dormitories, classrooms, and offices. It continued to expand year after year as the student body grew.

From the start, the yeshiva did not limit its scope to traditional *bochurim* seeking to learn only Torah all day. In the winter of 5712, the Rebbe wrote to the *hanhalah* about a proposal that had been raised to open vocational schools. The Rebbe wrote, "It is out of the question to change the *seder* of Tomchei Temimim from the way that it was set up by its founders and principals the Rebbe [Rashab] and my father-in-law the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, and therefore the yeshiva itself cannot have vocational classes. On the other hand, as there are a number of married men and *bochurim* who, for whatever reason, can't learn in yeshiva all day, but would be willing to learn *nigleh* and Chassidus for a number of hours each day, provided they are also taught a trade, it's a very good idea to work on this ..."²

Thus *Beit Sefer L'Melacha*, the Vocational School, was born. It was a separate *mosad*, but under the close supervision of the yeshiva. The school grew to include courses in carpentry, agriculture, and printing.

On Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5716, *Beit Sefer L'Melacha* was the site of a horrific terrorist attack when five students and a teacher were murdered in cold blood. The Rebbe's response to this tragedy was to encourage rebuilding. A print shop was built, and named for the five slain students.³

THE REBBE'S DEPUTY

During the first decade at the yeshiva, Reb Ephraim worked with Reb Avrohom Drizin (Mayorer), and they poured heart and soul into building up the *mosad*. The Chabad network in Eretz Yisroel quickly grew



ORIGINAL BUILDINGS OF THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN KFAR CHABAD



REB EPHRAIM STANDS (SECOND TO RIGHT) IN FRONT OF THE "YAD HACHAMISHA PRINTING SCHOOL", BUILT IN MEMORY OF THE FIVE SLAIN STUDENTS.

to include boys' and girls' schools, *yeshivos*, Colel Chabad, Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, and the Reshet schools. While Reb Ephraim focused on the yeshiva and its branches in Kfar Chabad, Nachlas Har Chabad and Migdal Ha'emek, he was soon acting as liaison between the Rebbe and all the Chabad *mosdos*, earning him the unofficial title "the Rebbe's deputy in the Holy Land."

The Rebbe would ask to hear in detail about everything taking place in the yeshiva, as Rabbi Hodakov wrote to Reb Ephraim in 5729: "The Rebbe has pointed out to me a number of times that they don't tell him about everything that's happening in Kfar Chabad and in Eretz Yisroel in general. You need to write about everything, down to the last detail."

Reb Zushe Posner, who worked in Reb Ephraim's office for a number of years, related that Reb Ephraim told him that the Rebbe had asked to be informed of everything taking place "as if I'm in the yeshiva office."

Harkening back to that first *yechidus* with the Frieddiker Rebbe, when Reb Ephraim was told that one should be loud but that others should not hear you, Reb Ephraim served in a position of immense responsibility, but did so with the utmost discretion. He knew everything about everyone, but told not a soul — besides the Rebbe.

He directed, counseled, and advised dozens of *mosdos* and hundreds of people, but always in an unassuming way and under unbreakable secrecy.

This reliability and discretion was brought to bear during the painful *sefarim* incident leading up to Didan Notzach. As the individual who stole *sefarim* from the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad began making them available for sale around the world, the Rebbe spoke with anguish about the *sefarim*, warning that to take such a *sefer* into one's possession was like picking up a live bomb.

A number of these *sefarim* made their way to Eretz Yisroel, where they were acquired by local collectors and dealers. Local Lubavitcher Chassidim tried to persuade these collectors to return the *sefarim* — if not of their own goodwill, then in exchange for payment. The payments were made by Reb Ephraim, from funds he administered on the Rebbe's behalf.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer Levine, librarian of the Agudas Chasidei Chabad library, related that some time after the court ruling on Hei Teves 5747, the court requested a detailed list of all monies paid by Chabad to recover the stolen *sefarim*. Rabbi Levine received information from various Chassidim who were active in the United States and in Europe

in recovering the *sefarim*, but when he reached out to Reb Ephraim, he did not receive a response. He asked other Chassidim who were involved, but they said that they didn't have the information. Under pressure to send in the list as quickly as possible, Rabbi Levine again reached out to Reb Ephraim, expressing the urgency of the matter, and informing Reb Ephraim that a copy of the letter was sent to the Rebbe as well.

In response, Reb Ephraim wrote that the information about the sums he spent was something he would only report to the Rebbe, and not to anyone else. He added that he, too, was sending a copy of *his* letter to the Rebbe.

In the end, Rabbi Levine was able to get the list, but was left with a deep appreciation for the extent to which Reb Ephraim safeguarded the Rebbe's confidence, unwilling to share potentially sensitive information with anyone whatsoever.

Upon the passing of Reb Eliezer Karasik and Reb Pinchas Althaus in the early 5720s, Reb Ephraim was asked to head Agudas Chasidei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel. For decades, he reported to the Rebbe on public and private matters, and passed on the Rebbe's responses to the appropriate individuals. He did all this while maintaining a grueling schedule as the

yeshiva's director, involved in administrative and fundraising duties.

THE ONE UPON WHOM I CAN RELY

Scores of the Rebbe's letters to Reb Ephraim are published in Igros Kodesh, but they drop in frequency in the 5720s. This is not because Reb Ephraim was corresponding *less* with the Rebbe, but rather the reverse: he had begun sending detailed reports to the Rebbe, every morning, encompassing all Chabad activities in Eretz Yisroel in which he had a part. In the evenings, he would talk by phone with Rabbi Hodakov, who would verbally relay the Rebbe's responses to, and questions about items in the report.

Despite his efforts to keep a low profile and avoid publicity, Reb Ephraim's devotion and almost superhuman efforts did not go unnoticed or unrecognized. Speaking with a Chossid from Tel Aviv, the Rebbe said, "The one on whom I can rely in Eretz Yisroel is Reb Ephraim Wolff." On another occasion, a couple who had emigrated from Russia to Eretz Yisroel came to New York to visit the Rebbe, leaving their daughter behind in Eretz Yisroel. They told the Rebbe that they couldn't afford the airfare to bring her along.

"I have a friend in Eretz Yisroel," the Rebbe replied. "His name is Reb Ephraim Wolff. Go to him, and he will see to it that all your needs are met."

BUILDING CHABAD NEIGHBORHOODS

In 5724, foreseeing the need for more housing when Russia's Jews would be allowed to go free, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Binyamin Gorodetzky to develop a Chabad project in Lod. Reb Ephraim told *Kfar Chabad* magazine that Rabbi Gorodetzky was given \$20,000 by the Rebbe for this project, and Reb Ephraim and Rabbi Gorodetzky raised the rest with great effort. As financial challenges threatened to halt the project, and later, as construction progressed on what would be called "Shikun Chabad," Reb Ephraim corresponded with the Rebbe, keeping him informed at every step in the process.

Reb Ephraim sent the Rebbe the blueprints as soon as they were approved. When construction finally commenced, the Rebbe sent a telegram blessing Reb Ephraim and Reb Avraham Parshan, who was also heavily involved, with much success and with far greater additions over what had already begun.

The Rebbe's prophetic vision saw Shikun Chabad become home to hundreds of Russian immigrants in the years to follow.

Following the Six Day War in 5727, immigration from the Soviet Union picked up, particularly from the republic of Georgia, and the need for additional homes for these new *olim* was acute. So, in addition to Shikun Chabad and the expansion of Kfar Chabad, a neighborhood was established in Kiryat Malachi in 5729 named Nachlas Har Chabad.

At this point, the Chabad effort to resettle Soviet refugees ran into opposition from high-ranking members



TRANSCRIPT OF A PHONE CONVERSATION REB EPHRAIM HAD WITH THE REBBE'S MAZKIRUS ON THE TOPIC OF ENROLLING ADDITIONAL CHILDREN IN CHABAD MOSDOS

ON A LETTER SENT BY REB EPHRAIM TO THE REBBE REGARDING BOCHURIM GOING ON MIVTZOIM DURING SEDER, THE REBBE REPLIES SHARPLY HOW ALL MATTERS OF THE BOCHURIM MUST ACCORD WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE HANHALA.



of the Israeli government, who were determined to scatter these immigrants across the country rather than allowing Chabad to settle them in the new neighborhoods being built for this purpose.

The Rebbe realized the serious spiritual harm this could cause, and prevailed upon the government, through his representatives in Eretz Yisroel, to approve the creation of the new development in Kiryat Malachi. Nachlas Har Chabad consisted of a number of apartment buildings which would host some 600 Soviet immigrant families. They would be mentored by ten Chabad families who moved to the neighborhood for this purpose.

Of course Reb Ephraim was in the thick of these discussions and debates. In one letter, he wrote to the Rebbe how in a meeting with an Israeli official, the official asked what they would do if the expected hundreds of families showed up before the buildings were ready. "Then every family in Lod and in Kfar Chabad will take in an immigrant family," was Reb Shlomo Madanchik's immediate response.

Reb Ephraim asked the Rebbe if this was as far as they were expected to go: did the Rebbe expect every family of *anash* to take in an immigrant family? Should they maintain their ambitious goal of absorbing so many families? As the meetings and negotiations continued, and the plan began to take shape, Reb Ephraim continued to write to the Rebbe for guidance. Following the final meeting, when it was decided to go ahead with the building project and the relocation of Chabad families to serve in mentorship roles, the Rebbe telegraphed his approval and blessing for success.

On Erev Shabbos Zachor 5729, the Rebbe instructed that a *farbrengen* be held in the new neighborhood, and since then, Shabbos Zachor is considered the official date of Nachlas Har



REB EPHRAIM HELPS A VISITOR AT THE YESHIVA IN KFAR CHABAD PUT ON TEFILLIN

Chabad's founding.⁴

Reb Ephraim was also deeply involved in the establishment of Kiryat Chabad in Tzfas. In 5733, when Rabbi Leibel Kaplan arrived in Tzfas as the Rebbe's *shliach*, Reb Ephraim reported on the tasks and challenges Rabbi Kaplan faced, and the Rebbe responded, making clear that the *Kiryat* should be built as its own neighborhood, blessing the families moving in, and pledging financial support.

These are a few examples of the hundreds of letters and *hora'os* Reb Ephraim merited to receive from the Rebbe as he put heart and soul into the growth of Chabad in the Holy Land.

EXPANDING CHABAD IN ERETZ YISROEL

Reb Ephraim stood at the helm of Chabad in Eretz Yisroel as it

experienced exponential growth, and was directly involved in the opening of dozens of *mosdos*, programs, and initiatives. His accomplishments include the *yeshivos* in Lod, Kfar Chabad, Nachlas Har Chabad and Migdal Ha'emek; the *Beit Sefer Lmelacha*; the absorption of immigrants from Georgia, Bukharia, Russia and Yemen; opening a Kotel for married men; renovating the Tzemach Tzedek Shul in Yerushalayim after the Old City was liberated during the Six Day War; establishing and expanding Chabad neighborhoods in Lod, Kiryat Malachi and Tzfat; spearheading initiatives following the Rebbe's calls for the *mitv-zoim*, Who is a Jew, the Sefer Torah for Unity, Rambam, and much more.

Under the Rebbe's guidance, Reb Ephraim was involved in sending shlichim throughout Eretz Yisroel. He collected *maamad* donations from the Chassidim in the country, and supervised outreach initiatives to soldiers in military bases. He also oversaw the publication and distribution of *sifrei Chassidus* throughout Eretz Yisroel.



REB EPHRAIM IN HIS LATER YEARS, LEARNING ALONE FROM A SEFER AND KUNTRES OF THE REBBE

THE LEGENDARY MENAHEL — DIRECTOR

Despite his enormous workload, Reb Ephraim's primary responsibility was always Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim and its many branches across Eretz Yisroel. He would work late into the night, the light in his office almost always on. Regardless of how busy he was, he would always make time to speak to any *bochur* who needed something.

In the yeshiva's early years, during times of hardship in Eretz Yisroel, it was a struggle to provide just one meal a day to the students. When Reb Ephraim would be brought food from the dining room, he would refuse it, asking to be brought the leftovers only after all the *bochurim* had eaten. Throughout his life, despite being the one who fundraised to buy the supplies for the yeshiva, he refused to use them, insisting they be used only by the *bochurim* and *hanhalah*.

His *Yekkishe* roots would sometimes surface when the *zal* was especially messy. As had happened

so many years before in Otwock, *bochurim* would wake up to find the *zal* mysteriously cleaned, the tables and chairs placed in neat rows. They soon discovered that it was the *menahel* himself who, after a grueling day's work that left him almost no time for himself or his family, spent yet more time sweeping and organizing the *zal*.

Despite all this, Reb Ephraim found time to learn Torah, *nigleh* and Chassidus, each day, as per the Frierdiker Rebbe's blessing all those years earlier. He completed Shas several times with his *chavrusas*, one of whom was Mr. Tzvi Itzkowitz, the Mayor of Lod, with whom he would learn Gemara for an hour a day.

Reb Ephraim once wrote to the Rebbe that he was concerned that due to his huge workload and communal responsibilities, he might forget the Torah he had learned. The Rebbe responded that he should take on an additional *chavrusa*, so Reb Ephraim added another *kvius* from 1:00 to 2:00 every afternoon.

Despite being responsible for hundreds of salaries and thousands of students, Reb Ephraim did not hold himself above the work of every Chossid — *hafatzas hamaayanos*. Every Friday for more than 30 years, he and

his wife Pessia would visit the Shmuel Harofe Hospital where Reb Ephraim would put on tefillin with the men and Pessia would distribute *neshek* to the women.

GENERATIONS OF CHASSIDIM

Reb Ephraim and his wife Pessia were blessed with six children and a multitude of grandchildren *ka'h*, many of whom moved on shlichus to distant countries. Reb Ephraim took a keen interest in every family member, calling each grandchild on their birthday, and would recite the *kapitel Tehillim* corresponding to the age of each child and grandchild every day.

In 5760, Reb Ephraim fell ill, just two months after the tragic passing of his son and right-hand man, Reb Berke.

On Wednesday, 26 Shevat 5763, Reb Ephraim passed away at the age of 84. He is survived by a large family around the world, and by thousands of spiritual descendants who owe their Chassidishkeit to the *mosdos* he built and maintained through decades of selfless and unwavering service to the Chabad community in Eretz Yisroel.

The young *bochur* from Nuremberg found the light of Chassidus and grew into a legend, with thousands of students, *mushpa'im*, and family members carrying on his legacy of learning, giving, and above all, being a staunch and loyal *chossid* of the Rebbe⁵. **T**

1. See Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 310; vol. 4, p. 486; et. al.

2. Igros Kodesh vol. 5, pg. 84.

3. See *Transforming Tragedy* — Derher Iyar 5775; *The Rebbe's Capital City* — Derher Tishrei 5779.

4. See "A Mountain of Pride," Derher, Tishrei 5780.

5. Much of the material in this article is based on the book *Hamenahel*, Kfar Chabad 5782.



Returning The Favor

As related by Rabbi Shmuel Lew

Written By: Rabbi Tzemach Feller

Rabbi Nachman (Norman) Bernhard was a legendary activist, speaker and rabbi at Oxford Synagogue, South Africa's largest congregation. He graduated from Yeshiva University and served as rabbi in Wichita, Kansas for five years. After returning to New York, he was offered the position of rabbi in Oxford Synagogue but was unsure whether taking the job was the right thing to do.

It was suggested to Rabbi Bernhard that he visit the Rebbe, and so he did. He arrived in *yechidus* with a list of reasons why he shouldn't go to South Africa, and the Rebbe dismissed them, telling him that anyone capable of putting out the fire burning in Jewish life today must do so.

So Rabbi Bernhard agreed to move to South Africa. But he did not plan to stay there permanently. He instead intended to soon move to Eretz Yisroel. At his first *yechidus* after taking on the position in South Africa, he asked the Rebbe about his decision and requested a bracha to make *aliyah*.

Aware that her father would be seeing the Rebbe, Rabbi Bernhard's daughter had written a several-page-long letter to the Rebbe, pleading "Please don't take away my father's dream of making *aliyah*." The Rebbe responded to the girl, explaining why Rabbi Bernhard's moving to Eretz Yisroel wouldn't be a good idea, and explained why staying in his current position as a rabbi in South Africa would be the best thing not only for his community, but for himself as well. Despite the answer his daughter had received, Rabbi Bernhard still wanted to discuss it with the Rebbe.

In the course of a two-hour *yechidus* with the Rebbe late

one Thursday night, the Rebbe asked him, "Are you asking me for an *eitza* (advice) or a *bracha*?" An *eitza*," he replied. "I want the Rebbe's advice on what to do." In that case, the Rebbe told him, the best thing for him would be to stay in South Africa. "But I can be active in outreach in Eretz Yisroel," Rabbi Bernhard tried to reason. The Rebbe's response was, "It is not needed as much in Eretz Yisroel as it is in South Africa." The Rebbe went on, "You should do this not only out of *kabbalas ol*, but also out of an understanding as to why you should stay in South Africa."

That Shabbos at the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe called Rabbi Bernhard up and gave him a bottle of *mashke* for the "*Chevriah*," a group of people that would come together once a week to learn Torah with Rabbi Bernhard's involvement.

Before heading back to South Africa, Rabbi Bernhard requested another *yechidus*, which took place on Sunday night. When he walked in, he said to the Rebbe in Yiddish, "*Ich vil danken dem Rebbe'n far'n kiruv* [I want to thank the Rebbe for the particular close attention you have given me]" — presumably referring to the *mashke* he had merited to receive at the *farbrengen*. The Rebbe responded, in English, "*Kiruv* is a two-way street."

"How can I repay, so that it will be a two-way street?" Rabbi Bernhard asked. The Rebbe replied, "If you follow all my instructions and you do exactly what I tell you to do with *kabbalas ol*, that is not reciprocating the *kiruv*. Giving back *kiruv* is when you do what I ask with joy — because you know it's right." ①

מבית הגזע
TREASURES
FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

“MY SON-IN-LAW ENCOURAGED ME...”

SELECTIONS OF THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S DIARY—5705

In the winter of 5705, the Frierdiker Rebbe suffered terrible heart pain and was advised by his doctors to rest. Nevertheless, the Frierdiker Rebbe kept at his holy work as much as possible, continuing to write *maamarim* and letters, and receiving people for *yechidus*.

“Over the past week I was instructed by the doctors to rest from my work and not to meet personally with people, because I have heart pains that require total rest,” the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in a letter. “But is it possible for me to rest when there is so much work to do in spreading Torah, *yiras Shamayim*, and Torah-true education; ten-fold or more than what I’m doing now?”¹

On 26 Cheshvan, the Frierdiker Rebbe had a heart attack and was bedridden for three weeks, after which he slowly began to return to his previous responsibilities.

Throughout this period, from the end of Tishrei until 25 Cheshvan, then again from 7 Teves until 26 Teves, the Frierdiker Rebbe kept a detailed diary.

Presented here from *MiBeis Hagnazim*² are a few fascinating selections:³

MOTZEI SHABBOS BEREISHIS, 27 TISHREI

7:00 PM

Last night I ate the Shabbos meal in the dining room with my son-in-law Harav M.M.S.⁴ and my dear friend Harav S.L.⁵ from 9:30 until 10:00 p.m.

It was my intention to eat the [daytime] Shabbos meal [again] in the dining room with my son-in-law Harav M.M.S. and my dear friend Harav S.L., but due to an external factor which caused me great heartache, I suddenly felt pain in my heart and I was unable to fulfill my wish. Instead, I ate [alone] in the *yechidus* room...

MOTZEI SHABBOS PARSHAS LECH, 11 MAR-CHESHVAN

11:00 PM

Last night, after Kabbalas Shabbos and Maariv, I was engaged in learning.

In the evening [on Motzei Shabbos], from 8:30 until 9:30 p.m. I was visited by my son-in-law, Harav Hagaon M.M.S. Shlita, and my dear friend Reb Nissan Mindel. I related to them a synopsis of the stories of communal activism—specifically in the area of helping Yidden with livelihood—of my great-great-grandfather the Mittlerer Rebbe, my great-grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek, my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash, and my father [the Rebbe Rashab], up until the year 5661.

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

I tell the stories in an undertone—due to my weak health, may Hashem strengthen me materially and spiritually—and in turn, my son-in-law, Harav Hagaon M.M.S. Shlita, conveys it to my dear friend Mr. Mindel—because he is hard of hearing, may Hashem send him healing—and he writes notes for himself. Their plan is to compile a booklet about the stories of communal activism, of the Rebbes of Chabad throughout the generations, especially in the area of providing means of *parnasah*, and to publish it in English.⁶

Today I was visited by Dr. Wilder and he found that, *baruch Hashem*, my health is getting better. May Hashem send me healing and give me strength that I be able to continue my work, and grant me success materially and spiritually.

SUNDAY, 12 MAR-CHESHVAN

11:00 PM

Last night I slept very little. In the morning I was visited by Dr. Wilder who found that my health has improved but warned me not to receive people for meetings and not to work too hard. He was very adamant about this.

Throughout the day, I finished [writing] the *maamar* Bereishis, and I wrote responses to letters and notes from #825 to #856.⁷

From 7:30 until 8:30 in the evening, I again told stories to my son-in-law *Harav Hagaon*, M.M.S. *Shlita*, and my dear friend Reb Nissan Mindel about the communal activism of the Rabbeim, specifically in the realm of assisting with *parnasah*, from the year 5662 and onward.

I then spent time sorting through my personal accounts.

MONDAY, 13 MAR-CHESHVAN

Throughout the day I wrote out the first chapter of the *maamar*, *Elieh Toldos Noach*, and I responded to letters #857 to #865.

I read through the material to be published in Kovetz Lubavitch and was very pleased.

I saw the essay about the visits with Jewish farmers on behalf of Machne Yisroel,⁸ written by Mrs. Hodakov, and it made a deep impression on me.

THURSDAY, 16 MAR-CHESHVAN

12:00 AM

...My son-in-law, Harav M.M.S. Shlita has been encouraging me to print the *sichos* I have delivered since arriving in this country on 9 Adar II, 5700. I would have to edit them because they are all oral transcriptions that require thorough editing and style improvement. I plan to dedicate around five hours per week towards this endeavor, one



hour each day. May Hashem assist me.

It is noteworthy to mention the great pleasure I received by reading the letter of my friend, the *talmid*, Mr. Tzvi Yehuda Fogelman, conveying good news about his instruction and education of the students at Achei Temimim Lubavitch of Buffalo...

TUESDAY, 17 TEVES

11:00 PM

At the insistence of my son-in-law Harav M.M.S., I began examining the transcriptions of *sichos* of the year 5700, from when we arrived safely in this country, in order to prepare them for publishing, ה"א... ①

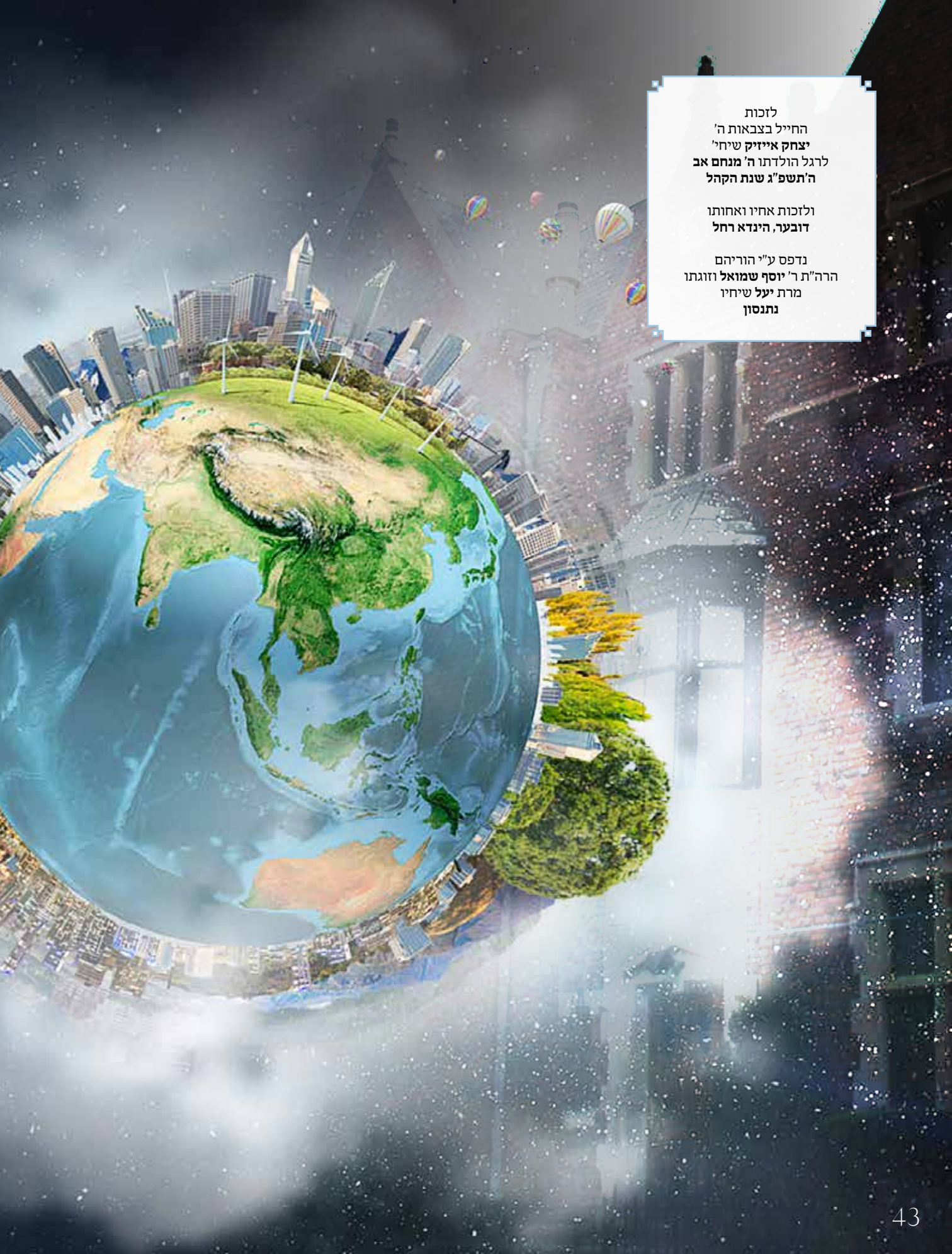
1. Igros Kodesh RaYatz vol. 13, pg. 395.
2. Article 19, p. 47 and further.
3. Our Rebbe wrote on top of these pages, "Yoman 5705."
4. The Rebbe.
5. Reb Shmuel Levitin.
6. It seems that this material was eventually published in Hebrew in *Chabad Lubavitch—Askanus Tziburis*. See *Yemei Melech* vol. 3, p. 1230.
7. The Frierdiker Rebbe numbered each letter he received and placed them into binders ("journals" as he referred to them), after which he would write down answers in the order of the letters for his secretary to type out.
8. The "Farmer's Division" of Machne Yisroel sent shlichim to strengthen Yiddishkeit among Jewish farmers in rural areas of the country.



WHEN I WENT ON SHLICHUS...

EIGHT STORIES SHARED BY SHLUCHIM ABOUT HOW THEIR SHLICHUS BEGAN— THEIR APPOINTMENT, THE REBBE'S GUIDANCE, AND THEIR EARLY EXPERIENCES 'ON THE GROUND.' PRESENTED IN HONOR OF THE KINUS HASHLUCHIM HA'OLAMI.

BY: RABBI MENDY GREENBERG



לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
יצחק אייזיק שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו ה' מנחם אב
ה'תשפ"ג שנת הקהל

ולזכות אחיו ואחותו
דובער, הינדא רחל

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יוסף שמואל וזוגתו
מרת יעל שיחי'
נתנסון

THE GUIDANCE WAS STILL THERE

RABBI MOSHE GURKOV

Boston, Massachusetts

As a *bochur*, I always knew that when I got married I would go on shlichus to wherever the Rebbe would send me. In those days, the Rebbe would handpick the places to which he sent shluchim and that seemed to me the greatest gift—the Rebbe himself would choose where I would spend my life dedicated to his shlichus.

To my consternation, ‘bad’ news came around the time of my wedding. The Rebbe would no longer be choosing the locations; prospective shluchim now had to research different places, settle on what seemed the best choice, and—of course—submit it for the Rebbe’s approval and bracha.

I was devastated. I had always envisioned my place of shlichus as one chosen by the Rebbe himself. My life on shlichus

would be spent not where my own *nefesh habehamis* chose but where the *ratzon ha’Elyon* designated.

In *yechidus*, I poured my heart out to the Rebbe, and begged the Rebbe to direct me to a location of his choice. It was probably a bit *chutzpadik* but I felt that I couldn’t settle for less. The Rebbe spoke to me in a very fatherly tone but didn’t agree to change policy. Instead, he said, “*shreib arein*,” that I should write in about my various options and the Rebbe would guide me further.

In my deep yearning for my life to be carried out exactly as the Rebbe wishes, I told myself that I would leave it entirely to the Rebbe; I would not allow my own comforts and desires to impede. Whenever a shlichus opportunity came my way,

I would immediately write it to the Rebbe without determining whether it seemed desirable to me or not. I would leave the decision entirely to the Rebbe.

Several options appeared and I began writing about them to the Rebbe. For a while, I received no response at all, and I assumed that those *shlichus’n* weren’t for me.

One day, I received an offer to teach in the Chabad school in Boston. For several reasons, the offer was not palatable to me and I ignored it.

Then I realized that if I really wanted to be guided by the Rebbe, I needed to do just that, and not insert my own desires. I submitted the offer and to my surprise—almost immediately—I received a warm, positive answer. I had received my shlichus.

As told to Rabbi Yossi Shemtov — Toledo, Ohio



RABBI GURKOV RECEIVES KOS SHEL BRACHA FROM THE REBBE

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 21041 (3 TISHREI 5745)

THE SPECIAL GUEST AT THE TZEISCHEM L'SHALOM

RABBI ZUSHE POSNER

Eretz Yisroel

Rabbi Leibel Alevsky relates:

When I was learning in 770 in Elul of 5718, my good friend Reb Zushe Posner was appointed by the Rebbe to be a shliach to the “Reshet,” the Chabad school network catering to non-religious children in Eretz Yisroel.

We Israeli *bochurim* felt close with Reb Zushe; he had been one of the shluchim sent by the Rebbe after the terrorist attack in Kfar Chabad in 5716, and had played an important role in inspiring us to come learn in 770 near the Rebbe. So, before his departure, about ten or fifteen of us sat down for a “*tzeis'chem l'shalom*” farbrengen in the small zal.

During our gathering, I noticed Rabbi Hodakov leave the Rebbe's room and begin observing us. I was comfortable with Rabbi Hodakov—I had worked with him on various projects—so I approached him and asked if there was anything he needed.

“If you all remain here,” he said, “the Rebbe will come out in around five minutes.”

He went back into the Rebbe's room, and pandemonium broke out in the zal. The Rebbe was coming out! We needed to clean up, set up, bring the Rebbe's chair and *becher*—and we had only five minutes!

Exactly five minutes later, the Rebbe emerged from his room. We had set up a table for the Rebbe as he sat at farbrengen, and we stood around a second table, protruding forward like a T.

The Rebbe sat at his place and looked around. “*M'hot doch geredt az m'zol bleibn zitz'n oif di pletzer* - we agreed that you would remain seated in your places...”

“*Un der shliach alein shteit oich* - the shliach himself is standing too.”

In our frenzy, all the benches had been removed, so we just bent down as if we were sitting. The Rebbe smiled and proceeded to say a *sicha*.



REB ZUSHE POSNER (ON THE LEFT), HANDS A TANYA TO A CHILD, DURING THE HISTORIC VISIT OF THE SHLUCHIM TO ERETZ YISROEL IN 5716.



REB ZUSHE POSNER RECEIVES A DOLLAR FROM THE REBBE DURING THE KINUS HASHLUCHIM, 5752.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 2/21/07

THE REBBE'S DELIBERATE PLANNING

RABBI PINCHUS FELDMAN

Sydney, Australia

The first indication of my shlichus location came when I became engaged to my wife Pnina (a shidduch initiated by the Rebbe), the daughter of Rabbi Chaim Gutnik. It was then that the Rebbe conveyed to my father his desire for us to live in Australia, saying, "*Zei zolen zein in Australia* - they should live in Australia."

The actual implementation of my shlichus, however, took place over the following months and years, in an incredible sequence of events orchestrated by the Rebbe himself.

It began with instructions I received in *yechidus* before traveling to Australia.

The Rebbe told me that though the wedding would be in Melbourne, one *Sheva Brachos* should be held in Sydney. The official reason, the Rebbe explained, was that the kallah's grandparents lived in Sydney; her grandmother's second husband, Rabbi Asher Abramson, was chief *dayan* of the city. The *taam pnimi*, however, was about the *Sheva Brachos* venue.

The Rebbe specifically instructed that it take place in a particular shul called "Yeshiva." This shul had a number of very learned congregants, Holocaust survivors who had been

educated in Europe's finest yeshivos. It also had a semi-yeshiva for children, and it was a major center for Yiddishkeit in Sydney. In the early 5720s, when their previous rabbi moved, the community members had sought the Rebbe's guidance in finding a replacement. Although they eventually hired a different rabbi named Rabbi Barzel, a renowned rosh yeshiva from Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe's connection to the Yeshiva synagogue remained strong.

The Rebbe instructed us to arrange a *Sheva Brachos* in the Yeshiva shul on Motzei Shabbos, and provided me with precise guidelines. I was to deliver a pilpul, tailored to the understanding of the erudite congregants. I was to review a *maamar* (which they should not fully comprehend), and also sing the *niggun hachana* and the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*.

In the month before my wedding, I spent most of my time in Sydney, where I first met the members of Yeshiva. The rav of the Yeshiva would deliver an *iyun Gemara shiur* every week. Upon meeting an American *yungerman*, he honored me with the opportunity to present the *shiur* in his stead. Baruch Hashem, I made a favorable impression.

A few weeks later, the family and *baalei batim* hosted our *Sheva Brachos* at the Yeshiva. As per the Rebbe's instructions, I delivered the pilpul, and the learned Jews in attendance listened attentively and enjoyed it. Following that, I reviewed a *maamar*, and they sat in deep reverence, awed by the Kabalah "flying over their heads." Soon after, we sang the solemn and soul-stirring *niggunim*. The audience was quite moved; it was a very uplifting experience. Soon, we headed off to Eretz Yisrael, where I joined the kolel in Kfar Chabad as per the Rebbe's instructions.

A year later, my wife's younger sister became engaged to Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht. Initially, we did not plan to attend the wedding; frequent trips to Australia were unheard of. However, about a week before the wedding, I received an urgent phone call from Rabbi Hodakov. He informed me



RABBI PINCHUS FELDMAN PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A PHOTO FROM HIS COMMUNITY WORK.

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 59712

that the Rebbe wanted me to pack my bags and travel to Australia without delay.

Why the sudden rush? It turns out that Rabbi Barzel had decided to relocate to Eretz Yisroel, leaving a void in Yeshiva's leadership. The *baale batim* were already advertising the position. The Rebbe wanted me to assume the role of rav in Yeshiva, and the wedding presented a fitting opportunity for me to visit, discuss this new possibility, and do whatever we could to achieve it.

I took my suitcase and set off for Australia. At the outset, my father-in-law was incredulous about the Rebbe's instructions. As one of the founders of the Yeshiva, he couldn't fathom that they would hire a 23 year old rabbi.

The Rebbe's instructions were clear, however, so we didn't hesitate. My father-in-law invited several community leaders to the wedding and suggested that they bring me to Sydney for a "*probeh*," a two-week trial period. The idea was accepted, and my *probeh* concluded successfully.

Before long, the community extended an offer: they would employ me to oversee the school, teach classes, and fulfill all rabbinic duties, but they reserved the right to hire a senior rabbi in the future if they deemed it necessary. After all, I was only twenty-three years old.

My father-in-law called 770 and the Rebbe gave us the following instructions: We were to tell the community that I am a rav. A rav is *mara d'asra* and must have full control

over everything in the community. If they were willing to hire me as rav unconditionally, with final say on all matters, good. If not, "*mir velen bleiben gutte freint* - we would remain good friends," in the Rebbe's words, but we would not accept the offer.

After some deliberation, they accepted. The Rebbe sent a telegram to the *hachtara*, and also a beautiful letter to the congregation praising them for their choice and writing the most extraordinary compliments:

ואשרי חלקם שבחרו בהרב פנחס שליט"א הכהן לרב דקהלתם ולראש הישיבה, שהרי הוא מטובי תלמידי הישיבה הק' תומכי תמימים ליובאוויטש — You are fortunate to have chosen Rabbi Pinchus Shlit"א Hakohen to serve as rav and rosh yeshiva of your community, for he is from among the finest students of Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch." (Igros Kodesh vol. 25 pg. 236)

After I received the post, the Rebbe told my father-in-law that my task was "*iber-tzu-nemen di gantze medineh* - to 'transform' the entire state [New South Wales, as Rabbi Hodakov explained]." That was to be my shlichus, and "Yeshiva" was at the center of it all.

At the time, there was no official Chabad presence in the city. There were three Chabad families in Sydney—two rabbonim and one shochet. Today, fifty-five years later, nineteen of the approximately twenty-four Orthodox shuls (including Chabad Houses) have Chabad spiritual leadership—all a result of the Rebbe's vision.

THE AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING

RABBI GERSHON MENDEL GARELIK

Milan, Italy

When we received our shlichus to Milan, we were so excited to become the Rebbe's shlichim that we set the earliest possible date for our departure. We didn't even wait for Yud-Tes Kislev; we bought airline tickets for 12 Kislev 5719.

In *yechidus* before our departure, the Rebbe gave us Tanya as a gift, and then pulled out one final Tanya: "*You never know who you might meet on the plane; perhaps someone will need this Tanya.*"

We left for the airport with a lively entourage, dancing

in front of 770 until I was rushed into the car. The Rebbe came out to see us off and was waiting until we would leave for the airport.

The *farbrengen* continued on the plane, much to the consternation of the flight attendants and finally settled down as we prepared for departure. At that moment we received one final goodbye—Reb Leibel Raskin raced onto the plane with a newly published *sicha* about shlichus, said the previous Shabbos, which the Rebbe had rushed to print in time for

our departure.

My first thought as we settled in was to fulfill our first shlichus—to give the extra Tanya to a Yid on the plane.

I got out of my seat and began wandering up and down the aisles, in first class and economy, looking for a Jewish person; all the while, the staff were chasing me and asking me to sit down in my seat. Despite my best efforts, I couldn't find a single Jew and I was forced to sit down for takeoff without having fulfilled the shlichus.

I was very disappointed; I felt like the opening moment of our shlichus had been a failure. From the emotional high of our send-off, I dropped to an emotional low.

A few minutes after takeoff, a well-dressed man approached us. "I see you are a Chabadnik; would you by any chance have a Tanya?"

I was stunned.

Hiding my emotions, I asked him, "Why do you need a Tanya?"

His answer was incredible.

"I'm on my way to Paris for business, and I visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe for a bracha. The Rebbe told me that on the plane, it's worthwhile to study a *sefer*, and preferably—a Tanya. To my question, 'Where should I get a Tanya?' the Rebbe responded, 'You never know who you will meet on the plane...'"

My first shlichus had been fulfilled.

From Rabbi Garelik's JEM interview.



REB GERSHON MENDEL WITH OTHER CHASSIDIM IN FRONT OF 770 AS HE LEAVES TO THE AIRPORT.



REB GERSHON MENDEL PERFORMS HAGBA AS THE REBBE LOOK ON

LEVI FREEMAN VIA JEM 4699 (4) CHESHVAN 5767

WHAT SHOULD I DO THERE?

RABBI NACHMAN SUDAK

London, England

When I became a chosson in Kislev 5720, some fellow *bochurim* and I wrote to the Rebbe with a request. Instead of us looking for cities to settle in, we wanted the Rebbe himself to direct us on our shlichus.

From that moment, there seemed to be a long series of subtle tests to determine the extent and seriousness of our commitment. For instance, Rabbi Hodakov once summoned me into his office and asked me what I thought of going to

Turkey. I replied that wherever the Rebbe would send me, I would go. Showing no sign of whether my answer pleased him or not, he sent me back to my studies. Later, I realized that the suggestion about Turkey was just an outlandish question to see how serious we were.

Months went by and I had yet to set a date and location for my wedding because I was waiting for the Rebbe to let me know where I would be going. Towards the summer I

finally received my orders: I should get married in London (where my kallah lived), and shortly thereafter I would move somewhere in Europe.

Naturally, I was somewhat disheartened to hear this, because that meant that the Rebbe wouldn't be *mesader kid-dushin* at my wedding, so I decided to write to the Rebbe asking for permission to get married in New York. I added that this arrangement would be easier for both sides, as far as logistical arrangements were concerned.

The Rebbe replied in no uncertain terms: “מנהג ישראל לעשות החופה במקום דירת הורי הכלה. זאת אומרת בלונדון. וגם עליהם לעשות כן — It is a Jewish tradition to hold the chuppah in the place where the kallah's parents live. This means in London. And they should do so as well.”

The Rebbe's insistence on this matter was clarified some more when, one day, I was called in and told that my shlichus would be to London. The Rebbe even showed me a letter he had written to the board of associates founded by my father-in-law (Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov), recommending me for the position. It finally dawned upon me that the Rebbe wanted my shlichus to begin with my wedding, easing my transition into town, rather than landing there later as a perfect stranger.

In those days, the definition of shlichus was still a bit vague, and I wasn't exactly sure what my job would entail. So during that *yechidus* I asked the Rebbe what I should do upon arriving in London.

The Rebbe raised both his hands and said, “וואס זאל איך — דיר זאגן, ס'איז פאראן טויזענטער זאכן וואס צו טאן



REB NACHMAN SUDAK RECEIVES A SET OF DALED MINIM FROM THE REBBE

LEW FREDIN VIA JEM 2/8/58

I tell you; there are thousands of things to do.”

The Rebbe told me to open a branch of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, and that we would be in touch. The Rebbe concluded by saying that if I were to have any questions, I should write straight to him, and finished with, “מיר וועלן זיך זעהן — we will see each other.”

I moved to London and did precisely as the Rebbe had instructed. I opened a branch of Merkos and started giving shiurim and doing other activities. The Rebbe assisted me every step of the way. Over the years, whenever a problem arose, the Rebbe always found out about it somehow, even when I had deliberately chosen not to bother him with it. He always knew and came to the rescue.

From Rabbi Sudak's 5773 interview with A Chassidisher Derher

THE OPEN WINDOW-SHADE

RABBI SHABSI ALPERN

Brazil

On Shvi'i Shel Pesach 5721, shortly after my wedding, I walked on *tahalucha* to Williamsburg in a group of some 200 *yungerleit*.

After crossing Eastern Parkway, my attention was caught by a man leaning against the wall. He was clearly Jewish, but his clothing were peculiar; he had pointy shoes—not in

style then. I approached him and wished him a Gut Yom Tov, asking where he was from.

“Brazil,” he answered.

“What are you doing here?”

“I'm on business.”

Although he wasn't fully observant, he wasn't working that

day, so I invited him to join us on our walk to Williamsburg. He joined us, watched the dancing and Divrei Torah in the shuls, and afterwards I brought him to my home for the seudah. He was a warm Jew, and quite touched by everything he had seen that day. We spoke late into the night.

“Would you be willing to move to Brazil?” he asked as our discussion concluded.

I explained that we don’t make these decisions, but that I would write to the Rebbe about it after Yom Tov. After Yom Tov, I wrote to the Rebbe who very quickly responded in the affirmative.

Our flight was set for 3 Av 5721. We had two *yechidus’n* before our departure, and on Shabbos, 2 Av, the Rebbe held a farbrengen. During the farbrengen the Rebbe said a short *maamar* on the topic of Bnei Gad and Bnei Reuven, but at the end, he suddenly spoke about the importance of shlichus in faraway places.

“Unlike those who mistakenly want to remain in their own *daled amos* and not travel to distant places, one must know that although it is easier to remain in your own *daled amos*, it is nevertheless not the *tachlis hakavana*, the ultimate purpose. Hashem’s will is that you go to a distant place and spread the wellsprings of Chassidus there.”¹

That last paragraph wasn’t directly connected to the *maamar*, and we understood that it was a farewell to us. In the *sicha* following the *maamar*, the Rebbe spoke about it once again.

In those years, there was a special ritual when a couple went on shlichus. On the way to the airport, the shluchim would stop in front of 770, and the *bochurim* would come out of *zal* to dance and see them off. During the dancing,



RABBI SHABSI ALPERN RECEIVES A DOLLAR FROM THE REBBE

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 39446

the Rebbe would raise his blinds about a third of the way.

When we came to 770 before our departure, the Rebbe did not raise the blinds. Everyone thought it was very strange. The Rebbe had given us two *yechidus’n* before our trip, and there was no doubt that the Rebbe knew we were going on that Sunday. Slightly disappointed, we left for the airport.

The first leg of our journey, to Caracas, Venezuela, was on a Belgian airline. We sat down for take-off, but the plane didn’t move. After some time, the pilot apologized and said that one of the engines had burned out, and it would take 48 hours to receive a replacement part from Brussels. We were told to go home and return two days later.

On Tuesday, before returning to the airport, we again stopped off to say farewell at 770. This time, the Rebbe opened the blinds.

DON'T DIFFERENTIATE!

RABBI YISRAEL DEREN

Stamford, Connecticut

During the two years I spent in kollel, I received many offers for shlichus opportunities. In those years, the Rebbe generally didn’t send shluchim to new locations; new

shluchim were usually hired to join existing *mosdos*. At the time, many *mosdos* needed extra hands, and quite a few shluchim called us with offers.

When my wife and I were in *yechidus*, we told the Rebbe that we wanted to go on shlichus to a new location. The Rebbe told us to go into Merkos and speak to Rabbi Hodakov to hear suggestions. Rabbi Hodakov said there was a suggestion for a shliach to move to Amherst, Massachusetts, and I immediately said, “We’ll take it.”

He smiled and explained that the recent norm was to come with a list of suggestions and choose the best one.

I wrote up all nineteen proposals we had received, and we asked the Rebbe to choose. The Rebbe replied, “The *seder* now is that we don’t send out shluchim anymore; you should choose a place yourself, *b’makom shelibo chafetz* - according to your heart’s desire, *v’al yeshaneh adam mibno mitoch banav* - a person shouldn’t differentiate among his children.”

I remember being disappointed; I wanted the Rebbe to choose our place. Reb Binyomin Klein saw my disappointment, and said, “The Rebbe just called you his own child!”

In the end, my wife wrote a letter to the Rebbe explaining that our heart’s desire, our *libo chafetz*, was to go where the Rebbe himself would send us. This time, the Rebbe circled three of the nineteen options, and said to look into those places and get more details. After we did so, the Rebbe chose Amherst.

During that same *yechidus* regarding our shlichus, the Rebbe said, “*Bichlal zolt ir zehn az s’zohl zein gut b’gashmius. Hagam az ruchnius iz der ikar, az s’iz gut b’gashmius, ken men hob’n koach oif ruchnius*—In general, you should ensure that you’re comfortable *b’gashmiyus*. Although *ruchniyus* is the main thing, when you’re physically comfortable, you have energy for *ruchniyus*.”



REB YISROEL DEREN BRINGS A MEKURAV TO THE REBBE AT A YECHIDUS FOR MEMBERS OF THE MACHNE YISROEL DEVELOPMENT FUND

VELVEL SCHILDKRAUT VIA JEM 149398 (3/NISSAN 5748)

WHAT A MESS!

RABBI YIGAL TZIPORI

Kiryat Shemonah

We arrived on shlichus with the Rebbe’s bracha in 5748, and immediately began working on our first major event — a *Siyum HaRambam*. We secured a spacious venue, distributed flyers, and began a major campaign to attract attendees.

When I approached Kiryat Shemonah’s Sephardic rav

with an invitation, he responded warmly and said he would be delighted to participate. However, his demeanor changed when I mentioned the Ashkenazi rav.

“Under no circumstances should you invite him,” he declared. “He has opposed us and does not deserve our

cooperation. If he attends, I won't!"

Realizing that I had gotten myself into a hot situation, I suggested that we not make the final decision ourselves. "I will call the Rebbe's office," I suggested, "and we will follow his guidance."

The rav agreed.

I spoke with Rabbi Groner over the phone, and he conveyed the Rebbe's response: *Limmud HaRambam* is intended to unite the Jewish people, not create divisions. Therefore, all the *rabbonim* should participate.

I relayed the Rebbe's answer to the Sephardic rav, and he accepted the Rebbe's decision.

The Ashkenazi rabbi was no friend to Chabad, so I wasn't sure how to go about inviting him. At this point I suddenly found myself inundated with outraged phone calls. During a Gemara shiur, the Ashkenazi rav had made a statement that caused quite a stir, saying something derogatory about Lubavitch, and more specifically about the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

People were very upset; many were familiar with Lubavitch, and several had even learned in Chabad institutions. Protests erupted at the shiur the moment those words were uttered, and news of the incident quickly reached me.

I approached the rav, and told him that I was sure he had been misunderstood. "Absolutely," he exclaimed, "My words were taken out of context! I would never have said anything like that!"

"Listen," I said, "We have the *Siyum HaRambam* next week. Why don't you join us and address the crowd? It will be the perfect time to counter those claims!"

He hadn't anticipated being "roped in" like that, but after a moment's thought, he agreed.

The big day finally arrived. The *Siyum* was a resounding success; Rabbis Kaplan, Bistritzky and Wilschansky from Tzfas graced the event, both local rabbis addressed the crowd, and there was a very impressive turnout. We couldn't have been happier with the outcome.

As the event drew to a close, we held a raffle for a ticket to travel to the Rebbe. Rabbi Wilschansky, our master of ceremonies, mixed the raffle tickets and invited the Sephardic rav to select the lucky winner. With anticipation in the air, the rav pulled out a ticket and glanced at the name. Suddenly, his face began changing colors; it was none other than his long-standing rival, the Ashkenazi rav!

It was just too bad. The Ashkenazi rav was granted the coveted ticket, and, after several delays, he got to 770 on Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5750.

The Shabbos he spent in 770 was very memorable for



RABBI YIGAL TZIPORI RECEIVES A DOLLAR FROM THE REBBE DURING A RARE DISTRIBUTION ON CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS 5746

him. At the farbrengen, he received several *kiruvim* from the Rebbe, and the Rebbe even called him up to sit on the dais. He also had the opportunity to receive a bottle of *mashke*, as was common for anyone hosting a farbrengen or event of *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

As the Rebbe handed him *l'chaim*, the Rebbe asked when his farbrengen would take place.

"After Pesach," he replied.

The Rebbe remarked that the Rabbeim were not accustomed to selling *chametz* that was *kos shel bracha* or the like, so the rav changed the date; "Before Pesach," he said.

"When?"

On the spur of the moment, he said, "*Yud-Alef Nissan*, the Rebbe's birthday."

Hearing that, the Rebbe gave him an incredible smile.

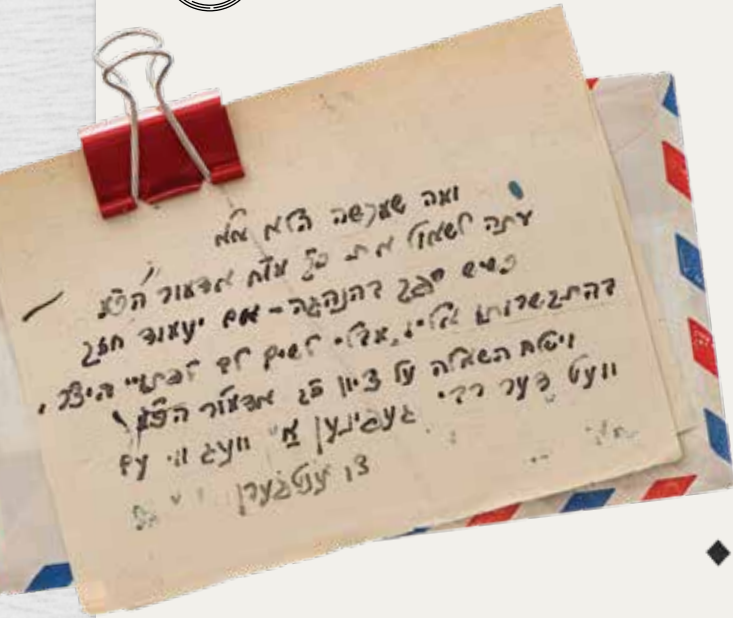
On *Yud-Alef Nissan*, he held a grand farbrengen. He invited the *gabbaim* of all 42 shuls in Kiryat Shemonah, and gave each a bottle containing the Rebbe's *mashkeh* for their shuls, with strict instructions that it be finished before Pesach.

The visit made an incredible impression on him. He later began delivering his own Tanya shiur and all his children started studying Chassidus; today some of them are deeply connected to the Rebbe. That *Siyum HaRambam* was the start of a beautiful connection with Lubavitch. ¹

1. Toras Menachem vol. 31 pg. 160.



Story



לזכות השלוחה חי' מושקא בת פערל
 גאלדא תחי' לרגל יום הולדתה ד' מר חשון
 ולזכות השלוחה מיגא עטל בת פערל גאלדא
 תחי' לרגל יום הולדתה י"ב מר חשון

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
 הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא שיחיו
 טייכטל
 שמפיין אילינוי

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Perfectly Timed Delivery



AS TOLD BY
RABBI NISSAN KORNFELD
 (Mercer Island, WA)

In the fall of 5783, my wife Mushka hosted a Jewish Women's Circle focused on the mitzvah of Mezuzah. We noticed that numerous Jewish homes in our small community on Mercer Island did not yet have *mezuzos* on their doors and we figured this event would encourage many of the women to embrace this mitzvah.

We ordered kits from an artist in San Diego, CA named Ilanit who provides glass-infused Mezuzah cases for people to design and then send back to her for finishing

touches. The event was a huge success with many ladies in attendance and the craft was a real hit. We immediately sent the kits off to Ilanit for the final touches and looked forward to delivering the finished Mezuzah cases, along with *parshiyos*, to their homes.

Several weeks passed and we got distracted with other *peulos*, especially Chanukah, but the box never arrived. When we finally followed up during winter vacation, Ilanit was genuinely surprised. She had sent them back a week



THE GLASS-INFUSED MEZUZAH CASES MADE AT THE JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE EVENT AT CHABAD OF MERCER ISLAND, WA.

after receiving them.

She provided us with the tracking number and indeed according to the US Postal Service, the box had been delivered to our home three weeks earlier! We checked our security footage from the date of the alleged delivery but there was no sign of a USPS truck.

Nothing about the situation made any sense and we felt terrible for three reasons. First, these women would not get *mezuzos* for their homes. Second, the cases were quite costly. And finally, this fiasco would make us look unreliable and unprofessional. Ilanit understood the gravity of the issue and despite the complications and the huge hassle it would entail, she offered to redesign all the Mezuzah cases based on the photos she had.

On Wednesday, 11 Teves my wife sent an email to the event participants with the following announcement:

“We have good news and bad news. We sent your Mezuzah cases to Ilanit in California to complete. She did a great job (she even sent us a picture, see below)! She shipped them back to us, and they never arrived! The tracking number said they were delivered on Dec. 17th (picture below), but we have yet to receive them...”

She concluded with the good news that Ilanit offered to replicate the cases and if this was unacceptable we would reimburse them for the loss.

That Shabbos my brother was hosting a Bar Mitzvah in New Jersey. Arriving at JFK Airport on Friday morning 13 Teves, I went directly to the Ohel. Since

the recent Mezuzah episode had greatly disturbed me I wrote about it in my *tzetel* before entering the Ohel.

About an hour later I started receiving messages from people on Mercer Island wanting to speak with me. A woman working as a maintenance worker at a local gated community had posted on a local Facebook Group, “We received a box addressed to a Mushka Kornfeld. Does anyone know who that is?”

It turns out that our box of Mezuzah cases was mistakenly delivered to the wrong address and it sat in this woman's golf cart for over three weeks. She had gone on vacation shortly after it arrived and less than an hour after I wrote to the Rebbe at the Ohel she decided to seek out the owners on Facebook.

Everyone was thrilled with the outcome, and not only were we able to affix many more *mezuzos* on the island, we were also able to share this incredible story with our community and inspire them to know that the Rebbe always finds a way to guide us and *bentch* us. **T**

YOUR STORY

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





JEM198809

TOGETHER AS ONE

FIRST YECHIDUS KLOLIS-DOWNSTAIRS

26 TISHREI 5744

Yechidus Klolis, group yechidus, began in 5742. It first took place in the Rebbe's room, then in the small zal. With time, the process became more organized and the groups were split into several categories. The Rebbe would speak briefly to each group, then all of the assembled would walk by the Rebbe and hand in their panim, and the Rebbe would give each one a dollar for tzedakah. This later moved to the big shul.

The following collection of photos are from the very first Yechidus Klolis that took place downstairs, in the main shul of 770.

For more on this see "Yechidus - The Ultimate Bond" in the Tammuz issue of 5775, as well as "Yechidus Klolis" in Shevat 5778.

Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer

The first group was comprised of families who came as guests for Tishrei. At the start of the yechidus, everyone walks past the Rebbe to hand in their pan, then returns to their places.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198718



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198721



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198724

The Rebbe addresses the crowd with brachos for the rest of the year and encourages them to utilize the remaining days of the special month of Tishrei.

The Rebbe also addresses the positive aspects of this relatively new format of yechidus, explaining the significance of Jews gathering together, and how it can be easier to take hachlatos when one has the encouragement of people around them.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198774

The Rebbe then hands out dollars for tzedakah. On this unique occasion, the Rebbe stood on the opposite side of his usual place at the farbrengen bima, to make for a smoother passage of the line.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198798



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198801



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198784



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198759



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198851

The next groups to enter were guests from Kfar Chabad and Nachalas Har Chabad, those celebrating their Bar/Bas Mitzvah, Chasanim and Kallos, and bochorim returning to yeshiva.



The Rebbe distributed dollars to each group.



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.

Lessons In Chinuch

Dear Editors,

I would like to make a correction to the *Leben Mit'n Rebb'n* column in the recent Tammuz issue, describing Tammuz 5751 with the Rebbe.

On page 11, a transcript from a conversation with the Rebbe during dollars on 11 Tammuz 5751 reads as follows: "To a man who said that he came to request a *bracha* for his children, and asked for guidance on how to raise them to be good people." The Rebbe's answer is then cited briefly.

The man's question is inaccurately translated and that changes the whole theme of the dialogue. I would like to share the original question and full transcript from the video (available at <https://jemtv.page.link/2fQH>).

The man's question - in Yiddish - was "וואס דארף איך טוהן זאלען מיינע קינדער זיין" "גליקלעך" which means "What must I do for my children to be content/happy?" (as opposed to "good").

In other words, (like every good parent) the man wants his children to be happy and asks the Rebbe how to achieve

that.

There is a very powerful lesson here in *chinuch*, and I am including the whole conversation as transcribed from the video:

The man, named Zvi Ghivelder, is introduced by Rabbi Krinsky as the director of television for the whole of Brazil. The Rebbe gives him a *bracha* "for success in all [of] Brazil." Then the man tells the Rebbe that he came especially from Brazil to ask this question:

וואס דארף איך טוהן זאלען מיינע קינדער זיין" —גליקלעך—What must I do for my children to be **content/happy?**"

The Rebbe answers:

בשעת זיי וועלן זעהן אז בא אייך אין שטוב פירט זיך ווי דער אויבערשטער וויל, וועלן זיי דאס וועלן נאכטאן, - נאכמאכען -, במילא וועט דאס בריינגען זיי גליק פון דעם אויבערשטן וואס ער האט געהייסען אויף מקיים זיין מצוות און לערנען תורה. און כדי איינווירקן אויף קינדער, איז בשעת די קינדער זעהן אז די עלטערן פירן זיך אנדערש, האט מען אויף זיי קיין ווירקונג. בשעת איר וועט אבער באווייזען א לעבעדיקען ביישפיל צוזאמען מיט אייער פרוי ביי זיך אין הויז, און זיי וועלן זעהן דעם ביישפיל אין טאג טעגלעך לעבן, וועט דערנאך, אז איר וועט מיט זיי רעדן, וועט איר ביי זיי פועל זיין אז זיי זאלן אויכעט טאן אזוי, און אויב ניט מיט איין מאל, איז לכל הפחות טריט ביי טריט -

(Loosely translated):

“When they will see that the behavior in your home is in accordance with the will of Hashem, they will want to follow - emulate - your behavior, and this will bring them contentment/happiness from Hashem who commanded the fulfilling of mitzvos and learning Torah.

“And in order to influence children - when children see that their parents are behaving differently, one cannot have any effect on them - but when you will show a living example together with your wife in your home, and they will see this example in day-to-day life, then when you will speak with them, you will affect them to do the same, and if not at once, at least step by step... [then in English] day by day. And G-d A-lmighty bless you to be successful, in raising your children in the right way.”

The man then wishes the Rebbe good health to which the Rebbe responds "דיר אויכעט - בשורות טובות (You as well; good news).

He introduces his wife, who asks for protection and health. The Rebbe tells

her in English, “All these things are also directed to you, much more than to your husband, because a wife has more influence in things of education than the husband. That is the fact of life! And G-d A-lmighty bless you to use it in the full measure. בשורות טובות, הצלחה רבה, גם את.”

I do want to point out, however, that the *tochen* that was written in the article was expressed by the Rebbe on another occasion during dollars (transcript from the video):

On 8 Sivan 5749, Rabbi JJ Hecht introduced a supporter of Shaloh, who told the Rebbe that he has two daughters who “are a little bit further away from Judaism than I would like them to be” and asks the Rebbe “How can I bring them a little closer?”

The Rebbe responds: “[To] showing a living example! That is a very peaceful measure, and a very effective measure.”

Kol tuv and thank you for your incredible work!

Mendel Greenberg
CROWN HEIGHTS, NY

