

A Chassidisher *Derher*

א חסידישער דערהער

Chassidus Proliferation

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
THE ALTER REBBE

To the Last Detail

AN INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI SHMUEL LEW

The Very Life of the Rabbeim

*Bringing back the Seforim
from Captivity in Russia*



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In This Issue

Teves 5784 / Issue 138 (215)



14

To the Last Detail
An Interview with
Rabbi Shmuel Lew



30

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48

**The Very Life of
the Rabbeim**
Bringing back the Seforim
from Captivity in Russia

- 4 **A Word on the Parsha**
Dvar Malchus
- 6 **Lift Him Up**
Ksav Yad Kodesh
- 8 **Teves 5737**
Leben Mitten Rebbe'n
- 13 **He will Return**
Stories of the Rebbe

- 28 **Running A Business**
Practical Hora'os
- 41 **Yirmiyahu**
Luminaries
- 46 **The Menorah of
Chassidus**
Treasures

- 62 **Saving a Sefer Torah**
Der Rebbe Vet Gefinen a Veg
- 64 **Asara B'Teves 5721**
Moments
- 68 **Derher Letters**



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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, ולאח שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר ה' טבת



WHO WINS?

Every year, Chassidim enthusiastically celebrate the Yom Tov of Hei Teves, marking the everlasting and ongoing victory of the Rebbe and his Chassidim. The celebrations demonstrate the fulfillment of the Alter Rebbe's promise that his followers, Chassidim of all generations, would forever enjoy the upper-hand in matters of holiness—"יד מקושריו על העליונה". Chassidus Chabad continues, and grows, till the coming of Moshiach and beyond.

In the timeless slogan proudly proclaimed by Chassidim: "*Didan Notzach!*"—our side is victorious.

Let us take a moment to reexamine the meaning of *Didan Notzach* and its implications for our everyday life.

During the initial week following the victory, the Rebbe addressed Chassidim almost every night. As the week came to a close, the Rebbe said a final sicha in which he explained the real meaning of *Didan Notzach*:

Everyone proclaiming "*Didan Notzach*," said the Rebbe, obviously have only one intention with "our side"—the side of the [Frieddiker] Rebbe, *nessi doreinu*. It follows that the outcome of "*Didan Notzach*" must be a victory for the Rebbe. Every action should be assessed to see whether it serves the will of the Rebbe, or rather one's

own self interest. In the end, the *nossi hador* will surely be victorious, prevailing *b'darkei noam ub'darkei sholom*, in a pleasant and peaceful way.

A chossid is wise, "*a kluger*," he certainly understands that it is best to follow the Rebbe's wishes to begin with, and not try foreign paths.

The Rebbe continued to describe the internal struggle between the *yetzer tov*, telling us to follow the Rebbe's instructions, and the *yetzer hara*, who tries dissuading us with all sorts of gimmicks. But by standing together with one another and proclaiming "*Didan Notzach!*" in the proper way, the way the Rebbe would want, we can overcome all these struggles and do what is right.¹

The Rebbe sees "*Didan Notzach*" as the battle cry that will lead us to victory over the forces of evil, and end the *galus*. By increasing our efforts in spreading Yiddishkeit, adding more Batei Chabad in every corner of the world, we will experience "*Didan Notzach*" — victory in every corner of the world, when the holiness of Eretz Yisroel will spread throughout the entire world with the coming of Moshiach, now!²

The Editors

יום הבהיר י"ד כסלו ה'תשפ"ד

1. 11 Teves 5747; Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2, p. 243.

2. 19 Kislev 5747; Ibid. p. 72



דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word on the Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

מקץ

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה לְכָל-מִצְרַיִם לְכוּ אֵל-יוֹסֵף
אֲשֶׁר-יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ (מא, נד)

Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Yosef; what he tells you, do."

Rashi reveals the background of this *possuk*: When the *Mitzri'im* ran out of food due to the famine, they went to Yosef, knowing that he had grain stored away from before the famine (all the grain which they had stored had rotted unnaturally). Yosef said to them that he would give them grain on condition that they have a *bris*. When they came to Pharaoh to complain, Pharaoh—realizing that there was something unnatural happening here—commanded them to listen to Yosef and give themselves a *bris*.

The question is: Why did Yosef demand from the *Mitzri'im* to give themselves a *bris*—a mitzvah they were never commanded to perform? The question becomes stronger when taking into account how Rashi explains the *possuk* in Parshas Noach: "וְיֹאֵר אֶת דַּמְכָם לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם אֲדַרְשׁ"; "But your blood, of your souls, I will demand [an account]"; that the intention is to forbid *B'nei Noach* from shedding their own blood—how is it possible that Yosef demanded from them to shed their own blood unnecessarily?!

The explanation is as follows: When Hashem commanded Avraham Avinu to perform a *bris* upon himself and his household, He also required him to give a *bris* to "those [who

were] purchased for money"—meaning servants (this mitzvah applies to all descendants of Avraham, as well, as the Torah states clearly).

Since Yosef was the ruler of the land, and without him "no one would raise his hand or foot in all the land of Mitzrayim"—they were his subjects and living under his authority—they were considered his servants, and he was therefore required to ensure that they had a *bris*.

Now we can also appreciate the precise wording of Rashi—"לְפִי שְׁהִיָּה יוֹסֵף אוֹמֵר לָהֶם שְׂיִמּוּלְכוּ"—implying that Yosef had been speaking to them about this *all along*: Since the *Mitzri'im* were considered his servants and needed to be circumcised, Yosef had ordered them to do so in the very beginning of his rule—years before the famine. The masses, however, did not heed Yosef's command. It was only when the famine forced them to turn to Yosef for grain that they accepted the conditions Yosef made.

Takeaway: *Yidden* are referred to as "the flock of Yosef" and have the ability to remain steadfast in their *Yiddishkeit* wherever they may be—even in a place where people are very far from *Elokus*. One should not feel intimidated by unholiness that may surround him, and should ensure that he remains complete in his Torah and mitzvos. Furthermore, we all have the ability to be a positive influence on the world around us—both on *Yidden* and, *l'havdil*, on *umos ha'olam*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 30, p. 223)

ויגש

וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שְׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת
לְפָנָיו גֹּשֶׁן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרְצָה גֹּשֶׁן (כו, כח)

He sent Yehuda ahead of him to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen.

This needs some clarification: Why did Ya'akov need to send Yehuda ahead to prepare the way for the rest of the family? Yosef was the ruler in Mitzrayim, and he certainly could have taken care of any necessary preparations!

By sending Yehuda to Mitzrayim, Ya'akov sought to emphasize that even when a *Yid* is in *golus*, he remains above it and not subject to its limitations. Ya'akov was not satisfied with having Yosef prepare the way for the family, since Yosef was a part of the Egyptian government—appointed by Pharaoh himself. Even after his appointment to the position of viceroy, he was still a subject of Pharaoh and had to answer to him. He was therefore not the right person to express the complete independence of a *Yid*.

Ya'akov sent Yehuda, since Yehuda in particular expresses the boldness and strength of a *Yid*, how even in *golus* he is not subject to the will of the non-Jews around him. An example of this is when Yosef insisted that Binyamin stay with him to become his slave after the incident with the “stolen” goblet. Yehuda stood up to him forcefully, without fear of Yosef's power and status.

Takeaway: When a *Yid* rises above the restrictions and limitations of *golus*, and stands firm in his *Yiddishkeit*, in the end he will overcome all the difficulties of *golus*, and eventually become a “ruler” over the *golus*.

(Toras Menachem Hisva'aduyos 5752 vol. 2, p. 66)

ויחי

וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בָּנָיו אֶרְצָה פְּנֵן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ
בְּמִצְעַרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה (נ, יא)

And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah.

Targum Yonasan on the *possuk* relates that when Eisav heard that the *shevatim* were going to bury their father in *Me'aras Hamachpeila*, he went there himself to prevent it. He barred their way until Dan's son Chushim took a sword and severed Eisav's head. Eisav's head fell to the ground and rolled into the cave, coming to a stop next to the burial spot of his father, Yitzchok.

This incident seems puzzling: How can it be that the head of the wicked Eisav is buried right next to Yitzchok—after all, it is a clear *halacha* that we do not bury a *rasha* next to a

tzaddik (so much so, that when the body of a *novi sheker* was thrown into the *keiver* of Elisha *hanovi*, Hashem performed a miracle and the false prophet was resurrected)?

The truth is, however, that the wickedness of Eisav was only with regards to his “body”; i.e. Eisav as he appeared in a physical body in this world. With regards to his “head”—i.e. his spiritual source—he is connected to Yitzchok and possesses high and lofty sparks of holiness. Thus, we find very lofty souls who descended from Eisav, such as Reb Meir and Onkelos (we also find that it is mainly descendants of Eisav who become *geirim*, in contrast to the descendants of Yishmael).

When the head of Eisav was separated from his body, it was also separated from the “*rasha*” of Eisav, and could therefore be buried next to Yitzchok.

Takeaway: If this is true about Eisav—that no matter how low he fell he still remained connected to Yitzchok, and Yitzchok never gave up on trying to reveal Eisav's potential—how much more so is it true for us, to whom Hashem declared at *matan Torah*: “אנכי ה' אלקיך”, thus establishing that the life and vitality of every *Yid* is *Elokus*. Certainly, then, it is our duty and responsibility to be *mekarev* every single *Yid*, and to dig—sometimes a lot—until finding within him the wellsprings of the *neshama*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 193)

שמות

וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר (ב, יד)

Moshe became frightened and said, "Indeed, the matter has become known!"

Why does the Torah need to inform us of the fact that Moshe was afraid, a seemingly insignificant detail in the story? After all, it was not the fear that caused him to flee Mitzrayim, but rather Pharaoh's attempt to have him executed.

It must be that there is indeed, a connection between Moshe's fear and the events which followed--namely, Pharaoh's attempt to have Moshe executed:

If Moshe had trusted Hashem completely with absolute confidence that he would not be harmed, this would have resulted in the entire incident being forgotten, and he would not have had to run away. It was only because of a deficiency in his own *bitachon* (which led to his fear) that Pharaoh heard about the incident and sought to harm him.

Takeaway: The power of *bitachon* is so strong that it has the ability to protect a person from any trouble that may come his way. As the Rabbeim put it: “טראכט” גוט וועט זיין גוט”.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 36, p. 1)



בתבנית קודש



לזכות הרה"ת ר' ארי' הלוי שיחי' לאנג
 לרגל יום הולדתו כ"ח כסלו
 ולזכות בנו הת' יעקב יצחק הלוי
 שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו ב' טבת
 ולע"נ הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' זאב יוסף
 ע"ה בן יבלחט"א ר' שלום שיחי'
 וזוגתו מרת רחל בת ר' מרדכי ע"ה סיימאנס
 נלב"ע י"א טבת ה'תשס"ח
 תנ"צ'בה'

ולזכות אחינו הנתונים בצרה ובשביה שנזכה
 לגאולה פרטית ולגאולה כללית בגאולה
 האמיתית והשלימה תיכף ומיד ממש

LIFT HIM UP

*The Rebbe's advice for parents dealing
 with their son's challenges, both
 educational and general:*

1. Teshura Gurary-Simpson 5783

(ג) - אגף אחר רוח הנש אגף יאוצין ופני
 פנאי אהרן עם בסיסיות אהרן ירם.
 ואחוריה - הוספת (ע) יאוצין צעץ)
 יאוצין ענין ופנאי שיהיה אהרן אהרן
 אהרן אהרן אהרן אהרן אהרן אהרן
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Regarding your son's emotional wellbeing—in general, his learning, etc.— it would be advisable to consult with a psychologist who is a *yerei shomayim*.

Adding vocational training or a new field of study (to his current study schedule), something in which he could see (a future) *parnassah* and demonstration that he is capable of being independent, etc.— might fundamentally change his way of thinking and his outlook on life.

Moving from your current neighborhood would likely not change any of the above [in a positive way]. On the contrary,] it might present new challenges in acclimating [in a new environment] with new neighbors, etc.

I will mention this at the Ohel.

[Secretary should send a] receipt [for the contribution].¹

בכלל - ע"ד מצב רוח בנם שי'
 לימודיו וכו' - כדאי להתייעץ עם
 פסיכאלוגיסט יר"ש.

ולכאורה הוספת (על לימודיו דע"ע)
 לימוד ענין ומקצוע שיוכל לראות בזה
 ענין דפרנסה ודהוכחה שיכול להיות
 עצמאי וכו' - אפשר שישנה מהלך מח'
 והשקפתו באופן עקרי.

העתקתם משכונתם - לכאורה לא
 תשנה מאומה בהנ"ל, ויכולה להוסיף
 קישווי הסתגלות בשבילו לשכנים
 חדשים וכו'.

אזכיר עה"צ.

קבלה



VELVEL SCHILDKRAUT VIA JEM 108600

THE REBBE EXITS THE SHUL AFTER A CHILDREN'S RALLY ON THE THIRD DAY OF CHANUKAH 5737

A MONTH IN 770

TEVES 5737 WITH THE REBBE

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

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

Friday, 3 Teves

Today, Rabbi Hodakov spoke to Rabbi Mordechai Mentlik, Rabbi Yoel Kahan, and Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin on the Rebbe's behalf. He entrusted them with the task of leading a group of *bochurim* and *yungerleit* in creating an encyclopedic compilation of the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah, and a *mafteiach* (index) of *Hemshech Ayin-Beis*. Additionally, he directed that one chapter be ready to print every two weeks.

Shabbos, 4 Teves

In the afternoon, when the Rebbe returned from his house for Mincha, a group of children from "Mesibos Shabbos" were singing near the entrance of 770, and the Rebbe clapped along.

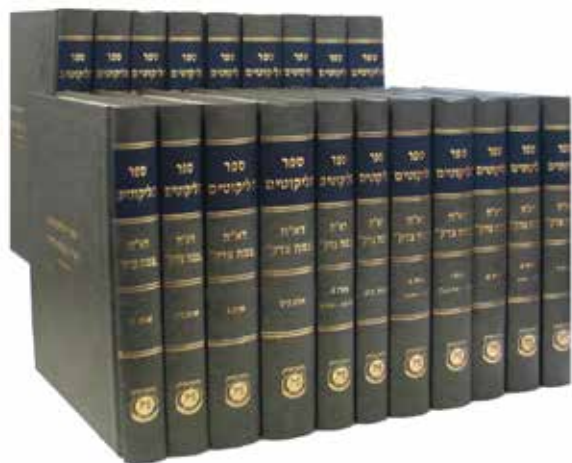
After Maariv, as the Rebbe left for home, he wished several children a "Guteh Voch".

Sunday, 5 Teves

Tonight there was Yechidus.

Rabbi Yehuda Paldi, Director of the "Vaad for Shleimus Ha'am", was in the Rebbe's room for about thirty minutes.

When he emerged, he related with intense emotion that the Rebbe wished him "success in his holy work." The Rebbe also told him that tomorrow, during Krias Hatorah, a special *Mi Shebeirach* would be made for past



THE ENCYCLOPEDIA COMPILATION OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK'S TORAH "SEFER HALIKKUTIM". THE PROJECT WAS FINISHED AFTER 7 YEARS.

and future donors to the "Mihu Yehudi" campaign.

The Rebbe encouraged him to publicize that those who haven't yet donated to the campaign could still do so, and those who had already contributed should give more.

Monday, 6 Teves

The Rebbe entered *Gan Eden Hatachton* for Krias Hatorah at 11:40 AM.

After Kriah, Reb Dovid Raskin recited a *Mi Shebeirach* for the donors to the "Mihu Yehudi" campaign.

After the Torah was returned to the Aron, Rabbi Itche Spritzer announced that everyone should take inspiration from those who have already contributed and give on behalf of themselves and their families. This way, they too would be included in the *Mi Shebeirach*.

(It is worth noting that the Rebbe donated \$100 on behalf of himself and \$100 on behalf of the Rebbetzin.)

When he concluded his announcement, the Rebbe smiled and said: "Amein, Kein yehi ratzon."

Wednesday, 8 Teves

On his way to Mincha, the Rebbe distributed coins for tzedakah to the children who were present.

After Mincha, the Rebbe returned to his room, and Rabbi Leibel Groner called Rabbi Paldi over.

The Rebbe came out of his room and engaged in a conversation with him in *Gan Eden Hatachton* for about 10 minutes.

When he came out, Rabbi Paldi mentioned that the Rebbe blessed him and inquired with a smile about his meetings with various Rabbonim in America.

The Rebbe gave him a Tanya, and a Siddur for his wife.

Rabbi Paldi also told the Rebbe that he had appointed a few *bochurim* to work for *Vaad Shleimus Ha'aretz* on the ground in America. He specified that Hatamim Y. Y. A. would be responsible for posting signs, to which the Rebbe remarked, "He's a Kohen, and 'Kohanim are *zerizim* (speedy and diligent).'" He also mentioned that Hatamim Y. A. K. would be in charge of financial matters, and the Rebbe replied: "He's a בעל מרץ (man of alacrity)."

Friday, Fast of Asara B'Teves

During Selichos, at *Rachamana D'anei* and *Avinu Malkeinu*, the Rebbe gestured for the crowd to sing.



AT THE REBBE'S REQUEST, RABBI Y. PALDI SPEAKS – ON THE TOPIC OF MIHU YEHUDI, AT THE FARBRENGEN OF 19 KISLEV 5737.

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 2979

At around 2:00 pm, the Rebbe entered the upstairs *zal* for Mincha. Since most of the bochorim were out on *mitvzoim*, the crowd was quite small, and the Rebbe's Haftorah could be heard very clearly. (It is an exceedingly rare occurrence for Mincha to be held upstairs on a fast day.)

In the afternoon, the Rebbe did not return home and stayed in 770 until Shabbos.

At 5:00 pm, the Rebbe came downstairs for Kabbolas Shabbos. During davening, the Rebbe looked at the Kovetz Ha'aros from Morristown.

Right after davening, the Rebbe walked home, accompanied by a large group of Chassidim. (Much more than the usual two bochorim.) While they were walking, the Rebbe turned to a boy without a coat and motioned with his hand for him to wear one.

Sunday, 12 Teves

At around 1:00 pm, the Rebbe went out to the entrance of 770 as the *levaya* of Mr. Shmuel Shrage¹ passed by.

Before Mincha, Rabbi [Avrohom] Sofer, who was involved in printing the Meiri, entered the Rebbe's room. When the Rebbe came out for Mincha a bit later, he continued talking to Rabbi Sofer.

The Rebbe distributed coins for charity to the children who were present. One of the kids said "Thank you," and the Rebbe replied, "You're welcome."

After Mincha, the Rebbe again conversed with Rabbi Sofer, and they entered the Rebbe's room together.

Teams of *bochorim* and *yungerleit* have begun working on the project of the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah and *Hemshech Ayin-Beis* (previously requested by the Rebbe) with great diligence. Everyone is eager to complete their portion of the work, particularly because a note with the names of those who contributed will be sent to the Rebbe.

Parts of *Hemshech Ayin-Beis* are already printed, and the rest is being worked on expeditiously, with hopes of the first full volume being published soon.

In line with Tzach's *hachlata* that Chassidim would study all ten of the Rebbe's edited Maamarim,² there is an effort to compile and print them all into one volume.

Over 600 college students from 71 universities across the U.S. and Canada participated in the "Pegisha with Chabad" Shabbaton organized by Tzach. The event was split into two parts, with the girls coming for Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz and the boys for Parshas Vayechi.

The goal of the Pegisha is to provide a taste of Chabad and Chassidic Philosophy, and to give them a chance to spend Shabbos with the Rebbe in Crown Heights.

Thursday, 16 Teves

In the morning, Reb S. Z. Levitin entered the Rebbe's room, and a few minutes later, the Rebbe emerged for Kriah. The Rebbe held his Siddur on the way to the *zal* and distributed coins for tzedakah to the children standing nearby. One of the coins fell to the floor, and the Rebbe bent down to pick it up.

The Rebbe was called up for the third *aliyah* and brought his siddur to the bimah with him.

After the *aliya*, the Rebbe recited *chatzi kaddish* and then instructed Reb Dovid Raskin to recite '*Kel Malei Rachamim*' for Bentzion ben Reb Avraham (Reb Bentzion Schneerson, the Rebbetzin's maternal uncle who had just passed away in Tel Aviv). While Reb Dovid was looking for the right page, the Rebbe opened the page in his own siddur. When Reb Dovid found it in his siddur, he recited the *tefilah*. When he reached the name, he paused, and the Rebbe said, "Bentzion ben Reb Avraham."

At the end, when he reached the part where it says "*Hashem Hu Nachalaso*," he asked the Rebbe whether he should say Hashem's name. The Rebbe replied that this is a question for a Rav.

After Kriah, the Rebbe remained in the *zal* for the duration of davening, and recited all of the *kaddeishim*. In a break from usual practice, before the final *kaddish d'rabbanan*, the Rebbe said *Pirkei Avos* instead of the customary *Mishnayos*. Following this, the *chazzan* began to say *kaddish d'rabbanan*, but the Rebbe quickly indicated that the regular *Mishnayos* should still be recited. After the *Mishnayos* were said, the Rebbe said *kaddish*.

Unexpectedly, at 2:50 pm, the Rebbe went to the Ohel, stopping at the Mikvah on his way.

During Mincha, the Rebbe didn't recite *kaddish*.

Tonight, the Rebbe held *yechidus*, a rare occurrence for a day when the Rebbe goes to the Ohel.

Amongst those who came to see the Rebbe was Rabbi Pinchas Taitz, who was in the Rebbe's room for three hours!

Yechidus concluded at 1:40 am.

Shabbos Parshas Vayechi, 18 Teves

After Shacharis, the Rebbe waved to one of the children standing nearby.

After Mincha, a family whose son had just had his Bar

Mitzvah *aliyah* waited near the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe wished them Mazal Tov.

On Motzei Shabbos, as the Rebbe was leaving 770, a man held the door open for him, and the Rebbe said "*Yashar koach*."

Sunday, 19 Teves

Mincha was postponed today, because the Rebbe went out for the *levaya* of Reb A. Yudin which passed 770 at 3:15 pm.

Tonight the Rebbe held *yechidus*, concluding at around 12:30 am.

Among those who came were a visitor from Russia and a delegation from the city of New York.

Monday, 20 Teves

Today, Krias Hatorah was held in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

Before Mincha, the Rebbe handed out coins for tzedakah to children and waved "hello" to them.

Friday, Chof-Daled Teves

Today the weather was very cold. At 9:00 pm, on his way home from 770, the Rebbe walked slowly due to the snow.

Shabbos Parshas Shemos, 25 Teves

At 1:30 pm, the Rebbe entered the Shul for the Shabbos *Mevarchim* *farbrengen*.

The Rebbe began by expounding on the connection between Shabbos *Mevarchim* and Rosh Chodesh, specifically Rosh Chodesh Shevat.

In the next *Sicha*, the Rebbe mentioned that when Moshe Rabbeinu rebuked the Yidden in *Sefer Devarim* (which began on Rosh Chodesh Shevat), he first spoke about the kindness that he did for them. This teaches us that we must first and foremost be kind to others. Only then can we rebuke.

In the third *Sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about *hafatzas hama'ayanos*, a theme that connects Chof-Daled Teves and Yud Shevat.

The Rebbe mentioned that the Frierdiker Rebbe pioneered the initiative to translate Chassidus into "70 languages". As a continuation to this, the Rebbe praised the

recent translation of the Tanya into Arabic.

Afterwards, the Rebbe said the Maamer “*V'eileh Shemos*”, in the tune of a sicha. (*Maamar Kein sicha.*)

Throughout the farbrengen, the Rebbe strongly encouraged the singing by nodding his head in all directions. At one point, the Rebbe instructed someone to say l'chaim and smiled at him. A number of people approached the Rebbe and said l'chaim, including Rabbi Y. Krinsky.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed bottles of *mashke* to several individuals.

Reb A. Pliskin received *mashke* for a planned gathering of Russian Jews in honor of 135 *Brisei Milah* of Russian children. The Rebbe also gave *mashke* to Reb Dovid Raskin for the upcoming Melave Malka organized by Tzach for the “Tankistim.” The Rebbe distributed *mashke* to a few other people, including some Bar Mitzvah boys.

Following this, the farbrengen concluded with a joyous niggun, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing by waving his hand.

After Mincha, “*Nyet, Nyet*” was sung.

The Rebbe remained in 770 until after Shabbos.

Wednesday, 29 Teves

Today, the Rebbe went to the Ohel at 3:20 pm.

The Rebbe returned to 770 at 6:05 pm, an hour and ten minutes after Shkiah. Before Mincha, the Rebbe distributed coins for tzedakah to the children present.

After Mincha, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Hodakov to accompany him to his room. A few minutes later Rabbi Hodakov emerged, and announced that a (surprise) farbrengen would be held at 8:00 pm. Maariv was scheduled for 6:45 as usual.

At 8:00 pm, the Rebbe entered the farbrengen, and indicated to begin singing the niggun which customarily precedes a Maamar. After the Niggun, the Rebbe said the Maamar “*Arba'a Rashei Shanim Heim.*”

During the niggunim, the Rebbe motioned to encourage the singing.

The Rebbe distributed dollars to everyone present via the “Tankistim”, handing each one a bundle of bills to give out. As the Tankistim came by to receive the dollars, the Rebbe indicated to many of them that they take the dollars with their right hand. A few children passed as well, and the Rebbe smiled at them and inquired if they



REB BENTZION SCHNEERSOHN, MATERNAL UNCLE OF THE REBBETZIN, SITTING BETWEEN THE REBBE AND RABBI HODAKOV AT THE FARBRENGEN OF 12 TAMMUZ 5730, HIS SECOND AND FINAL VISIT TO 770.

were also Tankistim. At one point, the Rebbe signaled with his hand to encourage the singing.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing “*L'hatchila Ariber,*” motioning to repeat the high stanza ten times. Afterwards “*Hoshea Es Amecha*” was sung, as well as “*Prazos Teishev,*” “*Ufaratzta,*” and “*Nyet Nyet.*” The Rebbe clapped along with the singing for several minutes.

This was followed by “*Ki Visimcha.*” After that, the Rebbe said a *Bracha Acharona*, and started “*Ki Visimcha*” again. Then the Rebbe exited the room holding the remaining dollars and his siddur. **T**

1. See his story in “*Crown Heights,*” Derher Cheshvan 5777.

2. At this point in 5737, there were only ten *maamorim* published that the Rebbe had edited. In the later years, tens more would be subsequently published.

לעילוי נשמת
יעקב בן אייזיק ע"ה
גלב"ע ח' טבת ה'תשע"ז
ת"נצ"ב"ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' אלכסנדר וזוגתו
מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
קאלער



He Will Return

Rabbi Eli Silverstein, shliach to Cornell University relates:

A number of years ago, there was a student at our university who came from a modern orthodox home and had studied in Yeshiva. When he first came to university, he was very involved in Yiddishkeit, organizing shiurim in the shul, and so on.

A few months after his arrival, he suddenly disappeared and stopped coming to the Chabad House. I had no idea where he went and why he had stopped coming. One Friday, on my way back from shul, I noticed this student without a Yarmulke, walking with some non-Jewish friends. I asked him, "What happened? Why did you stop coming to shul?" he told me that he is no longer religious, and that he thinks the whole thing is not for him. I heard what he said and didn't question him further.

He did come to shul on Yom Kippur, and told me he had questions and doubts in his *emunah*. I tried explaining that his questions were not really questions, but it did not help.

When the time came for this student to graduate, his parents came and stayed in town for Shabbos. Out of respect for his parents, the student came to shul on Shabbos.

When I met his father, he told me:

"I know you may be worried about my son, given what he's been going through, but allow me to tell you a story:

"When my son was two years old, he was diagnosed with a mysterious disease which caused him to lose consciousness. The doctors were not able to find a solution for his disease, he was losing a lot of weight and his situation was deteriorating.

"At that time, someone told me about the Lubavitcher

Rebbe, and that he receives people for *yechidus*, so I took my son with me to see the Rebbe. When I was in *yechidus*, I broke down in tears, and told the Rebbe "I am losing my son... my son can't walk anymore, he is very weak, and his situation is getting worse!" The Rebbe asked that I bring my son closer to him, and he put him on his lap. The Rebbe began speaking to my son, as one speaks to a young child. Then the Rebbe smiled, returned my son to me, and said, "It's nothing, he will be okay". And in fact, from that *yechidus* on, my son never again lost consciousness and the disease disappeared as if it never was.

"Seventeen years later, my son went to Eretz Yisroel for a year. Before he left, I decided to go to the Rebbe at the Sunday dollars line to receive a *bracha* for my son. When I reached the Rebbe, before I even said anything, the Rebbe asked me, "How is...doing?" (the Rebbe said my son's name!) Now, I hadn't visited the Rebbe since that *yechidus*, nor had I written a letter, and yet the Rebbe remembered everything about my son! The Rebbe gave me *brachos*, that I should see *nachas* from my son."

With this his father concluded, "I am certain that he will return. After the Rebbe gave me such *brachos*, it's not possible otherwise. You should not be too worried."

Lately, I succeeded in getting in touch with the son. He lives in California; a very successful businessman. I spoke to him and he asked me if I could tell him the story of the Rebbe that his father told me. With Hashem's help our connection will grow, and we will see the fulfillment of the Rebbe's *brachos*. **1**

Interview By: RABBI LEVI SHEMTOV
Written By: RABBI MENDEL WOLOWIK

To the Last Detail

THE REBBE'S CARE AND ATTENTION IN
A YOUNG COUPLE'S LIFE-JOURNEY



AN INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI SHMUEL LEW

RABBI PINNY LEW



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RABBI PINNY LEW

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

The Shidduch

The Frierdiker Rebbe describes in a letter how the Rebbeim treated *temimim* as family, including attention to their shidduchim (Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz, vol. 12, p. 214). I was *zoche* to receive a great many *kiruvim* from the Rebbe, especially when it came to my shidduch and marriage. The shidduch was shepherded by the Rebbe at every step, from start to quick finish. We also merited that the Rebbe was our *Mesader Kiddushin*, though he had formally ended the practice. In fact, we were the last to have this privilege.

In a previous Derher, I shared about my path to Lubavitch, as well as the delightful years I spent as a *bochur* in Montreal, and later, after 5722, in 770.

Circa Lag Bomer 5722, a shidduch was suggested for me with Hinda Malka Jaffe from Manchester, UK. Her father, Mr. Zalmon Jaffe, was a well-known businessman, activist, and chossid.

Although his family had Chabad roots, Mr. Jaffe's connection with the Rebbe matured only later in life, under the guidance of Reb Bentzion Shemtov. Nonetheless, over the years he developed a very close connection to the Rebbe. He was tasked with numerous missions, and merited a great many *kiruvim* and letters from the Rebbe. He lived to bring joy to the Rebbe, as anyone who read his annual 'yoman' publication 'My Encounter With The Rebbe' knows quite well.

He was devoted to carrying out whatever the Rebbe requested of him. At the Rebbe's behest, he was elected President of the 'Shechita Board', the primary layman body for Jewish life in Manchester. Through his influence in the community numbering 30,000 strong, he accomplished much for Yiddishkeit, reporting to the Rebbe every step of the way.

Growing up in such a house, it was only natural for his daughter Hinda Malka to take a leadership role in the activities of B'nos Chabad. When she reached the age of shidduchim, she was quite set on marrying a Lubavitcher *bochur*, with whom she could devote her life to the Rebbe's *shlichus*. For such a *bochur* they would have to search beyond the British Isles. With that in mind, her brother's friend asked if I would be open to the idea.

After getting my parents' approval to explore the shidduch, I approached Reb Dovid Raskin—as all shidduchim for the bochurim in 770 went through him.

Then I asked the Rebbe:

האם להתעניין בשידוכים בכלל או לא? ובהצעה זו בפרטיות או לא?

1) Should I start taking interest in shidduchim at all or not? 2) Should I [look into] this specific suggestion or not?

The Rebbe responded in the affirmative, drawing an arrow on each question.

Meanwhile, my future father-in-law was busy arranging a

charter flight from Manchester to New York, due to land on the last day of Sivan. Following the unmistakable influence of the previous year's inaugural flight¹, they were again filling 118 seats with Britons, giving them the rare opportunity to spend time with the Rebbe. During their 17-day stay, they would have the opportunity to participate in the Rebbe's farbrengens on Shabbos Parshas Shelach and Korach, as well as the large farbrengen celebrating the Frierdiker Rebbe's redemption on Sunday night, 13 Tammuz. They were also each allotted a private *yechidus* with the Rebbe.

An Excerpt from Mr. Zalmon Jaffe's Diary

Our son Avrohom met us at the airport and imparted to us all the latest flows and events about '770.' He kept interspersing his remarks with the name of one special friend, Shmuel Lew, who seemed to be the paragon of all virtues...

"Anyway," I interrupted, "What about it?" Well, Avrohom wanted to arrange a meeting between this Shmuel and [Hindy]. Roselyn said that on no account and under no circumstances would she consent to or allow this meeting. "She is only eighteen years of age and there is plenty of time for a Shidduch."

During the whole of the three weeks that we were in Brooklyn, Roselyn was subjected to the most extreme



REB ZALMAN JAFFE WITH HIS GOOD FRIEND REB BENTZION SHEMTOV, HEADING TO THE AIRPORT FOR THE SECOND CHARTERED FLIGHT TO THE REBBE

pressure, by Shemmy [Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov, who had connected the Jaffes with the Rebbe] and Avrohom, that she should allow this meeting to take place. "What harm would it do?" "They might not even like each other," and so on...

Almost at the end of our stay in New York - we were due to leave for home on the following Wednesday - Roselyn was at long last prevailed upon to invite Shmuel for Friday night's Shabbos dinner but - at the last moment she canceled the invitation.

Meanwhile, there was an undercurrent of great activity going on with Rabbi Shem Tov and Avrohom, whispering and plotting in corners. I heard later that they also involved the Rebbe...

At that Friday night's dinner, Shemmy, who had made Kiddush and followed this with a few Schnapps, 'took the chair.' The lights had fused and we were sat around the candle-lit table... In his opening speech, he flayed Roselyn for her obstinacy and obduracy. He condemned her unreasonable attitude which prevented two young people who, in Shemmy's estimation, were an ideally suited couple - from even being allowed to meet each other. Avrohom was the second speaker - his theme was very similar to that of the 'Chairman'.

Under this concentrated attack, Roselyn relented. She consented to [Hindy] seeing Shmuel on Saturday night. Roselyn thought to herself: "We are leaving on Wednesday, in three or four days' time, so it seems fairly safe now to let them meet each other."

"A SHORT TIME"

I was assistant Head Counselor in Camp Gan Yisroel that summer, but on the Rebbe's advice, I came in for that Shabbos.

Our first time meeting was on Motzei Shabbos. We went on the Staten Island Ferry, which my father-in-law dubbed "the 'Lubavitcher Shadchonus Express' (or, in our case, 'Express Shadchonus')."

My father-in-law related: "At the grand farbrengen for Yud Gimmel Tammuz, which took place Sunday night in 770, the Rebbe handed me some *Lekach* (cake), indicating that I should hand it to my daughter. (Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin explained to me that this signified a blessing for a Shidduch.) This pleased me very much, but I obviously did not expect the Rebbe's Brocha to be fulfilled with so much haste and speed."

At that memorable farbrengen, the Rebbe related the story of a chossid who asked the Rebbe Rashab: What is a chossid? The Rebbe Rashab replied: a chossid is a *'lamterntchik'*

(lamplighter). The Rebbe went on to explain at length the lessons to be learned from every detail of the story.

At one point during that time, I wrote an account to the Rebbe and asked if I should carry on meeting with her. The Rebbe responded in the affirmative—'lehamshich'.

For the time being, however, there was no rush. So, Monday evening I took the bus upstate, returning to camp.

An Excerpt from Mr. Zalmon Jaffe's Diary

That night, I received a message that the Rebbe desired to see Roselyn and me straight away. Roselyn ... had a bad headache ... so I went alone.

I admit I do not remember much about this Yeichidus. Events were moving too fast for me ... The Rebbe suggested that it should take place in the month of Tishrei or in Tammuz. I surmised that the Rebbe was discussing the Tenoyim (engagement) but the Rebbe was talking about the WEDDING - and neither Roselyn nor I had yet made Shmuel's acquaintance!



RABBI SHMUEL LEW AND A GROUP OF CHILDREN WITH THE REBBE AT A CAMP GAN YISROEL REUNION, 17 SHEVAT 5723

At that *yechidus*, my father-in-law expressed his hesitations about how fast things were moving. He told the Rebbe: “We don’t know him well. Truth be told, we’ve never actually met him. What will he do for a living? How will he have *parnasah*?” Referencing the previous night’s *farbrengen*, the Rebbe replied: “*Er vet zain a lamterntchik!*” (he will be a lamplighter).

The next day, I got the call to make a U-turn. I was to go to Crown Heights and meet Hindy’s parents, as they would be returning to England Wednesday afternoon.

After utilizing the opportunity to daven Maariv with the Rebbe following his return from the Ohel, I went to meet the family. Mrs. Jaffe was pleased to meet me, and remarked that if we’d like to, we could correspond. When we’d meet next year, her daughter would be mature enough to discuss marriage more seriously...

We figured that, as the Jaffes were returning to England, I’d pay them a visit in the winter and we’d close the shidduch then.

But the Rebbe had other plans. The next morning, the day of the charter’s departure, Rabbi Hodakov, chief of the Rebbe’s Secretariat, approached me. He had a message to relay to me: “You should wind it up today, one way or the other.” I responded that it’s *‘toluy bedaas acheirim’* (a decision dependent on someone else), and not exclusively up to me.

Rabbi Hodakov replied that a shidduch has three stages:

1. A couple meets. If they agree to build a home together, then,
2. Their parents meet. If they’re happy to move ahead, then,
3. You write in and ask the Rebbe for a bracha.

After davening I went to meet my soon-to-be *kallah*, and we agreed that we’d build a home for the Rebbe and move on shlichus. Having satisfactorily concluded the first stage, we promptly arranged for our parents to meet at the Milky Restaurant and discuss matters over lunch. “I was the leader of the flight,” writes Mr. Jaffe about that meeting. “Passengers were continuously interrupting our meal and conversation, as they had so many problems to settle.”

Mazal Tov!

Ready to ask for the Rebbe’s go-ahead, I gave Rabbi Hodakov my note to pass on to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded with his approval and blessing, and then wrote: יהא בשעתומו"צ בל בל בן עדי עד בית חסידותי ומאושר בכל (May [the wedding] be in an auspicious time. An everlasting edifice, a Chasidische home, fortunate in all matters).

Meanwhile, the visitors from England were each given a few private moments with the Rebbe—a *tzeischem lshalom* (farewell). At her turn, my *kallah* asked the Rebbe for his blessing.

An Excerpt from Mr. Zalmon Jaffe’s Diary

The scene at ‘770’ was chaotic, utter confusion and appalling.

Hundreds of travelers, their friends and relatives together with hundreds of Yeshiva boys (who were always interested in everything connected with the Rebbe) were all milling around the vicinity of the hallway. I was in the waiting room doing my best to keep the queue moving. Passengers would enter into the Rebbe’s study and they would just not leave. We had almost - literally - to drag some of them from out of the Rebbe’s presence. It was very fortunate indeed that it was our own chartered flight - and it could not leave without us. (We left New York three hours late because of this lack of co-operation from our members.)

Suddenly a large commotion was heard outside. Rabbi [Bentche] Shem Tov had arrived. He was holding a bottle of vodka and a glass and wishing everyone mazel tov, mazel tov. He pushed a glass of vodka into my hand and said. “Say L’chaim, [Hindy] has made up her mind and she is now a Kallah!” What excitement! What a turmoil!

But [we] hardly knew the Chosson... The only consolation, the anchor that kept us sane, was that the Rebbe had agreed to the Shidduch and given his blessing. That alone assured our rationality.

My father was away at a legal meeting and couldn’t be there during the day. He came to 770 that night, and as the Rebbe entered for Maariv, he turned to my father with a big smile, a sort of Mazal Tov.

Upon their arrival in England, the Jaffes received a letter from the Rebbe, dated 28 Tamuz 5722:

“... It is gratifying to know that you had ... many good wishes of Mazel Tov for your daughter’s shidduch. It must have helped Mrs. Jaffe to get used to the idea that her daughter has grown up and there is much to be grateful for in the thought that the Almighty has helped bring up such a suitable shidduch without undue strain and worry.”

Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov told me an episode that reveals the Rebbe’s personal attention to our shidduch: “Subsequent to your engagement,” he related, “I was walking down the street, and Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe’s mother, approached me. She smilingly told me: ‘*M’hot mir gezogt az ir zait gevoren a gantze shadchan!* (I was told [presumably by the Rebbe] that you’ve become a full-on shadchan).”

To sum up how distinctive this shidduch was, we present here a heartfelt letter, typos and all, which Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov airmailed the Jaffes (the only one he ever wrote in English!):

Yud Tes Tammuz

Mazel Tov! Mazel Tov! Mazel Tov!

My dear, dear, dear Zalmon. Rosali and Hinda Malka!

To see chassidische happiness in your home and BH I feel in my soul like a happiness in my own family. I hope that everyone of the family of Zalmon Jaffe will understand my feelings.

"I was very happy to see the nearness from the Rebbe Shlita to everyone of your family. For the 47 years in Lubavitch, I have never hear or see from the Rebbes to push a Shiduch like the Rebbe in the Shiduch of Hinda Malka (Le'arichas Yomim Veshonim Tovos.....)

I am sorry for my broken English but I cannot ask somebody to write my feelings and I want Roselyn and Hinda Malka themselves to read my beste wishes for long life in happiness (Begashmius Veruchnius)

I hope to hear from everyone and to see Besimcho

B. Szemtow

Wedding Location

The first order of business was to decide on a time and place for the wedding. The Rebbe was involved every step of the way. For example, in a letter to my parents dated 7 Elul 5722, the Rebbe wrote:

"...I wish you Mazal Tov for the good shidduch of your son Shmuel... With regard to the question of the time and place of the wedding, this is a matter which both sides should discuss and decide by mutual consent. I have written to this effect to your *Mechutan*, adding that in general it is customary to arrange the wedding in the place where the *Kallah* lives."

One aspect we took strongly into consideration was the hope that the Rebbe would be *mesader kiddushin*. While in the first decade of the *nesius* it was common, the practice virtually came to an end on 10 Shevat 5720, with just a handful of exceptions². Nonetheless, we would do anything for the merit of having the Rebbe participate in our *chuppah*.

In response to Mr. Jaffe's expressing this hope, the Rebbe wrote:

"With regard to my position relating to *Siddur Chuppah* and *Kiddushin*, you can gather it from the fact that in about two weeks a cousin of mine will be married in New York to a Talmid of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva, but the *Mesader Kiddushin* will be one of the *Anash Rabbonim*." (27 Elul 5722)

As Mr. Jaffe noted:

"This [letter] was a big blow to our ambitions ... [Rabbi Shemtov] concurred with my viewpoint, that although the Rebbe had HINTED that he would not be *Messader Kidushin*, nevertheless he had not expressed an unequivocal "No." If the marriage took place in Manchester then there was no chance at all of achieving our objective, whereas if the location was Crown Heights, then there was every possibility that the Rebbe might

מזל טוב מזל טוב מזל טוב

MY DEAR, DEAR DEAR, Zalmon, ROSALI AND HINDA MALKA!

TO SEE CHASSIDISHE HAPPINES IN YU HOUSE AND SO I FEL IN MY SOUL LIKE A HAPPINES IN MY FAMILIE SELF I HOPE GAS EVERY VON OF THE FAMILIE OF SALMAN JAFFE STENG MAY AND FEL MAY.

I VERY HAPPY TO SEE THE NEAREST FROM THE REBBE KOB TO EVERY VON OF YU FAMILIE FOR THE 47 YEARS IN LUBAVITCH I NEVER HEAR OF SEE FROM THE REBBES TO PUSH A SHIDUCH LIKE THE REBBE KOB IN THE SHIDUCH OF HINDA MALKA RAINDIKHT

I AM SORRY FOR MY BROKEN ENGLISH BUT I CANNOT ASK SAMBODY TO WRITE MY FEELING AND I VON ROSALIN AND HINDA MALKE SELF TO READ MY BESTE WISHES YO LONG LIFE IN HAPPINES I HOPE TO HEAR FROM EVERY VON. AND TO SEE B. Szemtow

REB BENTZION SHEMTOV'S LETTER IN ENGLISH TO REB ZALMAN JAFFE, WISHING HIM MAZAL TOV ON THE OCCASION OF THE SHIDDUCH

RABBI PINNY LEW



RABBI SHMUEL LEW ADDRESSES A CROWD IN THE EARLY 5720S

RABBI PINNY LEW

* 5722-1962, 5720-1960

relent and bestow upon us this great honour.”

Owing to Mr. Jaffe’s influential position in Manchester, the Rebbe originally wrote to him that the wedding should be held there. Eventually, however, he consented for it to be in New York, provided they made a *Sheva Brachos* back in Manchester.³

Ultimately, the wedding was scheduled to take place in Brooklyn’s Glenwood Jewish Center on Sunday, 15 Tammuz, 5723.

Planning the Trip to England

With the Rebbe’s encouragement, our shidduch had taken the express track, which was quite unlike the way things were done in England. We hadn’t even had the opportunity to get to know each other’s families, something my in-laws were keen on changing.

Now, I wasn’t overly excited about the idea of visiting my *kallah* and her family. I reasoned that on the Rebbe’s encouragement, *chassanim* would make sure not to spend time in the same city as the *kallah*. Many of my friends in yeshiva in 770 would therefore spend the time of their engagement learning in Montreal or Newark. With that outlook, I didn’t feel comfortable about the idea of traveling overseas to meet my *kallah*. The idea had been brought up, however, so I asked the Rebbe if I should go along with it. The Rebbe responded:

כל ענין נסייעות הנ"ל מקום לחשוב אודותם לאחר י' שתהי' השערה
עכ"פ לזמן החתונה

[The whole idea mentioned about traveling can only be considered once there is a general idea about the *chasuna*’s timing.]

The Rebbe didn’t negate the idea. However, being that there was an ongoing discussion at the time whether the wedding would be in the winter or later, in the summer, the travel plans would have to wait.

Yechidus

As part of their rather relentless campaign that I travel to England to meet their family, my in-laws arranged for the *kallah* to come to New York. As she put it in a letter to me, her father was sending her to meet my family, as he wanted me to meet hers.

It was during her visit that I merited my first two *yechidus*’n of the year.

Sunday night, 28 Cheshvan, my *kallah* had a *yechidus*. Knowing that the discussion might relate to me as well, I waited right outside ‘*Gan Eden HaElyon*’, ready to enter on a moment’s notice. During her *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked where

she would like to live after our *chasuna*. “That’s dependent on my *chossan* as well,” she replied. The Rebbe followed up: “First tell me where you yourself want to live.” But she asked if I could join. The Rebbe insisted: “Let’s first talk ourselves.” However, she didn’t say much, so the Rebbe agreed to call me in.

When I came in, the Rebbe asked me in Yiddish if I had any thoughts. Earlier, Rabbi Hodakov had asked if I’d consider being a *Rov* in Greece, similar to Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik in Italy. Unsure if he was just sounding me out, or relaying the Rebbe’s recommendation, I replied to him: “If that’s what the Rebbe said, we’re in.”

Back to the *yechidus*: I relayed that Rabbi Hodakov had brought up Greece. It seems that the Rebbe didn’t have that in mind for us, however. He asked whether we knew which city in Greece was on the table, Athens or Thessaloniki. I said I don’t know, and added that it was probably just a theoretical question. Turning to my wife, he said in English: “Don’t worry about Greece,” and concluded that, as I suggested, it was probably just theoretical.

At that *yechidus* the Rebbe gave us very nice *brochos*. He also told us to keep sending in suggestions for *shlichus* as they came up. I continued conveying them for months, always stressing that we would go wherever the Rebbe would like.

About a month later, the Rebbe wrote to Mr. Zalmon Jaffe

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEIDERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 12, N. Y.
Whatch 1962

הגאון מוויז'ניצקי שליטתנו
ליובאוויטש
770 אסטערן פארק
ברוקלין 12, נ. י.
ח' אדר ב' 1962

B.H.
6th of Tishrei, 5723
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Miss Hinda Malka Jaffe
105 Cavendish Road
Kersal, Lancs.

Blessing and Greetings:

I was pleased to receive your letter of 28th of Elul, in which you report on your activities to strengthen Yiddishkeit among the younger generation of Manchester, about your teaching, etc. As every Jew is assured Divine help in such work, every effort is bound to be fruitful, and may it be G-d's will that you continue your good work with growing success, in gladness of heart. This in turn will increase G-d's blessings to you and those who are near and dear to you.

Please convey my good wishes also to the other leaders who are working with you. I trust you have all taken advantage of the present auspicious period of the year to intensify your good work and influence.

I appreciate your letting me know about the success of the camp. I trust this has further convinced you that where there is a firm resolution to accomplish things, they are indeed accomplished.

Wishing you a chesmo umgar chasmon toivo for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good,

With blessing, *m. Schneiderson*

P.S. Regarding your desired visit to New York, as I indicated to your brotherly it is suggested that the time of the wedding should at least tentatively be considered, and then it will be more practical and easier to consider a visit, etc.

Enclosed is a copy of my Rosh Hashanah message, which I trust you will put to good advantage.

IN THE REBBE’S LETTER TO MRS. LEW FROM 6 TISHREI 5723, HE MENTIONS HER “CHOSSON”

RABBI PINNY LEW

on the topic:

“As for the young couple's plans after the wedding, there was some discussion on this subject without a final decision, as also in regard to their settling in general, for they had no definite suggestions to offer, nor did I hear from them any suggestions that you or the Chosson's parents might have made.” (3rd Light of Chanukah, 5723)

During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked for my thoughts on going to England to meet the family. I responded that I'm unsure if the Rebbe would be happy for a *bochur* to travel during the *zman* in Yeshiva.

The Rebbe instructed that I go for a visit, but it should involve spreading Yiddishkeit; for example, speaking at an event. While in England, I was also to visit London and far-brother for Tzach there. Then he turned to me in and said in Hebrew: מפני מה יאמרו הבריות ([the reason I should have a pretext for the visit is] due to ‘what will people say?’)

This too was relayed by the Rebbe in a letter to Mr. Zalmon Jaffe:

“With regard to your future son-in-law's visit, I suggested that there should be some external ostensible occasion for his

trip to minimize possible criticism.” (Letter 8 Kislev, 5723)

And followed up with the following:

“As for Shmuel Lew's visit to [Manchester], I trust it will eventually materialize for the benefit of all concerned, and no doubt you are exchanging correspondence on the subject.” (27 Shevat, 5723)

And another letter during my trip: “By now you will have received regards through Rabbi Shmuel Lew, and may G-d grant that he makes the most of his visit and utilizes it also in the interests of the community, and no doubt he will find an opportunity to visit our institutions in London for a few days.” (3 Nissan, 5723)

Yechidus 2 Kislev

On Tuesday, we were told that the Rebbe had invited us for *yechidus* on Thursday afternoon, before my *kallah's* return flight that night. This was a true gift, as this was not a time that the Rebbe regularly held *yechidus*. This time I was told from the outset to join.

At that special *yechidus*, the Rebbe told my *kallah* to learn typing—which wasn't common at the time—and the like, *'like*



THE REBBE WISHING MAZEL TOV TO RABBI SHMUEL LEW AND HIS KALLAH UNDER THE CHUPAH

the sister of Shmuel'. My sister, Mrs. Mindy Feller OBM, and her husband Rabbi Moshe Feller *sheyichye*, had recently been sent on shlichus to Minnesota, and she worked together with him on the shlichus, taking on the role of secretary. Being that we were to be shluchim as well, the Rebbe wanted my *kallah* to have the necessary skills to be an integral part of our shlichus.

As Chanukah was later that month, the Rebbe gave my *kallah* \$10 to distribute among those who took part in Bnos Chabad of Manchester as Chanukah Gelt, and gave her a silver dollar as '*schar tirchah*' (for the effort). The Rebbe also gave my *kallah* a mimeograph of 'the Sicha of the week' (as he called it) to pass on to her father.

At that *yechidus* we received from the Rebbe some beautiful *brachos*. He also instructed me to study for—and receive—*semicha*.

Birthday Yechidus

The next *yechidus* I had was in connection with my birthday, which is 20 Adar. At that *yechidus* I asked the Rebbe how to spiritually prepare for my upcoming wedding. The Rebbe

responded, "The most important preparation is to learn the הלכות הצריכות [relevant halachos], however, it's currently too early for that. For clear guidance about when to learn these laws, you should ask the *Mashpi'im* who were in Lubavitch, Otwock, and [Krementchug]." [In the *yechidus* just before our *chasuna*, I received additional instructions from the Rebbe.]

Curious about who had spent time in the three mentioned Yeshivos, I asked those in the know, and the consensus pointed to Reb Shmuel Levitin. He recommended that I begin learning the halachos six to eight weeks before my *chasuna*. He suggested studying from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch and incorporating the rulings of the Misgeres Hashulchan on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch.

Travel

My visit to England was now scheduled, and an 'ostensible reason' had been planned. While the Chabad community in Manchester was rather small, they would regularly arrange concerts to benefit Chabad activities in London and Eretz Yisroel.⁴ To this end, they retained the 800-seat Holsworth Hall for a *chazzonus* concert scheduled for 2 Nissan 5723. I



THE REBBE DEPARTS 770 AFTER BEING MESADER KIDDUSHIN. WHEN RABBI SHMUEL LEW SHOWED THIS PICTURE TO REBBTZIN CHANA, SHE COMMENTED THAT THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF HER SON

DREAM FULFILLED

While on the surface the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin* at our *chasuna* in my father-in-law's merit, it could very well be that my mother, and her deep feelings for the Rebbe, played a role. Born in 1905 on the Lower East Side, she had no Jewish schools to go to. Nonetheless, she was deeply *frum*, covered her hair with a *shaitel*, and had an unheard-of-at-the-time 8 children.

When the buses left for camp, the Rebbe came out of 770 to see us off. In the first post-card my mother dispatched after sending us off to Gan Yisroel, she described how she was profoundly fascinated by the Rebbe's holy eyes.

After I transferred to Lubavitch we got to know the Shemtovs, and my mother was invited to Berel's wedding. As I was then in Montreal, she wrote to me a description of the wedding. "My dream in life," she finished, "is that you have a *chuppah* like that."

After our *chasuna*, she remarked that her life's dream had been fulfilled.

was to address the crowd. The Rebbe also gave me his written *brocha* for the trip: “תהא - רצו"ש - בהצלחה” back and forth be with success.”

Speaking engagement and all, ultimately I was traveling to visit my *kallah* and meet her family. While the Rebbe had given the go-ahead, it was an exception to the norm at the time, and I figured it would best be kept quiet. Therefore, I was somewhat surprised that at the Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe called me up: “Distribute some here, and some in England,” he said, presenting me with a bottle of mashke.

In addition to the talk in Manchester, I also addressed a large farbrengen in London during that trip, as well as a N'shei Chabad women's gathering, conveying fresh regards from 770. I also had the opportunity to meet *Rabbonim* in Manchester and Dayan Yitzchak Weiss in London.

Rebbetzin Chana

Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov of London asked me to deliver a parcel to the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana upon my return to New York. Thanks to this mission, I made the acquaintance of this majestic woman and merited to experience some memorable moments in her regal presence.

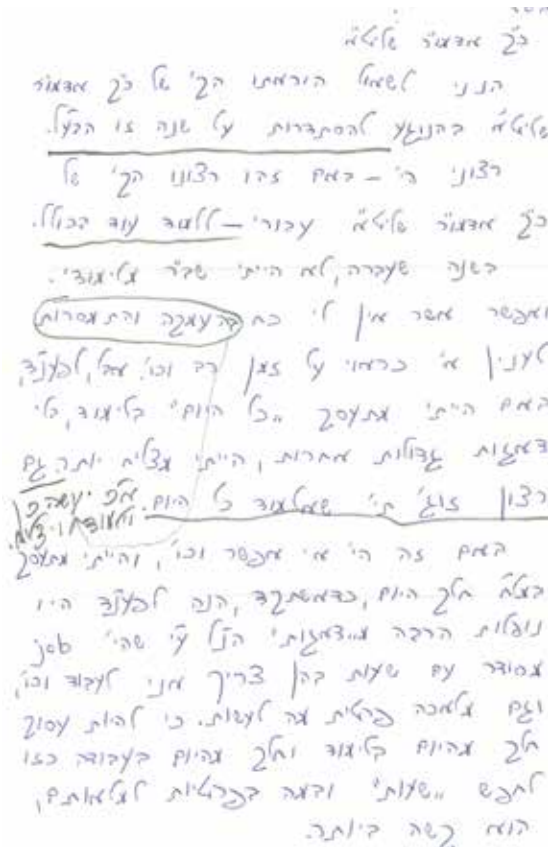
Upon my return from the UK on Friday morning, Yud-Aleph Nissan, I went straight to Reb Dovid Raskin, the contact person for Rebbetzin Chana, and asked him if he could pass on the package. He informed me that on that very day a group of Chassidim would visit her for a small farbrengen in honor of the Rebbe's birthday. I could come along, he said, and present it to her then.

The small crowd, consisting of a handful of respected Chassidim and Reb Dovid, shared some stories, said l'chaim, and wished success and blessing to the Rebbe. The Rebbetzin was very keen on hearing about Rabbi Shemtov, my in-laws the Jaffes, and the situation in England. Following this initial encounter, I merited to visit her a number of times, including other 'farbrengens'.⁵

Chasuna Week

The third annual charter flight from England was scheduled to land on Sunday, Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, and depart on Monday, 16 Tammuz. In past years, one aircraft had sufficed. This time, however, “so many friends wished to travel to New York for the wedding that we had to charter two planes.”

In *yechidus* upon his arrival, Mr. Jaffe said: “Due to my position in the community, I cannot afford to move the wedding here. The only justification will be if the Rebbe is *Mesader Kiddushin*.” While still not formally consenting, the Rebbe smiled. My father-in-law took that as a yes.



RABBI PINNY LEW

RABBI LEW'S LETTER TO THE REBBE WITH HIS PLANS TO REMAIN IN KOLEL FOR A SECOND YEAR WITHOUT BEING INVOLVED IN OTHER PART TIME WORK. THE REBBE CIRCLED THE WORDS בהעמקה והתמסרות, INDICATING THAT HE FOCUS SOLELY ON HIS LEARNING. AFTER UNDERLINING THE WORDS THAT REB SHMUEL WROTE, THAT HIS WIFE WANTS HIM TO LEARN ALL DAY, THE REBBE WROTE אם כן יעשה - IF SO, HE SHOULD DO SO AND BE SUCCESSFUL.

The Rebbe Consents

Ten days before our wedding, at 11 PM on 5 Tammuz, my *kallah* and I went into *yechidus* to receive a *brocha* for our wedding.

The Rebbe had questions about the wedding schedule. “Why is the chuppah called for 7:30?” he asked. “Is it because the hall is unavailable earlier?”

He also asked me when I planned on going to the Ohel. I said I planned to go on Thursday, 12 Tammuz, (when everyone would go in honor of the Frierdiker Rebbe's Chag Hageulah) and also on the day of our *chuppah*. The Rebbe said that was correct.

He instructed me to learn Chapters 16 and 17 of Reishis Chochma Shaar Hakedusha daily until the wedding, completing the study on Motzei Shabbos-Sunday.

Then we received a beautiful *brocha*:

זאל זיין א ווארעמע ליכטיגע שטוב ביי זיך, און א ווארעמע ליכטיגע שטוב פאר יענעם

May [the home you build together] be a warm, bright home inside, and a warm, bright home for others.

Seven hours later, at 6:00 AM, my father-in-law had his *yechidus*. Addressing the late hour for which the *chuppah* was scheduled, the Rebbe told him: "It's a pity for the *chosson* and *kallah* to fast [until then]." He responded: "If the Rebbe will be *Mesader Kiddushin*, they'll fast for two weeks!" "[Keeping them fasting so late] is unnecessary," the Rebbe replied.

"It was with some agitation, excitement, and no little trepidation," Mr. Jaffe writes, "that I asked the Rebbe at what time would be the *chuppah*. He answered, to my great relief, that it should take place outside '770' at 5:00 pm precisely." This was clear indication that the Rebbe indeed would join.

However, the Rebbe gave us a few conditions. Firstly, we should tell absolutely no one that the Rebbe would be at the *chuppah*. Secondly, we mustn't approach the printer regarding printing updated invitations before Thursday (giving only a couple of days to typeset-print-pack-ship!). Thirdly, the updated invitation should not mention the Rebbe's participation.

While the Rebbe didn't explain his reasoning, I do have a

theory for the significance of keeping absolute secrecy until Thursday:

My dear friend Reb Leibel Wolowik of Montreal, may he be well, was getting married on Wednesday night to my *kallah's* friend. He had lost his father as a young child, and his mother passed away while he was engaged. Of course, he also wanted the Rebbe to be *mesader kiddushin* at his wedding. I feel that out of sensitivity to him, the Rebbe waited and told us to only approach the printer the morning after his wedding.

The Rebbe sent us a note saying that the *chuppah* should take place at 5:00 PM *bediyuk* [precisely], doubly emphasizing that word.

After the Rebbe gave us the great *besurah* that he would be *mesader kiddushin*, Rabbi Hodakov asked me who would be taking care of the *kesubah* and the other halachic intricacies. I replied that they would be arranged by Rabbi Dvorkin.

He also inquired if my *kallah* had a *sheitel*. Contrary to the erstwhile norm of owning just one, I informed him that she had two. "It's proper that she should have a spare," he agreed. "That way, when her *sheitel* gets cleaned, she won't be stuck without one." He also asked when she'd begin wearing it, and I said before the *chuppah*. "That's fine," was his response.⁶

Inviting the Rebbetzin

An Excerpt from Mr. Zalmon Jaffe's Diary

I asked the Rebbe for permission to invite his Rebbetzin - Chaya Mushka - to the wedding. The Rebbe said: "You can invite her. She will be delighted; although, she will not come physically. She does know of you, since you always 'say it with flowers.'" (The Rebbetzin did not like appearing in public. However, we had for some time now been sending her and the Rebbe flowers before Yom Tov).

Just over a week before the wedding, the *choson* and *kallah* and ourselves were granted the honor and privilege of meeting the Rebbetzin in her home for the first time. One incident comes to mind, illustrating the wonderful and perfect hostess she was.

Shmuel accidentally knocked over a glass of red fruit punch. Shmuel's face turned the color of the now bright red table cloth. The Rebbetzin immediately assured him that it was a wonderful *simon brocha* (sign of blessing) and so on. She seemed so happy about it that I was tempted to knock over my glass, too!

A POSTPONED YECHIDUS

On the day after our wedding, we would be joining the charter flight to England for our Sheva Brachos, and spending some five weeks there. Therefore we were both entitled, like all the guests leaving after 12 Tammuz, to *yechidus* on Friday afternoon⁷. As it was within a week before the *chasuna*, we would go in separately.

Late Friday afternoon the Rebbe sent out a message that instead of going in now, I would have *yechidus* together with my wife on the day after our wedding.

In that special *yechidus*, the Rebbe spoke to us, amongst other things, about our upcoming trip. "Your trip to England is a *Merkos Shlichus*," he said. "Like all *Merkos Shluchim*, go to Rabbi Hodakov and he will give you each a dollar." The Rebbe also gave me a Tanya and my wife a Siddur.

The Chasuna

For the Mincha before my *chasuna*, I was *zoche*, like all *chassanim*, to use the Rebbe's siddur.

The Rebbe had said that the *chuppah* would begin at precisely five o'clock. It was getting close, yet the Rebbe hadn't returned from the Ohel. At about 4:56, the Rebbe's car pulled up. Without exception, the Rebbe would immediately daven Mincha upon returning from the Ohel. However, on his way into 770, the Rebbe told a surprised Rabbi Hodakov that the *chuppah* would take place imminently.

As the clock struck five, the Rebbe came through the doorway of 770 and down the few steps to where the *Chuppah* had been set up. Of course, the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin*. After Rabbi Hodakov read the *Kesubah*, the Rebbe was honored with reading all the *brachos* under the *chuppah*.

We left the *chuppah* walking backward, as the Rebbe was still standing there.

Thankfully, we had it recorded on tape. My brother-in-law Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe had the foresight to run a wire from the *Chuppah* into 770 and attach it to his Wollensak tape recorder. We also retained a videographer once we knew the Rebbe would be there.

It was amazing to see how the Rebbe started punctually. Barely five minutes after the *chuppah*, the sky gave way to a torrential downpour.

'Merkos Shlichus'

The Sheva Brachos in Manchester was a beautiful event set like a wedding and with a *mechitza* of flowers. A representative of every Jewish organization in town spoke. The eighteenth and final speaker was Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov. His whole speech was one word: "*Uuuuuforatzta*" he sang, and kicked off joyous dancing.

We then got to doing our 'Merkos Shlichus' (see sidebar). I had always been a camp boy (in fact, my connection to Lubavitch came about through Camp Gan Yisroel) and spent my summers there. This was to be my first Merkos Shlichus (as the *Meshalayach*, the *Nossi Hador*, called it).

Over the summer, we ran a day camp in Manchester, visited the Gan Yisroel girls' camp in England, and addressed other camps as well. Each Shabbos I would speak at another shul, and I also led *farbrengens* in people's homes. Like all Merkos Shlichim, we took *seforim* to sell, and we visited surrounding cities, such as Liverpool, speaking to the *Rabbonim* there.

Regards to CGI Detroit

Upon our return at the end of Av, the Rebbe tasked us with another mission. We were to give regards to Camp Gan Yisroel in Detroit from the camp in England that we had visited; the Rebbe would sponsor the trip. Rabbi Hodakov told us exactly what our message to the campers should be: "You're campers in Gan Yisroel; you have Gan Yisroel here. What you may not know, however, is that there are Gan Yisroel's all over the world."

We came on the last day of camp, and I spent a few hours composing a song on this theme. At the banquet, I told the children "You must realize that you are part of the Gan Yisroel family which spans continents. There are Gan Yisroels in the farthest reaches of the globe (at the time there were just a handful, but nowadays that is literally true) and you are all connected."

Then I sang the song, with the chorus reading: "International, Gan Yisroel, Gan Yisroel, all over *di velt*."

This was the only time I received a clear directive from the Rebbe telling me precisely what to say. And it's as relevant as ever. The Rebbe was instilling within us a global mentality: all Chassidim are one family no matter where we are.

In Kollel

After many deliberations, the final decision was that after our marriage we'd live in Crown Heights. Respecting this, the Rebbe had told my father-in-law: "For the first few months to a year that a young couple is married, they should live near

MECHITZA

In those days, having a *Mechitza* at a wedding wasn't to be taken for granted. When there were struggles to ensure one would be put up for my brother-in-law Avrohom's wedding a year later, the Rebbe referenced our Sheva Brachos in a letter:

I am certain that the chuppah and the wedding dinner will [be] arranged and take place with a Mechitza and with due dignity and splendor.

And in a footnote added: *Certainly at least as at the* שבע ברכות *of your daughter* תרחי.

(20th of Tammuz, 5724)



RABBI SHMUEL LEW, 5723

WHY SO FAR?

In a letter to Mr. Zalmon Jaffe, the Rebbe explained how the *kollel* in 770 is unique:

With regard to your question why should your son-in-law learn in a specified place, while he could learn in another place at much smaller cost, I hope you will not take it amiss if I answer your question with a question of my own, in [an] area where you are an expert. The same answer will apply in both. My question is: At first glance it seems strange that you should go to such trouble and expense and inconvenience and privation – to go to... Japan in order to place an order for footwear there. Would it not have saved you much expense, trouble, etc., to place your order for footwear with a local manufacturer? But undoubtedly, the thought had also occurred to you, but you decided wisely that the kind of merchandise you desire and at the right price could not be obtained in M/c and that the trip, expense, etc. were justified.

(1st Day of Chanukah, 5725)

other newlyweds. It's important that they be able to talk to each other."

I learned in '*kollel*' which at that point was a fresh concept in Lubavitch, and wasn't a fully organized *moisad*⁸. When I asked the Rebbe when to start, he was surprised by the question. "לפלא השאלה הרי ת"ת כל יום עולם מלא הוא!" The very question is startling. Every day of Torah learning is a whole world!" It was just a group of *yungeleit* learning together, mostly supported by their parents. For my *parnassah* that first year, I worked part-time for Merkos, and my in-laws pitched in to help support us.

By the next year, 5725, the *Kollel* had taken form. My wife and I desired that for that year I learn full-time, and with the Rebbe's consent and blessing, I continued on. My father-in-law, whom we were relying on for financial support, had fallen on hard times. In response to his describing his difficulty taking on our financial burden, the Rebbe wrote:

What follows next was not discussed nor even mentioned with your daughter and son-in-law, but I raise the matter here in connection with your mentioning the weight of the financial burden which you have had in the past in supporting them. I suggest that you should write to me (without involving them in the matter) what sum you would consider easy enough for you to send for their support in the future, and I would then בע"ה find a way to make up the difference. I emphasize the fact that I should not want them to be involved in this, so that your son-in-law could apply himself to his studies with complete peace of mind, and your daughter should also have no anxiety. (15th of Marcheshvan, 5725)

So strong was the Rebbe's desire for me to learn in *kollel*, that he personally took on the financial responsibility! From what I understand, my father-in-law pulled through in the end, and didn't need the Rebbe's assistance.

He Has Two Children By Me

I'll share two episodes from those years which highlight the Rebbe's personal concern for our family:

When Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht went to England on a speaking tour, the Rebbe asked him to send regards to my father-in-law. "He has two children by me," said the Rebbe, referring to my brother-in-law in yeshiva, and my wife.

In response to a routine letter I wrote the Rebbe in 5724, he replied with concern for my wife's social life in an unfamiliar country:

מה בהנוגע לזוגתו תי' ההתיידדה כאן כבר עם נשי חבד? אחדות על כל פנים?

(How is your wife faring? Has she made friends yet with some of the *N'shei Chabad* here? A few at minimum.)

Where to Live

Over those few years, I wrote in many long-term *shlichus* options that came up. Each time I stressed that we have no preference; we're ready to go wherever the Rebbe will send us.

However, it seems that the Rebbe wanted us to personally feel for a place. In response to one such letter while we were engaged, in which I 'reported' the different options offered to us, the Rebbe wrote:

"שאלתים להצעות מפורטות מצדם – וכותב מה שאומר פלוגי
"ופלוגי בזה!"

[I asked them for detailed suggestions from their perspective. [Instead,] he writes me what other individuals say about it.]

This went back and forth during my time in *kollel*. In one letter during the summer of 5725, I mentioned that if the Rebbe feels we would be more comfortable moving to England, my wife's native country and where her parents live, we're fine with that as well.

Shlichus

In response to my letter, which included some 15 possibilities for *shlichus*, the Rebbe wrote out an outline for a *shlichus*, filling a double-sided paper: "Priority should be given to creating the position of 'Youth Minister' in Manchester, under the auspices of the local Beis Din or Jewish community ... If this isn't feasible, (although in my opinion it's within reach, and shouldn't require much effort) look into London."

As the position in Manchester wasn't materializing, I asked the Rebbe what the next step should be. The Rebbe responded:

אם כן יכתב עם לונדון על דבר משרה אצלם, על כל פנים לשנה

[If so, you should correspond with (Lubavitch of) London regarding a position by them, for at least one year.]

Sunday, 27 Av 5725, we had a *yechidus* in connection with our one-way ticket to England the next day. When I was in *yechidus* together with my wife, the Rebbe would speak to us in English, going so far as to summarize the contents of my letter for my wife to understand.

This time, however, the Rebbe asked her if she spoke Yiddish. She replied that she does understand quite a bit but doesn't speak it well. Said the Rebbe: "It's a shame that after two years in Brooklyn [you don't speak Yiddish]". Then he told her: "I'm going to speak to your husband in Yiddish. If there's anything you don't understand, you can interrupt me."

He directed me to tell Rabbi Nachman Sudak to hire me for a year. But primarily, I was to deal with youth. "The coming months of Elul and Tishrei are opportune times '*tzu tohn mit yugent*' [to make an impact on youth]."

FROM THE REBBE

Rabbi Yossi Lew, who was a one-year-old child at the time, relates: The Rebbe had a silver dollar for me, and knocked it on the table to get my attention. I turned around and immediately grabbed the coin! Said the Rebbe: "I see he likes money already!" To which my father added: "When it's from the Rebbe." And the Rebbe said: "Ah! From the Rebbe, yes."

Leaving to London

That night, at our *tzeischem leshalom* reception, Rabbi Hodakov said: "This is not a regular *shliach*. Rather, he is traveling 'אל הארץ אשר אראך', without knowing his destination".

The next day, the day we went out on *shlichus*, Rabbi Hodakov showed me a letter that the Rebbe had just received from London. "This letter," which told of their pressing need for a High School boys teacher, "can be viewed as no less valid than an invitation to you." Indeed, I taught the class for a year, and that was the beginning of our sixty-year-strong *shlichus* in London. **T**

1. See Derher #110.
2. For the full story see 'Mekadesh Yisroel' (Derher Kislev 5773).
3. For the full story of the *shidduch* and *chasuna* from Mr. Jaffe's perspective, see Chabad.org/259892, from 'My Encounter With The Rebbe' (PCL Publishing) vol. 1.
4. See chabad.org/1568019 about the concert of Mr. Jan Pearce.
5. Some of Rabbi Lew's memories from these gatherings were shared in Derher Vov Tishrei 5775 Supplement pg 15.
6. Being that this episode has been distorted and misrepresented, Rabbi Lew wants to clarify that the response was as presented here.
7. While *yechidus* was regularly held on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings (and from 5725 on, just Sunday and Thursday) there was one little-known exception. When a large *yoma depagra* *farbrengen* was on a Thursday night, the guests from abroad would have their *yechidus* on *Motzei Shabbos* in the winter, and, if it was summer, on Friday afternoon.
8. See 'Kollel', Derher Cheshvan 5780.

FOR THE AUDIO AND VIDEO CLIPS OF
RABBI LEW'S CHUPPAH, SCAN THE
FOLLOWING BARCODE:



לזכות בנינו ובנותינו
ומשפחתם שיחיו
להצלחה רבה בכל העינים

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יעקב וזוגתו מרת
מלכה בינה שיחיו מאראס
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר בורני, טעקטאס

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

RUNNING A BUSINESS

The Rebbe's hora'os for employers on topics from hiring and firing to salaries and partnerships

COMPILED BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG
WRITTEN BY:
RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

TZEDAKAH FOR EMPLOYEES TO GIVE

On Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, 5750, the Rebbe spoke about ways to increase in *tzedakah*. One way to do so, the Rebbe said, would be for employers to give employees—in addition to their regular paycheck—money for the purpose of giving *tzedakah*.

In order to add in the giving of *tzedakah* this year in particular, it is worthwhile to institute that the director of every *mosad chinuch* (a *cheder*, *talmud Torah*, *yeshiva ketanah*, or *yeshiva gedolah*) should distribute money—from his own funds or those of the organization—to be given to *tzedakah* by all of the *mosad's* students, and all of its employees.¹

The Rebbe went on to say that this could be any amount, even a tiny bit; it should be done at least once a week, ideally on Erev Shabbos—before everyone goes home for Shabbos—which is when the *tzedakah* is most needed for the poor.

The Rebbe said that this applies not only to schools and *yeshivos*, but to all Jewish institutions and organizations, and that it would be ideal to institute this at non-Jewish institutions and organizations, especially those in America, where philanthropy is a foundational value.

SEVERANCE PAY

The *Sefer Hachinuch*² says that even though the actual *mitzvah* of "*ha'anaka*"—giving gifts to a servant when sending him away at the end of his tenure—only applies during the time of *Yovel*, it is nevertheless appropriate that some form of it be observed today as well. When someone employs their fellow to work for him, and the period of employment ends—and all the more so when the employment is terminated before the allotted time, whether this is because the employer has enough workers and the employee's job is redundant, or even because the employer is displeased with the employee's work—the employer must give the employee *ha'anaka*—severance pay.

(If the employee quits before the allotted time, there is no *mitzvah* of paying *ha'anaka*, similar to the *halacha* in the case of an *eved* that "one who flees or leaves [voluntarily] with *gir'on kesef* (the deduction of money) does not receive *ha'anaka*.")

Ha'anaka is considered *tzedakah*, which makes it clear that one cannot fulfill this obligation by paying something that they are already required to pay. The worker's wages must, of course, be paid in full, and promised bonuses also do not count towards *ha'anaka*, as bonuses are not considered *tzedakah*.

It doesn't matter how long the employee worked for

the employer, as the *Sefer Hachinuch* writes, “a long time or even a short time.” It also makes no difference whether the employer was pleased with the worker—whether “the home was blessed because of him” or “the home was not blessed because of him,”³ the employer must give *ha’anaka*, in accordance with the amount of time the worker was employed.

And all the more so, when “the house was blessed because of him,” when the law is that “you must give him in accordance with that with which you have been blessed,” you must increase his *ha’anaka*, proportionate to the amount that “Hashem blessed him with.”

The Rebbe added that this teaching of the *Sefer Hachinuch* should be publicized, and followed by all.⁴

FAMILY BUSINESSES

The Rebbe did not always approve of family members working together in a business, as this could lead to acrimony and discord. In a number of *yechidus*’n with members of Machne Israel Development Fund⁵ in 5752, the Rebbe spoke about the potential downsides of working with family.

To someone who was having issues with family in the business, the Rebbe said, “In general I am not in favor of partnership between relatives, because relatives are too envious of the success of one another. If you have a partnership, a companionship with a relative, then continue it, but don’t enlarge it. You’ll continue the same measure as till now, and if the partnership becomes bigger, then it is good to have someone from outside, not from the family.”

Another individual asked about a business venture, and the Rebbe replied, “If you have some suspicion that there will be disagreement in the family, then it is not worthwhile to make a new partnership with relatives. If you have the inclination to make a partnership, it is better to make it not with a relative, [but with] someone who is not closely related. That will be more peaceful.”

On the other hand, however, there were instances when the Rebbe did advise people to join the family business.

Reb Zalman Deitsch went into *yechidus* before his *chasuna*. The Deitsch family patriarch, Reb Sholom, had recently passed away, leaving six orphans, the oldest of whom, Reb Zalman, was about to marry. The Rebbe asked Reb Zalman what his plans were for after the *chasuna*, and Reb Zalman said that he intended to go on *shlichus*. The Rebbe, however, instructed Reb Zalman to join his father’s business and to take up its directorship, saying that in this way he would be able to provide for his mother and siblings.

Later, the Rebbe directed Reb Zalman’s brother, Reb Yosef Deitsch, to join the business as well, but this time the Rebbe said that it had to be with the approval of the wives of Reb Zalman and Reb Yosef.⁶

WORKING FOR THE FATHER-IN-LAW

The Rebbe wrote to an administrator of a large *mossad* that he would recommend that his son-in-law accept a *chinuch* position that the father-in-law was offering him, and the Rebbe set forth the following conditions so that he should be able to succeed, and that his *shalom bayis* should not be affected by the job.

He must have true and complete autonomy in his work, meaning that once you speak clearly and in detail about his job description, you, your wife, and your daughter will not mix in with his work (unless he himself asks you to).

And just as you promised—without being asked—salary and other conditions to [someone else], you must offer him at least the same... The same applies to your daughter.

This is all for a trial period of one year. After this, there can be no complaint if either side does not wish to continue; [in that case,] it will have to be as if the whole thing never took place. But I am sure that if they follow these conditions, the father-in-law and son-in-law will be successful in their partnership as necessary and even more, and the *mossad* will do very well. And the merit of the one who founded the *mossad* [the Frierdiker Rebbe] will stand by them.⁷

COMPETITIVE SALARIES

“Regarding what you wrote about giving a pay raise, I don’t know the pay grades in Eretz Yisroel, but you certainly know and are taking into account that when you give one person a raise, this must be in a way that is commensurate with the pay of the other employees.”⁸

“It’s obvious that you shouldn’t single out any of the young men by giving him a raise.”⁹ **T**

1. Sefer Hasichos 5750 vol. 1 p. 108.
2. Mitzvah 482.
3. As the Gemara (Kiddushin 17b) rules regarding an eved.
4. Likkutei Sichos vol. 19 p. 155.
5. For the story about this unique fund, see To Greater Heights - Derher Elul 5775.
6. From Vayehi Ish Matzliach, the Biography of Reb Zalman Yuda Deitsch.
7. Shlichus K’hilchosa p. 262.
8. From a letter of the Rebbe to Reb Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrom, printed in the Blau-Zilberstrom teshura, 6 Tammuz 5775.
9. From a maane printed in the Shuchat-Orenstein teshura, 1 Kislev 5770.

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

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

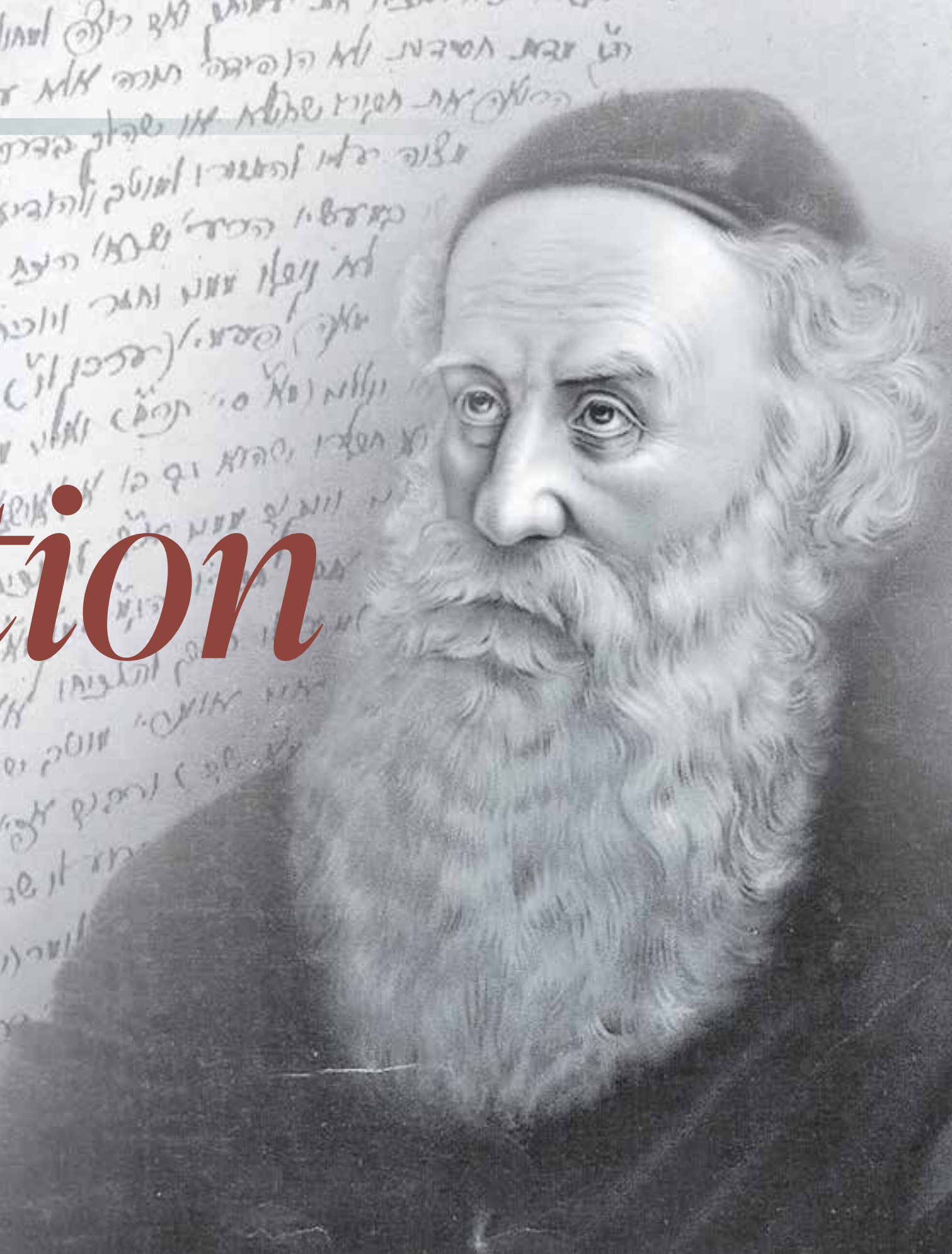
Chassidus Proliferat

The Life and Times
of the Alter Rebbe

In honor of Chof Daled Teves, we present an overview of the Alter Rebbe's nesius.

This article is based on Sefer Hatoldos Admur HaZaken and Toldos Chabad B'Russia HaTzaris, unless otherwise indicated.

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg



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To Visit Liozna

“In the early years of his *nesius*,” the Rebbe related, “the Alter Rebbe once opened the window and saw masses of Chassidim arriving for a gathering or a *yoma d’pagra*. He immediately closed the window and wanted to hide.

“The Rebbetzin asked, ‘What’s this all about?’

“The Alter Rebbe replied, ‘What do all these people want from me?’

“The Rebbetzin, realizing a quick response was needed, replied, ‘They want to hear what you heard from your Rebbe!’

“If so,’ the Alter Rebbe said, ‘*vel ich zogen un zogen*, I will speak and speak!’”¹

The Liozna years—spanning approximately the initial two decades of the Alter Rebbe’s *nesius*—were a period of remarkable growth and expansion.

Following the Maggid’s passing, the Alter Rebbe’s colleagues gradually relocated from the White Russia region²; Reb Mendel Horodoker and Reb Avraham Kalisker had settled in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Levi Yitzchok of Pinsk and Reb Shlomo Karliner had moved to Berdichev and Ludmir in Ukraine, Reb Yisroel Polotzker and Reb Chaim Chaikel of Amdur passed away, and Reb Yissachar Ber of Lubavitch had willingly acknowledged the Alter Rebbe’s leadership. Consequently, the entire region, which had experienced fervent opposition to Chassidus, was now entrusted to the sole leadership of the Alter Rebbe.

In those early years, the distinctions between Chabad and Chagas Chassidus weren’t as clear as they would later become. The first mention of “Chabad” Chassidim as a distinct identity is in a letter written by the Alter Rebbe many years later, from



THE REGION OF ‘WHITE RUSSIA’ (MODERN DAY BELARUS)

Liadi.³ Chassidus, at this point, was still perceived as a unified movement. Therefore, anyone seeking to become a chossid in the region knew there was only one destination: Liozna. During those decades, thousands, if not tens of thousands, flocked to Liozna and joined the ranks of the Alter Rebbe’s devoted followers.

The opportunity to visit the Alter Rebbe was something that no one wanted to miss. “The Alter Rebbe delivered maamarim in an awe-inspiring manner,” described the Friediker Rebbe. “Everyone present would feel shaken and filled with awe; people became baalei teshuva in a single moment, and felt a new sense of inspiration in their own avodah.”

“His davening was equally awe-inspiring. The Tzemach Tzedek remarked that the Alter Rebbe possessed an insatiable yearning to be completely immersed in *Elokus*. He often said, ‘*Ich vil nit dein Gan Eden*, I do not desire Your Gan Eden, I do not seek Your Olam Haba – I desire You and You alone.’

“His davening in the presence of Chassidim was thunderous. It would often extend an hour or two beyond *chatzos*, and would be even longer on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. During davening, he would often bang on the walls until his hands bled, without noticing at all—until they eventually hung soft clothing along the walls.”⁴

The Response to Growth

Unlike many of the Maggid’s other talmidim, the Alter Rebbe rejected the notion of “*צדיק באמונתו יחי*,” (read as *‘echaye*’), that a tzaddik’s inspiration could suffice in uplifting the *avodah* of a regular Yid. He insisted that every chossid take personal initiative in, and responsibility for, his *avodas Hashem*.

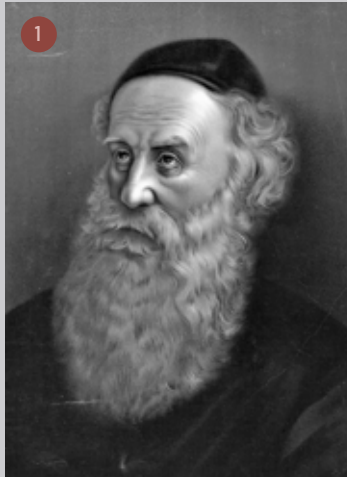
This approach meant that the Alter Rebbe dedicated much time to each new chossid. Every chossid wanted the opportunity to bare his heart to the Rebbe and receive his guidance in *avodas Hashem*. Chassidim also tried asking his advice in material matters, but the Alter Rebbe expressed himself sharply against this trend and tried to curtail it as much as possible. Chassidim would remain in Liozna for weeks, learning Chassidus and preparing themselves for their first *yechidus*.

Soon, the system became unsustainable. The crowds of Chassidim converging on Liozna grew so large that the Alter Rebbe made two foundational changes to the interaction between Rebbe and chossid. The first was *Takkanos Liozna*, the second was the writing of *Sefer HaTanya*.

Takkanos Liozna were a series of rules limiting the number of visits a chossid was allowed to make to Liozna. Ordinary Shabbosim were reserved for new Chassidim awaiting

their first *yechidus*, while Shabbos Mevarchim was for veteran Chassidim who had already had at least one *yechidus*. Several occasions each year, such as Shabbos Shuva, Simchas Torah, Shabbos Chanukah, Purim and Shavuos, were 'open to the public' but no *yechidus* was held. The *takkanos* were occasionally tweaked and adjusted.

In the Alter Rebbe's written responses during his interrogations, he writes that Shabbos Mevarchim guests usually numbered some 150-200 Chassidim, occasionally hundreds more. On Shavuos, the Alter Rebbe noted, the numbers sometimes exceeded one thousand.⁵ The crowds were so large that there were times when *yechidus* was held only in the format of



The story of the Alter Rebbe's portrait

The original portrait of the Alter Rebbe was done by one of the Russian Ministers during the Alter Rebbe's imprisonment in Petersburg in 5559. The caption read, "Rabbi Shneur Zalman Boruchovich" and the year and location.

Over 60 years later, the picture was discovered by the Rebbe Maharash in Petersburg and was brought on loan to Lubavitch for two weeks. The Tzemach Tzedek confirmed it to be an accurate depiction of the Alter Rebbe's visage and would emotionally closet himself each day with the picture. It's unclear if it was originally painted in color.

25 years later, it was copied by a Jewish artist (Boris Shatz), who drew this black and white copy (picture no. 1). Working with Reb Shmaryahu Schneersohn, a great grandson of the Alter Rebbe.

It was released in 5649 as a lithograph, with the original Russian caption (picture no. 2) and produced in hundreds of copies.

When the portrait was published, it took the Jewish world by storm and a controversy arose regarding its authenticity. The original picture was not extant, and some even doubted that the Jewish artist had copied it correctly.

Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash, attested that she merited to see the original portrait often during those two weeks and that this was a perfect copy.

In 5698, rumors rose again that the artist had fabricated the entire story. The Frierdiker Rebbe then published the testimonies of Rebbetzin Rivka and other elder Chassidim in Hatomim.

“*yechidus-klalis*,” thirty or forty Chassidim at a time, while personal *yechidus* was restricted to complicated Halachic matters which necessitated the Alter Rebbe’s close attention. Reb Aharon Strasheler and later the Mittlerer Rebbe were appointed to teach Chassidus to newcomers and serve as a go-between between Chassidim and the Alter Rebbe.

To compensate for the lack of close contact, the Alter Rebbe began to write the Tanya. The opening perakim were

A SINGLE LONELY WOMAN

Despite the masses of Chassidim converging on Liozna, the Alter Rebbe paid remarkable attention to individuals, as seen in these famous stories:

“One Yom Kippur,” the Rebbe related, “the Alter Rebbe left shul and went to the outskirts of town, where a new mother had just given birth. Her family had gone to shul to daven, and he sensed that she needed assistance. He removed his tallis, went there, and personally did all sorts of actions which are permitted only in cases of *pikuach nefesh*.”

“The Alter Rebbe had a shul full of people; the Gemara indeed says that it is a mitzvah for the greatest person present to break Yom Tov for *pikuach nefesh*—but did he really need to do it?

“We all know the lofty nature of his davening; how much more so when he davened on Yom Kippur itself. Nevertheless, during his davening, on Yom Kippur, in a *makom kadosh, er hot der-filt*—he nonetheless sensed (!) that a new mother on the outskirts of town needs help!”⁶

Another famous story:

“The Mittlerer Rebbe was once deep in learning in his room, when his small baby fell out of the crib and began to cry. He didn’t notice anything, but the Alter Rebbe—learning on the top floor—heard the cries, paused his learning, and calmed the baby back to sleep.

“Afterwards, the Alter Rebbe admonished his son. *B’shaas a yiddish kind veint, darf men derheren*, when a Jewish child cries, you need to hear...”⁷

said as a maamar on Rosh Hashanah תקנ”ג; manuscripts began to circulate in the summer of תקנ”ב, and the sefer was finally published in תקנ”ר, towards the end of the Liozna period.

As the Alter Rebbe explains in the *Hakdama*, the sefer was based on answers given to Chassidim in *yechidus*, “since it is no longer possible to answer each person individually.” Instead of the Alter Rebbe serving as a personal *mashpia* for each chossid, Chassidim were expected to help each other, and leading Chassidim in each city were appointed to teach Tanya and guide the younger Chassidim in *avodas Hashem*.

Over this period—from the early 5540s until the end of the 5550s—the Alter Rebbe became the uncontested leader of all Chassidim in White Russia.

A Nossi Emerges

From a relatively young age, the Alter Rebbe had a close circle of talmidim, a *chaburah* of *lomdim* attracted by his unparalleled mastery of Torah and his unique approach to *avodas Hashem*. This was true even before he traveled to Mezeritch. In the years after the Maggid’s passing, he also established official *chadorim*, an organized study system where many accomplished *talmidei chachamim* came to learn.⁸

However, these were focused groups of talmidim, not *nesius* in the broad sense of the word. Even after the passing of the Maggid in תקל”ג, the Alter Rebbe accepted the leadership of Reb Mendel Horodoker, traveling to visit him as a chossid to a Rebbe. When Reb Mendel decided four years later to move to Eretz Yisroel, the Alter Rebbe declared his intent to join, and even began the journey south towards Eretz Yisroel.⁹

But then plans began to shift. Upon reaching Mohyliv near



THE HOME AND SHUL OF REB MENDEL HORODOKER IN ERETZ YISROEL

the Turkish border, Reb Mendel Horodoker implored the Alter Rebbe to remain behind and take responsibility for all the Chassidim of White Russia. Initially, the Alter Rebbe resisted this proposal, but after several weeks of reflection, he consented.

The next five years marked a period of transition. Initially, Reb Mendel Horodoker continued to serve as a Rebbe to Chassidim in White Russia, albeit from a distance, guiding them through letters sent from Eretz Yisroel. During this time, the Alter Rebbe remained in Mohyliv for a year and a half, during which, he mentioned to his children, he immersed himself in Torah study, completing Shas for the sixteenth time “while standing, day and night, learning nonstop.”

However, circumstances soon evolved. Many Chassidim in White Russia felt that they needed a Rebbe whom they could visit in person; some began to travel to Ukraine and Poland, where other Talmidei HaMaggid were active. Reb Mendel Horodoker was displeased with this development (perhaps he disapproved of the “poilisher” style), so, in the early 5540s, he began to encourage Chassidim to visit the three local Talmidim

of the Maggid—the Alter Rebbe, Reb Yissachar Ber of Lubavitch, and Reb Yisroel of Polotsk.

During this period, the Alter Rebbe’s name gained increasing recognition as the “Maggid of Liozna.” His *chadorim* had become renowned, and he also played a prominent role in organizing financial support for Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel. Simultaneously, Reb Yisrael of Polotsk passed away, and Reb Yissachar Ber of Lubavitch deferred to the Alter Rebbe’s leadership. It wasn’t long before hundreds, and then thousands, of Chassidim began flocking to Liozna.

The Alter Rebbe continued to regard Reb Mendel Horodoker as his Rebbe, referring to him in letters as “*Rabboseinu sh’b’Eretz Hakodesh*,” but after Reb Mendel’s *histalkus* in תקמ”ח, the transition was complete.

Being a Chossid

During those years, a significant change was introduced — the establishment of *chassidishe minyanim*. This innovation infuriated the *misnagdim* who saw the new shuls as a threat to their authority and influence, and it was often a focal point of the *cherems*, polemics and persecutions.

In Shklov, a certain Reb Aleksander defended the Chassidim in their efforts to daven separately, and was rewarded with a personal letter from the Alter Rebbe. “Although I do not know you, I heard that ... you opposed the people who play games and belittle those who desire to serve Hashem, and who joined forces to enforce a decree of *shemad* against davening, forcing all to daven in their hurried, mechanical manner, devoid of enthusiasm...”

The separate shuls weren’t just in order to daven according to the Alter Rebbe’s *nusach* (which was initially inscribed in the margins of existing siddurim). In the *chassidishe minyanim*, davening was recited loudly and slowly, taking at least an hour from *Hodu* until after *Shemoneh Esrei*. There was time for *hisbonenus*, and talking *devarim betalim* was unacceptable. Public shiurim were held between Mincha and Maariv each evening to ensure that time wasn’t wasted.

Chassidim were expected to rigorously adhere to the *takkanos*. The leaders among Chassidim in each community weren’t just *mashpi’im* who taught Tanya but also gatekeepers for Liozna—one could enter *yechidus* only if those appointees determined that one took his *avodas Hashem* seriously and was deserving of the privilege.

Manuscripts of the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch were also becoming widespread, and Chassidim began adopting many of the Alter Rebbe’s unique *pispei dinim*.



A KSAV YAD DISCOVERED JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, AMONG THOUSANDS OF KESOVIM IN THE LIBRARY OF AGUCH, CONTAINING TWO SIMANIM OF THE ALTER REBBE’S SHULCHAN ARUCH, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL HALACHOS AND DIFFERENCES FROM THE WAY THEY WERE PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

Tefillin knots were tied in a unique way, tefillin was no longer worn on Chol Hamoed, *mechiras chametz* was rearranged, a new *shechita* knife was introduced, heated *mikvaos* became commonplace, and a general approach of *hiddur mitzvah* developed in all areas of halachah.¹⁰

Every chossid was also expected to contribute to the Alter Rebbe's fundraising efforts for the Chassidim of Eretz Yisroel. Each individual designated the amount he could contribute, and would hand it over periodically to the local administrator, who held the money until the annual visit of the Alter Rebbe's *Shadar*. Other fundraising activities were organized occasionally, for serious cases of *pidyon shvuyim* or when Chassidim faced persecution from *misnagdim*.

A system of *maamad* also evolved for the support of the *chatzer* of the Alter Rebbe, being that Chassidim in *yechidus* were not expected to make a contribution (as was customary among other Talmidei HaMaggid).

These donations were periodically collected and sent to Liozna. The funds would feed and house poor Chassidim who visited Liozna, and also support the various '*mazkirim*'—the Alter Rebbe's brother Maharil who wrote *hanachos* and inspected all *kesavim* for errors, Reb Aharon Strasheler and the Mitteler Rebbe who guided new Chassidim. Later, in Liadi, the *mazkirim* also included Reb Chaim Avraham (the Alter Rebbe's second son) who was responsible for questions of *gashmius* that arrived at the Alter Rebbe's door, and the Tzemach Tzedek, who would help prepare halachic *teshuvos*.

This entire system was meticulously structured and overseen by the Alter Rebbe. "The Alter Rebbe was an excellent director and organizer," the Friediker Rebbe once noted. "His broad vision, his decisiveness, and his willpower were extraordinary. From a young age, he never changed his mind—in *ruchnius* or *gashmius* matters."¹¹

From Before, to After, Petersburg

The incredible reach of Chassidus during the two decades in Liozna rankled the *misnagdim*, particularly in the epicenter of Jewish Lithuania, the city of Vilna.

The *hisnagdus* was not new to the Alter Rebbe. During an earlier round of persecution, in the winter of תקל"ב, the Maggid had sent him and Reb Mendel Horodoker to meet with the Vilna Gaon—but to their disappointment, he had refused to receive them. The Alter Rebbe had also traveled to Shklov with Reb Avraham Kalisker to debate the merits of Chassidus, and had participated in other efforts as well. Notably, the Alter Rebbe consistently refrained from retaliatory measures, he did not allow a *cherem* to be issued in response to the *cherem* of the *misnagdim*, and always instructed Chassidim to avoid



THE ALTER REBBE'S TEFFILIN WERE BROUGHT OUT OF RUSSIA IN THE YEAR 5726, DURING THE ASERES YEMEI TESHUVA. THE REBBE INSTRUCTED THAT THE TEFFILIN BE PLACED ON THE BIMA AND ANYONE WHO TOIVELED IN THE MIKVAH COULD TAKE A LOOK.

any sort of provocation.

However, a significant shift occurred after the passing of the Vilna Gaon in תקנ"ח. With the towering figure of the Gaon no longer restraining their actions, the *misnagdim* felt emboldened to escalate their opposition, venturing into previously uncharted territory.

Thus began a three year period of accusations, interrogations, and persecutions.

In early תקנ"ט, the Alter Rebbe was arrested following accusations by an informant who alleged that he led a subversive group involved in embezzlement and inciting rebellion by sending money abroad. Thirty prominent Chassidim were also apprehended. After a few terrifying months, the Alter Rebbe and the Chassidim were finally released; Yud-Tes Kislev marks the historic moment when the Alter Rebbe was freed and the movement of Chassidus was officially legalized.¹²

The *misnagdim* weren't satisfied, and another *malshinus* was submitted just a year later. Thankfully, this one was rejected by the government, and the informers were called in by the Vilna police and informed that "according to the will of his Highness, the rights of the *karlinim*¹³ must be maintained."

However, they tried again the next year, and this time they were successful. The Alter Rebbe was once again summoned to Petersburg. In this instance, despite his release on 23 Kislev, the Czar instructed that the Alter Rebbe remain in the city until investigations concluded. These investigations dragged on and on until the Czar was assassinated and his successor, Czar Alexander, issued the final release.

The Alter Rebbe prepared to leave Petersburg at the end of תקס"א. At that point, a decision was reached to relocate from Liozna to Liadi. This decision was influenced by the

fact that the Alter Rebbe's release had been arranged by Count Liubamirsky, who owned the towns of Lubavitch and Liadi. The count recommended that, for added security, the Alter Rebbe should reside in an area under his jurisdiction.

Liadi—When Chassidim Became Chabad

For the Rabbeim, the term “*noch Peterburg*” was a code-word referring to the vast expansion of Chassidus that took place after the Alter Rebbe's liberation. The approximately eleven years spent in Liadi, from late א”תקס until late ב”תקע, witnessed significant developments and consolidation within Chassidus Chabad.

During this period, the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim gained an identity of their own, becoming known as Chabad Chassidim, with a distinct style and even their own siddur—the Alter Rebbe's Nusach Ari—which was then published and widely disseminated. For the first time in decades, other streams of Chassidus arose within White Russia, under the influence of Reb Avraham Kalisker of Tverya, who opposed the Alter Rebbe's widespread dissemination of Chassidus.

Perhaps the most significant change was with regard to maamarim. Although the foundations of Chabad Chassidus were long established, the Alter Rebbe had not previously delivered long, elaborate maamarim like the ones in Torah Or and Likkutei Torah.

The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted that the first long maamar was recited on Rosh Hashanah 5550, and its content would later become the three opening chapters of Tanya. That was an anomaly, however. In his interrogation, the Alter Rebbe indicated that maamarim were delivered only on Shabbos Mevarchim, and of those, not many have remained. The earliest maamarim that have reached our generation are dated to ג”תקנ, and they are relatively rare.

The shift began during the middle years of his *nesius*, marked by the publication of the Tanya in ר”תקנ and the arrests of ט”תקנ and א”תקס. The Tzemaich Tzedek noted that Likkutei Torah was compiled from maamarim spanning the last fifteen years of the Alter Rebbe's *nesius*. The Rebbe Rashab further noted that a change was also evident after Yud Tes Kislev, and that the most significant change was upon the Alter Rebbe's move to Liadi.

In Liadi, the Alter Rebbe delivered long maamarim regularly, every Shabbos and Yom Tov. The vast majority

of his published maamarim date from those years. The transition continued gradually throughout those years. The maamarim of ב”תקס, for example, are far shorter—sometimes just a quarter the size compared to those six years later, in ח”תקס. Unlike the earlier concise teachings, comprehensible primarily to those well-versed in *nigleh* and *nistar*,¹⁴ the Alter Rebbe's Chassidus now became more detailed and accessible to a broader audience.

A New Neshama

On Chai Elul ה”תק, the Alter Rebbe was born in the outskirts of Liozna to his parents Reb Boruch and Rebbetzin Rivkah. They were Chassidim of the Baal Shem Tov, who told them that their son was a “new neshama” (one that has never been in the physical world in the past), and provided detailed instructions with regard to his upbringing and education, including the fact that the Alter Rebbe not be raised with knowledge of the Baal Shem Tov and Chassidus. An exception was made for the Alter Rebbe's *upshernish*, which was celebrated in the Baal Shem Tov's presence, without his identity being revealed.

From a tender age, the Alter Rebbe felt that the gates of Torah were open to him; he shared with the Mittler Rebbe that this was a source of frustration—he was upset that he never needed to *toil* in Torah learning; it came too easily.

At the age of ten, his father brought him to the nearby town of Lubavitch, where he spent two years learning

SHULCHAN ARUCH

When the Alter Rebbe was in Mezeritch, the Maggid asked him to write a new and updated Shulchan Aruch.

The Alter Rebbe wrote Orach Chaim during his years in Mezeritch, but continued writing throughout his *nesius*. In Liozna, he added various halachos to the Shulchan Aruch, and in the Liadi years, he wrote the *Piskei Hasiddur*, *Seder Birchos Hanehenin*, and also glosses on Hilchos Niddah.

under the tutelage of the Gaon Reb Yosef “Mochiach” and his son-in-law, Reb Yissachar Ber (the Alter Rebbe said that certain key ideas of Chassidus Chabad came to him during those youthful years).

Afterwards, he learned mostly on his own, in the local Beis Midrash in Liozna. At his bar mitzvah, he was inducted into the *chevra kadisha* of Liozna and the *ge'onim* of the region bestowed on him the honorary title “*Rav Tanna Hu Upalig*” (a statement in the Gemara giving Rav the status of a Tanna, though he lived in the first generation of Amoraim).

The young *iluy*'s reputation spread far and wide, leading to his betrothal to the daughter of the affluent Reb Yehudah Leib

Segal of Vitebsk, Rebbetzin Sterna. He received a substantial dowry, but dedicated it all to the establishment of Jewish agricultural settlements in the vicinity.

Around the age of twenty, the Alter Rebbe decided to leave home and travel to one of the great Torah centers, but he couldn't decide where to go—to nearby Vilna, seat of the Gra, or to (the much farther) Mezeritch, home of the Maggid. He consulted with his brother, Reb Yehudah Leib, who said that it was really a choice between learning—which he would receive in Vilna—and davening, which he would learn in Mezeritch. Since he already knew how to learn, he decided on Mezeritch.¹⁵

CHASSIDUS CHABAD—FROM MEZERITCH?

When Reb Avraham Kalisker accused the Alter Rebbe of straying from the true path of Chassidus, the Alter Rebbe publicly defended himself, asserting that his Chassidus didn't diverge whatsoever from the teachings he had received from the Maggid and Reb Avraham Hamalach. His claim was fiercely supported by Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev.

When examining the Maggid's teachings, Chassidus Chabad may indeed seem different. While some talmidim record statements of the Maggid about the importance of personal *hisbonenus*, for example, those statements are not found in his *sefarim*. And while the Maggid did base his Torah on the Arizal's Kabbalah (as opposed to the Baal Shem Tov, who rarely referenced it), this element played a secondary role in comparison to the central themes of “*avodah*” and “*mussar*.”

However, we find that the Maggid held personal discussions with select talmidim—namely, Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev and the Alter Rebbe—where he taught them concepts that he didn't teach publicly. Reb Levi Yitzchok transcribed his personal conversations, and they were later published in *Kedushas Levi* and *Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov*, where the Maggid extensively expounds upon Kabbalistic concepts not found in his standard writings.

A close inspection of the writings of the Alter Rebbe and his talmidim reveal that he, too, received numerous teachings from the Maggid in a similar manner. His demand for personal *hisbonenus* and the focus on the Arizal's Kabbalah are all clearly attributed

to the Maggid and his son Reb Avraham Hamalach.

“I personally heard from the [Alter] Rebbe,” writes Reb Aizik Homiler, to cite one example, “that the Maggid of Mezeritch told him in the name of the Baal Shem Tov... to delve into the concepts which bring a person to *ahavas Hashem*...”¹⁷

“It is impossible to properly understand [the concepts of Chassidus],” the Alter Rebbe himself writes elsewhere, “without prefacing from the writings of the Arizal . . . as I received from my Rebbes...”¹⁸

A long list of uniquely Chabad concepts are linked directly to the Maggid. These include concepts such as the difference between *Atzmus* and *Ein Sof*, the meaning of *ein aroch* and the interpretation of *tzimtzum shelo kipshuto*, to name just a few. Many maamarim published only in recent decades make clear that the Alter Rebbe's Chassidus indeed had a firm foundation in the Torah he received privately from the Maggid.

In a famous letter published in *Hatomim*, the Friediker Rebbe compared the progression from the Maggid to the Alter Rebbe to the growth of flax and its ultimate refinement into fine cloth. Although the first stage is the growth of the rough product, the ultimate goal is the production of a much more developed and refined result.

As Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev attested, “We all ate from the same plate in Mezeritch, but the Litvak [the Alter Rebbe] took the ‘*smetene*’ [the best portion].”¹⁹

The First Torah

“The Zaide,” the Alter Rebbe said, referring to the Baal Shem Tov, “loved simple Jews dearly. During my initial days in Mezeritch, the Rebbe, the Maggid conveyed, “The Rebbe—the Baal Shem Tov—would often say: Ahavas Yisroel is *ahavas Hamakom* (love of Hashem). *Banim atem laHashem Elokeichem*, when you love the father, you love the children.”¹⁶

The Alter Rebbe arrived in Mezeritch in תקכ”ד, remaining there for about a year and a half. During this period he was granted a unique privilege—the Maggid instructed his son, Reb Avraham Hamalach, to teach the Alter Rebbe *nistar*, while the Alter Rebbe would teach Reb Avraham *nigleh*. Seeking to extend the time allotted to *nistar*, the Alter Rebbe would turn the clock’s hand backward unbeknownst to Reb Avraham and gain precious additional minutes.

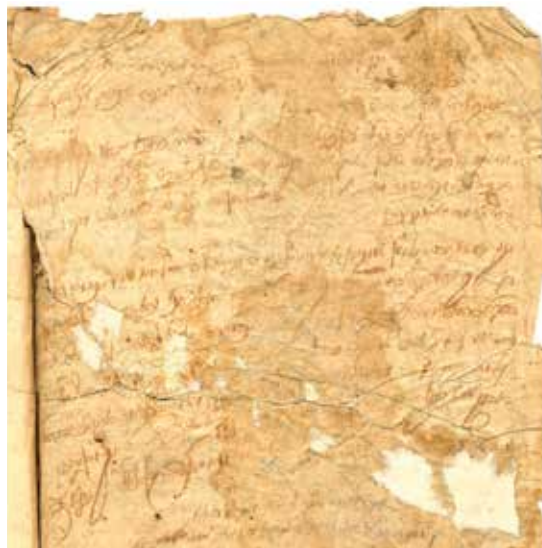
The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted that when the Alter Rebbe returned from his first visit to Mezeritch, he shared many teachings from the Maggid with the group of students that were already gathered around him. He also changed certain customs: In their private minyan, simpletons hadn’t been permitted to be *chazzan*, but now this practice was discontinued.

Over the next eight years, the Alter Rebbe made occasional visits to Mezeritch, while maintaining his own group of talmidim at home. In the final year of the Maggid’s life, when *hisnagdus* to Chassidus reached a fevered pitch, the Alter Rebbe spent an extended period of time in the Maggid’s presence once again, until the *histalkus* on Yud Tes Kislev תקל”ג.

Napoleon vs. Alexander

“I hate him thoroughly,” said the Alter Rebbe, “for he is the Satan who opposes good with every kind of evil. He is the ultimate *kelipa* and harsh judgment, the opposite of *chesed* and *tov*, he is only death and evil, and his whole life force is to do evil, like a leech.”

As Napoleon marched through Europe, the Alter Rebbe made it clear that he abhorred Napoleon and saw him as one who is an absolute contradiction to *Elokus*. The Alter Rebbe felt that Napoleon’s success would bring spiritual and material downfall for the Jewish people. He therefore directed Chassidim to support the Czar’s cause—and also predicted that Napoleon would be defeated.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDET CHABAD

A 275 YEAR OLD LEDGER FOUND IN THE PINKAS OF LIOZNA IN WHICH IT DESCRIBES THE ALTER REBBE BEING INDUCTED INTO THE CHEVRA KADISHA AS WELL AS THE TITLE “RAV TANNA HU” BESTOWED UPON HIM AT HIS BAR MITZVAH.

Not wanting to remain under his rule even for a moment, the Alter Rebbe escaped Liadi just before Napoleon’s forces entered the town. At points during their escape, they were often so close to the battlefield that they were able to count the number of French cannon. For a half a year, from the summer of תקע”ב into the winter of תקע”ג, the Alter Rebbe and his entire household continued moving south, deep into Ukraine.

On Rosh Hashanah morning, the Alter Rebbe called in the Mittlerer Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek. He said, “Today during davening I saw that there has been a change for the better and that we have won the war. Although the enemy will still take Moscow, he will have no respite.”²⁰

In the month of Teves, when the entourage camped in the non-Jewish village of Piena, news began to arrive of Napoleon’s defeat. His armies were routed and moving quickly out of the Russian heartland.

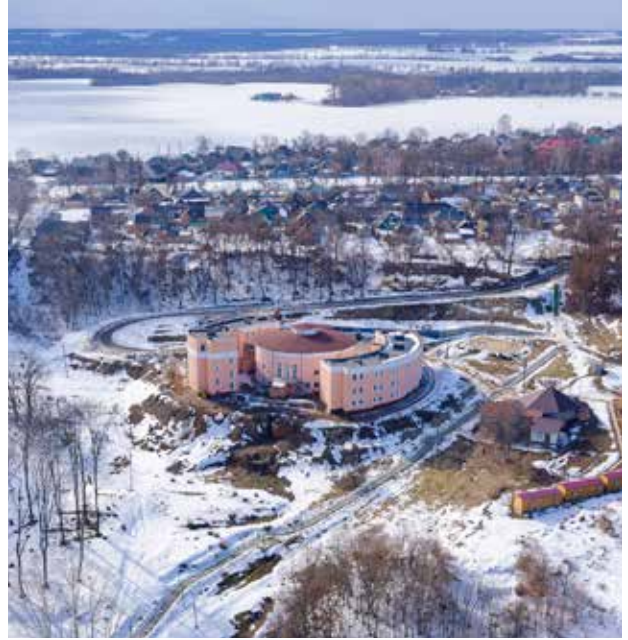
Immediately, the Alter Rebbe began making plans to alleviate the plight of the Yidden in White Russia, who had been devastated by the war. He sent out three groups: The Mittlerer Rebbe led one group to nearby Kremenchug to arrange suitable lodging for the family, Reb Chaim Avraham to Poltava and Cherson (also in Ukraine) to begin fundraising efforts, and Reb Pinchas Reizes to Vitebsk in White Russia to survey the destruction and begin planning the relief efforts.

However, the plans were not meant to be.

That year saw an exceptionally harsh winter, and the



THE ALTER REBBE'S TZIYUN IN HADITCH



THE LARGE COMPOUND BUILT SEVERAL YEARS AGO NEAR THE TZIYUN IN HADITCH.

Alter Rebbe soon fell ill from the strain of the journey. Over five days his condition steadily worsened.

On Motzei Shabbos Parshas Shemos, Chof Daled Teves, the Alter Rebbe “davened Maariv with havdalah in *Chonen Hada'as* with a clear and focused mind and with a wondrous *d'veikus*.²¹ Then, at ten thirty at night, the Alter Rebbe's *neshamah* was called back to its celestial abode.

No Jewish cemetery existed in the area, so the Alter Rebbe's holy body was transferred by sled, in a terrible snow-storm, to the town of Haditch where he was laid to rest.

The site immediately became a place of pilgrimage. A short time later, the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote, “we built a wooden roof and prepared many bricks to build an Ohel in his honor, as is

done on the *kevarim* of the Avos and great tzaddikim in Eretz Yisroel... Last Erev Rosh Hashanah, sixty people gathered there from Ramen and Kremenchug, and many candles were lit; a person is constantly at the site, and *panim* are sent from all the regions.”²²



“For some sixty years,” the Frierdiker Rebbe concludes his *reshimah* about the histalkus, “the Alter Rebbe built and perfected his public activism on four pillars—Ahavas Yisrael, Harbotzas Hatorah, Avodah with Mesirus Nefesh, and Gemilus Chasadim and Tzedakah—and bequeathed to his progeny, the Nesi'ei Chabad, a broad and well-trodden path in *askanus haklal*.” **T**

1. Ashreinu Audio, Purim 5743, Sicha 2 minute 2:54. The Rebbe noted that although he didn't hear the story from the Frierdiker Rebbe, it seems true since its content is tenable and it was widely retold by Chassidim (albeit in different versions).
2. Approximately modern day Belarus and Lithuania. Other areas where Chassidus was active was *Maleh Rusia* (Ukraine) and Vohlin and Galicia (i.e. Poland).
3. Igros Kodesh pg. 346.
4. Sefer Hatoldos v. 2 pg. 357.
5. Igros Kodesh pg. 291.
6. 19 Kislev 5744, and many other occasions.
7. 10 Kislev 5713, and many other occasions.
8. See Sefer Hatoldos v. 2 pg. 307
9. Sefer Hatoldos v. 2 pg. 343
10. Sefer Hatoldos v. 2 p. 359. Many of these takkanos originated in the time of the Maggid. See “The Maggid of Mezeritch,” *Derher Kislev* 5778.

11. Sefer Hatoldos v. 2 p. 488
12. See “The Arrest and Liberation,” *Derher Kislev* 5780.
13. A nickname for Chassidim which evolved from the Chassidic center of Karlin, home to two students of the Maggid, Reb Aharon and Reb Shlomo.
14. Yud Tes Kislev 5715.
15. This entire section is based on the account of Sefer Hatoldos.
16. Hayom Yom 24 Av.
17. Shnei Hameoros pg. 60.
18. Igeres Hakodesh siman 25.
19. Toras Shalom pg. 47.
20. See “A Battle of Good vs. Evil,” *Derher Teves* 5779.
21. From the Hakdama to Shulchan Aruch.
22. See “Hamasah Ha'acharon.”

LUMINARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

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

Transforming Churban

Yirmiyahu

Yirmiyahu ben Chilkiyahu was one of the nation's leading Nevi'im (along with Chuldah) during the time of *Churban Bayis Rishon*, and tried with all his strength to avert disaster by imploring B'nei Yisroel and their kings to change their ways.

His personal life story, found in Sefer Yirmiyahu, is more detailed and pronounced than any of the other Nevi'im, giving us insight into his personality in an unparalleled way.

Additionally, Yirmiyahu was one of the most prolific Nevi'im, authoring Sefer Melochim and Megilas Eicha, in addition to his own *nevuos* that make up Sefer Yirmiyah.

Yirmiyahu first experienced *nevuah* as a young man. The Novi describes Hashem reaching out to him and choosing him as Novi for a dark and difficult task. The Novi further relates the back-and-forth dialogue between Yirmiyahu and Hashem before he finally accepted.

Yirmiyahu is referred to as the Novi of the Churban – charged with sharing the harsh and gloomy *nevuos* relating to it. This bitter task is alluded to in his name that contains the word '*mar*'—bitterness.

As the bearer of dreadful and frightening *nevuos*, Yirmiyahu was not very popular in his lifetime. He suffered from many enemies both on the street and in royal circles. Over the course of his life he was assaulted, imprisoned, and nearly killed. He also needed to stand up to false prophets who were singing other tunes and promising better times, actively

trying to disprove Yirmiyahu's *nevuos*.

His words often fell on deaf ears. Even when the king was ready to accept Yirmiyahu's advice, it was too late. The Jewish-Egyptian revolt had already begun and Nevuchadnetzar's armies proceeded to invade Yerushalayim, attacking its people and destroying the Holy Beis Hamikdosh.

Nevuchadnetzar allowed Yirmiyahu to live and he was granted permission to remain in Eretz Yisroel, but following the murder of Gedaliah ben Achikam, the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel once again did not listen to Yirmiyahu and forcefully took Yirmiyahu with them to Mitzrayim.

In Mitzrayim, Yirmiyahu said his final *nevuos*, and seems to have been taken to Bavel after the Babylonians conquered Mitzrayim.

Yirmiyahu and the Shechina

The Midrash says that when the Yidden were going into *galus Bavel*, Hashem told Yirmiyahu that if he stayed in Eretz Yehuda, Hashem would join the Yidden in Bavel, and if Yirmiyahu went to Bavel then Hashem would remain in Eretz Yehuda.

The Rebbe explains that we know that wherever the Yidden end up in *galus*, "*Shechina imahen*" [Hashem's presence is with them]. When Hashem told Yirmiyahu that he could join the Yidden in *galus* "instead" of the Shechina, it meant that Yirmiyahu was one with the Shechina!

The concept of the Shechina is the connection between Hashem and Yidden – and this is what Yirmiyahu was all about.¹

Yirmiyahu and Yeshayahu

Yirmiyahu and Yeshayahu – two of our greatest Nevi'im, both spoke a great deal about *galus* and *geulah*. Regarding Yeshayahu's *nevuos*, however, the emphasis is on *geulah*, while in Yirmiyahu's, the opposite is true, and the imminent *galus* is highlighted. The Gemara goes so far as to say that Yirmiyahu is *kuleih churbana* (all about destruction) and Yeshayahu is *kula nechamasa* (entirely *nechama* – comfort).

The Zohar states that these opposing styles and *nevuos* are congruent with their names. Yeshayahu – has the word *yeshuah* – salvation in his name, and Yirmiyahu's name includes the more ominous word – *mar* – bitter. The Midrash goes

further:

The Midrash asks "Why is he called Yirmiyahu? Because in his days Yerushalayim was turned into *airmiah'* [ruins]. "

The Frieddiker Rebbe explains the reason for the different types of *nevuah* as being based on their different time periods. Yirmiyah was the *novi* in a time of "*dechiya vehester*" [distance and concealment], and Yeshayahu was in the time of "*giluyim*" [revelation]. Thus, Yeshayahu aroused the Jews through talking the language of *giluyim* – *geulah*, and Yirmiyahu spoke the language of concealment, warning and cautioning of *galus*.²

Yirmiyahu – Working with the Matah

Yirmiyahu was not only charged with sharing the *nevuos* that he was given with the hard-of-hearing generation. His main objective was to improve the Jewish people's behaviors – to have them return to Hashem's ways with *teshuvah*.

Different generations have different routes to *teshuvah*. Yirmiyahu's was through *mussar*. The Gemara puts it plainly: "*Yirmiyahu misnabei b'shvokim*" – he prophesized in the marketplace. Yirmiyahu spoke on the streets, to the streets.

Yirmiyahu's emphasis on *galus* and concealment is, as



THE PIT NEAR SHAAR SHECHEM IN YERUSHALAYIM, WHERE YIRMIYAHU HANOVI WAS IMPRISONED. IT IS ALSO BELIEVED TO BE HIS TZIYON. PHOTO FROM 5640

mentioned, directly connected with his audience and his time.

These *nevuos* are also connected with Yirmiyahu as a person, based on his lineage and his relationship with many in the Jewish community.

While leaders such as Yeshayahu and Moshe Rabbeinu uplifted their generation *m'lma'alah l'matah*, through immense revelation and positive influence, others, like Yirmiyahu,³ worked on *teshuvah* that comes from below, from the low and dark “*matah*.”

Moshe brings Torah down from above on Har Sinai and Yeshayahu speaks of the lofty and glorious *geulah*. But Yirmiyahu worked with a generation steeped in sin. To change them, he needed to come from their low and worldly perspective – bringing them to teshuva by inducing them to notice and take responsibility for their actions.

Yirmiyahu took Yidden on a deep, albeit painful, journey to *teshuvah*. He wasn't fortunate enough to be able to speak comforting and uplifting *nevuos*, rather, he showed his generation the severity of their actions and the cleansing of *galus*. He too, however, promised *geulah* at the end.

The Rebbe explains that there is an advantage to the type of *teshuvah* and uplifting done by Yirmiyahu and those in his style over that of Moshe and Yeshayahu:

When inspiration comes from above, from a spiritual illumination, it fixes the problem but doesn't transform the *matah* itself. Only when the change comes from the people themselves, when they – through their own understanding, in their “language” realize the error in their ways and return does the very lowest place become elevated to *kedushah*.⁴

Yirmiyahu Ben Chilkiyahu Min Hakohanim

Sefer Yirmiyah opens with a description of Yirmiyahu's lineage: a family of Kohanim from the city of Anasos.

The Midrash explains that the reason Yirmiyahu's lineage needs to be outlined is because he descended from Rachav Hazonah—a non-Jewish family, and therefore people were dismissive of him and disrespected him. This is why the Torah clearly emphasizes his descent from a famed family of Kohanim.

The Rebbe explains that the reason Yirmiyahu worked with the *matah* was because this relationship with, and triumph over *matah* were experiences that he personally went

through.

He was descended from a prominent non-Jewish family, and had his own journey to overcome his personal *matah*.

Additionally, he suffered the disregard and disrespect of his brethren. Nevertheless he reached out to those very people and worked to bring them to *teshuvah*. A *giluy* can't impact something that resists it, the best it can do is break it. Working from the bottom up, however, Yirmiyahu was able to transform his people and all the generations of *galus* since.

The *avodah* of *galus* – working with the world around them, not letting difficulties and tribulations break one down, but rather making a positive impact on oneself and consequently on one's surroundings, this is the heart of Yirmiyahu's *nevuos* – the deeper meaning of “*Kuleih Churbana*”.

On the topic of Yirmiyahu bringing the Jewish people to *teshuvah*, the Rebbe quotes the Gemara in Megillah that tells us of Yirmiyahu bringing the *Aseres Hashevotim* back to Eretz Yisroel and to the Jewish people.

The Rebbe explains that historically, people who tried to explain Judaism as meaning something different than what it really means eventually returned to the fold. One example was Yerovom Ben Nevot leading the 10 northern Shevatim astray (which led to their exile) and Yirmiyahu bringing them back.⁵

Yirmiyahu – The Novi that went into Galus

After the *churban*, Yirmiyahu was left in Yerushalayim. The Midrash tells us that Yirmiyahu was not in Yerushalayim during the *churban* itself. Hashem had him leave so that he wouldn't intervene. In any case, being that Yirmiyahu was outspoken against the revolt, the Babylonians decided that he could stay in Yerushalayim.

Yirmiyahu's troubles were far from over, however. After Gedalia ben Achikam—who was leader of the surviving community in Eretz Yisroel—was killed, Yirmiyahu was forcibly taken with the rest of the community to Mitzrayim.

[In Mitzrayim, Yirmiyahu met with the teacher of Aristo (presumably Plato) and taught him the wisdom of Torah and Yiddishkeit.⁶ Much of this wisdom would have been imparted to his student Aristo, and served as the basis to much philosophy and science].

Yet, Mitzrayim would also not be the final stop for Yirmiyahu, Rashi says that eventually he joined the main community in Bavel.

Yirmiyahu was finally reunited with his people—while he had rebuked and reprimanded them, he loved them dearly. The Rebbe explains that as the *Roeh Ne'eman* of his generation he needed to join his people in *galus*.⁷

On a more positive note, due to Yirmiyahu's joining the Yidden in Galus – he was able to see the truth of how they were in *galus*, that even while suffering and under the

“control” of the nations, their soul, the deep and most essential part of the Yid is constantly one with the *Aibershter*.

Yirmiyahu, as *novi* of the *churban*, did not only see the Yidden at their best and most shining moments. He lived with them at their darkest point and saw the intrinsic spiritual and G-dly beauty that they possess.⁸

IN HIS TORAH

In the beginning of Sefer Yirmiyahu, the *novi* describes how Hashem appointed him *novi*, and his reluctance to accept this difficult and important mission.

Yirmiyahu tells Hashem that he is young and cannot express himself well, to which Hashem responds and reassures him that he will be going as Hashem's Shliach and Hashem will be there to support him.

In line with explaining the *avodah* of Yirmiyahu as transforming and uplifting the *Matah* through a *Matah*-centered perspective, the Rebbe explains this dialogue between Hashem and his hesitant servant takes place in our lives and *avodah* as well:

בְּטָרַם אֶצְרָךְ בְּבֶטֶן יְדַעְתִּיךָ וּבְטָרַם תִּצָּא מֵרַחֵם הַקֹּדֶשׁ תִּתִּיךָ נְבִיא לְגוֹיִם נְתַתִּיךָ:

(ירמיהו א ה)

“When I had not yet formed you in the womb, I knew you, and when you had not yet emerged from the womb, I had appointed you; a *Novi* to the nations I made you.”

The *neshama* is taken from its holy and divine source and cast down into the lower worlds of *Briah*, *Yetzirah*, and finally *Asiyah*. Here it is tasked with working with the “*goy*” – the *Nefesh habahamis*, and transforming it. The *neshama*, which comes from an entirely different background, is understandably apprehensive.

To calm the *neshama*'s fears and empower the Yid to take on the challenge, Hashem says:

“*Beterem etzarcha vabeten - yedaticha*” – [Even before you were formed in the womb, I knew you]. Meaning to say, “Your source is far beyond the realm of creation and formation – your *Neshama* is a *Chelek Elokaḥ Mima'al Mamash!*”

Hashem continues “*Beterem teitzie meirechem – hikdashticha*” [Before you emerged from the womb, I sanctified you]. Meaning that in addition to the *neshama*'s lofty source, it is prepared and conditioned through the study of the whole Torah to be ready and equipped to take on the mission.

וַאֲמַר אָהָה אֲד-נִי יְדוּד הִנֵּה לֹא-יֵדְעֵתִי דְבַר כִּי-נַעַר אָנֹכִי: (ירמיהו א' 1)

“And I said, “Alas, O L-rd G-d! Behold, I know not to speak for I am a youth”

To this, the *neshama* responds, “On the inside I may be holy and one with you, but on the outside, “*Lo yodati dabeir ki naar anochi*” [I do not know how to speak, for I am a youth] – i.e. “to be spiritual on my own, I know I have the power to do, but to share with the world around me, to transform my *Matah*, to be a “*novi lagoyim*” – for this, I am not the right fit.”

וַיֹּאמֶר יְדוּד אֵלַי אֶל-תֹּאמַר נַעַר אָנֹכִי כִי עַל-כֹּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁלַחְךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְאֵת כָּל-
אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה תִּדְבֹּר: אֶל-תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי-אֶתְּךָ אֲנִי לְהַצִּילָךְ נְאֻם-יְדוּד: (ירמיהו א' 1-2)

“And the L-rd said to me; Say not, “I am a youth,” for wherever I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Fear them not, for I am with you to save you, says the L-rd”

To this Hashem responds: “*Al tomar naar anochi... Al tira mipneihem ki itcha Ani lehatzilcha*” [Do not say I am just a youth... Do not fear them because I am with you to save you!] – not only is the *neshama* a *Chelek Elokah Mima'al*, and not only did Hashem prepare the *neshama* before it entered this world, even here, in this world, while struggling and baffled by the “*goyim*” on the inside and out – “*Itcha Ani*” “I am with you!”

רְאֵה הַפְּקֻדֹתֶיךָ | הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל-הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל-הַמַּמְלָכוֹת לְנִתּוֹשׁ וְלְנִתּוֹץ וְלְהֶאֱבִיד
וְלְהָרוֹס לְבָנוֹת וְלְנִטּוֹעַ: (ירמיהו א' 1)

“Behold, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to uproot and to crush, and to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.”

Hashem told Yirmiyahu and tells each and every Yid “*Ki al kol asher eshlachacha teleich*” [wherever I send you, you will go] – Hashem is giving the power to take on every challenge against every *goy* and each *mamlacha*, both “*Linsosh velinsotz*” [to uproot and crush] and “*Livnos Velintoa*” [to build and plant] – having an impact both through positive and preventative strategies.

The Rebbe concludes that the first *geulah* that came through Moshe is not the ultimate redemption because it didn't fully transform the “*tachton*” [lowest realm]. Yirmiyahu's path brings the ultimate transformative *Geulah*, may it come *teikef umiyad Mamosh*.⁹

1. Sicha Parshas Pinchas 5721.

2. Sicha Yud Gimmel Tammuz 5703.

3. And Pinchas.

4. Likkutei Sichos Chelek Yud Ches, Pinchas 3.

5. Sicha Yud Gimmel Tammuz 5729. Megillah 14b.

6. Sicha Shabbos Chanukah 5726.

7. Maamar Va'eira 5726.

8. Simchas Beis Hashoeva 5717.

9. Yirmiyahu's path is shared by Pinchas, and Pinchas Zeh Eliyahu – the herald of Geulah.

מבית הגזרים
TREASURES
FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

לזכות
הת' שלום דובער שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
כ"ט כסלו גר חמישי דחנוכה ה'תשפ"ד

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק וזוגתו מרת
מרים יוכבד ומשפחתם שיחי'
גאלדשטיין

THE MENORAH OF CHASSIDUS

In honor of Hei Teves—a day that highlights the unbroken chain of our Rabbeim from generation to generation—we present a fascinating sketch handwritten by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Shortly after the *histalkus* of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, the Frierdiker Rebbe attests to having spent much time secluded alone in his room, in shock and unable to fully process the devastating loss. He spent a lot of this time writing, including a detailed index of all his father's *maamarim* and more.

One of the manuscripts that he wrote was this sketch of “The Menorah of Chassidus,” detailing the seven generations of *nesi'im* from the Baal Shem Tov through the Rebbe Rashab.

Each of the menorah's seven branches represents one of the Rabbeim, stating their name, the years of their *nesius*, and sometimes also their resting place.

The Frierdiker Rebbe begins with an introduction:

בחסדי אל עליון

על לב ישראל יאירו שבעת הנרות

והיתה לבבם, ביתם, ונחלתם שלום את ד' תמיד כל הימים

By the grace of the exalted G-d.

Upon the heart of Israel these seven lamps cast their light.

May their hearts, families, and legacies be at peace with Hashem, constantly, for all days.

Between the branches, he writes:

מנורת החסידות

ח"י אלול תפ"ד. ב' ניסן תר"פ

The menorah of Chassidus.

Eighteenth of Elul 5484 [the date that Achiya Hashiloni first appeared to the Baal Shem Tov, setting the ground ready for the revelation of Chassidus to the world] — Second of Nissan, 5680 [the date of the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*].

On the middle branch:

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

ר' שיון (Sixth of Sivan, the Baal Shem Tov's yahrtzeit.)
 ר' אדמו"ר הבעש"ט תצ"ד תק"ך (The Rebbe, the Baal Shem
 Tov, 5494-5520.)

On the next branch:

ר' טסלו (Nineteenth of Kislev, the Maggid's yahrtzeit.)
 ר' אדמו"ר המגיד תקכ"א תקל"ג (The Rebbe, the Maggid,
 5521-5533.)

On the other side of the branch:

ר' כד טבת (Twenty-fourth of Teves, the Alter Rebbe's
 yahrtzeit.)

ר' אדמו"ר רבינו הגדול תקל"ז—ע"ג (The [Alter] Rebbe, our
 great Rebbe, 5537-73.)

On the next branch:

ר' טסלו (Ninth of Kislev, the Mittlerer Rebbe's yahrtzeit.)
 ר' אדמו"ר האמצעי תקע"ג—פ"ח. מ"כ נייעזין (The Mittlerer
 Rebbe, 5573-88. His honored resting place is in Niezhnin.)

On the other side of the branch:

ר' יג ניסן (Thirteenth of Nissan, the Tzemach Tzedek's
 yahrtzeit.)

ר' חתנו אדמו"ר הרב צמח-צדק תקפ"ט—תרכ"ו ליובאוויטש (His
 son-in-law, the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek, 5589-5626. [His
 resting place is in] Lubavitch.)

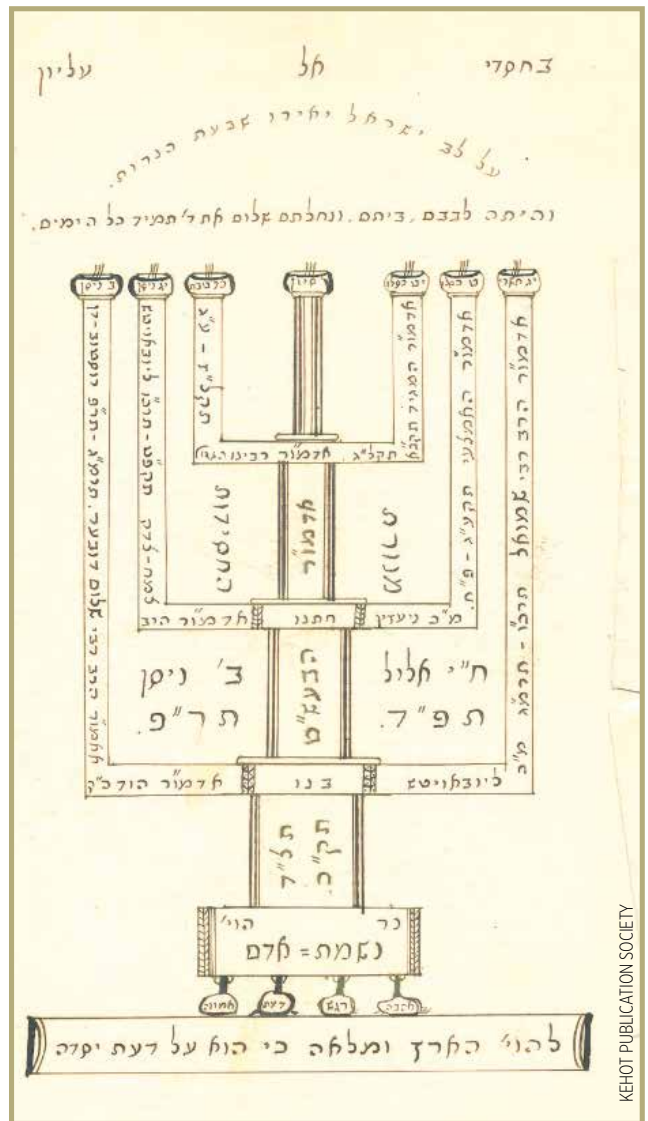
On the next branch:

ר' יג תשרי (Thirteenth of Tishrei, the Rebbe Maharash's
 yahrtzeit.)

ר' אדמו"ר הרב רבי שמואל תרכ"ו—תרמ"ג. מ"כ ליובאוויטש (The
 Rebbe Reb Shmuel, 5626-5643. His honored resting place is
 in Lubavitch.)

On the other side of the branch:

ר' ב' ניסן (Second of Nissan, the Rebbe Rashab's yahrtzeit.)
 ר' אדמו"ר הוד כ"ק אאמו"ר הרב רבי שלום דובער. תרמ"ג—תר"פ



ר' שולום דובר (His son, the Rebbe my esteemed father, Reb Sholom
 Dovber, 5643-5680. [His resting place is in] Rostov-on
 the River Don.)

At the base of the menorah, he writes:

נר הוי' נשמת-אדם
 אהבה, רגש, דעת, אמונה.
 להוי' הארץ ומלאה כי הוא על דעת יסדה.

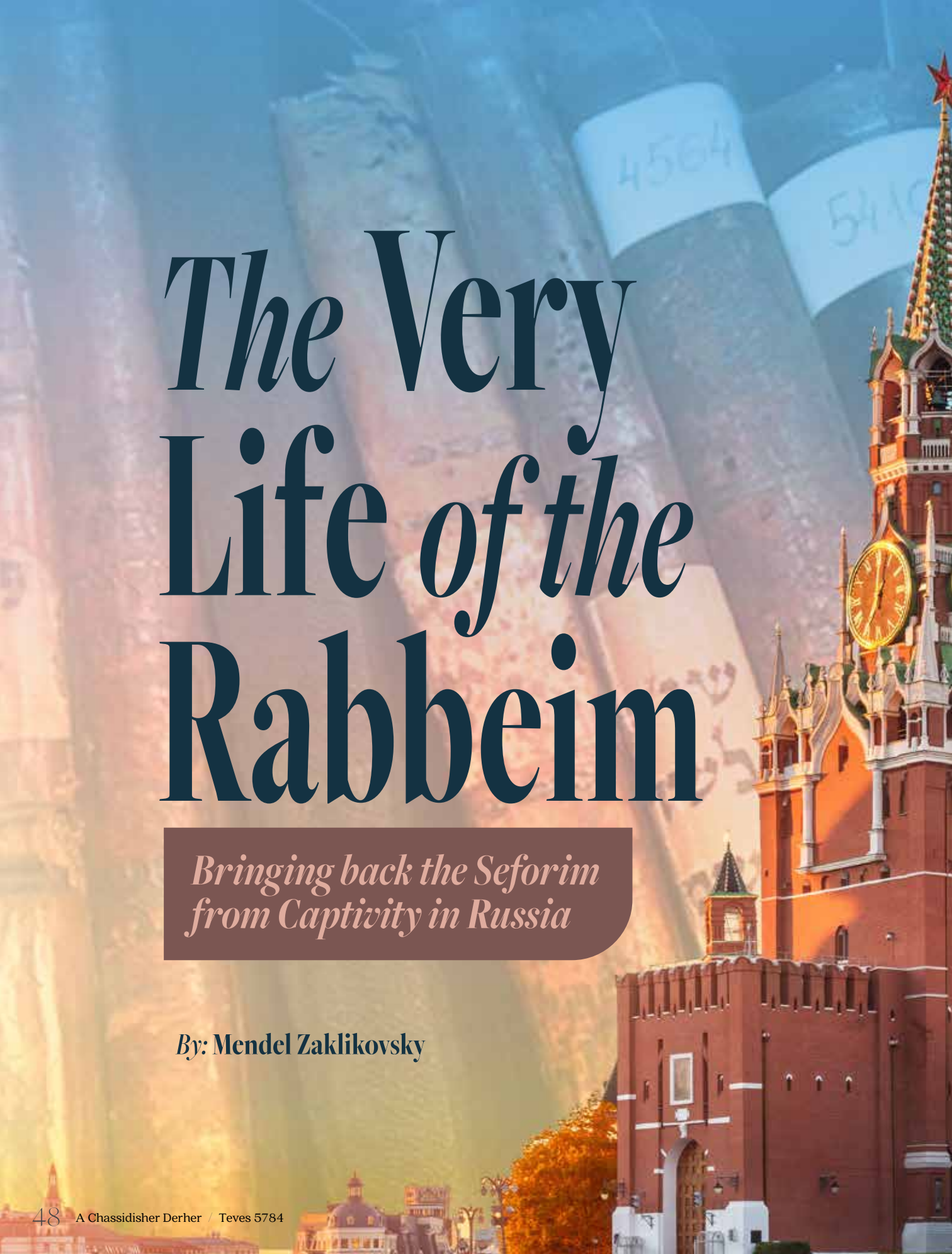
The lamp of Hashem is the soul of man.

This quote stands upon four boxes, containing:

Love, feeling, knowledge, faith.

To Hashem belongs the earth and all that fills it. For He
 established it upon knowledge.

(Mibeis Hagnazim, p. 40, article 13)



The Very Life of the Rabbeim

*Bringing back the Seforim
from Captivity in Russia*

By: Mendel Zaklikovsky

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

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

The story of the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad is a long and intricate saga. Its many volumes painstakingly collected by the Rabbeim over the generations, together with the many priceless *kesovim*, make it the “crown jewel” of Chabad-Lubavitch.

The Rebbe declared that every artifact belonging to the library is invested with a spiritual part of the Rabbeim, possessing immense *kedusha* and infinite value. Indeed, the struggle of our Rabbeim to maintain and expand the library demonstrates its significance to them. What is a better example than the story of Hei Teves which so clearly illustrates the Rebbe’s *mesiras nefesh* for the library?

As the library traveled across borders and oceans, even surviving two world wars, a large part of the library was lost and fell into foreign hands. Even today, thousands of *seforim* and *kesovim*, known as the “Schneerson Collection,” are held illegitimately in Russian government libraries.

In honor of Hei Teves, the day that the federal court ruled that the Rebbe’s library is the inheritance of every Chossid, we present the full story of the effort to retrieve the stranded *seforim*, an effort initiated by the Rebbe himself.

It is our hope that this will serve as an inspiration to our readers, and lead to concrete action (as will be addressed in the article).

In researching this story, we were greatly assisted by Rabbi Shlomo Cunin and his family, who graciously shared valuable information from their archives.¹ We also made significant use of Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin’s diary of the *shlichus*, published in “*Yoman Hashlichus Hameyuchedes*.”

Sacred Treasures

At the center of the Chabad-Lubavitch court stands the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, containing priceless manuscripts, the *kisvei yad kodesh* of our Rabbeim. In addition, the library boasts hundreds of thousands of *seforim*, collected by the Rabbeim over the generations.

The library's history begins with the Tzemach Tzedek, who started collecting and cataloging *kesovim* during the Alter Rebbe's lifetime. The Tzemach Tzedek also started the collection of *seforim*.

The town of Lubavitch was composed of wooden buildings and structures, making the city easy prey for wild and destructive fires. Around the year 5617 a fire broke out in Lubavitch. At the time, many of the Tzemach Tzedek's manuscripts were not in his home, since Chassidim would borrow them to study from or copy. This did not help the situation though, because the fire spread throughout the town, and most of the *kesovim* did not survive.

The fire took a heavy toll on the new library. In addition to the invaluable works of *nigleh* penned by the Tzemach Tzedek that were destroyed, the entire collection of *seforim* was burned. The Tzemach Tzedek was left with barely a single *sefer*. Thankfully though, a substantial amount of *kesovim* did survive. These, along with *seforim* the Tzemach Tzedek bought in the years following the fire, made up the Chabad library at the time of his *histalkus*.

The Rebbe Maharash continued the library's growth, in addition to maintaining the existing collection. He affixed stickers to the volumes of *kisvei yad*, describing the volume's

contents. Many of these stickers remain today, and have helped the library staff identify the year, date, and author of each manuscript.

The library continued to grow under the Rebbe Rashab, who, in addition to caring for and safeguarding the existing *kesovim*, also acquired an array of many old and rare manuscripts.

Over the years of his *nesius*, the Rebbe Rashab purchased a huge amount of *seforim*. His library eventually numbered 5,400 sets of books, totaling 12,500 volumes.

While the Rebbe Rashab was expanding the Lubavitch library, his young son, the Frierdiker Rebbe was building a library of his own. After years of research and collecting, the Frierdiker Rebbe amassed a sizable collection which was later added to the central library.

The Saga Begins

In the mid 5670's, the dark clouds of war loomed over White Russia, as the German army prepared to attack in what would become the First World War. Reports began flooding in of German atrocities toward Jewish communities.

In Tishrei 5676, with the situation becoming more dire, the Rebbe Rashab made the decision to move from Lubavitch to Rostov, leaving behind what had been the epicenter of Chassidus Chabad for over a century.

His 12,500 *seforim*, along with the Frierdiker Rebbe's sizable collection, were packed in crates and sent for safekeeping to a fireproof warehouse in Moscow.

The plan was to retrieve the *seforim* from the warehouse when the war ended. But with the war's end, the Bolshevik revolution plunged Russia into chaos. There was widespread hunger and anarchy, and the precious library was confiscated by the Communists, becoming part of Moscow's Lenin Library.

But the effort to bring back the *seforim* was never abandoned.

In 5686, members of "Agudas Hatmimim" in the United States, wrote to the Frierdiker Rebbe asking how they could help rescue the library from the Russian government.

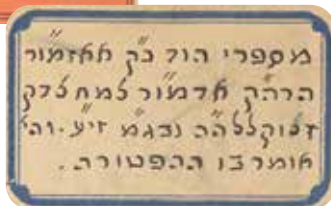
The Frierdiker Rebbe responded with a detailed plan of action. It entailed lobbying Congress and having many Jewish academics write to the Russian government that as the library was essential for research, the government must make it available to the Frierdiker Rebbe.²

He also instructed them to influence Dr. Rosen (referred to by his codename "Shushan"), the Joint Distribution Committee's representative in Russia, to help in the rescue efforts. In the end though, the library remained in the Lenin Library in Moscow.

In 5692, the Frierdiker Rebbe enlisted the Rebbe's help in



A STICKER WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ONE OF THE SEFORIM OF THE RABBEIM, WRITTEN BY THE FRIERDIKER REBBE IN HIS YOUTH, AND A LABEL PLACED IN EACH OF THE SEFORIM THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AMASSED FOR THE LIBRARY BEFORE HIS NESIUS.





THE RUSSIAN STATE LIBRARY DURING SOVIET TIMES.

rescuing the library, writing: “I have a request to make of you. You are aware that my *seforim*, the Lubavitch library, are still in Moscow, and, as I told you a few times, on account of my activities on behalf of Russian Jews, I did not want to use my connections to ask for favors regarding the *seforim*.

“However, the matter pains me greatly, and I am confident that with Hashem’s help we can work to resolve it.”

The Frieddiker Rebbe then went on to list a number of people who can be called upon to help, and discusses the pros and cons of approaching each person. Finally settling on the right one to ask, he finishes: “It would be a good idea if you can visit him a few times, and tell him that I am in much pain on account of the *seforim*.”³

The letter ends with more details of what to discuss with this individual, including the fact that the *seforim*’s captivity in the Russian library is a terrible *chilul Hashem*, and that rescuing them would bring the greatest *nachas* to the *neshamos* of all the Rabbeim.

BRINGING THE SEFORIM TO A CHABAD LIBRARY IN RUSSIA

In Sivan 5751, Dr. Irina-Kogan wrote to the Rebbe with the idea to establish a Chabad library in Moscow. Her reasoning was simple. It would be easier to persuade the Russian government to return the *seforim* to a local library than to convince them to release the *seforim* for return to New York.

The Rebbe responded:

[...] ות"ח ת"ח עוה"פ על פעילות שלה ע"ע, ומתוך שמחה בטח תלך מחיל אל חיל, אבל פתיחת ביבלייתקה חדשה דחב"ד עתה ברוסיא – יכולה לעורר טענה אצל המנגדים שהוצאת ספרי חב"ד מרוסיא עתה – הרי ההיפך מתאים יותר – לבסס התחלתה ע"י ספרי חב"ד הנמצאים ברוסיא – וידחו זה עד לאחר פירסום.

Many thanks again for your activities until now, and you will surely go from strength to strength with joy, but opening a new Chabad library in Russia now, could provoke a claim by the opponents that [instead of] bringing the Chabad books out of Russia now, the opposite approach makes more sense—to establish the founding [of this new library] with the Chabad books already in Russia—and postpone [dealing with] this until after it’s publicized.



FARBRENGEN, 19 KISLEV 5743

However, these efforts too did not bear fruit.

For many years, the fate of the library was unknown. There was fear that it was transferred to the Jewish library in Kiev, which was destroyed by the Nazis, or that it was scattered all over Russia.

“Things in Russia are Changing...”

In honor of Purim 5741, Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin, chief librarian, submitted to the Rebbe a catalog of the library when it was still in Lubavitch, shortly before the outbreak of World War I. He simultaneously turned to the *mazkir* Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, who had, in the previous year, overseen the

successful return of *kesovim* being held in Poland,⁴ to determine the status and whereabouts of the library.

At the time, no information was known. Did the library still exist? If it did, where was it being held? Was it in a single location? And most importantly, could its return be ensured?

There were many questions, but no answers. The research done in New York proved futile. The question of the missing library remained unanswered.

Until the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev 5743, that is. The cavernous shul at 770 was packed with Jews from all backgrounds who had come to participate in the Rebbe’s annual Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, among them Rabbi Shlomo Cunin, head *shliach* to the West Coast.

“During one of the sichos,” recalls Rabbi Cunin, “the Rebbe began addressing a situation where one may have

connections in places of influence. The Rebbe said: ‘Hashem wanted it so, that everything should be taken from its potential to actuality. And if he uses his connections for physical purposes, how much more so must he use these connections in matters connected to Yiddishkeit.’

“I looked around the room to see who the Rebbe may have been referring to, but I wasn’t able to spot anyone specific.

“In the morning, I received a phone call from Mr. Jerry Weintraub, a major supporter of Chabad and

chairman of the Chabad Telethon.

“‘Cunin!’ Mr. Weintraub tells me, ‘Tell the Rebbe that with regard to the issue he spoke about to me yesterday, I’m going to do whatever he wants!’

“After a short conversation with him, he revealed that he had been watching the farbrengen on live TV, when suddenly he heard the Rebbe conveying a message pointed directly at him. Now he wanted to tell me that he was ready to do whatever the Rebbe wanted from him. I told him that I would pass the message on to the Rebbe.

HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK’S FILES

In the summer of 5751, during the second *shlichus*, Rabbi Yitzchok Kogan visited Lenigrad. While there he was able to obtain the KGB files documenting the imprisonment of the Rebbe’s father, Harav Levi Yitzchok.

The file contained details of his arrest, a photograph of Harav Levi Yitzchok, and Rebbetzin Chana’s letters to the KGB chief Beriya *yemach shemoi*.

The *shluchim* made a raffle to choose who would have the *zechus* of bringing these precious files to the Rebbe and Rabbi Cunin’s name was drawn (Rabbi Aharonov joined the trip, as it was unsafe to travel out of Russia alone with these files).

“On 5 Elul 5751, we arrived at 770 and I told one of the *mazkirim* that I intended to give the file to the Rebbe,” recalls Rabbi Cunin. “After *Mincha*, we ran to *Gan Eden Hatachton* and waited by the Rebbe’s door for the Rebbe to arrive. When the Rebbe arrived, he opened the door and told us to come in.

“We went into the Rebbe’s room and I handed the Rebbe the files. The Rebbe looked through the file and I could see the pain in the Rebbe’s eyes when he looked at his father’s picture. I could feel the Rebbe’s aggravation as he read his mother’s letters to the police chief.

“After looking through the file, the Rebbe looked up at me and said: ‘שלמה, זאלסט וויסן אז’

יעדער רגע וואס די ספרים זיינען בשביל איז דאס א מצוה פון פדיון שבויים. איך דארף דיר קיין דרשות ניט זאגן, דו ביסט אליין א רב. (Shlome, you should know that every moment that the *seforim* are in captivity there is a mitzvah of *pidyon shvuyim*, I do not need to tell you any *droshos*, as you yourself are a *rav*).

“I took a deep breath and said: ‘אויב די רבי האט געוואלט ברענגען די ספרים, וואלט דער רבי שוין לאנג געהאט די ספרים.’ (If the Rebbe had wanted to bring back the *seforim*, the Rebbe would have long had the *seforim*).

“The Rebbe looked up at me very sternly and said: ‘וואס איז שלמה? דו ביסט מיר חושד?!’ (What is this Shlome? Do you suspect me?!)

“I replied: ‘וואס, וואס? מ’זאגט אז די רבי דער צמח צדק, וואס שמו איז מנחם, והוא ינחמנו, אז ער זיצט אין ליובאוויטש און פירט אן אין פעטערבורג. (They say that the Tzemach Tzedek, whose name is Menachem, and “He will comfort us”, sits in Lubavitch and controls the goings-on in Petersburg).

“I could see on the Rebbe’s face that he accepted what I had said.

“I then told the Rebbe that my son Mendel was getting married on Chai Elul and the Rebbe instructed me to go back to Russia since there was still time until the wedding. The Rebbe added that it is already possible to conclude the subject of the *seforim* and that Moshiach will be here by then!”

“The next day during Mincha, I noticed the Rebbe looking at me, nothing unusual at the time. After davening, Rabbi Groner came to me and said quietly, ‘take the elevator up to the third floor, and go down the wooden stairs. The Rebbe wants to see you.’

“When I got to *Gan Eden Hatachton*, the Rebbe was standing at his door with a broad smile. The Rebbe told me:

“זאכן אין רוסלאנד בייטן זיך. און ס'איז דאך דא אונזערע ספרים וואס אנדערע האלטן אז זיי האבן דאס פארברענט אבער איך האלט אז זיי זייגען בקיומם, און וויינטראוב האט א גוטן פריינט, ער הייסט ארמענד האמער, וואס ער האט ברייטע קשרים מיט די רוסישע און ער קען דאס דורכפירן.”

(Things in Russia are changing. Our *seforim* are there, and some believe that they were burnt, but I believe that they still exist. Weintraub has a good friend, named Armand Hammer. He has broad connections with the Russians and he can accomplish this.)

“The Rebbe handed me several dollar bills to give to Mr. Weintraub for a speedy recovery (he was suffering from a hiatal hernia at the time). Then I told the Rebbe that Mr. Weintraub had called me in the morning, saying that he is ready to do everything the Rebbe wanted of him. The Rebbe responded with a big smile.”

In the coming weeks, Rabbi Cunin met with Mr. Weintraub and Mr. Hammer about the release of the *seforim*. Mr. Hammer was convinced that getting them out of Russia would be a piece of cake. He was extremely well connected in the Russian government and agreed to use whatever leverage he had to insure the speedy return of the *seforim*.

But things were not destined to move so quickly. Requests made to the Russian government about the “Schneerson Collection” were met with denial of its very existence! Rabbi

Cunin sent to Mr. Hammer lists of *seforim* that were part of the missing collection to be submitted to the Russians, but to no avail.

This ongoing exchange persisted for five long years, until Mr. Hammer—himself becoming skeptical about the existence of the *seforim*—requested from the Russians that a delegation from Lubavitch be allowed to come to Russia to search for the *seforim* themselves. To the joy of the Chassidim, the Russian government agreed.

“As all this back and forth was taking place,” relates Rabbi Levin, “I decided to do a bit of my own research about the whereabouts of the *seforim*. Rabbi Yosef Friedman of Kehos was traveling to Moscow, and I gave him a list of *seforim* that would have been included in the “Schneerson Collection,” with instructions to check the catalog of the Lenin Library in Moscow to see if any of those *seforim* were being held there.

“Rabbi Friedman actually found twelve *seforim* from the list in the antique section of the library. I was now certain that the rest of the *seforim* were also there.”

Departure

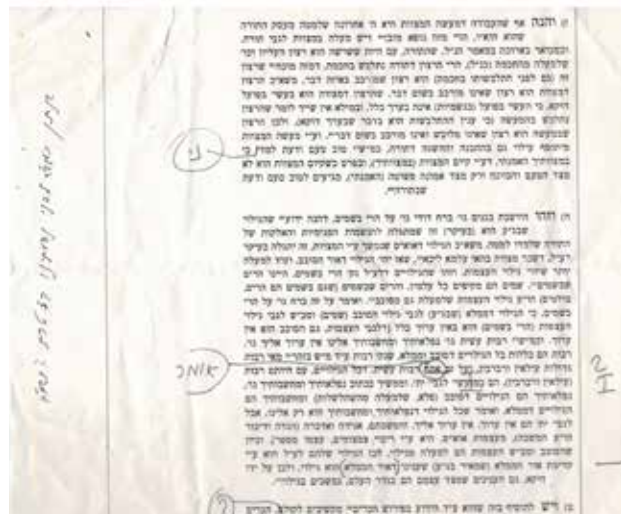
In early Kislev 5748, final approval was given for a group of Chassidim to travel to Moscow. The delegation would include Rabbi Shlomo Cunin, Rabbi Berel Levin and the *mazkir* Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel (who spoke fluent Russian).

The necessary paperwork was filled out, visas were obtained and the date for departure was set for Sunday, Chof Teves.

During the weeks leading up to the *shlichus*, Rabbi Levin wrote to the Rebbe extensively regarding the *shluchim's* itinerary and many technical and logistical questions pertaining



RABBIS SHLOMO CUNIN AND BEREL LEVIN, ALONG WITH DR. VERONIKA IRINA-KOGAN, MEET WITH THE REBBE ON 28 IYAR 5751



PART OF THE MAAMER GIVEN TO THE SHLUCHIM.

to the *shlichus*. The Rebbe made it clear that they should search every possible location where the *seforim* could potentially be, and also make an effort to locate any additional manuscripts belonging to Lubavitch being held in Russia.

The *shlichus* was kept under total secrecy by those who were going. Until the Shabbos farbrengen, that is, when the Rebbe spoke publicly about the *shlichus*.

“I didn’t even tell my wife where I was going!” remembers Rabbi Cunin, “Immediately after Shabbos I called her up in California to inform her about the *shlichus* and to fill her in on the details.”

During the farbrengen, the Rebbe underlined the importance of *pidyon shevu’yim* and emphasized that those who are going are “*shluchim*” in its broadest meaning, and that the *meshaleyach* would be traveling with them and bestowing *brachos* upon them.

After the *sicha* the Rebbe instructed those departing on the *shlichus* to say *l’chaim* on a full cup.

A Special Yechidus

On Sunday, Chof Teves, the day of the group’s planned departure, Rabbi Mindel was in his Long Island home packing when he got a phone call. Earlier that day, Rabbis Cunin and Levin had gone by the Rebbe for dollars and the Rebbe had requested to meet with the entire delegation before he went to the Ohel. Rabbi Mindel

TRUE BITACHON

On the eve of Beis Shevat 5751, Rabbi Groner gave the Rebbe a report on the progress of the *Shlichus*.

“מ’דארף בא זיי פועלן, זיי זאלן האבן בטחון” אמיתי, the Rebbe said. (We must influence them that they should have true *bitachon* that they will return with the *seforim*).

Rabbi Groner replied that it seems that they have *bitachon*.

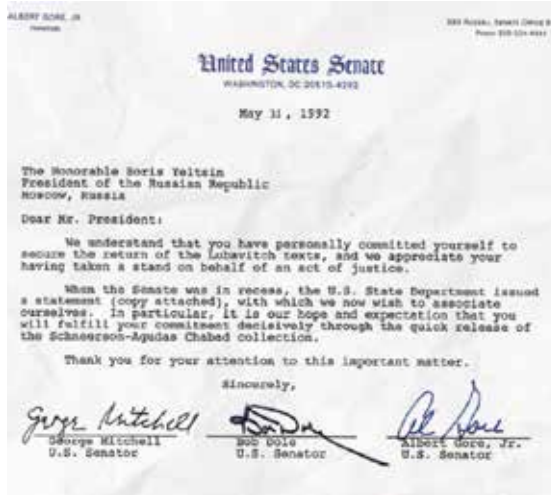
“*Bitachon amiti?*” the Rebbe asked.

“Yes!” replied Rabbi Groner.

The Rebbe smiled.



SOVIET LEADER MIKHAIL GORBACHEV (RIGHT) RECEIVING ARMAND HAMMER IN THE KREMLIN



LETTER SIGNED BY ALL 100 SENATORS TO RUSSIAN PRESIDENT, MR. BORIS YELTSIN.



RABBI SHLOMO CUNIN AND HIS SONS MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT MR. AL GORE IN THE MID 5750S

quickly headed out to 770, and shortly after the dollars distribution ended, the group went into *Gan Eden Hatachton* for a *yechidus*.

The Rebbe directed them to search any place where there was potential for finding the *seforim*, as long as it did not compromise their overall mission. The Rebbe also said that they should evaluate the conditions of each place, deciding whether to speak to the Yidden there, since it could potentially have a negative effect on the mission.

Rabbi Cunin asked if he could tell the locals there that the Rebbe had specifically instructed not to speak with them, in order to safeguard the mission, and the Rebbe agreed. He then gave them more money for *tzedakah*.

Later that day, the group received word that the Rebbe would return from the Ohel early in order to have a second *yechidus* with the group. After *Maariv*, the three *shluchim* headed to *Gan Eden Hatachton* and were in *yechidus* for fifteen minutes. The Rebbe gave them each a dollar for *tzedakah* in Russia, as well as a page of the galley proof of the *maamar* published in honor of Chof Teves that year, with handwritten edits.

The Rebbe explained that they were collectively receiving only one copy of the *maamar* and in order to learn it they would have to share with one another. Similarly, their *shlichus* was to be a joint effort and they would have to work together in order to succeed. The Rebbe also said: “היינט איז דאך דער יארצייט פון דעם רמב”ם, און די וואך כ”ד טבת, דער יארצייט פון אלטן רבלין, וועלן זיי ביידע ארבעטן צוזאמען מיט אייך (Today is the Yahrzeit of the Rambam, and the week of 24 Teves – the Yartzeit of the Alter Rebbe. They will both be working with you).

Rabbi Cunin worked up the courage and added: “און דער רבי צוזאמען מיט זיי – and the Rebbe together with them,” to which the Rebbe replied, “Amen.”

The Rebbe then escorted the *shluchim* to the steps of 770 as they left for Russia. The *shlichus* had begun.

In Russia

The group arrived in Moscow on Monday afternoon, 4:30 pm. After settling in their hotel, they went to scout out the buildings comprising the Russian National Library.

The next morning, they visited the Moscow offices of Mr. Hammer. He graciously offered the use of his office, with its phones, copy machines and typewriters, as the Moscow headquarters for the *shlichus*.

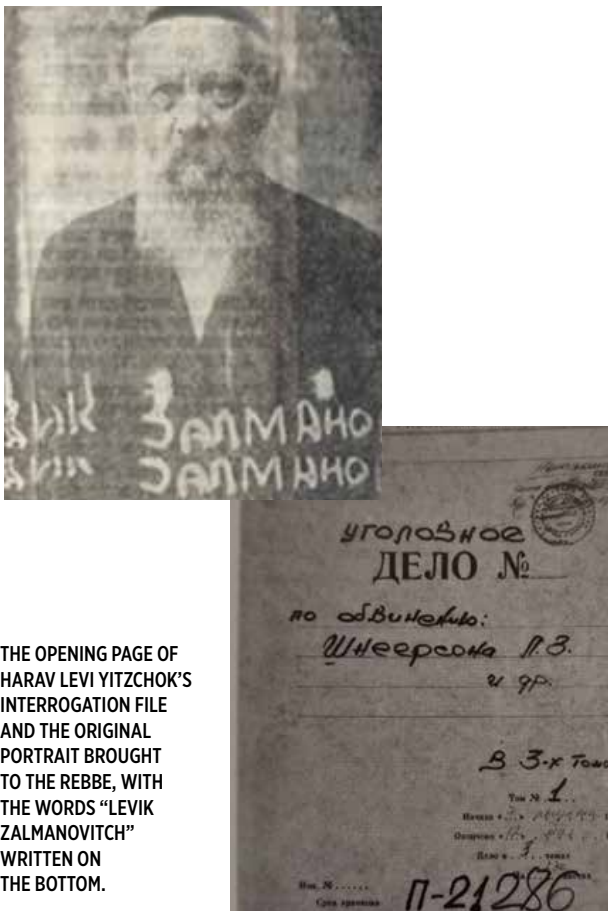
The next week was filled with visits to the library, meetings with librarians and ministers, as well as time in the local shuls and Jewish locations. A key clue was the list of twelve *seforim* that Rabbi Friedman had located some time earlier.

On Chof-Daled Teves, Rabbi Cunin visited the Russian Minister of Culture together with Mr. Hammer. He came back with exciting news: although the minister had denied the existence of the “Schneerson Collection,” he nevertheless agreed to do his utmost to try and locate the twelve *seforim* on the existing list.

The next day the delegation got a call from the office of the Minister of Culture that the twelve *seforim* had been located in the Lenin Library in Moscow. It was Friday morning, and Shabbos came in early during the Russian winter, so the delegation quickly headed over. At the library they wheeled out a cart with twelve books, Rabbi Cunin picked up one of the *seforim* (a copy of the *Avudraham*) and opened it. Inside was written: “זה הספר שייך לבנו של כ”ק אדמו”ר שליט”א” (“this sefer belongs to the son of the Rebbe *shlita*,”—the Rebbe Maharash, son of the Tzemach Tzedek).

The Librarian in charge of the Hebrew books explained that these twelve books were not in any “Schneerson Collection,” rather, they were contained in the “Poliakoff Collection,” a collection of approximately 7500 books.

The Poliakoff brothers were chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab and well-known philanthropists. However, it was clearly evident that these twelve *seforim* were part of the



THE OPENING PAGE OF HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK'S INTERROGATION FILE AND THE ORIGINAL PORTRAIT BROUGHT TO THE REBBE, WITH THE WORDS "LEVIK ZALMANOVITCH" WRITTEN ON THE BOTTOM.



VICE PRESIDENT GORE ON HIS FIRST VISIT TO RUSSIA AS VP, RECEIVES A TANYA TO BE GIVEN BACK TO THE REBBE. THE TANYA WAS ORIGINALLY GIFTED TO THE FRIEDIKER REBBE BY THE TALMIDIM OF TOMCHEI TMIMIM.

missing collection. Some of the *seforim* even had the Frierdiker Rebbe's handwritten notes on the margins. Apparently, the collection of *seforim* had been renamed the "Poliakoff Collection" in order to hide its true origins.

Nonetheless, the *shluchim* were overjoyed. They had found what they were looking for!

Leaving the library, they quickly went to the office to contact Mr. Hammer and arrange the *seforim's* return. They also called the *mazkirus* to inform the Rebbe of this development.

There are accounts which maintain that the Rebbeztzin called some of her acquaintances that day and excitedly told them that the Rebbe had reported to her that the *seforim* had been found.

That Shabbos in 770 the Rebbe was clearly very happy.

Back in Moscow, on the following Sunday, Dr. Hammer contacted the Minister of Culture in order to obtain the twelve *seforim*. A reply came shortly that such a thing could be authorized only by Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Meanwhile, the group went to various other libraries, looking at collections of *seforim* in various locations throughout the city. Slowly, the list of found *seforim* grew.

In the United States, the federal government was



To Leon, Lion of the Lubavitch Library
congratulations on returning to another
Happy Birthday — Bill Clinton

PRESIDENT CLINTON WITH UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE LEON FUERTH UPON THEIR RETURN TO THE USA FROM MOSCOW IN 5754. MR. FUERTH HOLDS SEVEN SEFORIM, BROUGHT ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE THAT WERE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO THE REBBE IN HIS ROOM.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WROTE AN INSCRIPTION ON THE PHOTO:
"TO LEON, LION OF THE LUBAVITCHER LIBRARY..."

putting pressure on Russia as well (with the help of Mr. Hammer). It seemed that the *shlichus* was heading to a successful conclusion.

The time came for the *shluchim* to return to New York. Rabbi Cunin had to attend to a major lawsuit regarding a legacy gift to Chabad in California, and the Russian authorities refused to extend the visas for the remaining *shluchim*.

Rabbi Cunin returned to California with a stopover in New York, where he was greeted by the Rebbe with a salute and davened a joyous Mincha. He then continued to California. Rabbi Levin landed that afternoon as well.

B'hashgocha protis, the date that they returned was Chof-Aleph Shevat 5748. Later that evening, the Rebbeztzin was *nistalek*.

Back to Moscow

Over the next three and a half years, many efforts were made to effect the return of the *seforim*, but they all proved futile. The Minister of Culture, who had helped in locating the *seforim*, was removed from his position, and his replacement refused to be helpful.

The sudden death of Mr. Hammer, a driving force behind the effort to bring back the *seforim* complicated things even more. Other connections proved fruitless and it seemed like another trip to Russia would be

inevitable.

In early Kislev 5751, an opportunity arose for another trip to Russia. Tzach in Eretz Yisroel had just launched a massive project to rescue children affected by the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Aharonov and his colleague, Rabbi Yitzchok Kogan, were at the helm of the operation, and had developed relationships with Russian officials.

One woman with whom they had come in contact was a Russian lawyer named Dr. Veronika Irina-Kogan. She graciously offered her services in assisting with the effort to free the *seforim* and bring them back to the library in New York.

After receiving the Rebbe's approval, the *shluchim* readied themselves for a second trip to Moscow, this time confident that they would return with the *seforim* in their hands.

The expanded delegation on the second *shlichus* included Rabbi Aharonov and Rabbi Kogan, in addition to Rabbi Cunin and Rabbi Levin, who had gone on the first *shlichus*.

They left New York for Moscow on Monday, Tes Kislev, 5751. Shortly before leaving they received the Rebbe's *bracha*: "לכל הנוסעים שליט"א ויהא בהצלחה רבה אזכיר עה"צ".

The delegation arrived in Moscow and immediately busied themselves with their mission: to obtain the necessary

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S TANYA

In 5752, Tennessee senator Al Gore was instrumental in applying immense pressure on the Russians to return the *seforim*. Later, he joined a ticket as Vice President with running mate, Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, and the two of them promised that if elected, they would do all they can to bring back the *seforim*.

Indeed through their efforts, on Hei Teves, 5754, Rabbi Cunin was given a Tanya that belonged to the Frierdiker Rebbe to bring back to New York and give to the Rebbe.

Rabbi Cunin was called to meet Vice President Gore in his hotel room. Mr. Gore presented Rabbi Cunin with the rare edition of the Tanya that he received from the Russians. "I know how the Russians work," the vice president said. "So to ensure that you make it through Russian Customs, I wrote a brief letter in the book, both in Russian and English, using my Vice Presidential power, authorizing you to take the Tanya to Rabbi Schneerson in Brooklyn."

It didn't end there. Rabbi Cunin says, "Mr. Gore sent us to the airport in his motorcade and had the Secret Service escort us all the way throughout the airport until we were safely in our seats on the "American" airplane to New York."

"When we landed, we headed for Crown Heights, straight into Gan Eden Hatachtoin, where the Rebbe was sitting at the entrance to his room," Rabbi Cunin recalls. "We presented the Rebbe with this great *matana*. You could see the smile and the *nachas ruach* the Rebbe had."

Undersecretary of State Leon Fuerth recalled:

"Although it was only one book that was returned, that did not stop Vice President Al Gore. At every meeting he had with the Russian government, he had a picture of the Rebbe placed in front of him to remind the Russians of what was important to him."



VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE AUTHORIZES THE RETURN OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S TANYA.

permissions and documents from government officials to retrieve the *seforim*.

Dr. Irina-Kogan introduced the group to influential Russians, and the expanded team spared no effort in arranging the necessary meetings and conferences with government officials.

It seemed at first that the Russian government was ready to return the *seforim*, and the *shluchim* had high hopes as they once again expected a quick ending to the saga. Unfortunately, every time that it seemed that final approval was about to be given, a new obstacle came up, blocking the path to success.

There was even a point when the President of Russia, Mr. Boris Yeltsin implied that he would be signing the final document, going so far as to demand that the *shluchim* bring the press to cover the ceremony. Yet, when the news agencies showed up on the appointed day, they weren't allowed in. An internal political issue caused Mr. Yeltsin to retract his decision, and to turn over the responsibility to Gorbachov, then President of the Soviet Union.

The case then proceeded to the Russian supreme court, where it was twice ruled that the *seforim* must be returned to Aguch. But the ruling was ultimately retracted.

Aguch of Russia

On Motzei Shabbos Yud Daled Kislev 5751, just a short while after the *shluchim* arrived in Russia, they received a surprise *hora'ah* from the Rebbe.

The Russian government was planning to give an official scroll of honor to Chabad-Lubavitch of Russia, and the plan was for Ezras Achim, an institution created to support and enable the existence of Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, to receive it. However, in this *hora'ah*, the Rebbe unexpectedly directed that it be given to a new institution - Agudas Chassidei Chabad of Russia.

The Rebbe wanted this new *mossad* to be established immediately, with the four *shluchim* serving as its administrative committee. Official stationery and a stamp should be obtained, a bank account should be opened under the name of the *mossad*, a building should be purchased for the institution—and all this should be done immediately.

The Rebbe took special interest in the creation of the new *mossad*, and within a short time, Aguch of Russia had obtained all that the Rebbe had requested.

The Rebbe stated that the administrating members of this *mossad*, along with Dr. Veronika, were to be the only authorized representatives dealing with the issue



VICE PRESIDENT GORE HANDS RABBI CUNIN THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S TANYA

of the *seforim*'s return.

On the Shabbos after the Rebbe's *hora'ah* to establish Aguch, the Rebbe spoke about the new *mossad* during the *farbrengen* and addressed the current situation of the *seforim*.

Heading to Washington

Years of hard work in Russia were going by without success. Every time the delegation was convinced that the saga was nearing its end, another setback seemed to land them right back at square one.

With no other choice, the *shluchim* sought to solve the matter in a Russian court. Despite their initial optimism, the verdict was rendered in favor of the Russian government.

Eventually the idea developed from a contact within the Russian government to engage the American government to demand from the Russians that they return the *seforim*. The Russian government desperately needed American aid; the US pressure could be applied very effectively.

Actually, this idea had precedent. Years earlier the Frierdiker Rebbe had written to several politicians with the request that they help bring back the missing library. It seemed now that this method would be most effective, especially considering that every other means

had been exhausted.

Rabbi Cunin relayed this information in a phone call to the Rebbe's Mazkirus. "With the Rebbe on the phone, I raised the idea of sending my sons to Washington, DC," Rabbi Cunin recalls.

The Rebbe approved the plan.

At the end of Adar 5751, the six Cunin brothers—who had been chosen to lead the mission to Washington, DC—passed by the Rebbe at dollars to receive the Rebbe's *bracha* before their departure to the Capitol. The Rebbe handed each of them a dollar, saying, "*Hatzlocha* in Washington."

With the Rebbe's *brachos*, they confidently set off on their *shlichus*. Their first initiative was to have every member of congress sign a letter to the Russian government demanding the return of the *seforim*. They were successful in this initial project, although it did little to sway the Russian government.

Every week they returned to New York and updated the Rebbe on what they had accomplished.

'Pidyon Shevuyim'

On the fifth anniversary of Hei Teves, in 5752, with the *shlichus* to Russia in full swing, the Rebbe spoke about the plight of the *seforim* and the significance of their ultimate

1. A portion of the story was published in "A Library Held Hostage," a magazine published by Aguch of Russia.
2. Igros Kodesh Admu"r Harayatz vol. 1 pg. 537.
3. Igros Kodesh Admu"r Harayatz vol. 15 pg. 117.
4. See *Rescuing the Library*, Derher Adar II 5774.
5. Interestingly, in the *sicha* the Rebbe mentioned that in addition to the *seforim*, there are also *kisvei yad* being held in captivity. At the time, no one had heard of *kisvei yad* being held in Russia libraries. Years

return.

"Today, there are still a group of *seforim* and accompanying *kisvei yad* which are waiting for their '*pidyon shvuyim*' [to be redeemed from captivity] and returned to their rightful owner, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe," the Rebbe said.

"And since one *mitzvah* brings another ('*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*'), so the '*pidyon shvuyim*' of Hei Teves leads to the *pidyon shevuyim* of these *seforim* as well."

The Rebbe went on to say that the completion of the 'redemption' of the *seforim* on Hei Teves would be when it caused the redemption of the *seforim* in Russian captivity, as well as all other *seforim* awaiting their redemption.⁵

The next Shabbos, Parshas Vayigash, the Rebbe again spoke about the *seforim* in Russia and discussed ways that everyone could join the effort to ensure their return (see sidebar).

Just how crucial the redemption of these *seforim* is can be understood from the Rebbe's words in the *sicha* of Hei Teves, that the return—*pidyon shevuyim*—of the *seforim* held in Russia brings about the ultimate *pidyon shevuyim*, when Hashem will redeem all the Yidden from *galus*, may it happen right away. **T**

later, thousands of volumes of *kisvei yad* were discovered in the Russian Military Library.

6. Shemos 5748.
7. Ibid.
8. Hei Teves 5752.
9. Vayigash 5752.

Join the effort to bring back the seforim!

When speaking about the *seforim* held in captivity, the Rebbe gave several instructions about how every *chossid* can—and should—take part in their speedy return:

- Increase in saying Tehillim.⁶
- Increase in giving tzedaka.⁷
- Increase in *limmud haTorah*, especially the study of *Mishnamos*.⁸
- Purchase more *seforim* to add to your home's library.⁹

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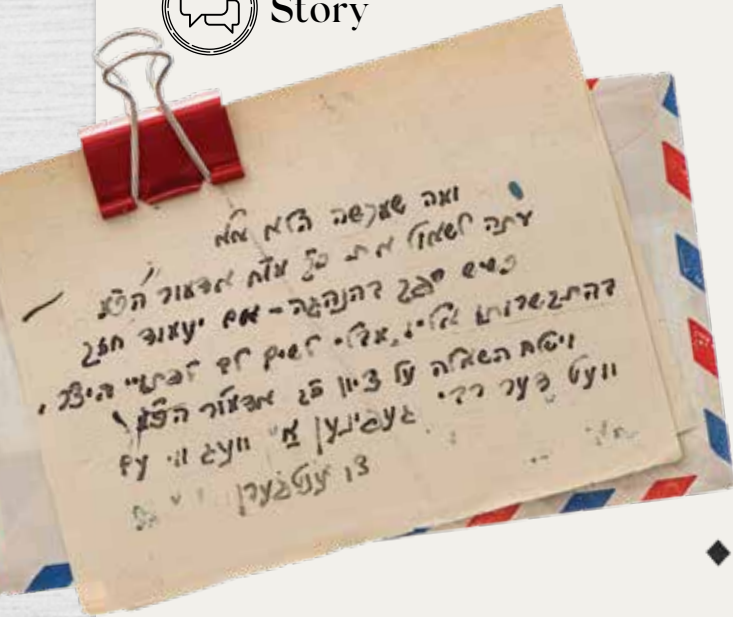
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Story



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לזרוב

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Saving a Sefer Torah



AS TOLD BY
RABBI YITZCHOK MEYER LIPSZYC
(Tzfas, Eretz Yisroel)

When we started our shlichus in Crimea in 5752, there were no kosher Sifrei Torah in the shul of Simferopol. This was the result of an unfortunate scandal that took place in the former Soviet Union shortly after the fall of communism. Several unscrupulous individuals posing as *sofrim* from Eretz Yisroel found Sifrei Torah in various old shuls, convinced the unsuspecting community leaders they were taking them to be fixed in Eretz Yisroel, and disappeared with them for good.

In Simferopol they pulled the same trick on the Rosh Hakahal, Reb Shimon Korotka a”h, a special Yid who

was a truly dedicated community *askan*. They gave him fake IDs and took off with most of the shul’s Sifrei Torah, leaving only two extremely damaged ones. Thankfully, the *gabboim* of 770 were kind enough to lend us a Sefer Torah to use until we arranged one of our own.

After several years I found a potential sponsor who, upon hearing about the scandal, committed to sponsoring the repair of one of the pre-Soviet era Sifrei Torah. When I approached Reb Shimon with the idea, he adamantly refused to allow me to take it away even temporarily, suspecting I was a scam artist like the guys who stole the

other Sifrei Torah. After giving the community a very valuable item as collateral he finally agreed to have the Torah brought to a *sofer* in New York for repair.

The damage was quite extensive and although the *sofer* gave us a discounted price due to the unique circumstances, the repairs took over half a year and cost \$8,000. Entire sheets of parchment needed to be replaced and many letters rewritten. Throughout this time a very nervous Reb Shimon kept asking when the Torah would return and I kept patiently explaining how difficult and time-consuming the job was.

Finally, the work was done, but when I contacted the potential donor he informed me that unfortunately his financial situation had deteriorated and he could not honor his pledge. My search for another donor was unsuccessful for close to a year. Now two people were very upset with me: Reb Shimon kept badgering me to return the Torah and the *sofer* demanded payment for his work.

Finally, the *sofer* sent me the following letter. "Dear Itche Meyer. It is now more than a year since the Torah has been fixed. I have a lot of money invested in it and can't afford to wait any longer for you to find a sponsor. I am sorry, but if you do not pay me by Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, I will have no choice but to sell the Torah, take what I am owed, and give you whatever extra money is left over."

I was mortified. If I lost this Sefer Torah our shlichus in Simferopol would effectively be over and it would cause a tremendous *chilul Hashem!* I begged the *sofer* for a 20-day extension and traveled to New York to look for a sponsor, to no avail. Twenty days later, on the night of Chof Cheshvan, I felt it was time to go to the Ohel and hand my problem over to the Rebbe.

In my *tzetel*, I wrote the entire saga, concluding that it was crucial for our shlichus that I return to Simferopol with the Sefer Torah and asking the Rebbe for a bracha.

As I left the Ohel and entered the house nearby at around 4 o'clock in the morning, I saw a *yungerman* sitting at the table writing a *tzetel*. I figured I needed to do my part and Hashem would take care of the rest, so I approached him and asked if he had a few minutes to hear my story. He politely put down his pen and listened to my story.

I concluded by saying, "Obviously, if you are here at the Ohel, at this time of night, there must be something very important you urgently need. I imagine, if

you save this Torah, the Rebbe will surely grant you your request."

"That's a great pitch!" he said with a laugh, but he remained unconvinced.

"Do us both a favor," I said. "When you are inside the Ohel, just give my proposal a thought, so that if the Rebbe wants you to do it, he'll be able to get you the message." He smiled, "Ok, I'll give it a thought while I'm inside." I handed him my business card and left.

Two hours later I was overjoyed to receive a phone call from him. "Rabbi Lipszyc, your Sefer Torah is paid for. You can pick it up at the *sofer!*"

He proceeded to tell me that when he was standing at the Ohel, minutes after I spoke with him, he started thinking about how Chof Cheshvan is the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab and about the story told in connection with his birth. On the night of Yud Kislev, his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka, dreamed that her mother instructed her to write a Sefer Torah and the Mittler Rebbe blessed her with a son. On the night of Yud Tes Kislev the dream repeated itself, with the addition of a blessing from the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe Maharash commissioned the writing of a special Sefer Torah and the Rebbe Rashab was born within the year, on Chof Cheshvan. Upon the instructions of the Tzemach Tzedek, both the *haschala* and *siyum* of the Sefer Torah were done quietly and without fanfare. (See the story at length in Sefer Hatoldos Admur HaRashab pages 3-5.)

"I found it interesting to be standing at the Ohel of the Rebbe and the Friediker Rebbe on the birthday of his father the Rebbe Rashab, and to suddenly think about this story shortly after hearing from you how a Sefer Torah needs to be saved. Then, when I walked out of the Ohel I saw the same *sofer* you had mentioned standing in the house near the Ohel, at 5-o'clock in the morning! I rushed over to him and after he confirmed the details of the story, I decided to donate the \$8,000 necessary to bring the Sefer Torah back to Simferopol. And just like in the story, it was done without fanfare, I want this donation to be anonymous as well."

And that is how the Rebbe saved the Sefer Torah from Simferopol and our shlichus. **1**

YOUR STORY

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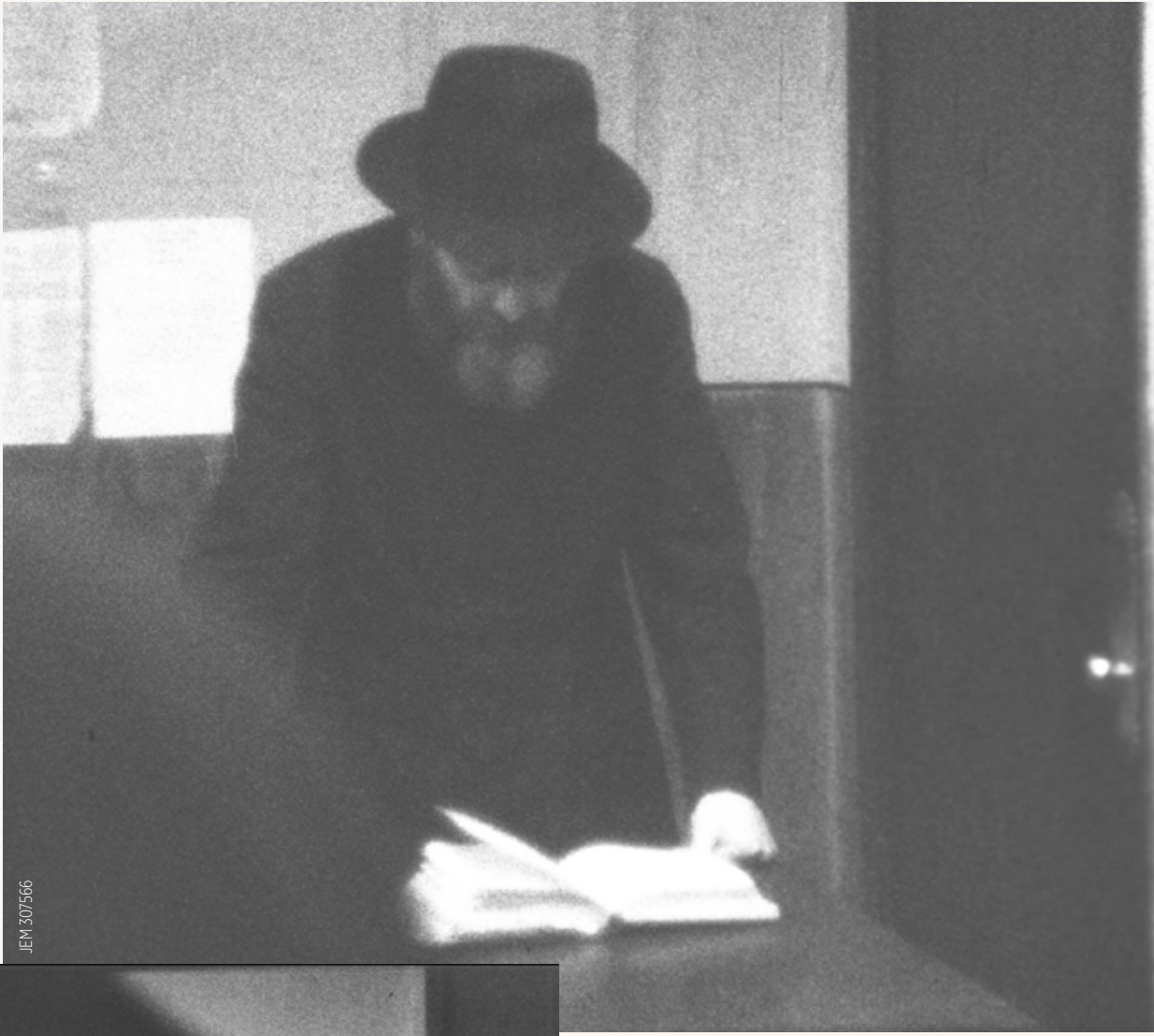
לע"נ הרה"ת הרה"ח יוסף יצחק
בן הרה"ת הרה"ח אשר ז"ל
סאטאנאקא
תנ"צ'בה'
נדבת משפחתו שיחיו

The Rebbe davens Mincha.

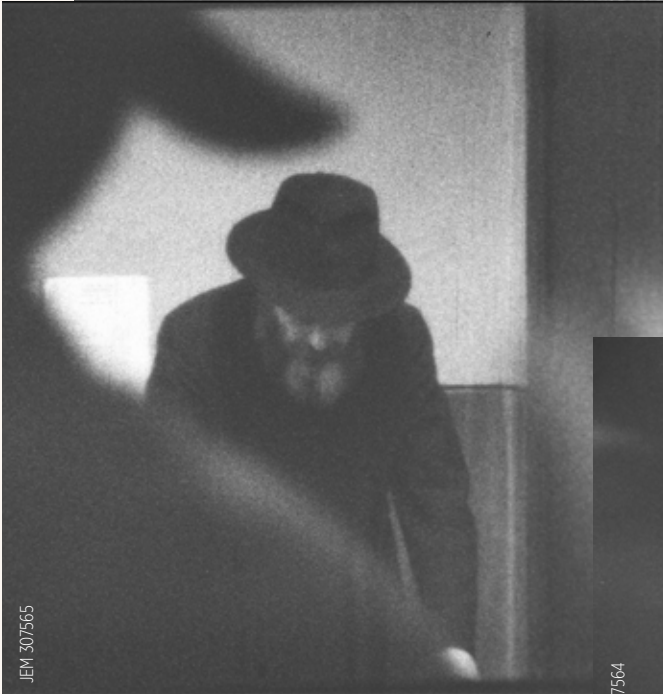
ASARA B'TEVES 5721

Featured this month is a rare collection from Mincha on Asara B'Teves 5721, as captured by the camera of Rabbi Yosef Goldstein, shared with us by his family and digitized from the original film with the help of The Living Archive at JEM.

Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer



JEM 307566



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—
The Rebbe stands for Krias
haTorah.



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The Rebbe receives Maftir, then reads the
Haftorah for fast days, *Dirshu Hashem*.



Taken from sefer *Yeshayahu*, the Haftorah encourages the Jewish people, no matter where they stand, to return to Hashem with teshuvah, and internalize the imminence of *geulah*. Many recall the Rebbe reading these words with emotion, often crying profusely.



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.

Memories of Rebbetzin Chana

In honor of 28 Teves, birthday of Rebbetzin Chana, we present another series of anecdotes and stories about Rebbetzin Chana from an exclusive interview conducted by A Chassidisher Derher for the article "N'shei Chabad: The Rebbe's Pride and Joy" which appeared in the recent Elul issue of our magazine:

It should be known that all of the details of N'shei Chabad activities were overseen by Rabbi Hodakov and we saw clearly that N'shei Ubnos Chabad was something very dear and special to the Rebbe.

The first few N'shei Chabad conventions took place in people's homes and were informal. I remember it being quite a job for the emcee to keep the crowd quiet!

In 5716, however, the convention was taken to a new level and took place in the fancy hotel in Manhattan. At this point Rebbetzin Chana began attending. (A delegation would go every year before the convention to personally invite Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka and Rebbetzin Chana - Ed). Rebbetzin Chana's appearance completely transformed the convention and she would listen intently to all the speeches and sometimes even comment.

There is a picture from that convention where you can see my sister, Golda Shwei, the representative of Bnos, speaking, and you can see Rebbetzin Chana looking at

her with so much love.

When she finished speaking, Rebbetzin Chana told her that she spoke very well and asked her who helped in writing the speech, to which my sister responded that she was helped by her brother in law (Reb Zelig Katzman).

My memories of Rebbetzin Chana begin from when I was a young child in the DP camp in Pocking, Germany, after escaping the Soviet Union. They assigned us long barracks and started allocating people to different rooms. Larger families received bigger rooms, and smaller families smaller rooms. There was a small room that could only fit one person and they gave it to my aunt, Mrs. Chaya Mushka Nimotin, who was a widow.

When they finished dividing the rooms, Rebbetzin Chana said that she had not been allocated a room to stay in. So my aunt, who was a very giving and chassidishe lady, said that she would bring Rebbetzin Chana into her little room. Rebbetzin Chana was very happy and in return she bought notepads and pencils and taught my aunt how to read and write Hebrew.

On Shabbos, they came over to our house. Our parents prepared us for a very important guest who was coming, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *mechuteneste*.

You have to understand that at the time we were refugees, having survived the horrors of Communist Russia and the Holocaust, and then the saga of

illegally escaping from behind the Iron Curtain, getting dressed up nicely was just not something we would do. Besides, everyone had maybe two pairs of clothing and did not even own Shabbos clothes. But the Rebbetzin somehow had something extra nice that she was wearing in honor of Shabbos and as she entered our DP camp residence the whole room became different—it became Shabbos'dik, Yom Tov'dik. She told us so many stories, about her husband, her father etc. She enthralled us, the children, but unfortunately neither us children nor our parents could recall the details of those stories.

Later in America she once had us over at her apartment, and she was so happy to be the host this time. I also had the *zechus* to help the Rebbetzin in her later years in America and even knitted her a jacket shortly before her *histalkus*.

There was a Mrs. Chein who was traveling back to France after spending Tishrei with the Rebbe and made an appointment to see Rebbetzin Chana. She asked the Rebbetzin what regards she should bring back to France. The Rebbetzin told her that at the Rebbe's farbrengen she saw two Israeli girls standing there and being that she understood Hebrew she could understand their conversation. One girl turned to the other: 'Do you hear, do you understand?' She wanted to leave. The other responded, 'I don't hear, I don't understand, but I can't bring myself to leave.' That's the regards you should bring to France."

This is what it means to be connected to the Rebbe. You don't always have to understand and of course even if you think you understand, you don't understand.

Rebbetzin Chana took much pride in the Rebbe's accomplishments and we could see how she considered all the Rebbe's chassidim like her *einiklach*.

This is the subject of the following very special story:

I was once walking with my children on Kingston Avenue at the same time that Rebbetzin Chana had gone out for a stroll. She noticed me and we began talking. I think it was a Yom Tov because she was looking

out on the street where there were a lot of people walking leisurely, among them many young couples. After taking in the scene the Rebbetzin told me with much *nachas* "זיי זיינען גליקלאך, די זון'ס פארלאך" - they are happy, my son's couples...

Mrs. Sarah Katzman

CROWN HEIGHTS, NY

Ask So You'll Be Answered

Every year before the annual N'shei Chabad Convention held in the spring, the organizers would write a letter to the Rebbe with details of the Kinus and request a letter from the Rebbe to be read at the beginning of the convention by an elder chossid as all the ladies stood. In the letter, the Rebbe would address the theme of the Kinus and give a message to Jewish women for that year.

The Rebbe would write a letter - they were later collected and published in a special book called "Letters by the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Nshei uBnos Chabad."

One year, the convention's organizers forgot to ask the Rebbe for a letter ahead of time. When we realized that we had forgotten, we still didn't write in but assumed that since the Rebbe knew the details of the convention and its theme (especially because the Rebbe himself was going to participate and speak at the convention) and since the Rebbe treasured the convention so much, he would write a letter himself and send it to us.

The convention lasts a number of days. The days were passing and still the Rebbe had not issued a letter. We realized we wouldn't get one if we didn't write in and ask for one, so we asked and the Rebbe sent.

The lesson I learnt is that the Rebbe wants us to ask, to write or visit the Rebbe, asking for the *brachos* that we need and for Moshiach. The Rebbe is waiting for us to ask and when we ask, our requests and petitions will be answered.

Mrs Leah Kahn

BROOKLYN, NY



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