

Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער

**The Sun
Shines Again**

YUD SHEVAT 5710-5711

**Precious
Moments**

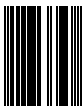
RABBI YOSEF MINKOWITZ

On Every
Jewish Home

MIVTZA MEZUZAH



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Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz



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This magazine
has been made possible

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

בקשר עם יום התחלת הנשיאות
יו"ד שבט
ובקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט



Forty years ago, on Yud Shevat 5744, the Rebbe began the farbrengen with a most timely message about what Yud Shevat means to each of us:

The *yom hahilula* marked on Yud Shevat is that of the Friediker Rebbe, who was the successor, the “*memaleh makom*” of his forebears, going all the way back to the first Chabad Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe.

The fact that he is referred to as the “*memaleh makom*” (lit. the one who fills the place) of his fathers, indicates that he is at least equal in all the great qualities that they possessed, filling every aspect of their *nesius*.

Moreover: every Yid is expected to continuously climb higher in *avodas Hashem*; the practice of *ma'alin bakodesh*. It is obvious then that a Rebbe, a *nossi*, the leader of his entire generation exemplifies this journey all the more, continuously growing and moving upward. Not only does he fill the place of predecessors; he surpasses them with an even greater presence, accomplishing even more.

We all know the famous *mashal* of a midget standing on the shoulders of a giant, who is able to see much further than the giant himself. In our instance, we speak of a *giant* standing on the shoulders of giants, building upon the incredible *avodah* of all the Rabbeim who preceded him.¹



Yud Shevat marks the day that the Rebbe's *nesius* began, the *dor hashvi'i*, ushering in the final *geulah*. With each passing year, the Rebbe's *nesius* rises higher in the spirit of *ma'alin bakodesh*. As the Rebbe famously said, with each passing year, the Rebbe is more alive, stronger, and more active amongst us.

It remains up to us to demonstrate this fact, by continuing to grow in our connection with the Rebbe, by learning his Torah and following his *hora'os* with ever-increasing *chayus*.²

And with that we will indeed complete the Rebbe's charge for our generation, to complete the transformation of our world with the coming of Moshiach, and as the Rebbe concludes:

ונזכה זעהן זיך מיט'ן רבי'ן דאָ למטה אין אַ גוף
ולמטה מעשרה טפחים, והוא יגאלנו.

The Editors

יום הבהיר ה' טבת ה'תשפ"ד

1. Hisvaaduyos 5744, vol. 2, p. 853.

2. 15 Tammuz 5745; Hisvaaduyos 5745, vol. 4, p. 2516.



דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word
on the
Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

ווארא

הֲנִי נָתַן לְנְבוּכַדְרֶעֶזַר מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל אֶת־אֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם... פִּעֲלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־עָבַד בָּהּ נָתַתִּי לוֹ אֶת־
אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם (יחזקאל כ"ט, י"ט-כ; הפטרת פרשת ווארא)

Behold I will give Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, the land of Egypt... For his labor wherewith he worked against it I have given him the land of Egypt.

In the Haftora of Parshas Vaera, we read of Hashem's promise to Nevuchadnetzar that he will receive the land of Mitzrayim as a reward for fulfilling Hashem's will by conquering the city of Tzor.

It seems difficult to understand why Nevuchadnetzar deserved a reward—after all, he was not acting with the intent of fulfilling Hashem's wish, but rather to satisfy his own ambitions to conquer more territory?

This is why the *possuk* uses the words “פִּעֲלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־עָבַד בָּהּ”: He was not rewarded based on his *intentions*, but rather for his *actions*. And since, ultimately, Hashem's will was carried out through him, he deserves a reward.

Takeaway: If this is true of Nevuchadnetzar—who certainly did not intend to carry out Hashem's wishes—how much more so with regard to a Yid: When someone performs an act of kindness, its value should not be minimized because of ulterior motives they may have had. Just for the act alone—even without pure intentions—they deserve great reward.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 21, p. 50)

בא

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה גַם־אַתָּה תִּתֵּן בְּיָדֵנוּ זְבָחִים וְעֹלֹת וְעֲשִׂינוּ
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ. וְגַם־מִקְנֵנוּ יִלָּךְ עִמָּנוּ לֹא תִשָּׂא פִרְסָה
כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ נִקַּח לְעַבֵד אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵנָּחֵנוּ לֹא־
נֵדַע מַה־נַּעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה עַד־בֹּאֵנוּ שָׁמָּה: (י, כה-כו)

But Moshe said, “You too shall give sacrifices and burnt offerings into our hands, and we will make them for the L-rd our G-d. And also our cattle will go with us; not a [single] hoof will remain, for we will take from it to worship the L-rd our G-d, and we do not know how [much] we will worship the L-rd until we arrive there.”

Rashi elaborates on Moshe's claim before Pharaoh לא “We will not know how intense the worship [of Hashem] will be,” Moshe said. “Perhaps He will ask for more [animals] than we have in our possession.”

Moshe's words seem to imply that Hashem would demand something of the Yidden that they could not fulfill—how is this conceivable? Moreover, if it is, indeed, the case that Hashem might ask them for more than they have, what is the benefit in bringing *all* their animals—that may *also* not suffice?!

The answer to both of these questions can be found in Rashi's precise wording—“perhaps He will ask for more than we have *in our possession*”:

Obviously, Hashem would not ask the Yidden for something which is unattainable. But He might have asked them for more than what they owned at that moment, something they would have to obtain from another source—namely from Pharaoh (who certainly owned many more animals

than the Jewish slaves did).

Moshe's words come, therefore, as a continuation of the first *possuk*—"זָנַם אֶתָּה תִּתֵּן בְּיַדְנוּ זְבָחִים וְעֹלֹת": "You also"—said Moshe to Pharaoh—"will give us *korbanos*, since we do not know what Hashem will ask of us, and we may be required to use your animals as well."

Takeaway: There is a well known teaching of the Ba'al Shem Tov that everything a person hears or sees in the world around him needs to be applied as a lesson in *avodas Hashem*. Now, a person might ask: Are the instructions and guidance given to us by the Torah and the *Chachomim* really not enough? Do we also need to take lessons from the mundane, day-to-day occurrences in the world around us?

The answer is that yes, sometimes Hashem wants us to serve Him not only with "what we have"—the *horavos* in the Torah. He also wants us to serve Him with "Pharaoh's possessions"—the lessons in *avodas Hashem* that we derive from our daily experiences.

(*Hisva'aduyos 5746 vol. 2, p. 424*)

בשלה

וְצֵא הַלֶּחֶם בַּעֲמֹלֶק (י"ז, ט)

And go out and fight against Amalek...

Parshas Beshalach speaks of two battles the Yidden faced on their way to Matan Torah—with the *Mitzriyim* and with Amalek.

The Yidden's response to these two threats were very different; even opposite from each other. With regard to Pharaoh and his army, we find that the Yidden were commanded to stay put while Hashem fought on their behalf. With regard to Amalek, however, the command was the exact opposite: "צֵא הַלֶּחֶם בַּעֲמֹלֶק"—go out and fight.

The reason lies in the fundamental difference between the two wars: Pharaoh and his army posed a physical danger to the Yidden. He pursued them and wanted to harm them, but he did not try—at least not directly—to hurt them *b'ruchniyus* and threaten their relationship with Hashem. In other words, Pharaoh was not an obstacle between the Yidden and Har Sinai, but rather between the Yidden and "the fish we ate in Mitzrayim"—if they wanted to enjoy what the land of Mitzrayim had to offer, they would have to submit to Pharaoh.

When faced with physical danger, the Yiddishe response is: "ה' יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תַּחֲרִישׁוּן"—we put our trust in Hashem and trust in Him to deliver us from the hands of our enemies.

Amalek's war, on the other hand, was a spiritual one. Amalek was intent on placing a wedge between the Yidden and Har Sinai, blocking their path to receiving the Torah.

They tried to harm the *ruchniyus* of Yidden and separate them from Hashem.

The response to this is "go out and fight Amalek!": When there is a spiritual danger, when there are those who try to interfere with *kabbolas haTorah*—the study of Torah and observance of mitzvos—it is necessary to respond immediately, and, if necessary, to go to war and face the risks thereof in order to save Yidden from the danger to their *neshamos*.

Takeaway: There are two points to bear in mind when faced with an "Amalek" that wants to cool down our passion for Yiddishkeit: 1. To use every tool at our disposal to beat "Amalek", and do whatever it takes to reach our personal Har Sinai and receive the Torah. 2. Not to mistakenly think that it is with our own *kochos* and resources that we are fighting, but to be aware that it is with the *ko'ach* of Moshe, the *ko'ach* of Torah.

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, p. 144*)

יתרו

וְהָיִיתֶם לִי סִגְלָה (ט, ה)

You shall be to Me a treasure...

Rashi translates the word "סגולה" to mean "a beloved treasure... costly vessels and precious stones which kings store away".

Why does Hashem compare Yidden to precious stones hidden in the king's treasury—items which do not serve any practical use? Why not compare them instead to the jewels affixed to the king's crown (and the like) whose glory is visible to all?

The jewels in the king's crown (and the like) are used for an external purpose, to increase his honor and glory in the eyes of the people—"Melech b'yofo techezenah einecha; A king in his beauty, behold your eyes". The precious stones in his storehouse, however, are not used for an external purpose; as a means to an end. Rather, their purpose lies in their very existence, so that the king can delight in them and derive pleasure from their very existence.

This is why Yidden are likened to "costly vessels and precious stones which kings store away", to teach us that our preciousness in the eyes of Hashem is not because we serve as a means to a greater end—we are the end. The very existence of Yidden is precious to Hashem, and causes Him tremendous pleasure.

Takeaway: We need to be very attentive to how we treat a fellow Yid—every single Yid is a precious diamond in Hashem's treasury!

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 24, p. 162*)



כתב
יד קודש

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A GUIDING LIGHT

The following are some of the Rebbe's edits on a draft of a letter to a Lubavitch supporter in 5710, shortly after the Frierdiker Rebbe's histalkus.

It is superfluous on my part to elaborate on it, inasmuch as you have been privileged to hear it direct from the Rabbi of saintly memory, on more than one occasion. Your last interview with him, moreover, so soon before his leaving this world, should be considered in the nature of a last will and testament to you, as a guiding light to illuminate your path in life and direct your principal endeavors into the right channel.

The Rebbe reminds the recipient of the last words he heard from the Frieddiker Rebbe in *yechidus* (at which the Rebbe was present as well), about his responsibilities to spread Yiddishkeit. (The Rebbe's handwritten additions are in **bold**.)¹

It is superfluous on my part to elaborate on it, inasmuch as you have been privileged to hear it direct from the Rabbi of saintly memory, on more than one occasion. Your last interview with him, **and I too merited being in his chamber at the time**, moreover, so soon before his leaving this world **ascent to higher worlds, though he continues to serve us here in this world**, should be considered in the nature of a last will and testament to you **and me**, as a guiding light to illuminate your path **the path upon which we both tread together** in life and direct your principal endeavors into the right channel.

1. Published in Teshrua, Wenger Bar Mitzvah 5780



FARBRENGEN, 15 SHEVAT 5744

A TANYA IN EVERY COMMUNITY!

SHEVAT 5744

The first half of Shevat 5744 with the Rebbe. At the time¹, the Rebbe was calling relentlessly to print Tanyas in as many cities as possible.² The urgency of this initiative could be felt throughout the month.³

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

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

Friday, 2 Shevat

Today, Rabbi Meny Wolf, director of Kehos in Eretz Yisroel, notified the Rebbe about 17 printings of Tanya throughout Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe responded, “Certainly, all of these Tanyas were actually studied from. The merit of those who printed the Tanya is everlasting and will bring about blessings both materially and spiritually.”

Shabbos Parshas Bo, 3 Shevat

In the morning, when the Rebbe entered the shul for Shacharis, he indicated to Rabbi Leibel Groner that there would be a farbrengen today.

At 1:30 pm, the Rebbe entered the farbrengen. The *mazkir*, Rabbi Binyomin Klein was holding about twenty recently printed Tanyas in a brown paper bag, which he placed on the table near the Rebbe.

The Rebbe began by saying that he is holding the farbrengen since it’s a week before Yud Shevat. Additionally, the farbrengen is in honor of the many guests who are in town, particularly those who brought with them recently printed Tanyas, “may everyone follow their lead.” The Rebbe concluded the *sicha* by encouraging the printing of Tanyas in every community.

Following this, the Rebbe addressed the ongoing situation in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe emphasized the importance of standing firm with “*Ge'on Yaakov*.” We see from history that when we bend to the other nations and hand over our weapons in exchange for promises, they aren’t kept. But when we stand firm with pride, we are safe.

The Rebbe emotionally lamented that we can’t seem to learn from the tribulations of the past. We must not continue down the path of appeasement and concessions. The “peace deal” with Egypt was not just ineffective at preventing bloodshed, it was also counterproductive by strengthening Egypt and emboldening terrorists.

Later, the Rebbe addressed a question on Rashi that he had posed the previous week but had not resolved due to time constraints. This was also done to see if anyone would be able to toil and find the correct answer independently.

The Rebbe mentioned that unlike the last time he left questions unanswered, when no one cared to attempt at resolving them, this time numerous answers were

published in the kovtzim, but some didn’t properly address the question, and a few didn’t even align with the basic pshat of Chumash! The job of the editors is to vet the answers, ensuring that the kovtzim are properly arranged.

Toward the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that he would now give mashke to someone endeavoring to print Tanyas in numerous locations. Mashke would also be distributed to anyone who resolved to print Tanyas in multiple communities.

The Rebbe gave a bottle of mashke to Rabbi Shabsi Alperin from Brazil, who committed to print 83 Tanyas. The Rebbe told him, “If you end up printing 84, I won’t have any complaints...”

Rabbi Sholom Dovber Friedman from Italy also approached to receive mashke, but Rabbi Leibel Groner informed him that the Rebbe was only giving mashke to those committed to printing a Tanya in more than one place.

The Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner how many printings Rabbi Friedman was planning to arrange, adding, “it should be at least three.” On the spot, Rabbi Friedman



A TANYA PRINTED IN 5744 IN THE REPUBLIC OF GRENADA BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE USA, WITH THE OFFICIAL MILITARY SEAL.

committed, and the Rebbe gave him a bottle. A student who came up with Rabbi Friedman told the Rebbe that he was going to print a Tanya in Rome as well. The Rebbe gave him some wine from his cup and a piece of Mezonos.

U.S. Army Chaplain Yaakov Goldstein was given a bottle of mashke for the printing of Tanyas with the American Army in Grenada.

Rabbi Holtzman, who had printed a Tanya in Antwerp, came up to receive mashke as well and took it upon himself to print the Tanya in ten more locations.

Following the distribution, the Rebbe began the niggun “Ufaratzta.”

After Bracha Acharona, the Rebbe took the bag of Tanyas with him to the shtender for Mincha. When davening concluded, the Rebbe took the Tanyas with him to his room.

On Motzei Shabbos, the Rebbe was notified about a bochur in Brazil who was injured in a car accident. The Rebbe replied that the printing of Tanyas in cities throughout Brazil would stand as a great zechus for the bochur.

Sunday, 4 Shevat

Today, the Rebbe responded to Rabbi Shabsi Alpern, who had told the Rebbe about his plan to print Tanyas in 100 locations throughout Brazil. The Rebbe sent \$2,000 dollars from the Frieddiker Rebbe’s fund and indicated that additional funds would be provided each time the Tanya was printed in another Jewish community.

During the day, a special *kuntres* containing the sicha from Shabbos about the “importance of printing a Tanya in every city where Jews live” was published. The *sicha* had been edited by the Rebbe, who added a note emphasizing the necessity that every printing be under the auspices of Kehos. The note was printed in large letters and also added to the cover of the *kuntres*.

This week as well, the Rebbe reviewed and edited the *sicha* from the past Shabbos with the questions on Rashi. Throughout the week, groups of people worked diligently in search of a satisfactory answer.

The editors of the *kovtzim* received tens of answers, but only the better ones, a select few, were published by the *ma’areches*, as per the Rebbe’s words on Shabbos.

Throughout the week, Tanyas printed around the world were sent to the Rebbe. The Rebbe contributed \$20 to each printing as his participation. To some, the

Rebbe also sent a booklet with the (now edited,) *sicha* from last Shabbos describing the importance of printing a Tanya wherever Jews are found.

Wednesday, 7 Shevat

On his way out from Maariv, the Rebbe turned to Mrs. P. Wolf (from Israel) and inquired regarding the health of Mrs. Zelda Mishkovsky (Schneerson), a famous poet who is a cousin of the Rebbe.⁴

Friday, 9 Shevat

In the afternoon, Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, the Rov of Crown Heights, entered the Rebbe’s room



THE “CROWN HEIGHTS TANYA” PRINTED BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, STATING THAT IT WAS PRINTED ON THE UPPER FLOOR OF 770.

to present a Tanya that had just been printed in Crown Heights. The Rebbe received it with obvious joy, and blessed the Rov and the entire community with “*Arichus yomim vishonim tovos.*”

The Rebbe asked if the Tanya had already been studied from, and he replied that people studied from the manuscript as it was being printed. The Rebbe smiled.

The “Crown Heights edition” of the Tanya was printed by Vaad L’Hafotzas Sichos and the residents of Crown Heights all contributed equally towards its printing — one dollar per person. The Rebbe also participated with two dollars and wished the printing much success.

The *sefer* was printed on the upper floor of 770 in record time (only a few days) in order to be ready for Yud Shevat, and was covered in a beautiful binding.

Already in the early afternoon, many *bochurim* and *anash* began filling up the shul to secure a good spot to hear the Rebbe davening from the *amud* on Yud Shevat.

Among the numerous guests were a significant number of Shluchim, who took advantage of a “regular Shabbos” back home to be able to be with the Rebbe. A large group of *baalei teshuva* from France was present as well.

The Rebbe went up to the *amud*, and Kabbalas Shabbos began. The Rebbe davened in a relatively loud voice, and those standing nearby were able to hear clearly.

At the end of davening, the Rebbe turned to the right of the *amud* where the children were standing (along the south wall) and began singing “*Sheyiboneh.*”

Shabbos Parshas Beshalach, Yud Shevat

At 1:30 pm, the Rebbe entered the farbrengen holding his siddur and the recently printed “Crown Heights Tanya”.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe described in glowing terms the greatness of a Sefer HaTanya being printed in Crown Heights. The Rebbe then expounded upon portions of Iggeres Hakodesh 27 (which speaks about the Hilula of a Tzaddik) from the Tanya he brought with him, reading from it as he went.

In the second *sicha*, the Rebbe explained the significance of printing a Tanya in “Crown Heights,” which alludes to the “Crown of supernal heights” (כתר עליון).

There are three crowns mentioned in Pirkei Avos. The first one is the “Crown of Torah,” which corresponds to

Torah study. The “Crown of Kehunah,” corresponds to Ahavas Yisroel, Aharon Hakohen’s specialty. The “Crown of Kingship,” represents total belief in the coming of Moshiach, and as a result, the (additional) “Crown of Good Name.”

Later, when the Rebbe addressed the questions on Rashi from the previous week, he noted that many answers were published in the “*kovtzim.*” Several answers started off on the right path, but they ultimately strayed from the *pshat.*

Monday, 12 Shevat

Rabbi Menachem Lerer from Kfar Chabad notified the Rebbe of his plan to print an official “Army Tanya” in collaboration with the Chief Rabbi of the IDF. The Rebbe instructed that in addition to the usual Kehos logo, the IDF logo should be printed on the cover page as well.

At 8:00 pm, there was a *yechidus klolis* in the large shul downstairs.

While addressing the guests, the Rebbe explained that on the Yom Hahilula of a Nossi Hador, like Yud Shevat, the theme of unity is palpable. This is especially true when people gather from all over to be together for the day.

We should continue this unity by organizing gatherings in different communities to encourage the study of the Friediker Rebbe’s Torah and the adoption of positive resolutions. An auspicious date to hold these events, as well as Tzivos Hashem rallies, would be the 15th of Shevat.

The Rebbe emphasized that these unity gatherings are essential in light of the dangerous events unfolding in the world. Coming together is the only way to dispel the darkness, bringing the *geulah* closer.

Wednesday, 14 Shevat

After Maariv, the Rebbe informed Rabbi Leibel Groner that there would be a farbrengen tonight. This was hinted at earlier in the week when a *chosson* notified the Rebbe that his *vort*-celebration would be on Wednesday night, and the Rebbe suggested he push it off to Thursday.

The Rebbe entered the farbrengen at 9:30 pm. The tables were set with platters of fruit in honor of the day, and between the *sichos* the Rebbe partook from the fruit in the basket near him.

The Rebbe expounded on the idea that the purpose of a tree is “bearing fruit.” In connection with this, the



THE REBBE AT FARBRENGEN, 15 SHEVAT 5744

Rebbe spoke very sharply about the fact that many *seforim* were not being printed quickly enough due to the complacency of the publishers. There are those who haven't accomplished anything in a full Shemitah cycle!

"These 'Scholars,'" the Rebbe continued, "are avoiding me with the hope that I will forget what they need to do. However, when they have even a 'sniffle,' they come straight to me, requesting that I arouse '*rachamim rabim*' for them! The most amazing thing is, these individuals don't have an inkling that there is anything amiss whatsoever!"

The Rebbe then instructed that children's gatherings should be organized for 15 Shevat. During these gatherings, the themes of the day should be explained so children could understand. The Rebbe then elaborated on the "seven species" (of fruit native to Eretz Yisroel) and their significance, in a manner understandable to children.

Later in the farbrengen, the Rebbe expressed his thanks and gave his blessing for all the good wishes and *brachos* that he received for Yud Shevat.

The Rebbe continued, that there is no need to wait for a letter in response. The very fact that there is too much correspondence to physically respond to proves that it is unnecessary. The postal service can be relied upon, and since "All Jews are presumed Kosher," it can be assumed that the requests enumerated in the letters

were addressed.

The Rebbe clarified that he was stating the obvious to dispel any concerns of those with "*marah sh'choireh*" (melancholy) who might worry that their letter was lost or that the Rebbe had not read it, *chas v'shalom*.

Thursday, Chamisha Asar B'Shevat

In the evening, as the Rebbe was departing for home, a young boy approached him and (in French,) requested a *brocha* to recover from a certain illness. The Rebbe blessed him with success in both physical and spiritual matters, assuring him that he would grow up to be a *talmid chochom* and a *tzaddik*. **T**

1. Beginning on the seventh night of Chanukah that year.
2. For a full article on this initiative in 5744 (and in previous years) see "*Tanya to the World*" – *The Story of the Printing Tanyas Campaign*," Derher Adar I, 5776.
3. The next section of the yoman will be published in the Adar I issue.
4. Zelda passed away later that year.



Bikkurim of Gold

The following story was related by
Reb Amram Malka

When I was learning at 770 in the “*kvutzah*” program in the year 5726, I used to assist the Rebbe’s *mazkirim* with various tasks. During that year, President Zalman Shazar came to visit the Rebbe, and I was asked to help clean out the Rebbe’s room before he arrived. While in the Rebbe’s room, I noticed that one of the drawers of the metal cabinet was slightly opened, and I was able to see that it contained piles and piles of photographs. I was even able to notice one photo of a family I recognized from back in Israel. I thought to myself, if people send photos of their families to the Rebbe, it would be appropriate for my family to send a photo as well.

I decided that when I went into *yechidus* at the end of my *kvutzah* year, I would give the Rebbe the photograph.

In the meantime, I asked my parents to send me a photo of the entire family, including my grandparents. I bought a nice gold frame, and brought the framed photo wrapped in an envelope with me into *yechidus*.

The Rebbe opened the envelope, took out the frame and held it, looking at the photo for a long while.

Then the Rebbe said in Hebrew, “When the Beis Hamikdash stood, people would bring Bikkurim to the Beis

Hamikdash. The rich people would bring their Bikkurim on trays of silver and gold, adorning the Bikkurim with exquisite vessels. People of less means brought their fruits in wicker baskets made of straw.

“From the wealthy people, the Kohen would take only the fruit and return the expensive vessels back to the owners. However, from the poor they would take both the fruit and the basket, so as not to offend the poor.”

During all this time the Rebbe was holding the frame in his holy hand. Then the Rebbe said, “I am returning this to you as they would return vessels to the rich: I will keep the photo, and the frame will go back to you.”

I later realized that the Rebbe didn’t have space for a frame in his drawer, but instead of just telling me as much, he made sure to make me feel good about my gift. The Rebbe compared me to a wealthy person and gave me back my frame with a smile and sensitivity. In fact, by giving me the frame, the Rebbe indeed made me rich. Now I had a golden frame given to me by the Rebbe!¹ **T**

1. Related in My Encounter with the Rebbe, Living Torah program 453.



PRECIOUS MOMENTS WITH THE REBBE



Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz relates memories of growing up in the Rebbe's presence, and special experiences on the Rebbe's shlichus.

By: Rabbi Mendel Wolowik and Rabbi Levi Greenberg



לע"נ
שד"ר רבותינו נשיאנו
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מנחם שמואל דוד
בן ר' שמעון הלוי ע"ה
רייטשיק
גלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשנ"ח
ת"נצ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

RABBI YOSEF MINKOWITZ (FAR RIGHT)
LOOKS ON AS THE REBBE SEES OFF
GUESTS TAKING LEAVE FROM 770.

Earliest Memories of the Rebbe

I was born in Paris in the year 5708. When I was five years old we moved to Brownsville, within walking distance to Crown Heights (where we later relocated). My childhood was enjoyed in the Rebbe's presence.

In those years, since there weren't many children around, we had many chances to be near the Rebbe, and the Rebbe gave us special attention. We also tried to have the *zechus* to help the Rebbe whenever possible.

Throughout my childhood, *tefilos* took place in what is now called the small *zal*, on 770's ground level. On weekdays the Rebbe sat at the table in the (northeastern) corner closest to his room. On Shabbos, however, the Rebbe's place was on the opposite end, at the southern wall, with his *shtender* located nearby, at the eastern wall.

When the Rebbe would go to the *shtender*, the table had to be moved aside to make space for the three steps before and after Shmone Esrei. We children would clamor for that *zechus*, as well as moving the table back for the Rebbe to sit down after *Kedushah*. I merited to move the table for the Rebbe a number of times.



THE REBBE (BOTTOM OF PHOTO) EXITS THE SHALASH AFTER A CHUPA. NOTE THE WOMEN STANDING IN THE EZRAS NASHIM ALONG THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING NEXT TO 770.

Another special memory I have from those early years is the Rebbe's recital of the *Haftorah*. Since the *bimah* was not on a raised platform, we were able to witness the Rebbe saying the *Haftorah* from up close. In those days, the recital was frequently accompanied by loud cries, a powerful sight indeed.

Farbrengens

I have many fond memories of the Rebbe's farbrengens in those years. Until 5717, most farbrengens were held in the upstairs *zal*. Indeed, farbrengens were held there due to extreme weather as late as 5720.

The Rebbe's table was on an elevated platform at the southern wall. Elder chassidim would sit on a bench behind the Rebbe, while Rabbi Hodakov would stand to the Rebbe's left, next to the window. In those years, the Rebbe would often speak to individuals on personal matters. For example, if someone bought a house or had a child, the Rebbe would wish them "Mazal tov," and instruct them to say *l'chaim*.

The *bochurim* stood on and around the 'bleachers' (consisting of one table with a bench on top, and another bench in front) which were to the right of the *aron kodesh*. For others, there were two rows of two tables, seating about forty people, while some rows of *yungeleit* would stand along the western wall.

Children under Bar Mitzvah stood on a table beneath the clock, directly facing the Rebbe. At the farbrengen before our birthday, we would push our way through the crowd, and approach the Rebbe with trepidation, saying: "On this day I'm turning X years old." *Bochurim* post-Bar Mitzvah would have a *yechidus*, but this was our only opportunity as children to receive a *brocha* from the Rebbe.

When a farbrengen ended, the children would quickly run to 'Gan Eden Hatachton,' right outside the Rebbe's room, where we would continue singing the *niggun* with which the farbrengen had concluded. Before entering his holy room, the Rebbe would strongly encourage our singing. This sometimes went on for a good few minutes; it felt like a kind of mini-farbrengen specifically for the children.

In the mid-5710's there was still empty space between our table and the seating area, but the crowd kept growing and by the late 5710's, overflowed into the hallway. To accommodate the crowd, farbrengens were moved to the "Shalash" (Russian for "temporary structure").

The Shalash

At the end of 770's driveway was an empty courtyard enclosed on three sides. It was first used Tishrei 5712, when the Rebbe dismissed the proposal to hold the Yom Tov *Tefilos* and farbrengens in a rented space. "The [Friediker] Rebbe



THE REBBE FARBRENGS IN THE SMALL ZAL ON 24 TEVES 5712 . NOTICE THE TWO ROWS OF TABLES BENEATH THE REBBE'S RAISED PLATFORM AS WELL AS THE BLEACHERS TO THE LEFT.

was immersed in these walls for his last ten years,” said the Rebbe. “Would I leave here?!”

A fourth wall was put up, and the space covered with a tarp. For Sukkos it was converted into a Sukkah.

From the late 5710's until summer 5720, farbrengens and tefillos were held in the Shalash. The conditions were quite primitive, with no heating or air conditioning. The canvas 'roof' was full of holes through which the cold rain would leak through.

One special event in the Shalash took place on Shabbos Bereishis 5717. The children were on bleachers made of stacked chairs, directly across the Rebbe. The Rebbe instructed the Chossid Reb Uriel Tzimmer, a translator at the UN, to lead the children in singing 'Ho'aderes Vehoemuna Tzu Vemen, Tzu Vemen', in many languages¹.

At late night farbrengens, often going past midnight, the sound of the niggunim carried for a distance, as the walls didn't reach the tarp. The women standing outside the Shalash had to endure agonizing disturbances from annoyed neighbors in the building next door. Since the sole drain was usually blocked, rainwater would often accumulate. I recall that the Shalash was once full of water, and the bochorim created a walkway out of benches, on which the Rebbe walked from his place to the rear steps ascending to 770.

In anticipation of Tishrei 5721, construction began to create a permanent structure in place of the Shalash. Beginning as the back quarter of the main shul in 770, it continued growing in stages, and, in 5734, was expanded to the size it

is today.

The air conditioning system was less than reliable. One Shabbos afternoon, as I was walking with my mother down Kingston Ave., we approached Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother, to wish her a Gut Shabbos. “Was the air conditioner working today?” she asked us. “You know why I'm asking,” she continued. “I have a relative there.”

“We Need to Be Wise!”

Hakafos on Simchas Torah was always a most joyous time, of which I have many unique memories, going back to my childhood. My great uncle, the famed chossid Reb Zalman Duchman, would announce who was honored with each hakofa. Having made a Simchas Torah'dige kiddush, his announcements would reflect his uplifted spirits.

It happened once, circa 5719, that while Reb Zalman was making the announcements, the Rebbe gestured towards him from his place in the front of the Shul.

Reb Zalman, standing in the middle of the *Shalash*, loudly reacted—much to the Rebbe's amusement: “*Rebbe! es shteit 'dai lachakima berimiza, darf men zayn a chakima!*” (It says that ‘for the wise, a hint suffices’, but that only works if one is wise!)

Another special *hakafos* moment: For Tishrei 5721, the shul was built up on the place where the *Shalash* used to be but wasn't completely finished. The panels on the walls were not up, and the windows facing Union Street were not installed.



GERSHON SHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303184

THE REBBE'S FARBRENGEN, 19 KISLEV 5722. NOTICE THE STILL UNFINISHED WALLS AND THE MAKESHIFT WINDOWS COVERED IN PLASTIC.

Instead of windows, they built frames approximately 3ft by 6ft and covered them with heavy plastic.

These makeshift windows were attached to beams that went across the width of the shul, enabling them to be opened and closed.

For *hakafos* on Simchas Torah, I stood with a friend on these large beams. We were enjoying the excellent place with a great view, just behind the Rebbe and slightly to the side. However, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, who was responsible for the construction of the shul in 5720, started shouting at us: “*Geit arup! Geit arup!* (Get down!)”

The Rebbe glanced at us. Then, turning to Rabbi Kazarnovsky, he asked: “*Vos art aich az zay shteyen dorten?* (Why does it bother you that they are standing there?)”

After that episode, no one dared bother us, and we had an excellent place for the rest of Simchas Torah. I took it as a great present from the Rebbe for my Bar Mitzva, which was just a few days later.

Caring for a Yid

The following incident occurred when I was a bit older, studying at 770 in the mid 5720’s. Of course, many different types of people came to the Rebbe for *yechidus*. As *bochurim*, we were most interested in their stories, especially since we didn’t know the wealth of stories about the Rebbe that we do

now. This most interesting story made a strong impression on me. It was testament to how the Rebbe, as a true *nossi hador*, Moshe of the generation, reaches and impacts every Yid with an individualized, personal approach:

An intelligent, well-mannered, middle-aged man came to 770 multiple times. The thing that set him apart from others was a professional-looking folder that he carried, full of supposed proofs—hints from *pessukim* and the like—that he is Moshiach! We had some interesting conversations with this businessman, who wasn’t actually *frum*, but we steered clear from debating his dubious claims.

To us he was just another curiosity. When we heard that he made an appointment to see the Rebbe in *yechidus*, we theorized that the Rebbe would convince him to seek professional psychiatric help.

He came out of his *yechidus*, which lasted about ten minutes, and related what had transpired. Unsurprisingly, the Rebbe didn’t acknowledge that he’s Moshiach. However, the Rebbe told him that Moshiach is someone who keeps all of Torah and Mitzvos, and puts on tefillin every day. Moreover, continued the Rebbe, Moshiach will influence others to go in that direction as well! I don’t know what ever happened to this man, but his story serves as a deep lesson to us. This incident taught us to see potential in everyone.

Mincha With a Minyan

On Friday Erev Pesach 5725, at about 3:00 pm, I randomly walked into 770, not sure what I'd find going on. The *seforim* haphazardly piled all over the *zal* attested to the fact that the room was being painted that day.

Through the open door to the Rebbe's room, I saw Noske Wolf with another bochur. They had just brought the Erev Pesach matzos from Reb Shiyah Korf's bakery on the Lower East Side.

Those matzos, baked with utmost vigilance by the *bochurim*, were the ones the Rebbe used throughout Pesach. Shortly before the onset of Yom Tov, the Rebbe would hand out matzos from this batch to the many who'd come to receive the Rebbe's matzah for use at the Seder.

While the boxes of matzos were being organized, I could see the Rebbe standing next to his desk wearing his *gartel*, saying *Hodu* and *Posach Eliyahu* from his Siddur Torah Ohr. At one point, the Rebbe asked for a large piece of brown paper to use for the mitzvah of *hafrashas challah*.

Not long after they finished stacking the matzos, the Rebbe came into the *zal* for an unscheduled Mincha. As he was in *aveilus* for his mother, the Rebbe approached the Chazan's place. The *amud* was unusable, however, piled high with *seforim*. I noticed the issue, and, together with Shlomo Cunin, cleared the *seforim* at breakneck speed. Then we took out 5 candles from beneath the *amud*, organized them on the *shtender*, and lit them.

After putting his siddur on the *amud*, the Rebbe thanked us. He also motioned to us to close the door to the chazan's right (through which the restroom door was visible) before *davening*.

Someone ran downstairs to fetch a few bochurim to complete the minyan, and after they came the Rebbe started *Ashrei*. Following the quiet *Shmoneh Esrei*, the Rebbe asked if 10 people had davened with him. Only after Reb Meir Harlig answered in the affirmative, did the Rebbe begin *chazaras hashatz*.

Another interesting episode which I witnessed a few years later:

After Maariv on *bedikas chometz* night, I was speaking to a friend in the hallway of 770 and Reb Shmuel Levitin walked by, coming from the Rebbe's room where he had organized the Rebbe's *mechiras chometz*.

Moments later, the Rebbe—unexpectedly—walked briskly passed us on his way to Reb Shmuel's room, and we heard him saying: "*ha'ikar shachachi!*" (I forgot the most important part). After the Rebbe had left Reb Shmuel's room, he told us that the Rebbe came to give him *s'char tirchah* (symbolic payment) for the *mechiras chometz*.

Shlichus to Australia

Rabbi Minkowitz had the distinct zechus of being one of six bochurim that the Rebbe personally chose to send as shlichim to reinforce the nascent Yeshiva Gedolah (Zal) in Melbourne, Australia, in 5727. The full story of this shlichus has been described at length in "Conquering Down Under" - Derher Nissan 5782. The following are excerpts of his own experiences:

During the evening *seder Chassidus* on Thursday, 6 Adar I, 5727, Rabbi Binyomin Klein tapped me on the shoulder, and told me to go to Rabbi Hodakov's office after *seder*.

I had never heard of Rabbi Hodakov asking to speak to *bochurim*, and had no idea why I was called to his office.

After *seder* we all packed into his 'office' (better described as a walk-in-closet). He told us that *bochurim shlichim* would be sent to bolster the recently opened *Yeshiva Gedolah* in Melbourne, Australia. "There are three conditions to be sent," he said. "First, you must undertake this mission בשמחה ובטוב לבב (happily and wholeheartedly). Second, you need to receive your parents' permission. Finally, you should receive a doctor's approval for the trip."

We later found out that the Rebbe had personally chosen each of us for the task. However, when we asked Rabbi Hodakov if this was coming from the Rebbe, he answered, in his typical way: "One of the conditions is that you go willingly, without feeling obligated to do so..." When would we go? "On our part, you can leave immediately. However, before leaving you'll need to receive your passports and flights..."

I was overjoyed at the opportunity, and my parents immediately gave me the go-ahead. The doctor's permission was easy: After telling Dr. Seligson why I needed the check up, he looked into my eyes and pronounced me fit to travel!

On Shabbos morning, Rabbi Hodakov was able to notify the Rebbe that all of us were ready to travel. In response, the Rebbe said: "*Nu, vet zein a farbrengen*" (there will be a



THE TALMIDIM HASHLUCHIM WITH REB ELIYAHU (YAICHEL) SIMPSON AFTER GETTING OFF THE PLANE. RABBI YOSEF MINKOWITZ IS THE FIRST ON THE RIGHT.



REB YOSEF MINKOWITZ (HOLDING THE TABLE) STANDS NEAR THE CHOZRIM AT THE REBBE'S FARBRENGEN, 6 TISHREI 5731.

farbrenge). Much of that farbrengen was dedicated to our shlichus, with the Rebbe describing our mission in remarkable terms. The Rebbe called us up to receive l'chaim from him, and when the crowd sang *Ufaratzta*, the Rebbe stood up and danced to the *niggun*.

Upon our arrival in Melbourne, we were surprised to see the legendary chossid and *ba'al mesirus nefesh* Reb Mendel Futerfas. He had been liberated from Soviet oppression just three years prior, and was in Melbourne for a short visit. The next day, the cover of Melbourne's most popular daily newspaper featured a memorable picture of Reb Mendel in his *kaske*. Below it was a smaller photo of the *talmidim hashluchim*.

In our send-off *yechidus*, the Rebbe gave us three bottles of *mashke*, instructing us to make a farbrengen in Australia. Indeed, the farbrengen we held with Reb Mendel was unforgettable. In the course of that farbrengen, he called our attention to the words of *Chaza"l* "אשה כשרה עושה רצון בעלה." He pointed out the usage of the term רצון (the will), as opposed to the usual ציווי (command). The message, he stressed, is that it doesn't suffice to merely follow the Rebbe's ציווי, his direct command. We should also be constantly cognizant of the Rebbe's רצון, striving to proactively understand—and fulfill—his desire, without the need to be told.

During the aforementioned *yechidus*, the Rebbe instructed us to use our own *kochos*, adding that the Rabbeim would shower us with supernatural strength and success. The Rebbe

also mentioned that our primary task was to show a *dugma chaya*, a living example. I'll mention one sample of the Rebbe's *kochos* being channeled through us, bringing about miraculous success:

Although our primary *shlichus* was in the Yeshiva in Melbourne, we had various opportunities to impact the broader community. For example, Hirshel Marozov and I traveled to Sydney for Sukkos 5729. Over Yom Tov, we relayed the Rebbe's *sichos* in shuls throughout the community, much to people's delight.

On Chol Hamoed, we visited dozens of schools during their "religious hours," reaching thousands of Jewish public-school students. We spoke about the message of Sukkos, and made the bracha on the *arba minim* with over 1800 Jewish children and teens.

Fast forward a number of years. One day, an unfamiliar *chassidisher bochur* approached me as I was walking on Kingston Avenue, and asked if I was in Sydney for Sukkos 5729. "The Rebbe dropped a spiritual bomb on Sydney," he exclaimed. Our presentation inspired him, and, together with a couple of friends, he transferred to a Jewish school. They continued on to Yeshiva Gedolah and ultimately came to 770. "What impacted us the most," he said, "was seeing two energetic *bochurim-shluchim* who were a *dugma chaya*, a living example, of a proud Jew." He's now a Shliach in Australia, and his friends are *chassidische yungeleit* living in Melbourne.

During my father's birthday *yechidus* in Sivan 5727, the Rebbe asked him: "What does your son write to you from Australia?" He replied that while I'm clearly satisfied, it seems from my letters that I dearly miss the environment of 770. The Rebbe responded: "The type of work the *bochurim* are doing now in Australia has not been accomplished since Moshe Rabbeinu was on *Har Sinai!*" And he added: "Please don't write this to him, so that it does not make them arrogant."

Following the Rebbe's directive, my father never relayed this *yechidus* to me. I only found out about it a number of years later when my older brother Leima relayed it to me.

After two years on *shlichus* in Australia, we returned to 770 just before Pesach 5729. On 27 Nissan, a few days after Pesach, Reb Leibel Groner told us that being that we hadn't been in *yechidus* for two years, the Rebbe wanted us to enter *yechidus* after *mincha*. That very day. That didn't leave us with much time to prepare ourselves spiritually...

Avraham Altein was the first of our group to go in. As he walked in, the Rebbe asked him "Where are the others?" We were called to join, and we each gave the Rebbe a *tzetel*. Then the Rebbe addressed us all:

"Your being here is for a common purpose, not an individual one. The *tzetlach* will be read at the Ohel in an auspicious time, including all that was written in them regarding all your physical and spiritual needs, each individual will be answered as necessary.

"It is not customary to give a *yasher koach* for a mitzvah, especially for such a great mitzvah. However, your accomplishments have caused a *nachas ruach*."

The Rebbe blessed us that our efforts should affect our personal *avodas Hashem*, and instructed us to remain in touch with the students and community in Australia. Importantly, we should remain in contact with the group that succeeded us, and guide them based on our experience.

The Rebbe continued: "A large portion of your role there was spreading Torah to others, and not pure learning. Therefore, for the forthcoming half year you should focus on learning with much *hasmada ushkida*. Certainly you will consult with the *hanholas ha Yeshiva* regarding how to arrange your *sedorim* of learning."

The Rebbe continued that those who felt that the time had come to look into *shidduchim* should not let it distract them. Rather, they should advise their parents to handle matters.

Two years later, in 5731, when the third group of shluchim left for Australia, the Rebbe requested that the previous two groups enter *yechidus* with them as well. Positioning their shlichus as a continuation of the prior groups, the Rebbe instructed that when they stop in Eretz Yisroel on the way, they should include the names of all the previous shluchim in a note placed in the *kosel*. At the end of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe gave money for tzedakah to the previous shluchim as well.

YIZKOR ON ROSH HASHANAH

Rosh Hashanah was a most special time with the Rebbe. During *tekios* we saw many spiritual things, including the Rebbe's choice of a shofar, how he arranged and rearranged the handkerchiefs, and so on.

Places near the *bima* were in high demand; people came early to grab one, and the pushing was unbelievable.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, circa 5740, I had a place directly to the left of the *bima*, from where I was able to witness the following episode:

For a few minutes preceding *tekios*, the Rebbe would cover his head and the bundles of *panim* with his tallis. The shul was absolutely silent for those moments, and the Rebbe's heart-rending sobs and cries melted the hearts of everyone close enough to hear them.

During these special moments, I unexpectedly noticed the Rebbe's hand moving to the left, towards my direction. As the Rebbe's holy hands came out from under his tallis, it seemed to me that he was reaching for the *eitz chaim* of the Sefer Torah.

Reb Mottel Deitsch, who was holding the Torah on the Rebbe's left, was standing a few inches back. As I was right next to him, I reached through the slats of the platform to nudge him forward, closer to the Rebbe. Immediately, the Rebbe took hold of the *atzei chaim*.

I don't know for certain what the Rebbe was doing. However, this brought to mind a letter in which the Rebbe writes⁵ that we should try to hold the *atzei chaim* when saying Yizkor. This was surprising to me, as I hadn't heard of a *minhag* to say Yizkor on Rosh Hashanah. A few years later, on 6 Tishrei 5743, the Rebbe revealed that the Frierdiker Rebbe had told him that on Rosh Hashanah, he would say Yizkor quietly.⁶

Before the fourth group of shluchim went in for their *yechidus* on 28 Nissan 5733, the Rebbe asked once again that the previous shluchim join the *yechidus*.

Seeing the incoming and outgoing groups gathered, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Hodakov, “וואו זיינען די פריערדיקע? (Where are the previous shluchim?)” prompting him to point to them. But the Rebbe asked again, “וואו זיינען די פריערדיקע?” adding: “אריינבריינגען זיי אריינבריינגען זיי אריינבריינגען זיי אריינבריינגען זיי אריינבריינגען זיי אריינבריינגען — why hold back and not bring them in?” Seeing that Rabbi Hodakov still didn’t understand, the Rebbe explained, “די נאך פריערדיקע - the ones before them.” When asked if they should be called now, the Rebbe said: “אויב עס וועט נישט נעמען א לאנגע צייט - If it won’t take long.”

Rabbi Hodakov left and the shluchim waited with bated breath as the Rebbe sat silently. When some of the previous groups entered, the Rebbe started the *yechidus* by saying a *maamar*.

Two years later, when the fifth group was sent, I was already on shlichus in Montreal. On 23 Iyar, at about 12:30, I heard that they’d be having their *yechidus* that day after *mincha*. I confirmed this with Rabbi Binyomin Klein, who also told me that, as in past years, the previous groups of shluchim are invited to join. However, he strongly dissuaded me from trying to make it by then.

I ignored his advice, and miraculously made it onto the next flight as its doors were closing. Boruch Hashem, I arrived during *mincha* and merited to be at that *yechidus*. Being that birthday *yechidusen* were ended that year, this was, *le’eis ata*, the last time I had *yechidus* in the Rebbe’s holy room.

“From Tonight?!”

Following my return from Australia in 5729, I was put in charge of preparing the weekday *sichos* for publication by *Vaad Hanochos Hatmimim*.

Everything the Rebbe said during Shabbos and Yom Tov *farbrengens* had to be reconstructed from memory, and my friend Rabbi Leibel Schapiro would produce the initial *hana-cha*, transcribing what the Rebbe said. The weekday *sichos*, however, seemed relatively easy, as there was a recording at our disposal. But getting it right was still exacting work.

Initially, a *bochur* would type the recorded *sicha* verbatim. I would then review it with the tape, and look up the *pesukim* and *ma’amorei Chazal* to ensure we quote them precisely. Although the Rebbe was particular not to quote a *possuk* as it’s written, he insisted that in the published *hana-cha* it should be true to the source. Then the *sicha* had to be punctuated and split into paragraphs. Since at the time, the Rebbe didn’t authorize us to add footnotes to *sichos* that weren’t *mugah*, we would include the primary source-notations within the body of the text.

On Sunday, 25 Iyar 5730, the Rebbe said a *sicha* addressing the N’shei Chabad convention, whose participants had gathered in the large shul at 770. At best, the *sichos* were usually published a number of days after they were said. This time, however, we decided that the *sicha* would be published that very night.

We had three alternating tape recorders; every five minutes Sholom Ber Eber would take a tape out to transcribe. Then he would pass it on to me for review, and move on to the next section. The *sicha*, which lasted an hour, was twice the length we expected, but we still had the initial draft ready just a few minutes after the *sicha* ended.

After the *sicha*, the women each had the opportunity to approach the Rebbe for a few moments. During that time, we edited the transcript, researched the sources, and typed the *sicha* on a stencil. The first 12-page copy was handed to the Rebbe before he went into his room.

The Rebbe looked at it in amazement, and remarked: “*Dos iz fun haynt bainacht?!?*” (This is from tonight?!)

The Rebbe went home after midnight, taking the *sicha* with him. The next morning he sent it back fully edited, with marginal notations and additions. The Rebbe indicated that we should move the sources to footnotes by numbering each one, and pointed out sources which we had left out.

This *sicha* was later published in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 8, pg. 217.



The Special Sefer Torah

In late 5733, I went on shlichus to Montreal to be the principal of Beis Rivkah.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5741, the Rebbe requested that a Sefer Torah be written to unite all Jewish children. It was started that very day.

Later on, at the *farbrengen* on the last day of that year, the Rebbe announced that there would also be ‘*Sifrei Torah Hakalim*’: Sifrei Torah will be written to include every Jew, not just children. This *mitvza* was especially dear to the Rebbe, evident from the Rebbe’s guidance on every detail of these campaigns, and his call at nearly every *farbrengen* over the next two years encouraging everyone who could to sign up more Yidden to purchase letters.³ The Rebbe specifically connected these Sifrei Torah to Tomchei Temimim and Beis Rivkah, stating that essentially every Jew was connected with these two institutions.

In Montreal, Beis Rivkah—where I served as Principal—organized a massive campaign, including flyers and ads in

Hebrew, English, French, and Romanian. Many members of N'shei Chabad went door-to-door every day.

After a week, we sent a list to the Rebbe with about a thousand names of people who had signed up for a letter in the *Sefer Torah Hakloli*. After receiving the Rebbe's reply that this seemed like a small number, we intensified our efforts. We organized volunteers to go door-to-door, block-by-block. When a street had been covered, it was marked on a wall-sized map of the city that was hanging in my house. After about two and a half months we had amassed some 50,000 sign-ups.

When I went to New York for Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz, Shabbos Chanukah, 5742, I wrote to the Rebbe about our success, and enclosed a copy of the certificate we'd given to everyone who had acquired a letter.

In the note I also asked if, as part of our advertising campaign, we could use the *possuk* in Daniel 12:

”וְבָעֵת הַהִיא יַעֲמֹד מִיִּכְאֵל הַשֵּׁר הַגָּדוֹל הַעֹמֵד עַל בְּנֵי עַמּוֹךְ וְגו' וְבָעֵת הַהִיא יִמְלֹט עַמּוֹךְ כָּל הַנִּמְצָא כְּתוּב בַּסֵּפֶר.”

“Now at that time, Michael, the great prince, who stands over the children of your people, will appear... and at that time, your people will be rescued, everyone who is found inscribed in the book.”

I gave my note to the Rebbe on Erev Shabbos, and soon after I received the Rebbe's response. There was, however, no answer about the *possuk* mentioned.

At the next day's farbrengen, the Rebbe began the third *sicha* by saying: “There's another point which, due to its importance, warrants its own farbrengen. At the very least, it deserved to be discussed at the farbrengen's start... Someone from a different country⁴ wrote to me of a concept with which I agree...”

“In Daniel, it is stated:

וְבָעֵת הַהִיא יַעֲמֹד מִיִּכְאֵל הַשֵּׁר הַגָּדוֹל הַעֹמֵד עַל בְּנֵי וְהִיָּתָה עֵת צָרָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא נִהְיָה מִהָיֹת גּוֹי עַד הָעֵת הַהִיא וְבָעֵת הַהִיא יִמְלֹט עַמּוֹךְ כָּל הַנִּמְצָא כְּתוּב בַּסֵּפֶר.”

The Rebbe pointed out: “The writer of the letter was averse to quoting the *possuk's* reference to troubling times, instead writing ‘etc.’ However, even when the world trembles, a Yid has nothing to fear. As it says in Tehillim: לא ינום ולא יישן שומר. Particularly because *Malach Michael* defends us.

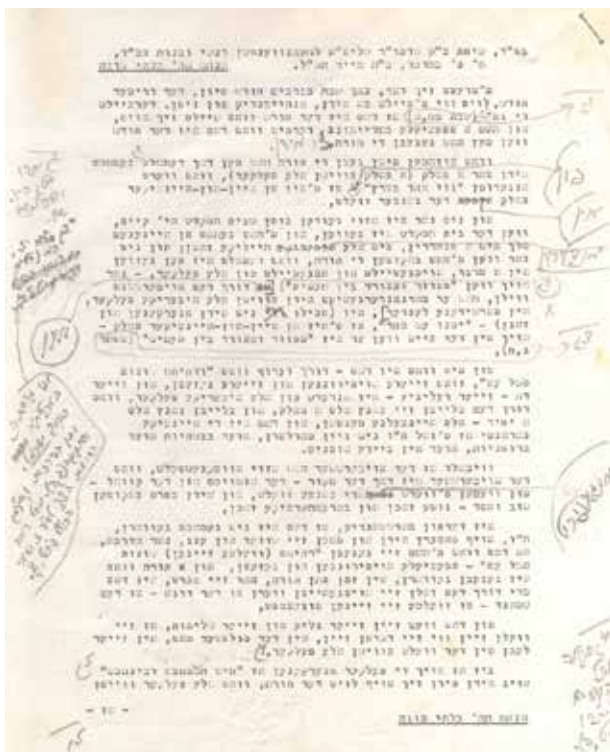
“The *possuk* continues: ‘At that time your nation will be saved, all who are written in The Book.’ On a basic level, the book referenced here is Hashem's book, the *Sefer Torah*. And the verse says that those who have a letter in the Torah will be saved from the ‘*Eis tzarah*’.

“Here you see the great importance of every Yid having a letter...”

The celebration at the completion of finishing the first *Sefer Torah Hakloli* written by Beis Rivkah was in Crown Heights.



THE REBBE SPEAKS WITH ONE OF THE WOMEN AFTER THE SICHA TO THE CONVENTION ON 25 IYAR 5730.



FIRST PAGE OF THE REBBE'S DETAILED EDITS ON THE MARGINS OF THE SICHA TO THE WOMEN, 25 IYAR 5730.

The second Siyum was scheduled, with the Rebbe's approval, for Sunday, 3 Sivan 5743, in Montreal.

We arranged a massive advertising campaign in the weeks leading up to the *siyum*, inviting all of Montreal Jewry to participate in the momentous occasion. In preparation for

the *siyum*, we set up the street of Bais Rivkah for the expected throngs, built floats with banners screaming lines like ‘Sefer Torah for a Safer World,’ and secured the participation of many prominent Rabbonim and community leaders.

On the morning of the event, however, things weren’t looking great. The weather forecast predicted rain throughout the day. In a panic, and knowing the importance of this *siyum* to the Rebbe, I phoned Rabbi Binyomin Klein, and requested that when he drives the Rebbe to 770, he should ask for a *brocha* on our behalf.

Looking up, I noticed that the clouds had parted. Baruch Hashem, the event went without a hitch, and was a great Kiddush Hashem. During the celebration, we told the crowd that the beautiful weather was thanks to the Rebbe’s blessings.

Later that day, Rabbi Klein relayed to me that when he mentioned our request to the Rebbe, he took it as a given and didn’t even respond. When he told me what time that happened, just after 10:00 AM, I realized that it coincided precisely with the time that the clouds parted in Montreal.

Community Trips to the Rebbe

In my capacity as principal of Beis Rivkah, I had the merit of arranging an annual trip for the high school students to be with the Rebbe for Yud Shevat. These trips had a strong impact on many students, including some from non frum backgrounds whose lives were strongly impacted from seeing the Rebbe. Incidentally, the joint programming we had during those trips with the Crown Heights Beis Rivkah, was the foundation for the annual High School convention.

Our visits were cherished by the Rebbe, and he showed our group a number of special *kiruvim*. For example: In the late 5730s, the students lamented that the only chance they had to see the Rebbe was from afar, from the women’s section. To resolve this issue, we had them all line up the next morning on the sidewalk outside 770, in anticipation of the Rebbe’s arrival. As he exited the car, the Rebbe saluted them, much to their excitement.

A minute later, Rabbi Groner relayed to me that the Rebbe requested they go into 770. In those days, before the Rebbe started giving out dollars each Sunday, girls never had an opportunity to go in to the main floor of 770, where the *bochurim* learned. The Rebbe came out of his room, and gave them each a coin to give to tzedakah. They were elated that their desire: רצונו לראות את מלכינו, was fulfilled.

The year 5748 was a *Shnas Hakhel*—during which the Rebbe encouraged gatherings connected to Torah and Mitzvos—so we worked together with the other Lubavitch organizations in town to take the trip to the next level. Students

from Beis Rivkah and Yeshiva Elementary schools joined, as well as public school children, Chabad House *mekurovim*, *anash*, and many more. To accommodate the broad-ranging group, we planned the trip for 5 Teves, Parshas Vayigash, which coincided with a legal holiday. On Friday morning, a caravan of ten buses, carrying about 500 passengers, rolled in, parking in the right lane of Eastern Parkway.

When the Rebbe arrived at 770 that morning, his gaze went to the buses parked near Kingston Avenue and, turning to the left, followed the line of buses all the way to Brooklyn Avenue. It seemed that the Rebbe was rather pleased with the sight.

At the Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed all who came from Montreal to say l’chaim, specifically mentioning that the women upstairs should say l’chaim as well.

When we came for Yud Shevat 5751, I brought along a school album which included our school photo—outside the newly expanded Campus Chaya Mushka—which was taken for the not-yet-published Sefer Hashluchim⁷. It also had a picture of each class (Kindergarten through High School), captioned with the names—and mother’s names—of the teachers and students.

When I went by the Rebbe for dollars on Sunday, 12 Shevat, I presented the album to the Rebbe saying: “This is a photo album of the students of Beis Rivka Campus Chaya Mushka of Montreal, together with their names. And some of these girls are coming now to get dollars.”

The Rebbe asked: “Is this for me? Or, do you need it to make money?” (I believe the Rebbe meant that the photo album could help with fundraising). I answered: “No, it’s not for money. It’s for the Rebbe.”

This exchange continued another couple times. In the end, the Rebbe said: “Okay. If so, it will remain by me. May we hear good news.” And he gave me a dollar. As I began to leave, the Rebbe gave me another dollar, saying: “So you will make money this way, through it [the photo album] being by me.” **T**

1. For Reb Uriel’s perspective, see “*Chossid and Man of the World*,” Derher Sivan 5778.

2. Tana D’vei Eliyahu Raba Perek 9.

3. See “Unite the Children,” Derher Teves 5776, and “600,000 Souls,” Iyar 5780.

4. The transcription of the sicha mistakenly says “מעבר לים” (overseas). In fact the Rebbe said “ממדינה אחרת” (a different country).

5. Likkutei Sichos vol. 14, p. 233.

6. See also Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol. 1, p. 225 fn. 5.

7. See “Cherished and Recorded,” Derher Issue 98.

SUMMARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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

Humility and Tradition

Hillel Hazaken

Hillel Hazaken was one of the most prominent *nesi'im* of the Jewish people and an invaluable link in the *mesorah* of *Torah She'baal Peh*.

Under the later Chasmonai kings, the influence of the Chachomim waned and Torah study declined. Sects like the Tzedukim, Baitusim and others began to gain traction. A *nossi* was needed to raise the banner of Torah and to reach the simple Jews, bringing them closer to Torah.

Hillel, taking over from the Bnei Beseirah as *nossi* of the Sanhedrin, revived the spirit of Torah and greatly increased its study, both in quantity of students and in quality of learning. The Gemara compares Hillel's work to that of the great leaders of the Jewish people and champions of Torah—Ezra Hasofer and Moshe Rabbeinu.¹

The Gemara relates that after coming to Eretz Yisroel from Bavel at the age of 40,² Hillel toiled in Torah and spent 40 years serving the Chachomim Shemaya and Avtalyon. Finally, he served as *nossi* of the Sanhedrin for 40 years.³

His *nesius* began 100 years before the Churban, and ended when he passed away, 40 years before the Churban (around the same time as King Hurdus's reign)⁴.

Serving beside him as *av beis din* was Shammai (after the short stint of a Tanna named Menachem)⁵. While there are a few disagreements between the two, most disagreements were

between their students – *Beis Shammai* and *Beis Hillel*. Yet, the basis of these opposing schools stemmed from the opposing outlooks and perspectives of their rabbeim – Shammai based in *Gevura* and severity, and Hillel in *Chessed* and *Giluy*.

As a sign of his greatness, he was referred to by name, without a title like Rav or Rabban. As the Rishonim say, “Gadol Meiraban – Shmo” [greater than the title Rabban – is one’s name]

The name Hillel denotes *Behilu* – light and revelation.⁶ Appropriately, he led the Jewish people in a fashion of revelation and inspiration, inclusion and tolerance. Hillel looked to see the good in people, and tried to be “*meiki!*” – finding things permissible and eligible for elevation.

Beis Hillel – his students, followed in his footsteps, taking a generally more lenient and more accepting approach. The Halacha is almost always decided in their favor.

Hillel was the father of a succession of *nesi'im* for fifteen generations, spanning the entire period of the Mishnah and into the period of the Gemara. The last of his line, Hillel Hanassi, was an Amora who lived at the same time as Rav Pappa.

The Gemara tells us that Hillel had eighty students: thirty who could split the sea like Moshe, thirty who could hold the sun up like Yehoshua, and twenty somewhere in between. The greatest among them was Rabbi Yonasan ben Uziel and the smallest (or youngest) of them all was the great Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakkai, who would later serve as *nossi* in his own right⁷.

This is hinted in the Possuk which is the acronym for Hillel “*Hamisnase lechol lerosh*”. *Lechol* in Gematriya is 30, 20, 30, alluding to his eighty great Talmidim⁸.

Hillel’s legacy goes a lot further than his actual students. The scholars of Beis Hillel are the basis of the Mishnah, and in essence, of all *Torah She’baal Peh*.

In addition to his impact on *Torah She’baal Peh*, Hillel personified the *middos* that he taught. He was a kind, humble, patient, and accepting leader of the Jewish people. After his passing, his generation lauded him, saying “*Hai Chossid! Hai Anav! Hai Talmido Shel Ezra!*” [Alas, the Chossid, alas, the humble man, alas, the student of Ezra]⁹

Hillel HaBavli

Hillel was a scion of the house of Shfatya¹⁰ descended from Dovid Hamelech on his mother’s side, and paternally

descended from Shevet Binyomin. He was born in the Jewish community of Bavel and spent the first forty years of his life there.

At age 40, Hillel arrived in Eretz Yisroel to study at the feet of the Chachomim, the *nossi* Shmaya and the *av beis din* Avtalyon. Hillel’s devotion to his teachers resulted in him becoming their greatest pupil, the link to the *mesorah* of the previous generations going back to Moshe Rabbeinu at Matan Torah.¹¹

The Gemara tells us that Hillel was very poor and would toil to be able to pay the fees to enter the Beis Midrash. The Rambam writes that he was a wood-chopper. He would earn one Trapoik (half a Dinar), which he would split, half to support himself and his family and half to the watchman of the Yeshiva. Elsewhere, the Gemara explains that Hillel had a wealthy brother named Shevna who offered to support his studious brother, Hillel refused this financial assistance, not wanting to lose the great *zechus* of studying Torah while supporting himself.¹²

One wintery Erev Shabbos, Hillel could not come up with the funds. Unable to enter the Beis Midrash, Hillel climbed up to the roof of the Yeshiva, and listened through the skylight. On Shabbos morning, when the Chachomim noticed that there was a lack of sunlight, they looked up and saw the outline of a man blocking the sun. They ran up and dug Hillel out of three Amos of snow and warmed him by the fire, exclaiming “such a man is worth being *mechalel Shabbos* for”.¹³

The Gemara introduces this story by saying that “*Hillel Mechayev Aniyim*” [Hillel obligates the poor] – no one is too poor to study, because no one is poorer than Hillel was, and nevertheless he devoted himself to Torah study.

The Rebbe quotes the Alter Rebbe that Hillel actually went above the letter of the law in this regard, and Halachically, the basic obligation of *limud haTorah* would not require a person to go to these lengths.¹⁴ The Rebbe explained that Hillel paved the way for every Jew to be able to learn and devote themselves to Torah in a manner of *middas chassidus* – beyond the basic Halacha.¹⁵

Hillel’s Chessed

Hillel’s time with Shmaya and Avtalyon did not only improve his learning but shaped his outlook and his *Middos* as well. Hillel learned from them the great importance of *ahavas Yisroel* – following Aharon’s path – promoting peace

and uplifting people to Torah with love and care.¹⁶

The Rebbe explains that Hillel's statement "*Hevei mitalmidav shel Aharon Hakohen, ohev shalom verodefshalom, ohev es habriyos u'mekorvon laTorah*" [Be of the students of Aharon, loving peace and seeking peace, loving the creations and bringing them close to Torah], is a reflection of the *chinuch* and lessons of his illustrious teachers Shmaya and Avtalyon.

Hillel and Shammai split along the lines of Moshe and Aharon in regards to their style of *ahavas Yisroel*. Moshe and Shammai, following clear-cut Torah, did not involve themselves with *reshaim*. Aharon however, would deal kindly with *reshaim* and that would bring them closer to Teshuva. Hillel too worked with even very distant people and brought even them into the fold of Torah.

This explains why Hillel requires one to not only be a lover of peace, but also a student of Aharon Hakohen, pinpointing the difference between his and Shammai's perspective.

In Tanya, Perek Lamed Beis, the Alter Rebbe quotes Hillel's two sayings about *ahavas Yisroel*. First, that "*ahavas Yisroel is Kol haTorah kulah* and the rest is commentary", and second, "Be from the Talmidim of Aharon Hakohen" to emphasize what *kind of ahava* and care is demanded. The Rebbe explains that the Alter Rebbe uses the title "*Hazaken*" for Hillel, to show that even though there is an opposing school of thought – Shammai's, Hillel's opinion as that of the "*Zaken*" – leader of the generation, is to be followed.¹⁷

With regard to Hillel's incredible statement that "*Ahavas Yisroel — is the entire Torah, and the rest is commentary*" the Rebbe explains that this refers to a deep level of *ahavas Yisroel* - looking at the source of Yidden, which is even higher than Torah. That is why Chassidus explains that one must love even a *rasha gamur*, because in truth the essence of a Yid is higher than Torah, and through that love – revealing the essence – it will illuminate their daily life – "*U'mekorvon laTorah*"¹⁸

Hillel and the Bnei Beseirah

After the passing of Shmaya and Avtalyon, the leadership went to the famed family of Tanaim – the Bnei Beseirah. While they were great Torah scholars, they were not on Hillel's level, neither were they as close as he had been to Shmaya and Avtalyon and able to pass on the *mesorah* of Torah *She'baal Peh* as Hillel could. In a lesson of humility for



EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF THE CAVE WITH THE TZIYUN OF HILLEL HAZAKEN AND HIS TALMIDIM.

the ages, the Bnei Beseirah stepped down and crowned Hillel the Bavli as *nossi* in their stead.

It happened when Erev Pesach occurred on Shabbos, and it was unclear whether or not the Korban Pesach should be offered on Shabbos. The Bnei Beseirah were trying to remember what the *din* was but they couldn't. Hillel was called in as a student of Shmaya and Avtalyon who would be able to share the correct *din*. Through examination of the *pesukim* and teachings of the *mesorah*, Hillel proceeded to prove that the Korban Pesach is indeed offered on Shabbos.

It was no coincidence that Hillel's *nesiut* began on Erev Pesach and that it was in connection to Pesach that his supremacy was proven. Hillel represents the attribute of *Malchus*, and so does the Yom Tov of Pesach, with an emphasis

on *emunah* – the *middah* of *Malchus*, which is the last of the *Middos*, and yet the basis of everything.¹⁹

Hillel the Nossi

The name Hillel stands for the words “*Hamisnase lechol lerosh*” from the *possuk* “*Lecha Hashem hagedula*” which describes Hashem’s *Middos*. ‘*Hamisnase*’ refers to *Malchus* – apropos of Hillel’s role as *nossi*–*Melech*.

Sfiras HaMalchus contains a dichotomy. On the one hand *Malchus* comes after the other *Sefiros* and all it has comes from them. On the other hand, once empowered, *Malchus* is “*Misnase*” – she rises up above the preceding *Sefiros*, encompasses their qualities, and even surpasses them. This *Middah* is clearly seen in Hillel who was both the humblest of men and the *nossi* of the entire nation.²⁰

Hillel stands in for Moshe Rabbeinu. Hillel and Moshe were from the four people who lived to 120. Hillel also follows the direct line of transmission of the *mesorah* beginning with Moshe Rabbeinu.

Like Moshe, Hillel stood primarily for Torah, the *middah* of *Emes*. Yet, just as Moshe exalted his brother Aharon and his *middah* of *Chessed* – *ahavas Yisroel*, so too, Hillel, instructs us to follow the ways of Aharon.

The correct way for a Yid to live is with a fusion of *Chessed* and *Emes*, *Ahavas Yisroel* and Torah. Instead of each side pulling the person to opposite directions, they complement each other - *Emes* informs *Chessed*, and *Chessed* enables *Emes*. Following Moshe, Hillel stood up for *Middas haChessed*.²¹

Hillel’s leadership was defined not only by Torah and *Chessed*, but also in the realm of *Chinuch*. The first *Tanna* we see to heed the call of “*Haamidu talmidim harbeh*” [Have many students] is Hillel Hazaken who had eighty exceptional *Talmidim*, ranging from Yonasan Ben Uziel to Yochanan Ben Zakkai. Hillel’s affinity for *chinuch* can be seen in his opening statement in *Pirkei Avos* “*Hevai MiTalmidav*” [be students!].

The Rebbe explains that Hillel highlighted the three main (umbrella) *Mivtzoim* – *Mivtza Chinuch* (as mentioned), *Mivtza Ahavas Yisroel* (*Ohev Shalom*- *Chessed*) and *Mivtza Torah* (*U’Mekorvon Latorah*).²²

Hillel and Shammai

Hillel and Shammai, friends and colleagues, were personifications of opposite ideologies and perspectives. Hillel (from the word *behilu* – light, and the word *Hillul* – praise²³)

champions kindness, openness, and light. Shammai, on the other hand, (from the word *shamma’i* – appraiser) stands for being strict, cautious, and controlled.

The differing attitudes is reflected both in their *hanhagos*, their rulings, and their teachings, continuing in the schools of Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel.

The difference in perspective manifested itself also in their interactions with various people. The Gemara tells three stories of Geirim who came to Shammai wanting to learn about Yiddishkeit and convert, but with preposterous conditions: One only wanted to learn *Torah Shebiksav*, one wanted to learn the entire Torah while standing on one foot, and one said he would convert only if he could become *Kohen Gadol*.

Shammai chased them away with a yardstick, while Hillel accepted them and taught them the Torah’s ways. The Gemara concludes that Shammai’s severity chases us away but Hillel’s humility brings us under the wings of the *Shechina*.²⁴

Beis Hillel’s opinion prevails in almost every case. The Gemara explains that this is because the scholars of Beis Hillel were more humble and respectful of opposing opinions than Beis Shammai, yet, the Gemara starts by stating “*Eilu va’eilu divrei Elokim chayim*” [Both opinions are words of Hashem].²⁵

The Rebbe explains how both perspectives are essentially the words of Hashem. When dealing with oneself there is benefit to Shammai’s perspective – being careful and calculated about one’s behavior and relationship with the world. When interacting with others, however, everyone must follow the rulings of Hillel with his kind and accepting attitude, embracing people on their level and lifting them up, engaging with the world in a positive manner.²⁶

Hillel’s Humility

One of the most celebrated of Hillel’s exemplary *middos* was *anavah* – humility.

The Gemara tells us that once, in the *aliyah* (attic) of Chonyo in Yericho, there was a gathering of *Chachomim* studying. Suddenly, a heavenly *bas-kol* rang out saying “there is one person here who is worthy of the *Shechina* resting on him, but the generation is not worthy.” All eyes turned to Hillel. The Rebbe explains the deep connection between humility and embodying the *Shechina*. When one is truly humble, they are able to serve as a vessel for Hashem’s holy presence.

The Rebbe elaborates on the concept of humility, highlighting its various levels. The highest level involves not only recognizing that others in the same position could do better

but also actively lowering oneself to uplift even the lowest individuals. Hillel personified this level of humility, evident in the stories of his interactions with potential *geirim*, and in the overall conduct of Beis Hillel).

It is at this elevated level of humility that the *Shechina* can radiate through a person.²⁷

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe offers an interesting perspective on Hillel, considering his Babylonian origin. As a Bavli, he had been raised in a state of “*bavel*” – mixture. In such an environment, even while he could attain true understanding of Halacha through strenuous study, Hillel was also more prone to feelings of ego as a result of his involvement in the worldly Bavel. As a result, he had to work on himself to attain true humility.

This explains the Gemara’s story that after Hillel replaced the Bnei Besirah as *nossi*, he told them that the reason why they didn’t know the Halacha was because they didn’t serve

Shmaya and Avtalyon as he did. He needed that extra time in their presence after coming from Bavel, in order to work on this *middah*.

Hillel then taught this lesson to the Bavlim in their native tongue of Aramaic: “*Negad shmei avad shmei*” (one who allows his own name to be overly publicized will lose His name). While one must lower himself down to Bavel and get involved in the its complexities in order to unearth the Halacha, one must not lower oneself, and feel one’s own ego, too much, because if so, then “*Avad Shmei*” Hashem’s name – the Torah, is lost.

At the same time, he continues, one must not shy away from study, nor steer clear of teaching, rather one must stand strong and retain humility and a genuine search for the true meaning of the Torah.²⁸

IN HIS TORAH

אָמְרוּ עָלָיו עַל הַלֵּל הַזֶּקֶן, כְּשֶׁהָיָה שֹׂמֵחַ בְּשִׂמְחַת בֵּית הַשְּׂוֹאֵבָה, אָמַר כֵּן: אִם אֲנִי
כָּאֵן — הַכֹּל כָּאֵן, וְאִם אֵינִי כָּאֵן — מִי כָּאֵן. (סוּכָה נג, א)

They said about Hillel the Elder that when he was rejoicing at Simchas Bais Hashoeva, he said, “If I am here, everyone is here; and if I am not here, who is here?”

Tosfos quotes Rashi who says that Hillel was speaking in the name of Hashem, and then quotes the Yerushalmi which understands Hillel to be referring to himself.

The Rebbe explains that these two opinions are linked. As a real *anav*, Hillel said something about himself that refers to Hashem, since he really had no existence for himself outside the *Aibershter*.²⁹

What is the connection between Simchas Beis Hashoeva and this statement? The Rebbe explains:

Hillel represents *Malchus*, specifically the way Malchus is empowered and rises above its source – *Yesod*, becoming a leader (*Hamisnase*) to *Yesod* (*Kol – Lechol lerosh*).

Simchas Beis Hashoeva is a time of *Ruach Hakodesh*, which also corresponds to *Malchus*. This is what Hillel was exclaiming, “*Im ani Kan*” (If *Malchus* is here) then *Hakol Kan* (all the energies coming through *Yesod* are present as well).

This statement follows a discussion Hillel had about Hashem’s need for the Yidden’s praise and exaltation. Hillel found words to inspire both those who excel at *ratzoi* – lofty excitement, and those who focus on *shuv* – grounded, down-to-earth involvement.

Appropriately, Hillel, symbolizing *Malchus*, with its transcendent and immanent features, is the one that highlights the relevance of Simchas Beis Hashoeva for all types of Yidden.

אָף הוּא רָאָה גְּלִגְלַת אַחַת שְׂצָפָה עַל פְּנֵי הַיָּם. אָמַר לָהּ, עַל דְּאַטְפָּתָּ, אַטְפּוּךְ.
וְסוּף מְטִיפִיךְ יְטוּפוּן: (אבות ב,ו)

He too saw a skull floating on the face of the water. He said to it: because you drowned others, they drowned you. And in the end, they that drowned you will be drowned.

The Rebbe quotes Kisvei HaArizal that the floating skull was that of Pharaoh, and Hillel as the successor of Moshe Rabbeinu “*Af Hu*” — “he too” saw this skull of Pharaoh and could tell Pharaoh’s lifeless skull that the reason he was drowned was because of what he did to the Jewish children ordering all newborns cast into the river.

On the second half of Hillel’s teaching, “*Vesof matayfoyich yetufun*” [they that drowned you will be drowned], there are two different *sichos*, in which the Rebbe takes two differing approaches.

In the first, from 5736, the Rebbe explains that Hillel is speaking to the Yidden, saying that just as you have seen justice come to Pharaoh, so too, all those who attack you will suffer the same fate.

Hillel lived in Bavel and Eretz Yisroel, while Pharaoh lived in Mitzrayim and Ninveh. Hillel also lived over a thousand years after Pharaoh and his evil decree. The fact that Hillel saw this skull, interacted with it, and found it so important to put in *Pirkei Avos* (that would make it into our *Siddur*) shows the extreme importance of Hillel’s message to the Jewish people: Hashem did not forget about the Yidden and will punish anyone who harms you!³⁰

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe offers an alternate explanation: Hillel was in fact talking to the skull itself, telling it that the end of whoever had drowned him would also be drowning.

Even while the lesson of “*Middah kenegged middah*” [retribution measure-for-measure] is a simple idea that doesn’t really need the drama of a floating skull, nevertheless, Hillel taught this lesson from the skull in order to bring rest to its wanderings.

As explained, Hillel’s seeing the skull was definitely not a natural phenomenon, and Hillel understood from its occurrence that there was something he had to do in order to bring rest to Pharaoh’s skull. In learning a lesson from Pharaoh’s demise, and his assurance that the end of Pharaoh’s assassins would be the same, Hillel brought peace to the floating skull.

Though this was the skull of Pharaoh who had tormented the Jewish people and was the antithesis of Moshe Rabbeinu in every way, when the time came for the skull to come to its final rest, Hillel with

his legendary kindness, worked to rectify it.

The Rebbe concluded that we should learn from Hillel the great importance of being *Tov labriyos* (good to all creations).³¹

הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, אִם אֵין אָנִי לִי, מִי לִי. וּכְשֶׁאֲנִי לְעַצְמִי, מָה אָנִי. וְאִם לֹא עַכְשָׁיו,
אֵימָתַי: (אבות א, ד)

He [Hillel] used to say: If I am not for me, who will be for me? And when I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, when?

Hillel became *nossi* after proving to the Bnei Besirah that the Korban Pesach, even as a *korban yochid* (brought by each individual, as opposed to the communal *korbanos*), can be offered on Shabbos, because it also has the power of a *korban tzibbur* (communal *korban*) that supersedes Shabbos.

The Rebbe explains Hillel's famous line from Pirkei Avos "*Im ein ani li mi li*" to hint in a humorous way to his ascent to *nesius*.

"*Im ein ani li mi li*" [If I am not for me, then who is for me?] – emphasizing the importance of the individual (*yochid*—like the Korban Pesach).

"*U'keshani le'atzmi moh ani*" [but when I am for myself, then what am I?] – Though, if I weren't also part of a greater picture – *korban tzibbur*, then what would I be? – I wouldn't have become *nossi*!

"*V'im lo achshav eimosai*" [and if not now, when?] The Korban Pesach needs to happen in its time, thus it is offered on Erev Pesach, its time, even when it falls on Shabbos.³²

1. Sukkah, 20a.

2. Yuma 35b.

3. Sifrei - Devorim 357.

4. Shabbos 15a.

5. Mishnayos Chagigah 2:2.

6. Likkutei Sichos, Chelek Alef pg. 157.

7. Baba Basra 134a.

8. Likkutei Levi Yitzchak al Maamarei Razal pg. 179.

9. Sanhedrin 11a.

10. Kesubos 62b. About his descendent Rebbe.

11. See Ben Yehoyada Sanhedrin 11a.

12. Sotah 21a.

13. Yuma 35b.

14. Hilchos Talmud Torah LeAdmur Hazaken, 3:4. Kuntres Achron.

15. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Dvorim 5739.

16. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5742.

17. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Matos Masei 5735.

18. Likkutei Sichos Chelek Yud Zayin, Kedoshim 2.

19. Maamar Hachodesh, Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Shabbos Hagadol 5743.

20. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Naso 5743.

21. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5745.

22. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5737.

23. Likkutei Torah, Shir Hashirim 48, 3.

24. Shabbos 31a.

25. Eiruvim 13b.

26. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim 5745.

27. Likkutei Sichos, Chelek 38, Bahalosecha 2.

28. Shabbos Parshas Naso 5743.

29. Reshimos 147.

30. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Devarim 5736.

31. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Emor 5744.

32. Likkutei Sichos - Chelek Yud Ches, Bahalosecha 2.

לזכות
 הרה"ת ר' יצחק ישראל זוגתו מרת
 רחל בריינא בניהם ובנותיהם מנחם
 מענדל זוגתו מנוחה לאנה, שרה רבקה,
 חנה פרימט ריקל, יהושע דוד שיחי
 מאגאלניק

PRACTICAL HORRORS

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

STUDYING NIGLEH ON SHABBOS

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

When it comes to structuring the learning schedule of a *tomim*, the Rebbe Rashab writes in *Kuntres Eitz Hachaim*¹ that two-thirds of each weekday should be dedicated to *nigleh*—the revealed parts of Torah, including *gemara* and *halacha*; while one-third should be dedicated to the study of *Chassidus*. Shabbos, however, should be completely dedicated to Chassidus. In a *sicha* on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, 5713, the Rebbe explained the rationale.

“During the weekdays, the spiritual illumination comes through the [lower] worlds of *Asiya* and *Yetzira*—where evil can exist—and this must be purified through the study of *nigleh*, where the focus of study is on purifying worldly matters.

Shabbos, on the other hand, receives its spiritual light emanating from the world of *Beriah*, and so the study that takes place is *pnimiyus haTorah*—the Tree of Life—loftier than involvement with the world.²

Nigleh, the Rebbe says, plays a crucial role in purifying the world. But on Shabbos, the world is so pure that *nigleh* is not necessary, and the focus should be on Chassidus.

SHOULD NIGLEH BE STUDIED ON SHABBOS?

Two months later, the Rebbe again addressed the topic of what to study on Shabbos, bringing up the question of whether we should refrain from studying *nigleh*.

“Regarding what was mentioned previously that Shabbos is the time to study *pnimiyus haTorah*, it is possible that “*shpitz-Chabad-nikes*”³ will come along and explain these words to mean that on Shabbos it is not necessary, or even “forbidden” to study *nigleh*.

Therefore, it must be made clear that it is not so. As explicitly stated in *Kuntres Eitz Chaim*, on Shabbos we should study two-thirds *nistar* [the hidden parts of Torah, including Chassidus] and one-third *nigleh*.

My father-in-law, the [Frieddiker] Rebbe, related what the Rebbe Rashab did—and this tells us that that is what [the Frieddiker Rebbe] himself did, as he rarely spoke about himself, and when he wished to speak about himself, he would relate it about his father—that on Shabbos, and even on Yom Kippur, he would study his daily *shiurim*, including the *shiurim* in *nigleh*.

Hence, even on Yom Kippur, “*Shabbas Shabboson*,” *nigleh* was studied. It is therefore certain, that on Shabbos we must learn *nigleh*, and proof can be brought from the fact that we recite *Eizehu Mekoman*⁴ on Shabbos as well.⁵

The Rebbe later clarified that when he had said that learning on Shabbos should be two-thirds Chassidus and one-third *nigleh*, he had been under the impression that this was what was written in *Kuntres Eitz Hachaim*. After looking



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 20614

it up, he saw that it says that Shabbos should be completely focused on Chassidus.

“I began to search for the source of what I had had in mind, that on Shabbos we should learn two-thirds Chassidus and one-third *nigleh*, and I found that that is what it says in the Rebbe Maharash’s will to his sons⁶.

I keep to the general principle—which is also logical—that anything revealed to others, must have a practical application for them.

So to the *temimim* who keep what the Rebbe Rashab established in *Kuntres Eitz Hachaim*—may they be blessed. But in general, the proper conduct is to follow what was stated above (two-thirds Chassidus and one-third *nigleh*).

And with that in mind, I will now discuss an idea in *nigleh*...⁷

Even so, apparently some continued to argue against the study of *nigleh* on Shabbos. The Rebbe addressed them in 5725, in the middle of a *sicha*:

“Parenthetically, there are those who complain about my speaking *nigleh* on Shabbos, as they say that Chassidim, especially Chabad Chassidim, were not accustomed to studying *nigleh* on Shabbos.

The answer to this is based on a story that my father-in-law, the [Friediker] Rebbe, said in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, who related that it once happened that the Rebbe Maharash sang *zemiros* on Shabbos. They asked him: ‘Chabad Chassidim don’t sing *zemiros*...’ and he answered that the intention was that instead of *zemiros*, there should be wordless melody (*shirah*) that is higher than *zemiros*. But if there is no singing, there can at least be the recital of the *zemiros*.

The same applies here. If people were learning Chassidus throughout Shabbos, all the better. But the reality is that besides learning Chassidus, people are

involved in other things, like sleeping or sitting idly. Therefore, I rule on the lenient side and allow myself to speak *nigleh* on Shabbos.”⁸

It should be noted that in subsequent years, the Rebbe mentioned the question of learning *nigleh* on Shabbos a number of times, addressing what he referred to as “the people who are always looking to complain...” who are unhappy that *nigleh* is discussed openly at a Shabbos farbrengen. On those occasions, the Rebbe mentioned many of the arguments mentioned above, with some additions:

At one such instance in 5737, the first point the Rebbe mentioned was that “It is necessary to know that what was said that on Shabbos one should only study Chassidus, does not affect the regular *shiurim* [that each person has], as was seen in practice.”⁹

The Rebbe also mentioned multiple times that we know that during the week, the Arizal used to learn every concept in Torah with six interpretations according to *halacha*, and one interpretation according to *nistar*, corresponding to the six days of the week and Shabbos, from which is understood that on Shabbos he did the opposite: six interpretations of *nistar* and one of *nigleh*.¹⁰ **T**

1. Kuntres Eitz Hachaim par. no. 22, 25.

2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 1 p. 53.

3. Lit. “Those at the ‘peak of Chabad.” A term for people who go to misguided extremes with Chabad customs and observances.

4. Mishnayos (*Zevachim* 5:1-8) that are said each day before beginning Shacharis.

5. Sichos Kodesh 5713 pg. 150.

6. Igros Kodesh Admur Maharash pg. 13.

7. Toras Menachem vol. 12 p. 204-205.

8. Ibid vol. 43 p. 284 note 56, Sichos Kodesh 5725 vol. 2 pg. 93-94.

9. Sichos Kodesh 5737, vol. 2, p. 509.

10. See Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 3, p. 2113, Ibid. 5746 vol. 1 pg. 302, Ibid. 5748 vol. 2 pg. 525, Sefer Hasichos 5752 pg. 64, Sichos Kodesh 5752 vol. 1 pg. 264.

On Every Jewish Home

MIVTZA MEZUZAH



לזכות הגה"ח הרב אברהם
ליב וזוגתו שיחיו שוהאט
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר למדינת
ונצואלה מאז שנת תשמ"ה
לרגל מלאות ארבעים שנה לנישואיהם (יו"ד כסלו
תשד"מ - תשפ"ד) לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

נדפס ע"י בנם הרה"ח שלום דובער
ומשפחתו שיחיו שוהאט

COMPILED BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG
WRITTEN BY:
RABBI ZELIG KATZMAN

me



MEZUZAH. The mark of a Jewish home. The ageless protection device, reminder and manifestation of Hashem's constant presence. An iconic campaign that epitomized the Rebbe's Mitzvah campaigns.

As we approach the fiftieth birthday of Mivtza Mezuzah, here is the full story of the Rebbe's tireless efforts to bolster worldwide observance of this special Mitzvah. As we all seek to feel more security in challenging times, there is no better time to tell this story and learn its lessons.



“ES SHTIMT NIT”

In an almost constant refrain throughout the Rebbe's thousands of published letters and *ma'anos* rings the phrase *bedikas hatefillin v'hamezuzos* - check your tefillin and mezuzos. In response to a varied array of troubles, illnesses and quandaries, the Rebbe took a uniform approach: A Jew's worldly condition is inextricably tied to his spiritual state. Hence, when encountering a setback, one must head back to the drawing board and determine whether it is rooted in a spiritual deficiency.

Many miraculous stories involve the Rebbe directing people to check their tefillin and mezuzos in order to resolve various issues. One fellow was instructed by the Rebbe on several occasions to check his tefillin and mezuzos, and when he responded that he had checked them and they had been found to be kosher, the Rebbe - quite uncharacteristically - shook his head and said, “*Es shtimt nit* - it doesn't make sense.”¹ Sometime later, he returned to report that he had discovered the issue...

THE BIRTH OF A MIVTZA

Although the mitzvah of mezuzah was a key part of the Rebbe's agenda from the beginning of the *nesius*, in earlier years the Rebbe conveyed its importance mostly in private correspondence and *yechidus*'n.

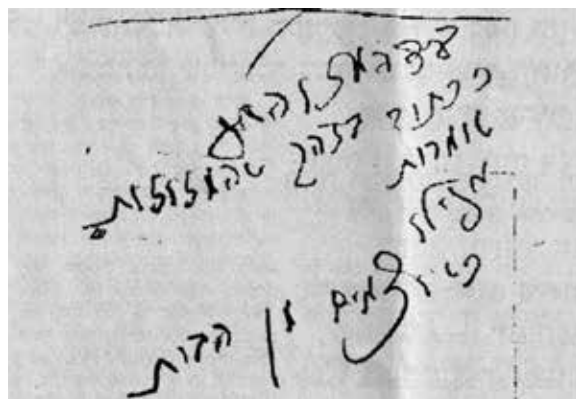
The public push for Mivtza Mezuzah, however, came in the winter of 5734. At the Yud Shevat farbrengen that year, the Rebbe spoke of the need to “bring light into the world” through adding in Torah and mitzvos. The Rebbe specifically highlighted the importance of every home having a *Tzedakah pushka*, a siddur, and a Tehillim (this was soon after the launch of the mitvzoim of *Tzedakah* and *Bayis Malei Sefarim*²), and then announced a new Mivtza: Mezuzah. “The place of the mezuzah (like the Menorah) is at the entrance to the home... It serves as a testimony to all who enter and leave the house - even to non-Jews - that the entire house and everything within is permeated with the mezuzah's message, from ‘Shema

Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad’ to its conclusion, which reiterates Hashem's promise to lengthen our days in the land that Hashem promised us, forever.”

The Rebbe concluded with a call to action: to ensure that every Jewish home, and even every room in the home, has a kosher mezuzah on the doorpost. And since this includes additional expenses, as it is necessary to check the mezuzos to ensure they're kosher, etc., there are Yidden who have already volunteered to participate in the expenses related to the effort to have kosher mezuzos on all the doors of every Jewish home. The best case scenario is when the homeowner recognizes the importance of the mitzvah and willingly pays for the mezuzah. Should they hesitate, however, the Rebbe said that a mezuzah should be given to them for free, or they should at least pay a small sum towards the full cost.³

The impetus for this Mivtza seems to have been *b'isarusa dilisata*, spurred by the initiative of Mr. Shabtai Rosenne, an Israeli ambassador who had met the Rebbe in the past. In a letter to him dated 20 Iyar, 5733⁴, the Rebbe confirms receipt of his letter in which he presented a plan for a Mivtza Mezuzah, modeled after Mivtza Tefillin which the Rebbe had launched in Iyar of 5727⁵.

After acknowledging his letter and conveying the hope



THE REBBE WRITES: בדמהזוה"תפ [בדיקת המזוזות והתפילין] ככתוב בזה"ק [בזוהר הקדוש] שהמזוזות ושומרות אפילו כשיוצאים מן הבית



that this idea reflected his general approach of spreading Yiddishkeit proudly, rejecting the ethos of the Maskilim “Be a Jew at home and a (secular) man in the street”, the Rebbe writes that he will reconsider this idea. Reconsider, the Rebbe emphasizes, as this had been tried before but it had encountered much difficulty. A Mivtza Mezuzah would entail much more buy-in from the entire family who dwells in the home and would require someone to go out and meet them there, and so on. Nevertheless, the Rebbe wrote, the fact that this was brought up again *b’hashgacha pratit*, meant that it warrants consideration. The following winter, the Rebbe launched Mivtza Mezuzah, as described above.

Immediately after the farbrengen, Chassidim got to work. On 19 Shevat, a memo was circulated in Eretz Yisroel, containing specific directives that were communicated to Chabad activists by the Rebbe’s *mazkirus* with regard to this Mivtza:

In order that the Rebbe’s call to install kosher mezuzos in Jewish homes should reach the widest possible audience, the following should be done in Eretz Yisroel:

1. Contact the heads of schools throughout the country and impress upon them the importance of installing mezuzos in the homes of the students, both for the protection of the students and their proper education in general, even when they are not in school.

2. Reach out to the Rabbonim and encourage them to speak to their congregations about the importance of this mitzvah.

*Those who cannot afford to buy their own mezuzos will be assisted, either through loans or gifts.*⁶

MEZUZAH IN RESPONSE TO A MASSACRE

It is the eve of 21 Iyar 5734, late Sunday night. Under the cover of darkness, three armed terrorists from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine cross the Israeli border from Lebanon. Late Tuesday night, on the eve of 23 Iyar, they begin their murderous rampage,



THE REBBE’S EDITS ON THE COVER OF A ‘LEKET’ (COMPILATION) FROM THE SICHA ON SHABBOS MEVORCHIM SIVAN 5734 ON MIVTZA MEZUZA. ON THE TOP RIGHT, THE REBBE ADDED “MOHIR” (URGENT).



FRANTIC PARENTS STAND OUTSIDE AS ISRAELI SPECIAL FORCES STORM THE NETIV MEIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ATTEMPTING TO RESCUE THE HOSTAGES.

shooting at whichever civilians they encounter, leaving a bloody trail in their wake.

They arrive at the Netiv Meir Elementary school at 4 am. 102 students and four teachers from a high school in Tzfas are inside sleeping, spending the night there as part of a three day school trip. The terrorists storm the building



and take 89 people hostage. The rest manage to escape.

The terrorists sent word to the Israeli government of their list of demands, which included the release of a large number of terrorists. As the negotiations dragged on, the government was getting ready to dispatch a unit of special ops soldiers of the Sayeret Matkal to rescue the hostages.

But the mission meant to safely resolve this situation ended in tragedy. As the soldiers stormed the building that afternoon, the terrorists realized what was happening and began to indiscriminately shoot at the hostages. After the dust settled and the terrorists were eliminated, there were 20 casualties and close to 70 wounded. A cloud of mourning descended across the country and throughout the Jewish world.

The following Shabbos was Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan. As usual, the Rebbe held a farbrengen that week. In the first *sicha*⁷, the Rebbe addressed the fresh and searing tragedy in a pained tone. The Rebbe cited the words of

the Rambam at the beginning of Hilchos Taanis, that when a calamity befalls the Jewish people, it is imperative that we look inwards and rectify our own deficiencies in Torah and mitzvos, instead of refusing to engage in this introspection and instead blame the occurrence on chance or natural causes.

The Rebbe continued that sometimes much effort is needed to know which area needs our focus; however, in this case, Hashem clearly showed *hashgacha pratis*:

The Rebbe shared that a chossid in Tzfas had called, and reported that he had checked the mezuzos of the school in which the children studied, and found that all 17 were *possul*, a number which corresponded to the official number of victims that was announced. When the newspapers publicized the next day that the amount of casualties was greater, the Rebbe asked to “inquire once again regarding the amount of mezuzos”. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that there were more



THE REBBE WAVES IN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE BOCHURIM HEADING OUT TO MITVZOIM ON THE NEW “MITZVAH TANKS” ON 7 TAMMUZ 5734



rooms with four additional mezuzos. Two of them were definitely *possul*, and the other two were questionably *possul*!

In a rare and remarkable comment, the Rebbe explained his recent launch of Mivtza Mezuzah. “In recent times I had a strong *koch* in Mivtza Mezuzah. **I myself did not understand the reason for it, but I was pushed incessantly to talk about Mivtza Mezuzah.**” The Rebbe did not specify who or what it was that “pushed him”, but the language points to some degree of supernatural foresight, a rare admission on the Rebbe’s part.

The Rebbe continued, “I provided reasoning, beginning with the idea of ‘*Shomer Dalsos Yisroel*’ etc. But why specifically mezuzah? There are many other mitzvos, and each mitzvah has a special *segula* (though this is not the reason to fulfill the mitzvos, we fulfill them because they are Hashem’s commands). Now it is clearly evident how this event relates to the Mitzvah of mezuzah, whose *segula* is to bring protection!”

The Rebbe called upon Rabbonim and educators to speak out about the importance of mezuzah, specifically addressing those who would be reluctant to follow his lead: “Anyone who looks in Chumash, sees that in both paragraphs of *Krias Shema* which they recite twice daily, it says “*U’chsavtom al mezuzos*”. The fact that the mezuzah effects “ה’ יסמר צאתך ובוואך” — it extends Hashem’s protection over a person both when he is in his home and when he is not — is clearly stated in the Zohar!”

In the next *sicha*, the Rebbe asked what connection there could be between putting up a mezuzah in *chutz la’aretz* and protecting Yidden in Eretz Yisroel? On a simple level, the protection a mezuzah provides is for the people that live in that house! The Rebbe explained this based on Perek 32 in Tanya, that ‘אב אחד לכולנה - all *neshamos* have one father,’ which means that all Yidden are really one, *achdus yisroel*. Hence, when a *yid* fulfills the mitzvah of mezuzah in *chutz la’aretz*, it brings protection and healing for the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel as well.

This idea was repeated in several *sichos* and letters the Rebbe wrote in the following months and years. For example, in a letter to *N’shei U’bnos Yisroel* on Rosh Chodesh Elul 5736⁸, the Rebbe writes: “Let it also be

remembered that inasmuch as all Jews constitute one body, and are bound up with one another, every Mezuzah is a Divine protection not only for the individual home, with everyone and everything in it, but each additional kosher Mezuzah that is affixed on a doorpost of any Jewish home, anywhere, adds to the protection of all our people everywhere.”

The Rebbe clarified on the next Shabbos, Parshas Bamidbar, 4 Sivan⁹, that he did not mean to suggest that the



A BROCHURE FOR THE MEZUZAH CAMPAIGN IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE MITVZA.

RASKIN FAMILY ARCHIVES



UNDER THE AUSPICES OF LUBAVITCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION, BOCHURIM MAN A MITZVAH TANK ON THE STREETS OF MANHATTAN IN THE SUMMER OF 5734. NOTE THE LOGO OF MITVZA MEZUZAH WITH THE INSCRIPTION “GUARDIAN OF ISRAEL”.

JEM YOSSIELMAN VIA JEM 12/9/15



tragedy was caused by shortcomings in the mitvzoim. The Rebbe gave the analogy of a soldier in war: A soldier wears a helmet to protect himself from the enemy's bullets. Nevertheless, when a soldier is wounded or [worse] by the enemy while failing to wear a helmet, it is obviously caused by the enemy's bullets, though were he to wear a helmet, it would protect him. The Rebbe went on to give a strong *hisorerus* and essentially inaugurate the existing five mitvzoim as a unit: Tefillin, Torah, Mezuzah, Tzedakah, and (Bayis Malei) Sefarim.

CHASSIDIM IMPLEMENT THE MIVTZA

The next day, on Erev Shavuos, the Rebbe unexpectedly went to the Ohel. On the way the Rebbe edited the *sicha* of the previous day, a task which he finished while standing inside the Ohel! The Rebbe handed the pages to Rabbi Krinsky, who immediately phoned Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos to relay the edits, so that the *Sicha* could be printed before Yom Tov and its message shared on *tahalucha*.

For many years, especially since the onset of Mivtza Tefillin before the Six Day War in 5727, it was routine for *bochurim* to venture out on mitvzoim when there was no *seider hayeshiva*. These activities were coordinated and supported by Tzach¹⁰, which was responsible for all outreach work in the New York area.

After the powerful *sichos* about mitvzoim during the recent farbrengens, Reb Dovid Raskin — *menahel* of Tzach as well as member of the *hanhala* of the yeshiva in 770 — suggested that this was not enough. A rotation of groups of *bochurim* needed to be on the streets doing mitvzoim every day.

On Wednesday, 15 Sivan, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and held a surprise farbrengen.¹¹ Its purpose was so that the Rebbe could directly communicate the importance of strengthening the mitvzoim to those listening remotely via hookup. The Rebbe announced that any child that would get more involved in mitvzoim, wherever they

were in the world, would receive a bill or coin of the local currency from the Rebbe.

Many members of *anash* joined the mitvzoim activities and Tzach's main office was busy 24 hours a day. Brochures were distributed about the importance of checking mezuzos and putting up kosher ones. Dozens of people would call Tzach's phone number (which was on the brochure) requesting home visits to check their mezuzos and a team of *bochurim* was tasked with doing the house calls.

Mivtzoim was reaching a fever pitch, but there was much more to come.

One day that week, as the *bochurim* were out on the streets doing mitvzoim, their activities were interrupted by heavy rain. Several *bochurim* came up with the idea of renting moving trucks and outfitting them with a table and two benches. This way people could be invited onto the truck and do mitzvot, regardless of the weather.

Renting trucks from U-Haul and Ryder, they repurposed them as "Mitzvah Tanks", revolutionizing the way mitvzoim was done. They covered the trucks with slogans like "Mitzvos on the spot for people on the go", and outfitted their interiors with mezuzos, tefillin and *seforim*. These iconic "tanks against assimilation", as the Rebbe dubbed them, were sent out to the frontlines of New York City to conquer the battle for the Jewish soul and Jewish survival, at this critical juncture in Jewish history.¹²

The first "tanks" left 770 on Erev Shabbos, 17 Sivan, 5734. The success was immediate, and by Sunday the fleet had doubled in size.

A few days after they launched, the Rebbe wrote an encouraging response to a *duch* of mitvzoim: "נתי' ות'ח" - ת.ח. ואשרי חלקם. ויה"ר שיקוים בכל המתעסקים במבצעים אלה - האנשים והנשים והטף - שליט"א: מי שיש לו מנה רוצה כו' ארבע - [The report] was received; many thanks, many thanks. Fortunate is their lot. May it be Hashem's will that it be fulfilled by all those involved in these mitvzoim—men, women and children—*shlita*: He who has one hundred wants [two hundred] etc. four hundred etc. I will mention it at the *tziyun*."

On Sunday 26 Sivan, Reb Dovid Raskin called a meeting to discuss how they would go about actualizing the Rebbe's call for increased involvement in mitvzoim. (At





the farbrengen the day before, the Rebbe actually gave the *mezonos* on his table to be distributed at the meeting.)

Reb Dovid wrote a report of the meeting to the Rebbe, saying that it was decided that on Motzei Shabbos there would be a community-wide meeting about mitvzoim to encourage *anash* to participate and to donate money as well. The participants in this meeting each donated \$202, the *gematria* of 'מבצע'. Soon thereafter, Rabbi Groner came out of the Rebbe's room to deliver the Rebbe's response to Reb Dovid. The Rebbe commented on their plan for an additional meeting: "הרי עד אז יכולת ואפשר להמבצעים — שליט"א לכבוש נ.י. וסביבותי' ובדרכי נועם ושלום הר יעד אז יכולת ואפשר להמבצעים" — Until then, those going on mitvzoim can conquer New York and its surroundings, in a pleasant and peaceful manner!" The Rebbe also enclosed a contribution of \$267 (the *gematria* of מבצע מזוזה) to the campaign. The unique expression in this note infused the *bochurim* with unprecedented enthusiasm.

Chassidim also took advantage of the unique opportunities inherent in the Mivtza. Whereas the other mitvzoim might entail only a brief encounter on the street, Mivtza Mezuzah enables a chossid to create a real relationship with the Yid they are helping. Coming into people's homes and installing Mezuzos lays the groundwork for a close

relationship which can encourage the entire family to continue growing in their *Shmiras haMitzvos*. One such instance was recounted by Reb Shmulik Brook, who was deeply involved in Mivtza Mezuzah for many years. "My friend met a secular Israeli man who was dating a Jewish American girl. The man wanted his girlfriend to learn a bit more about Yiddishkeit so he had us come and put up mezuzos in her house. Ultimately they grew in their learning about Yiddishkeit, and today, he is living in South Africa with Chassidishe children and grandchildren..."

Rabbi Brook shared more about his involvement in Mivtza Mezuzah. "In 5739, after I got married, Reb Avrohom Moshe Deitsch and I decided that we wanted to get involved in mitvzoim. We went to Reb Dovid Raskin and offered to take over the operation of Mivtza Mezuzah (which had declined since the original *koch*). He accepted our offer and we began to work out of my apartment. Tzach would provide us with a list of names of people who had requested to buy Mezuzos or get theirs checked, and we would send out *yungeleit* (many would go together with their wives) who volunteered to help put up and check mezuzos." After moving to several different locations, the headquarters of this Mivtza (now run by Reb Shmulik Kesselman) moved to the basement of Reb



Zalman Deitsch, where it continues today. To contact the office, call (718) 774-1780.

SUMMER OF 5734

On Shabbos Parshas Korach, the Rebbe held an unscheduled farbrengen.¹³ The reason for this unusual step was to display appreciation for those who had tirelessly dedicated themselves to the implementation of the recently launched mitvzoim and “especially Mivtza Mezuzah, which we see has been received very well. There are those who have taken upon themselves to get involved in the mitvzoim, and they do so energetically, they have thus ‘earned themselves’ a farbrengen this Shabbos, which is a completely unusual thing. [The purpose of this farbrengen] is to thank [them for what they have done until now] and to encourage and strengthen them to continue and to engage in the mitvzoim even more, with even more energy and vitality than they have displayed until now.”

The Rebbe added that if this farbrengen would cause even one Jew to add in his involvement in the mitvzoim, it would have been worth it!

Highlighting the uniqueness of this Mitzvah, the

Rebbe cited the words of the Mittlerer Rebbe in the Sid-dur¹⁴ that the Mitzvah of Mezuzah “encompasses all of the Mitzvos,” which is greater even than Chazal’s terminology about Tefillin. The Rebbe also mentioned the famous story of Onkelos the Ger,¹⁵ which demonstrates the power of the mezuzah to overcome *klipah*, to such a degree that the representatives of the Roman emperor converted to Yiddishkeit. This immediate “real world” effect of transforming darkness to light is a property of this special Mitzvah.

The Rebbe’s drive to ensure that every Jew had a kosher mezuzah intensified throughout the summer months. In a telegram dated Friday 15 Tammuz¹⁶, the Rebbe used the rare term “*bakasha nafshis*” in reference to this campaign, urging “all those who cherish our Torah, heed the mitvzos, and even those who merely carry the title ‘Jew’” to “intensify their efforts in all the mitvzoim, beginning with Mivtza Mezuzah - even before the onset of the Three Weeks...”

On Shabbos Parshas Balak, the Rebbe again spoke passionately about the mitvzoim, especially Mivtza Mezuzah, and offered a beautiful explanation on the significance of the new “Tanks” that had been dispatched.¹⁷

DEFENDING MIVTZA MEZUZAH

Like many of the Rebbe’s campaigns, this Mivtza was met with fierce opposition by many in the Frum world who raised various “holy” objections to the Rebbe’s approach. The Rebbe responded publicly to these arguments, proving the legitimacy of the Mivtza from Torah sources.

In response to the Rebbe’s words about the protection that a Mezuzah affords the Jewish home and its inhabitants, detractors quoted the Rambam¹⁸ who decried the use of Mitzvos as “*segulos*” and devices for protection as opposed to recognizing them simply as fulfillment of Hashem’s will.

The Rebbe explained that while the Rambam indeed rules that way, the Shulchan Aruch of the Beis Yosef omits



BOCHURIM ENGAGE YIDDEN ON “MIVTZOIM” IN THE SUMMER OF 5736.



that line, stating only that one who is careful in the mitzvah of mezuzah will have long life (based on the words of the *posuk* “*Lmaan yirbu yemeichem...*”). The Beis Yosef certainly saw the words of the Rambam but nevertheless chose to leave them out of his ruling.¹⁹

Others claimed that the Rebbe’s directive to check mezuzos and tefillin frequently contradicted an explicit Halacha in Shulchan Aruch²⁰, which states that one should check their mezuzos twice in seven years, and tefillin (in certain cases) never need to be checked. The Rebbe reconciled his position with this Halacha in several ways:

1. That *pesak* is only applicable to cases in which there is no doubt regarding the kashrus of the mezuzah. The Shulchan Aruch, however, does not discuss cases where it is doubtful if there’s even something inside the case, or whether the mezuzah is written on parchment or on paper. The Rebbe said that someone wrote to him that they found a parchment scroll with *Birchas Kohanim* written on it... Moreover, there are forged mezuzos being sold everywhere. Under these circumstances, more frequent *bedikos* are entirely warranted.

2. The methods used to process parchment have evolved significantly from the time of the Gemara. One manner of processing causes the ink to last longer, and another way of processing causes it to be weaker and last a much shorter time than it would have in the time of the Gemara.

3. Finally, the “Matei Efraim”, a great Talmid Chacham who was very involved in the field of practical Halacha, nevertheless ruled²¹ that one should check their tefillin and mezuzos every Elul!²²

On another occasion²³, the Rebbe responded to those who claimed that it is more important to focus on Mitzvos which are based “*bein adam lachaveiro*” (with humanitarian benefit). “The *bochurim* who give up their free time to engage in mitzvot have limited ability to promote those Mitzvos. On the other hand, the Rov who raised this criticism actually leads a shul made up mostly of businesspeople, whom he sees every Shabbos. He has plenty of time to engage and explain, with the hope that he will be able to influence his congregants to be vigilant about *Hasagas Gevul*, *Lashon Hara*, *Motzi Shem Ra*, and

giving *Ma’aser* and *Chomesh!*”

The Rebbe also questioned the sincerity of these critics, pointing out that if they were truly concerned about the neglect of these mitzvos, why had they waited till now to raise their criticisms? The Rebbe concluded that he would have preferred not to address these issues, and was speaking out only to mitigate the *agmas nefesh* that these criticisms caused the *bochurim* who devoted themselves tirelessly to these campaigns.

ENTEBBE AND ITS AFTERMATH

In the summer of 5736, the Rebbe reinvigorated this campaign with a new sense of urgency, in light of the events that had transpired.

On 29 Sivan, a routine flight from Tel Aviv to Paris was hijacked by Palestinian terrorists during a stopover in Athens, Greece. They diverted the flight to Entebbe, Uganda, then under the military dictatorship of the infamous Idi Amin, who was sympathetic to the Palestinian cause and agreed to harbor the terrorists and their hostages. The non-Jewish passengers were released. The remaining 94 Jewish passengers and the 12 member flight crew remained in captivity as the hijackers engaged in negotiations with international authorities. As the negotiations dragged on and the terrorists declared their untenable demands, the Israeli government began to plan a military option to rescue the hostages.

On 6 Tammuz, Israeli special forces embarked on a rescue operation. As the world waited with bated breath to determine the ultimate fate of the hostages, they flew to Entebbe under the cover of darkness, stormed the airport and rescued the hostages. Although three hostages and one soldier were tragically killed, it was a remarkably successful operation.²⁴

At the farbrengen on 13 Tammuz²⁵, the Rebbe proclaimed the operation to be an open miracle, and at that and subsequent farbrengens²⁶, addressed the lessons that could be learned from the incident. The ease with which the hijacking took place, the ability of a huge group



of soldiers to fly undetected, and the low casualties all pointed to an element of *hashgacha pratis*. It was a clear message from above.

The Rebbe spoke of the need to strengthen *shmiras hamitzvos* in general, but focused on Mivtza Mezuzah, saying: “One area of Torah and mitzvos that is specifically related to security is mezuzah. We see this clearly, for on the outside of the mezuzah the letters of Hashem’s name י-ד-ש are written. They stand for ‘שומר דלתות’ - ישראל - Guardian of the doors of Yisroel.” The Rebbe also cited the Zohar on the *possuk* of וּבֹאֵךְ וְיִשְׁמַר צֵאתְךָ וּבֹאֵךְ - about the protection of mezuzah. The Rebbe continued “...The mezuzah doesn’t only watch over the person who has it on their house, but every additional mezuzah adds to the protection of the Jewish nation as a whole. Therefore *every single person should check their mezuzos*.”

The Rebbe continued that this is especially true with regard to the soldiers. Every soldier involved in the operation should check their mezuzos, and make sure that they have a mezuzah on every door that requires one.

“Furthermore, since the Jewish nation is all together on the same ‘ship’, the mezuzah of every single Jew adds to the security of the Jewish nation. Therefore, every person has the responsibility to reach as many Jews as possible, wherever they may be, to ensure that they have kosher mezuzos on every door. In addition, the freed hostages should check their mezuzos to see if they are kosher, and to publicize the results. The point isn’t to catch them on a mistake; rather, seeing the results will give everyone else a sense of urgency to check their mezuzos as well.”

The Rebbe later said that it turned out that all of the hostages who checked found some problem with their mezuzos. This only added to the urgency of the previous request. Every hostage had the holy obligation to check their mezuzos and publicize the results, in order that everyone else would see the importance of having kosher mezuzos, and strengthen their own spiritual security.

In a letter from Rosh Chodesh Elul of that year²⁷, the Rebbe clarified his message: “The present situation calls for the protection of every Jewish home. True protection is that which only G-d provides, as it is written, “G-d guards the city.” To ensure this Divine guardianship, the home

has to be conducted in all aspects according to G-d’s will.

“Then the home is also an abode for the Shechinah (G-d’s Presence)..”

“In addition to this, G-d has given our people a special gift wherewith to protect the home, namely, the Mitzvah of Mezuzah. Our Sages declare explicitly that “the home is protected by it (the mezuzah).”

“Moreover, this protection embraces the members of the household also when they go out of the house...”

MEZUZOS AROUND THE WORLD

After the launch of Mivtza Mezuzah, the Rebbe worked incessantly to ensure that Jews had access to mezuzos wherever they found themselves.

In a letter dated 10 Teves 5736, Rabbi David Moshe Rosen, Chief Rabbi of the Soviet Republic of Romania, wrote to the Rebbe, saying that he had distributed the mezuzos that the Rebbe had sent for the Jews in Romania and requesting that more be sent.

The Rebbe replied on 25 Teves²⁸: “Thank you for the good news about the distribution of mezuzos etc. and understandably, I will try to obtain more, *bli neder*, and you will probably let me know...how to deliver them to you.”

In answer to a Rov who was traveling to Germany, the Rebbe wrote²⁹: “It is advisable that you bring along many **checked** mezuzos”. The Rebbe also advised him to be in touch with people in the area who were active in spreading Torah and Mitzvos, and to assist them.

Additionally, during the years 5736-7, the Rebbe led a clandestine campaign to install thousands of mezuzos at IDF bases across Eretz Yisroel. Aguch in Eretz Yisroel sent people to install these mezuzos, with most of the expenses covered by the Rebbe himself.³⁰

The following are excerpts from a *duch* written to the Rebbe by Reb Efraim Wolf on 11 Tammuz 5736: “Yesterday morning Reb Shlomo Maidanchik called Rabbi Piron [Chief Rabbi of the IDF at the time] and set a time to meet... We read the Rebbe’s letter to him... He fully



admits that the entire strength of this campaign is thanks to the Rebbe. Initially he was embarrassed by the existing situation [regarding mezuzos in the army] but he started to pressure [the relevant authorities] and now the stream of mezuzos is strengthening.

As of now, they have put up around forty or fifty thousand mezuzos, and it is an endless job... Today the situation of mezuzos [in the army] is far from worrisome, and soldiers themselves refuse to dwell in a base that has no mezuzah..."

Another account of this Mivtza was related by Reb Yisroel Glitzenstein: "In 5737, on a phone call with Reb Efraim Wolf, he said to me: 'The Rebbe wants there to be Mivtza Mezuzah on all of the army bases, are you willing to participate in Eilat and the surrounding areas?' The Rebbe asked that this be conducted secretly.

"Being that I was responsible for mivtzoim in the area, I immediately consented.

"We had to visit all of the bases, take down all the mezuzos and check them. The kosher ones we put back up. With regard to the *possule* mezuzos and the doors that needed mezuzos but had none — the Rebbe provided new

ones [for us to put up]..."

"The great enthusiasm and cooperation with the different commanders and soldiers at the various bases was remarkable..."

CHAIN REACTION

The Rebbe famously explained that doing mivtzoim, reaching out to fellow Yidden in the hope to influence them to perform even one mitzvah, has the potential to transform the other person. In addition to the fact that every mitzvah has infinite value in and of itself, Chazal tell us that "*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*," one mitzvah leads to another.

When it comes to Mivtza Mezuzah, the mitzvah has an even greater impact. Mezuzah is said to have the power to weaken a person's *yetzer hara*, thereby allowing the inner will of his *neshama* — to fulfill all of the mitzvos — to shine.³¹

In this sense, Mivtza Mezuzah is the quintessential of all the mivtzoim, and an overall potent one. **T**

1. <https://videos.jem.tv/video-player?clip=173>.

2. For more on Mivtza Bayis Malei Sefarim, see "Redefining the Home" - Derher Teves 5777.

3. Toras Menachem vol. 75 pg. 146-147.

4. Igros Kodesh vol. 28 pg 207.

5. For more on Mivtza Tefillin, see "Reconnecting" - Derher Iyar 5777.

6. Yemei Temimim vol. 6 pg. 24-25.

7. Toras Menachem vol. 76 pg. 173 and on.

8. Likkutei Sichos vol. 14 pg. 204.

9. Likkutei Sichos vol. 13 pg. 211-212.

10. For more about this organization, see "The Story of Tzach in the USA" - Derher Menachem Av 5779.

11. Toras Menachem vol. 76 pg. 309 and on.

12. For the complete story of the Mivtza Tanks, see "Are You a Tankist?" - Derher Kislev 5780.

13. Toras Menachem vol. 76 pg. 369 and on.

14. Siddur Im Dach, Shaar Hachanukah pg. 275a. [See also Ramban end of Parshas Bo].

15. Gemara Avodah Zarah 11a.

16. Likkutei Sichos vol. 13 pg. 210.

17. Toras Menachem vol. 77 pg. 10.

18. Hilchos Mezuzah 5,4.

19. Shavuos 5734; Toras Menachem vol. 76 pg. 266-267. See at length regarding this Rambam in Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, Ekev 5.

20. Orach Chayim end of Siman 39.

21. Matei Efraim Orach Chayim Siman 581 Seif 10.

22. Chof Menachem Av 5734; Toras Menachem vol. 77 pg. 175-176.

23. Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5735; Toras Menachem vol. 80 pg. 140-141.

24. For a comprehensive overview of the Entebbe Operation, see "Against All Odds" - Derher Sivan 5775.

25. Sichos Kodesh 5736 vol. 2 pg. 414.

26. Ibid. p. 408-433; 457-464; 470-480; 510; 542-543; 547-550; 577; 602-607.

27. Likkutei Sichos vol. 14 pg 203-204.

28. Igros Kodesh vol. 31 pg. 95.

29. Ibid. pg. 157.

30. For the following see Yemei Temimim vol. 7 page 20-22.

31. Likkutei Sichos vol. 13 p. 214.



מבית הגזנים
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הרה"ת ר' מנחם ארי' וזוגתו מרת עדינה
רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו לנדא
נאוואטא, קאליפארניא

MOSHIACH'S SEFER TORAH

On Yud Shevat 5730, the Rebbe famously concluded the writing of the “Moshiach’s Sefer Torah” commenced by the Frierdiker Rebbe in 5702.¹

Presented here are two documents pertaining to the launch of this campaign by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The first is a letter from Reb Shlomo Yehuda Leib Eliezerov, a distinguished chossid and rov in Yerushalayim, to his colleague Reb Shlomo Yosef Zevin, notifying him of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s campaign to begin the Moshiach Sefer Torah:

B”H. The holy city of Yerushalayim. 8 Cheshvan 5702.

My esteemed and dear friend, Harav Shlomo Yosef *shlita* Zevin,
I am delighted to notify you that today I received a telegram from our great *nossi*, the Rebbe *shlita*, translated as follows:

“On Simchas Torah I announced that I am about to begin writing a Sefer Torah with which to greet Moshiach. Anyone who wishes can take part in writing the letters. Please publicize this.”

This was his [the Rebbe] *shlita* holy dictation in this regard.

May Hashem, in His mercy, answer his prayers, and [bring to fruition] the good news he bears, as it says in the *possuk*, “בשרו מיום אל”

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

בית מפיקו"ת ירושלים ת"ו, ח' בהיוון תשי"ב.

כבוד

ירייע הרחיים כו" מוה-ר"ר. ש.ל.א.א.א.א.א.

שמה אני לבשרכם, כי היום קבלתי מלגה מאת נשיאנו הגדול כהן אדמו"ר סרן
 שלישי, וזה תרומתו :

- = בשמחת תורה הצהרתי כי עומד אני להתחיל
- = בכתיבת ספר-תורה ולפגוש עמו את המשיח
- = וכל החסן יקח חלק בכתיבת אותיות בבקשה
- = לפרסם זאת

(כסופים רבים הולכים להשיג)
 ככיל הקי שלישי, בענין זה, ה"י ברחמינו ימלא עתידתו ובשורתו המבשרת טוב
 שמייע יסופת כל ישראל בקרוב ובמחרה בימינו יחד אחו נזכה לראות בביאת הגואל
 משיח לישראל, כיר-א.

בכבוד ובכתיבה,

נשיאנו הגדול, כהן אדמו"ר סרן

שם	אב	אם	עיר	כמות	מחיר	הערות
אברהם	שמחה	רחל	ירושלים	1	100	
אברהם	שמחה	רחל	ירושלים	1	100	
אברהם	שמחה	רחל	ירושלים	1	100	
אברהם	שמחה	רחל	ירושלים	1	100	
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KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

יום ישועתו—bear the news of His salvation from day to day...” announcing the redemption of the Jewish people very soon, and speedily in our days we will merit to see the redeemer, the Moshiach of the Jewish people, amen.

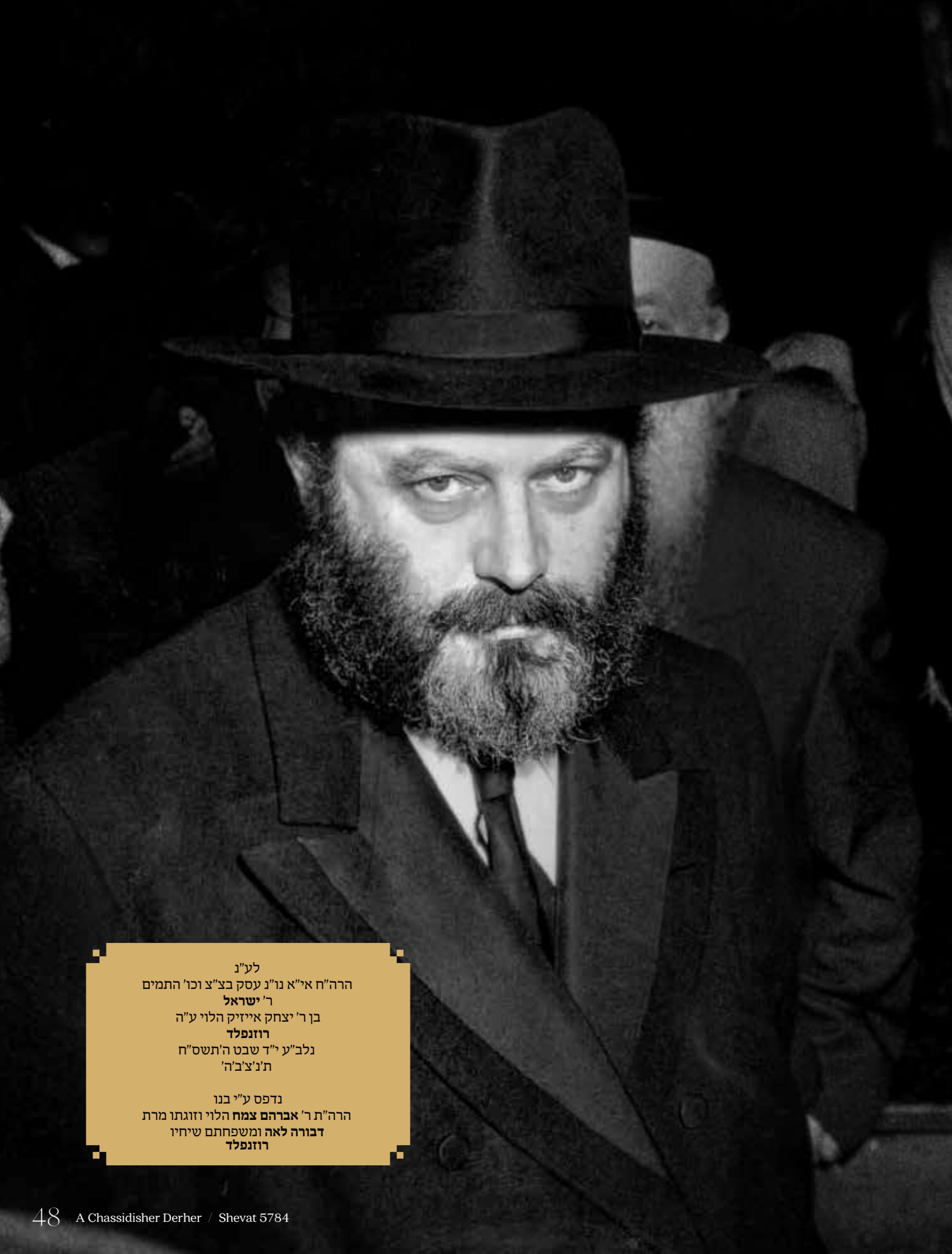
With esteem and blessing,
 Your dear friend who awaits Hashem’s salvation,
 Shlomo Y. Leib Eliezerov

The second document is a list of people who bought letters in the new Sefer Torah. It consists of 156 names, and includes the participants’ first name, family name, father’s name, mother’s name, city of residence, amount of letters purchased, chosen *possuk*, amount of money paid, and additional notes.

The list includes:
 Harav Shlomo Yehuda Leib Eliezerov, noted as “the Rebbe *shlita*’s representative.”
 Harav Avraham Chaim Na’eh, noted as the author of the *Ktzos Hashulchan*.
 Harav Yaakov Landa, noted as “Rav Av Beis Din of B’nei Brak, member of Anash.”
 Harav Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky [known as the Steipler Ga’on], noted as “one of the distinguished inhabitants of B’nei Brak.”¹

Published in *Mibeis Hagnazim*, p. 374, article 154.

1. See “Sefer Torah Shel Moshiach”, Derher Shevat 5776.



לע"נ
הרה"ח אי"א נו"נ עסק בצ"צ וכו' התמים
ר' ישראל
בן ר' יצחק אייזיק הלוי ע"ה
רוזנפלד
נלב"ע י"ד שבט ה'תשס"ח
ת"נ צ"ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' אברהם צמח הלוי וזוגתו מרת
דבורה לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רוזנפלד



THE SUN SHINES AGAIN

YUD SHEVAT 5710–5711

On Shabbos, Yud Shevat 5710, at 7:45 AM, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. One year later, at 10:40 PM on Motzei Yud Shevat 5711, the Rebbe delivered his first *maamar*, Basi Legani, formally accepting the *nesius*. This is the story of that pivotal year.

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg

THE LAST L'CHAIM

A large crowd of Chassidim gathered in the dining room on the second floor in 770. It was a wintery evening in 5710, one of the rare occasions each year when the Frierdiker Rebbe held a farbrengen. The date was Yud-Tes Kislev, Chag Hageulah.

After a few hours in “*Gan Eden*,” the farbrengen drew to a close. The Frierdiker Rebbe asked the Chassidim to sing the Niggun Hachana, the Alter Rebbe’s Niggun, and “*Nye zhuritzy chloptzy*.” He then blessed the crowd “*Az Hashem yizborach zol geben es zol zein b’hatzlocho b’gashmius ubiruchnius*, Hashem should help us with success materially and spiritually.”

The door to the room was unlocked and opened, and the Chassidim filed out. To protect the Frierdiker Rebbe’s health, attendance at these farbrengens was limited and many *yungerleit* and *bochurim* were forced to remain in the stairwell. At the close of each farbrengen, before the Rebbe’s exit, everyone was given the chance to enter the room, pick up a small glass of *mashke*, and say *l’chaim* to the Rebbe.

The Frierdiker Rebbe sat at the head of the table, his angelic face topped by his *spodik*, looking closely at each chossid. When the line was finished, the door closed.¹

THE UNTHINKABLE

Seven weeks later, on the morning of Shabbos Parshas Bo, 10 Shevat 5710, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*.

The evening prior, the maamar ‘*Basi Legani*’ was released in honor of the yahrtzeit of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s grandmother, Rebbetzin Rivkah. One of the *bochurim* had noticed a printing error in the foreword of the maamar: a ‘*Yud*’ (representing the word ‘*Yamim*’) was missing from the acronym ‘*Shlita*’ following the Frierdiker Rebbe’s title...

The *histalkus* came as a complete shock. The Frierdiker Rebbe had suffered from various health conditions for decades, but the situation had long been considered stable. *Yechidus* had been held the previous Sunday and Thursday, Reb Naftali Dulitzky had even—most unusually—gone into *yechidus* on Friday as well (this turned out to be the Frierdiker Rebbe’s final *yechidus*).

At about 7:15 Shabbos morning, the Frierdiker Rebbe asked to be brought to his *yechidus* room, scanning the room

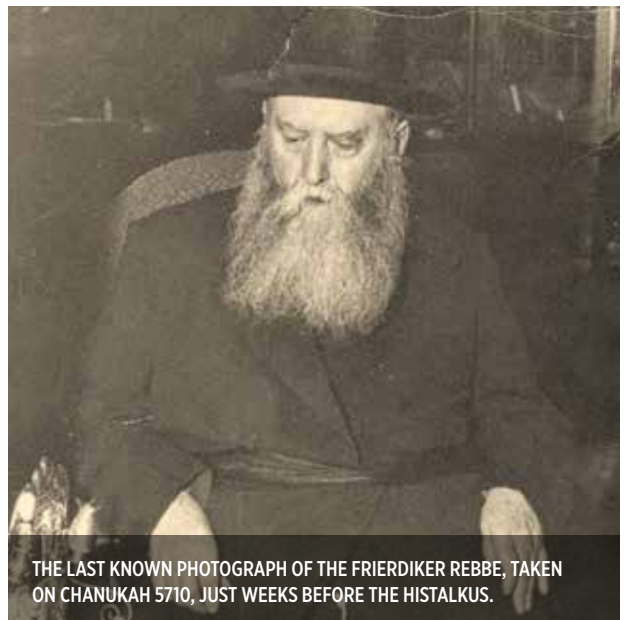
as if searching for something, but then immediately returned to his sleeping quarters. Shortly thereafter, his health began to falter. The family members notified Dr. Avrohom Seligson, who immediately realized that the Frierdiker Rebbe was suffering from a massive heart attack. Police medics and a private ambulance were called, and for a half hour, the medics did everything they possibly could, while the *bochurim* recited Tehillim fervently in the *zal*.

Suddenly, the *bochurim* saw the medics emerging from the elevator with their equipment. The only English-speaker in the group asked one of the medics, “What’s the situation?” The medic looked back somberly and replied, “Gone.” Shaken, unable to believe it, he asked a second time, but received only silence in response.

THE LEVAYA

Reb Meir Harlig was a young *bochur* at the time. In his interview with *A Chassidisher Derher*, he recalled those painful days: “The *histalkus* took place on Shabbos morning, and *bochurim* went around to the various shuls to inform everyone about what had happened. I remember that my classmate Zushe Posner came to my father’s shul during Shacharis and delivered the sad news. The following day was the *levaya*. People sobbed with such intensity, the grief was unbelievable.”²

The Rebbe arrived at 770 shortly after the *histalkus*. He quickly instructed everyone to go to the Mikvah, and arranged that a minyan be present to say Tehillim in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s room throughout the day. He also dispatched



THE LAST KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, TAKEN ON CHANUKAH 5710, JUST WEEKS BEFORE THE HISTALKUS.

bochurim to spread the news in the nearby neighborhoods.

After Shabbos, *anash* began streaming to Crown Heights from throughout the New York metropolitan area, and the office telephones started ringing off the hook; not wanting even to mention the *histalkus*, callers asked only, "Is it true?" They were told simply to come to Crown Heights, no questions asked. By morning, groups and individuals were pouring in from all corners of North America.

At 10:30, the elder Chassidim entered the *yechidus* room to perform the *taharah*. Near the door, the Rebbe stood with a Tehillim in his hand; turning to Reb Michel Piekarski, he said, "Let us recite this together," and they began to say Tehillim together from a single *sefer*. Reb Yochanan Gordon related that during the *taharah* there were "more tears than water." Around 11:00 a.m., from behind the door came the sound of choked voices calling out, "*Tahor, Tahor...*"

Before the Levaya, *anash* and Temimim were allowed to enter the room and ask *mechilah*. Meanwhile, thousands gathered outside 770; Jews from all walks of life came to honor the Friediker Rebbe.

At 12:30 p.m., a path was cleared in front of 770's entrance and the *aron* was brought out from the Friediker Rebbe's room; the Rebbe hinted that everyone should follow behind it. Throngs of people converged to touch it as it passed; the plan called for carrying the Aron all the way to the Lubavitcher Yeshiva on Bedford Avenue, but the crowd was so overwhelming that they were forced to move it into the hearse at Brooklyn Avenue.

"I merited to be one of those who carried the *aron* from 770 to where the car was waiting on Brooklyn Avenue," Rabbi

Leibel Posner related. "There were four small stools in the vehicle, one at each corner of the *aron*. The Chassidim sitting on these stools would place their hand under the *aron*, and in this way 'carry' it all the way to the cemetery. Three older Chassidim were seated inside; Reb Shmuel Levitin, Reb Berel Rivkin, and Reb Yisroel Jacobson. The fourth seat was empty. The Rebbe stood there by the open door of the car and sought an *eltore* chossid to take the fourth seat, but due to the crowding it was impossible for anyone to get through. Suddenly, the Rebbe said to me, 'Leibel, go in,' so I sat down."³

CONSOLED WITH MENACHEM

Throughout the difficult days of *shivah*, the question weighed on everyone's mind: Who would lead the flock? Who would carry on the Friediker Rebbe's work? Who would continue the *shalshes hazahav*, the golden chain of *nesius* to the future generations? For many Chassidim, the answer was obvious. They turned their eyes to the Rebbe, then known as Ramash, in the hope that he would agree to be *memaleh makom*.

In fact, from the moment of the *histalkus*, the Rebbe had assumed responsibility for many of the issues that arose. The *bochurim* noticed that when *shailos* arose among the elder Chassidim during the *taharah*, they immediately turned to



SOME OF THE THOUSANDS PRESENT AT THE LEVAYA. NOTE THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S KAPOTA PLACED ATOP THE ARON.



THE REBBE AT THE KABBOLAS PONIM OF REB LEIBEL DUBOV, 7 SHEVAT 5710. REB YITZCHOK DUBOV OF MANCHESTER SITTING TO THE RIGHT OF HIS SON, THE CHOSON.



THE REBBE READS PANIM AT THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S TZIYUN SHORTLY AFTER YUD SHEVAT 5710.

the Rebbe for guidance, despite the fact that among them were distinguished rabbonim many years his senior. Avrohom Weingarten, a *bochur* in 770, was supposed to celebrate his *tenaim* that Motzei Shabbos, and approached Reb Shmuel Levitin for guidance. Reb Shmuel was the preeminent “*tziyur*” in 770 and the *rav* of *Beis Harav*, but he demured. “Go to Ramash,” he responded.⁴

Still, the question of *nesius* wasn’t officially broached. The memory of the Frierdiker Rebbe so fresh, his absence so incomprehensible, that a new Rebbe was too painful a thought to bear.

THE THREE HANHAGOS

One of the earliest Chassidim to raise the possibility with the Rebbe was Reb Yitzchok Dubov of Manchester, who was visiting New York for his son’s wedding. He was acquainted with the Rebbe from their time in Riga, and during the *shiva* he remained glued to the Rebbe, watching his conduct closely.

Reb Yitzchok noticed three puzzling *hanhagos*. The Rebbe didn’t bang his fist over his heart when reciting “*Selach lanu*” in Shmoneh Esreh, he paused before reciting the last kaddish, and he walked back to his room before putting on Rabbeinu Tam’s tefillin.

On the fourth day of *shiva*, the Rebbe sat with Reb Yitzchok and told him a number of stories about the Frierdiker Rebbe, while everyone present crowded around to listen. Listening to the stories, Reb Yitzchok was shocked to discover that the Rebbe had answered all three questions. The Rebbe explained that when one doesn’t recite *tachanun* (for

example, during a *shiva*), one doesn’t bang by “*Selach lanu*.” During the *aveilus* for the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe said, the Frierdiker Rebbe would say something quietly before the last kaddish—and he does the same and recites a few lines of Tanya. Finally, the Rebbe said quietly to Reb Yitzchok, as per the Frierdiker Rebbe’s instruction, he puts on Tefillin of *Shimusha Rabba* and *Raavad*—privately.

Reb Yitzchok was flabbergasted. He had just witnessed open *ruach hakodesh*.⁵

The experience strengthened his resolve to raise the subject of the *nesius* that very day, before his departure. When Reb Yitzchok went in, the Rebbe said, among other things, that he hadn’t received a directive from the *shver*, the Frierdiker Rebbe. Additionally, the Rebbe said, “*Ba mir der Rebbe lebt*—for me, the Rebbe is alive.” Reb Yitzchok answered, “In 5680 [the year of the Rebbe Rashab’s *histalkus*], I’m sure the Rebbe Rashab was alive for the Frierdiker Rebbe, and nevertheless the Frierdiker Rebbe accepted the *nesius*.” The Rebbe didn’t respond.

THE REBBE REFUSES

At the close of *shiva*, the Rebbe published the *sichos* of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s final *farbrengen* of Yud-Tes Kislev, and for the first time since the *histalkus*, addressed *anash* in the preface of the *kuntres*. The Rebbe wrote that the Frierdiker Rebbe was still present with each and every chossid, and it was every person’s responsibility to bolster his *hiskashrus* by learning the *sichos* and devoting himself to the Frierdiker Rebbe’s directives. (This theme was repeated time and again

throughout the next year.)

Over the ensuing weeks, the Rebbe's *nesius* seemed to become inevitable. Chassidim increasingly began to turn to the Rebbe for advice and *brachos*, and the Rebbe would reply to their queries—especially those of the *bochurim*. (To people who inquired about material matters, the Rebbe would often note that the advice did not come with the title of 'Rebbe' attached.)

The work of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch under the Rebbe's leadership continued to expand as well. Right after the *shiva*, the Rebbe wrote to Reb Michoel Lipsker in France about the possibility of opening educational institutions for the Yidden of Morocco; Reb Michoel soon became the Rebbe's very first shliach. The Rebbe also continued to hold his regular Shabbos Mevarchim farbrengens, and began farbrenging on *Yomei D'Pagra* as well, using those opportunities to strengthen the *hiskashrus* of Chassidim to the Frieddiker Rebbe. It became increasingly clear that the Rebbe would not allow the Frieddiker Rebbe's work to falter, and was ready to carry the weight of Chassidim 'on his shoulders.'

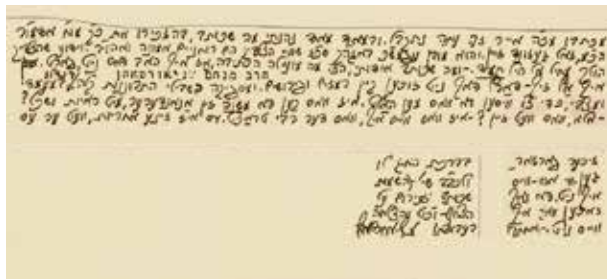
"Although the Rebbe returned to wearing his regular jacket and hat [after the *Shloshim*]," relates Rabbi Shabsi Alpern, "we all knew where things were headed. I was still a young *bochur*, but I clearly remember the talk of how to convince the Rebbe to assume the *nesius*. At some point during the year, we insisted that people cease using the term 'Ramash,' and call him only, 'Rebbe.'"

All the while, however, the Rebbe adamantly refused to show any sign of formal acceptance of *nesius*. The Rebbe returned to wearing a short jacket and refused to accept *panim*, sit at the head of the table at farbrengens, or deliver *maamarim*. The Rebbe even refused to repeat *maamarim* of the Frieddiker Rebbe in the tune of a *maamar*—as Chassidim do on a regular basis. The Rebbe gave no indication that he would accept the *nesius*.

In response to one *ksav hiskashrus* (a letter pledging submission to the Rebbe and accepting his *nesius*), the Rebbe expressed his dismay at the prospect: "I was shocked to read your letter, in which you demand of me things which were not granted to me, and which I do not have at all!"⁶ Similar messages were received by numerous Chassidim; it seemed that to the Rebbe, the concept of *nesius* was unthinkable.

WORLDWIDE PRESSURE

When Reb Yitzchok Dubov returned to England, he proceeded to the home of Reb Bentzion Shemtov in London, and after a long conversation, they both gathered the *anash*



SOME OF THE MANY LETTERS FROM 5710 IN WHICH THE REBBE FIRMLY REFUSED THE ELDER CHASSIDIM'S PUSH THAT HE ACCEPT THE NESIUS.

of London, and wrote the first *ksav hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. Reb Yitzchok urged many other Chassidim to do the same; he would speak publicly and privately, and write many letters, describing the "open *gilui Elokus* I witnessed," and encouraging everyone to commit themselves to the Rebbe. "In my opinion," he wrote in one letter, "all the Chassidim outside of America should crown him as Rebbe, and then it will automatically come, even if he doesn't want it."

His efforts were part of a larger campaign by leading Chassidim to entreat the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*, and also to encourage Chassidim around the world to accept the Rebbe as their *nossi*.

Chassidim in New York were acquainted with the Rebbe; for the previous ten years, the Rebbe had been present in 770, running the institutions of Kehos, Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Yisroel. For many, the decision to devote themselves to the Rebbe came naturally. For Chassidim in other countries, however, it was a bit more complicated. During the Frieddiker Rebbe's *nesius* in Europe, the Rebbe had spent the majority of his time away from the Chassidim, in Berlin and Paris. Numerous Chassidim had just left Russia; many of them had never spent time near the Rebbe, and had heard of him only from afar.



2 KISLEV 5714

FINANCIAL IMPEDIMENTS

On 26 Sivan, the Rebbe called a meeting in 770 about the future of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch. The Rebbe spoke of the financial strain the Mosdos were going through, and asked all present to assist in raising the necessary funds.

When nobody seemed ready to take charge, the Rebbe said, “Nu, everything will continue as it was until now. I will carry on with the Rebbe’s *kochos*. But any recent undertakings of mine will be weakened, and needless to say, I will refrain from taking upon myself any new responsibilities.”

These were difficult words to hear. The Chassidim present feared that the Rebbe was intimating his opposition to accepting the *nesius*. Rabbi Kazarnovsky stood up and emotionally declared, “Everyone present is ready to go wherever it is that you wish! The same way we followed Moshe Rabbeinu, we will follow you!”¹²

Another financial issue—that was resolved—pertained to 770’s mortgage.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in America, Agudas Chassidei Chabad took out a mortgage to pay for the purchase of 770, and at the end of Iyar 5710, Reb Yossel Robinson—a *gvir* from Chicago with a close relationship with the Rebbe—took it upon himself to pay the remainder of the debt. It was considered a very big deal relative to the financial situation at the time, and, upon Reb Yossel’s request, the Rebbe held a special *farbrenge* to mark the occasion. Chassidim say that the Rebbe had indicated that he would not be able to assume the *nesius* with such large debts weighing on 770 and Lubavitch, and upon receiving that message, Reb Yossel had agreed to take the cost on himself.¹³

However, a small but significant group of elder Chassidim were familiar with the Rebbe or had corresponded with him on Torah matters. These figures were instrumental in sharing their experiences with *anash* in their communities and encouraging them to be *mekasher* to the Rebbe. Chassidim like Reb Bentche Shemtov in London, Reb Yitzchok Dubov in Manchester, Reb Avraham Pariz in Tel Aviv, and Reb Shmerel Sasonkin and Rabbi Shlomo Zevin in Yerushalayim were among the many who were convinced that the Rebbe should be appointed *nossi*, and made sure to share their views with everyone they encountered.

Over the coming months, communities around the world, one after another, began sending *kisvei hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. Letters poured in to the Rebbe’s office in 770, and people started clamoring for *yechidus*. By summer, the sheer volume of people seeking *yechidus* necessitated the establishment of organized times for *yechidus*, replacing the prior custom of simply knocking on the Rebbe’s door and requesting entry.⁸

THE MEETINGS

Throughout that early period, meetings were held by the elder Chassidim to discuss the future. During one such gathering, the

Chassidim noted that the Rebbe explains his refusal by saying, “*M'darf hobin hora'os*” (there must be instructions), i.e., that the Frieddiker Rebbe never explicitly instructed him on this. They resolved to counter this claim.

On Beis Iyar, a minyan of elder Chassidim (including Reb Yisroel Jacobson, Reb Elya Simpson and Reb Shlomo Aaron Kazarnovsky), and *yungerleit* (including Reb Berel Baumgarten and Reb Yosef Wineberg) went to the Frieddiker Rebbe's Ohel, and read a *pan* entreating the Frieddiker Rebbe to inspire within the Rebbe a will to accept the *nesius*. Some say that from the day this petition was made, they no longer heard the Rebbe respond, “*M'darf hobin hora'os*.”⁹

That same month, the Rebbe also began accepting *panim* to read at the Ohel; on Lag B'omer, before leaving for the Ohel along with the Rebbe, each chossid approached and personally handed him their *pan*, which the Rebbe read at the Ohel.¹⁰

Taking note of the fact that the Rebbe seemed to gradually accept the *nesius* in a more public manner, Reb Yoel Kahan—a *bochur* at the time—decided it was time to officially transcribe and publish the Rebbe's Torah. He transcribed the Rebbe's farbrengen of Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan and mentioned it to one of the elder Chassidim, who in turn consulted with others. They decided to go to the Rebbe and ask for permission to print it.

An elder chossid approached the Rebbe and explained that *anash* living outside New York wished to know what was said at the farbrengens, and he therefore requested the Rebbe's permission to print Reb Yoel's transcription. “Why not?” answered the Rebbe. In order that his permission not be taken as any sort of implication, the Rebbe added: “This could have been done before [Yud Shevat] as well.” From then on, an official *chazara* headed by Reb Yoel took place after every farbrengen.¹¹

THE IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE

Tishrei was an uplifting month for Chassidim. Before Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe issued two *michtavim klalim*, one to the general public, and the other to yeshiva *bochurim*. The Tefillos were held in the *yechidus* room of the Frieddiker Rebbe (as they were all year), and there was an incredible crush of *bochurim* around the Rebbe's place, in the front corner near the door. The Rebbe gave out *lekach* on erev Yom Kippur, and even allowed Chassidim to *bentch* on his Lulav and Esrog on Sukkos.

5711-1951, 5710-1950



SOME OF THE NOTICES PRINTED IN JEWISH NEWSPAPERS ON 26 TEVES 5711 REGARDING THE KSAV HISKASHRUS OF 24 TEVES AND THE KABBOLAS HANESIU OF THE REBBE ON 10 SHEVAT.



END OF THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE SICHA OF SHABBOS MEVORCHIM SIVAN 5710. NOTE THAT THE REBBE CROSSED A LINE THROUGH "רבי" WRITING INSTEAD "הרב" - THE REBBE'S INITIALS.

The Rebbe's farbrengens on Sukkos and Simchas Torah drew immense crowds. The *Simchas Beis Hasho'evah* farbrengen was so packed that the entire Sukkah began to shake. At the Simchas Torah farbrengen, the Rebbe himself asked that people stop pushing; "Why is there pushing," the Rebbe said, "the Rebbe is found everywhere; those who push demonstrate a lack of *emunah*..."

The day of Simchas Torah marked a special turning point. When the Rebbe received *Chosson Bereishis*, the gabbai, Reb Berel Chaskind, emotionally called up the Rebbe with the title "*Adoneinu Moreinu V'rabeinu*." This was the first time that the Rebbe had been called to the Torah this way publicly, and everyone present was filled with emotion. "The prevailing feeling," Reb Yoel Kahan wrote afterwards, "was that the gabbai was not speaking alone, but that everyone in the room was reciting it together."

One of the *bochurim*, Reb Mordechai Dubinsky, wrote several letters in the months following Tishrei, where he describes the state of affairs.

"There is an ideological debate going on—should we pressure the Rebbe to 'officially' accept the *nesius*. Unofficially, he is leading us in the fullest sense of the word. Three days a week are formally scheduled for *yechidus*, and he answers everyone. We have been witness to open miracles from his *brachos*. Things are proceeding from day to day. He is called up to the Torah as '*Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabeinu*,' and in his presence, his personal name is never mentioned. The only thing missing is *maamarim*, and the rumor is that this will change after Yud Shevat."

A month later, he describes Yud-Tes Kislev. "On the second night, the Rebbe farbrenged for a crowd which filled every inch of the *zal*, without exaggeration. We stood crammed like sardines; the heat was unbearably stifling..."

"Thank G-d that we have reached this point; all that is lacking is the 'official' aspects, like a *shtraimel*, *sirtuk*, and so



A PICTURE SAID TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN ON 10 SHEVAT 5711 AS THE REBBE READ THE KSAV HISKASHRUS OF CHASSIDIM.

on. He is the Rebbe in an active manner for the vast majority of *anash* from throughout the world; dozens of letters arrive literally every day, and *yechidus* is three times a week for five hours or more..."

LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Events showed that the matter was finally coming to a resolution. It seemed that the Rebbe would accept the *nesius* any day. So, on Chof-Daled Teves, a large group of elder Chassidim came to the Rebbe's room to present a "*K'sav Hiskashrus*," on behalf of all of the Chassidim in America, accepting the Rebbe as leader. Many of them were openly emotional, especially those who remembered the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe. When the Rebbe read the first line of the letter he began crying and said, "Please go out. This has no connection to me."¹⁴

On 26 Teves, articles appeared in the New York Jewish newspapers reporting that the Lubavitcher Chassidim had crowned a new Rebbe on the 24th of Teves, and that the official acceptance of leadership would take place on Yud Shevat.

When the Rebbe saw this, he instructed Rabbi Hodakov to contact the newspapers' editorial staff immediately and demand that they print follow-up articles denying the previous report. Rabbi Hodakov called Rabbi Kazarnovsky, Rabbi Jacobson and Reb Shmuel Levitin, asking that they handle the situation. Together, the three entered the Rebbe's room and begged him to reconsider. Reb Shmuel Levitin argued that the newspapers had not written that the Rebbe had accepted the *nesius*—but rather that the Chassidim had accepted the Rebbe as their leader, something that could not be denied. In the end, the Rebbe agreed not to contact the newspapers.

On Rosh Chodesh Shevat, the Rebbe wrote two letters to all Chassidim: one letter encouraged them all to learn the Maamar of "*Basi L'gani*" in honor of Yud Shevat, and the second detailed the appropriate conduct for the upcoming *Yom Hilula*.

V'ZARACH HASHEMESH

"A large crowd of *anash* and *bochurim* awaited the Rebbe's arrival," Reb Moshe Dubinsky writes about the eve of Yud Shevat. "Large delegations of people had arrived from across the United States and Canada for this special day. The *shtrander* where the Rebbe was set to lead the *tefillos* was in the



THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH OF THE REBBE TAKEN AFTER THE KABBOLAS HANESIUS, 30 SHEVAT 5711, AT THE WEDDING OF REB LEIBEL POSNER.

Friediker Rebbe's *yechidus* room, but due to the enormous crowd, many people were forced to stand in the hallway as well... Throughout the davening the Rebbe was holding himself back from crying.”

The next morning, a *pan* was written to the Friediker Rebbe on behalf of all *anash*, asking that the Rebbe should finally accept the *nesius* openly, and that it should be with great success. Before leaving to the Ohel, a group of elder Chassidim entered the Rebbe's room. Harav Meir Ashkenazi gave the Rebbe a “*Ksav Hiskashrus*” on behalf of *anash* from across the globe. “Accepting the *nesius* will bring the *geula* closer,” he said to the Rebbe while handing it over. “Since the *geula* is dependent on ‘*yafutzu mayanosecha chutza*,’ the Rebbe accepting the *nesius* and saying Chassidus will hasten its coming.” The Rebbe responded: “Yes, but I need to be assisted as well.”

At the Ohel, Chassidim once again read the *pan* about the Rebbe's *nesius*, this time in the Rebbe's presence. “The *pan* was handed to the Rebbe and he put it in his pocket,” writes Reb Yitzchak Pevzner. “As the Rebbe took it back out of his pocket, he started to shake. Trying to hold back his emotions, the Rebbe bit his lips, but then burst out in tears and wept for quite a while. The hour was late, so the Rebbe didn't read the full *nusach*, just the names of those who signed.”

The Rebbe returned to 770 a short while before *shkiah*. The farbrengen was set to begin at 8:00 p.m.

Reb Moshe Herson was a 13-year-old *bochur* at the time. “The pushing was extremely intense,” he remembers. “Many more people than expected came to the farbrengen and there was an enormous crowd. In addition, it was a freezing cold

day and some people fainted outside. A lot of people couldn't make their way into the small *zal* and just listened to the farbrengen from the speakers.”¹⁵

After visiting his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe entered the *zal* at 9:45 p.m. Although no one knew it at the time, the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein had the foresight to record this farbrengen for posterity.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about strengthening *hiskashrus* and continuing to fulfill the shlichus that the Friediker Rebbe gave each person.

“It says that when someone goes to a new place they should follow its customs,” the Rebbe started off in the next *sicha*. “When one comes to a town or country, he needs to show that he is taking on the customs of the new location. In America, proceedings always need to begin with a ‘statement’ and the statement needs to be some novel idea that shocks the listener. I don't know if this will shock the listener...”

Here the Rebbe issued the famous “statement” about the three loves: *ahavas Hashem*, *ahavas haTorah* and *ahavas Yisroel*. All three are interconnected and one cannot have one without the other. It is one essence and an essence cannot be divided.

After several *sichos* and *niggunim*, an elderly chossid arose. Reb Avraham Sender Nemtsov was hoping to hear a *maamar*, and he made a public request. He stood up and emotionally announced: “The talks are good, but the *olam* is asking to hear Chassidus.”

The room fell silent. Everyone held their breath to see how the Rebbe would respond.

“I HAVE COME TO MY GARDEN”

10:40 p.m. The Rebbe's face was profoundly serious. He opened up the *kuntres* 'Basi Legani 5710' of the Frieddiker Rebbe, and looking into it, began to speak: "In the *maamar* that the Rebbe gave out for the day of his *histalkus*..." Choking with emotion, the Rebbe continued: "The Rebbe begins with *basi legani*." Suddenly, the Rebbe changed to the tune of a *maamar*: "*Basi legani achosi kalah*..."

At first, the room was filled with tumult as everyone tried to stand up. Soon, the *zal* again fell silent.

"The emotions that passed through the hearts of each and every *chossid* at that moment are beyond description," Reb Moshe Herson relates. "Here it is! Finally, the Rebbe is accepting the *nesius*!"

The Rebbe said the *maamar* with two pauses in the middle, during which he asked for the *niggunim* of the Rabbeim to be sung. During the first pause, Rabbi Nemtsov jumped up and called out: "Chassidim, say after me! We must *bencht* 'Shehechyanu v'kiyemanu vehigianu lizman hazeh!' Hashem has helped us that we have a Rebbe!" With great joy, Rabbi Nemtsov recited the *bracha* of 'Shehechyanu' and everyone answered after him word for word.

The last few minutes of the *maamar* were filled with bitter tears as the Rebbe spoke about the pain that the Frieddiker Rebbe suffered on behalf of *klal Yisroel*. The Rebbe spoke with great emotion about the *dor hashvi'i*, and the *avoda* expected of us in this generation.

"Now it is all dependent on us!" the Rebbe concluded. "This applies to every one of us, being that we are in the seventh generation... May we merit that very soon, we will be reunited with the Rebbe, and he will take us out of the spiritual and physical exile and bring us to the *geula sheleimah b'meheira b'yameinu amen*!"

A NEW NOSSI

After the *maamar*, the Rebbe made a declaration:¹⁶

"Fellow Jews, listen now! Traditionally, Chabad has demanded that every individual do *avoda* on his own, and not just rely on the Rabbeim.... I will not (*chas v'sholom*) completely withhold any assistance, to the best of my ability. However, 'Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for

the fear of Heaven'.. The [Frieddiker] Rebbe used to caution Chassidim against self-delusion. Every individual *chossid* must himself transform the folly of the *sitra achara*—and the seething disposition of his animal soul—to *kedusha*."

The *farbrengen* concluded at 12:25 a.m., the Rebbe returned to his room to the *niggun* of "*Ki Besimcha*," and the singing and dancing continued for a long while afterwards.

Reb Yoel relates: "The official *chazara* ended at 3:00 a.m. Although we hadn't slept the night before and hadn't eaten during the day, the *bochurim* remained and continued *chazering* the *maamar* until 6:30 a.m.

"We woke up a couple of hours later and continued *chazering* the *maamar* throughout the day. The same was on Thursday and Friday until we merited to hear the second *maamar* from the Rebbe on Shabbos. We lived with the *maamar* and continued *chazering* it again and again. In between we took a bite to eat and slept a little, but the entire *koch* and *chayus* was in the *maamar* that we heard from the Rebbe."



In the first *Maamar*, the Rebbe set out the vision of *Dor Hashvi'i* in clear and succinct terms:

"This is demanded of every one of us, the *Dor Hashvi'i*, וְכָל הַשְּׁבִיעִין חַבִּיבִין:

"Although we are in the seventh generation not of our own choosing and not as a result of our own *avoda*; in certain ways, perhaps contrary to our will, nevertheless, כל הַשְּׁבִיעִין חַבִּיבִין, we are now in the time of דְּמִשְׁיחָא, and near the end of דְּמִשְׁיחָא, and our *avoda* is to complete the process of drawing down the Shechinah, the essence of the Shechinah— specifically into this lowly world."

May we merit to fulfill the Rebbe's vision very soon. As the Rebbe concludes the *Maamar*: "Now, the entire matter is left to us, the *Dor Hashvi'i*. And may we merit to see the Rebbe here in this world, in a physical body... *vehu yigaleinu*." ¹

1. Yimei Bireishis pg. 44

2. Derher Teves 5777, pg. 42.

3. Interview with Derher, Teves 5783.

4. Yimei Bireishis pg. 71.

5. Ibid pg. 92

6. 26 Adar 5710. Ibid pg. 114.

7. Derher Shevat 5779 pg. 42

8. Yimei Bireishis pg. 195

9. Ibid. p. 145.

10. Ibid. p. 155.

11. Ibid. p. 158, 175

12. Ibid. p. 175-180.

13. See "The Rebbe's Gvir," Derher Teves 5782.

14. Ibid. p. 344

15. Techayeinu magazine, Shevat 5776.

16. Translation is from "Proceeding Together" by Sichos in English.



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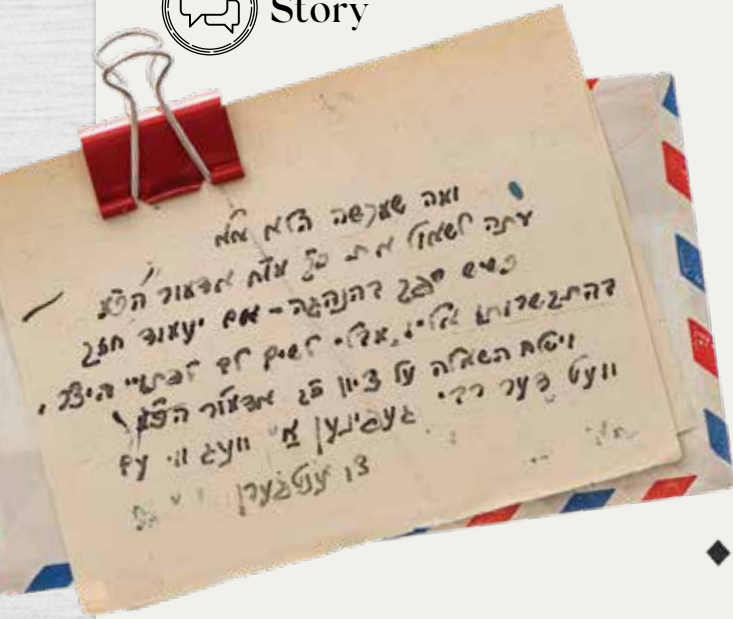
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Story



לזכות
 הרה"ת ר' שמואל משה הכהן וזוגתו
 מרת דניאלה ומשפחתם שיחיו
 לעזעל
 לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות

נדפס ע"י
 משפחתם שיחיו

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Learning Rashi Sichos



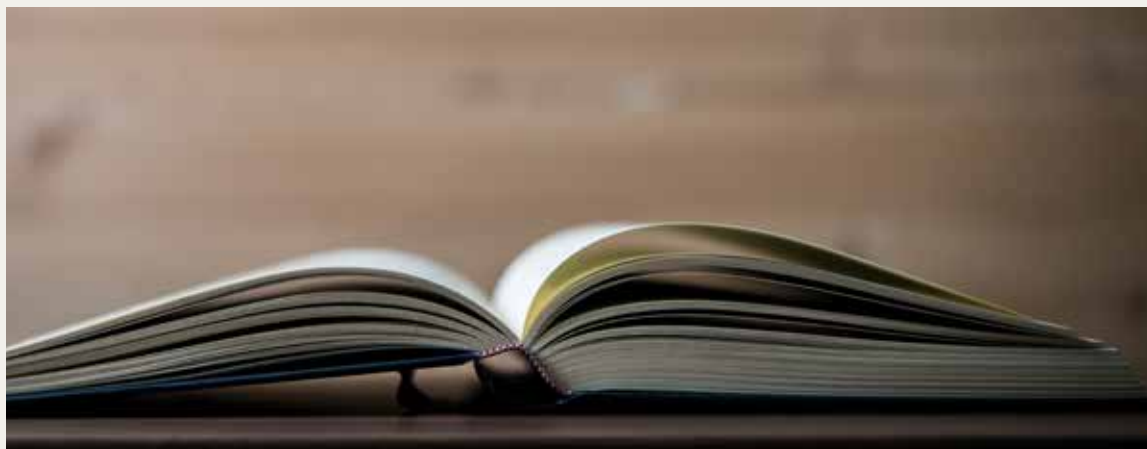
AS TOLD BY
RABBI MORDECHAI SITORSKY
 (Jackson, NJ)

My family is from a chassidische background. When I was twelve years old, my father took me to the Rebbe's farbrengen on Motzei Shabbos Yud Shevat 5733 and from then on I started coming to farbrengens regularly. When one of my Lubavitcher friends showed me a Rashi *sicha* in Likkutei Sichos Chelek Yud, I became “hooked” on the Rebbe’s *sichos*. Although I never learned in Lubavitcher Yeshivos and don’t keep Chabad *minhagim*, I am a passionate chossid of the Rebbe, especially involved in learning

the Rebbe’s Torah.

After my marriage I continued coming to farbrengens and was pleased to discover that my father-in-law was very involved in learning the Rebbe’s *sichos* as well, especially on Rashi.

To my chagrin, one of my sons was negatively influenced against Lubavitch in some of the yeshivos he attended. He refused to hear of anything about Lubavitch or learn the Rebbe’s *sichos*. This bothered me very much,



especially since he is such a *lamdan* and I knew he would appreciate and gain so much from learning the Rebbe's *sichos*.

For many years, I lived in close proximity to the Ohel and utilized the opportunity to go often. On several occasions I mentioned this specific son in my *tzetel* and requested a special bracha that he merit to avail himself of the sweet wellsprings of the Rebbe's *sichos*.

Two years ago, my family arranged a Shabbos get-away in honor of my sixtieth birthday at a large home in Morristown, NJ owned by a Lubavitcher chossid.

At one point over Shabbos I was surprised to see my son, who is a *mechanech* at a prestigious *cheder*, open a Gutnick Chumash that was on the bookshelf. He perused Parshas Vayeitzei, which he was teaching to his *talmidim* at the time, and when he read one of the explanations from the Rebbe's Rashi *sichos* he was so amazed that he started learning more *sichos* on his own. This was a short time after I had been to the Ohel and had davened, among other things, that he "come around" to learning the Rebbe's *sichos*!

Some time later, a fellow who lives on my son's block, with whom he is not close at all, knocked on his door and asked if he would accept a gift of some *seforim*. He was renovating his house and was looking to empty some bookshelves.

"Sure," my son replied and was astonished when the

man handed him a five volume set of *Biurim Lepirush Rashi Al HaTorah* - a compilation of the Rebbe's Rashi *sichos*!

He immediately called me and marveled at the tremendous *hashgacha pratis*. The fact that this neighbor offered him some *seforim* was in itself strange since they had no relationship at all. That this was the set he randomly received after starting to learn the Rebbe's Rashi *sichos* was truly incredible.

We discussed the idea that this was certainly a gift from the Rebbe. As Chazal say¹ "כל תלמיד חכם שאומרים 'דבר שמועה מפיו בעולם הזה שפתותיו דובבות בקבר'. A Tzaddik derives much pleasure when we learn his Torah, and we felt that the Rebbe had sent my son a special gift for starting to learn his *sichos*.

Since then he has purchased almost the entire set of Likkutei Sichos. In addition to him learning them with a *geshmak*, I have had the immense pleasure of learning the Rebbe's *sichos* together with my son, whose appreciation for the Rebbe's Torah continues to grow. **T**

1. Bechoros 31b.

YOUR STORY

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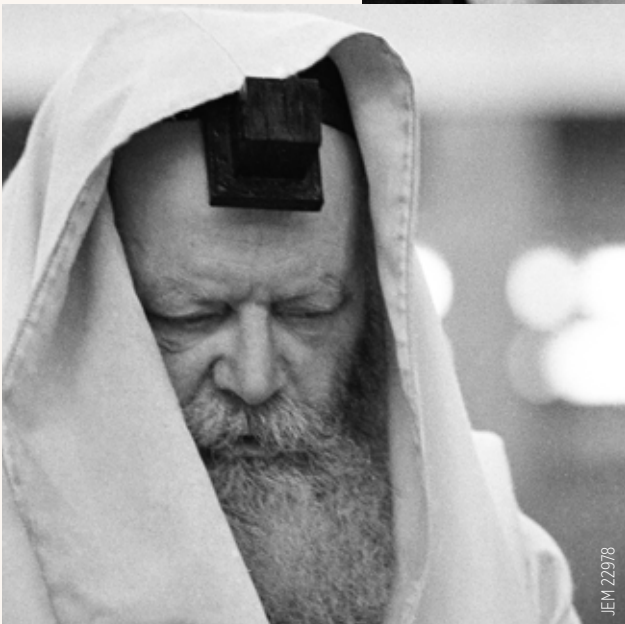


JEM 10/2938

THE DECIDING VOTE

Highlights from Yud Shevat 5736 with the Rebbe.

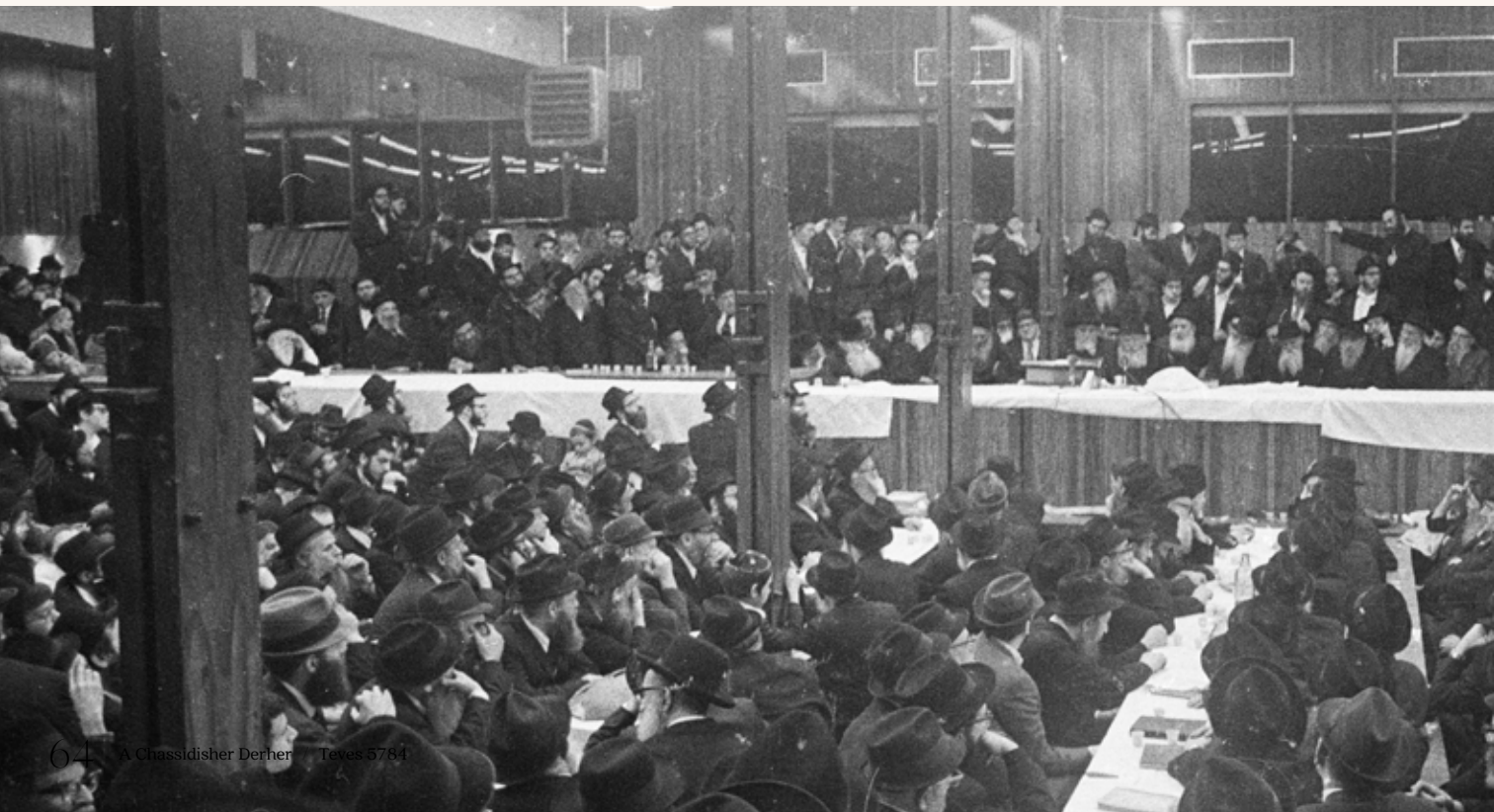
Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer



The Rebbe davens at the *amud* and receives the third aliyah at the Torah.



The Rebbe opened the farbrengen speaking of the Friediker Rebbe's unwavering *mesiras nefesh*, calling on everyone to take inspiration on the Yom Hilula and follow his example in our own lives.





JEM 287462

During the farbrengen, the Rebbe said several lengthy sichos, including a *hadran* on *Maseches Kesubos*, and recited the *Maamar Basi Legani*.



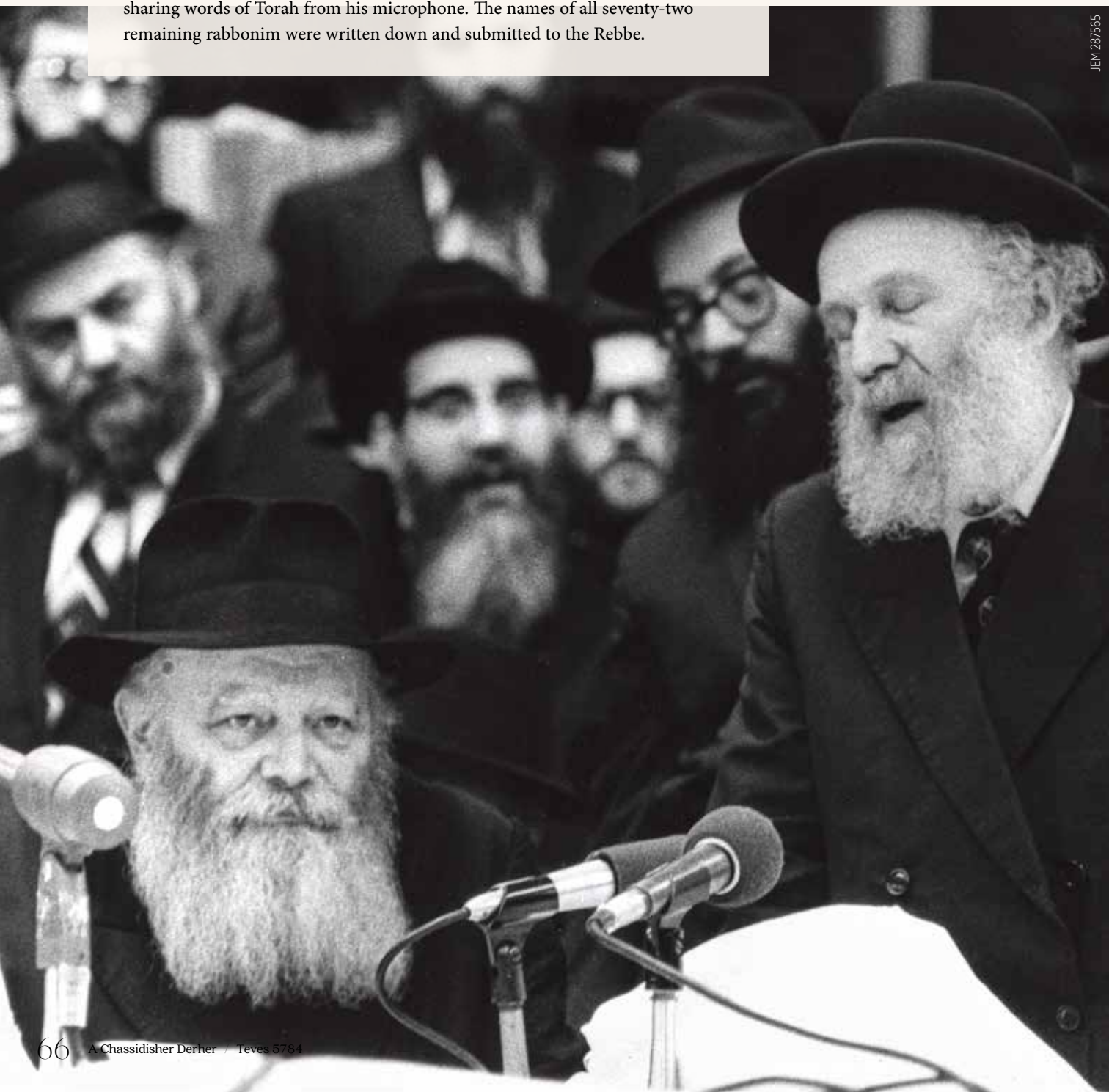
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In the fourth *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke passionately of the inevitable danger to Jewish life that would be caused by recent attempts recognized by the United Nations to influence the forfeiting of land in Eretz Yisroel. Just as they pass resolutions by vote, the Rebbe requested a resolution be made in similar vein at the farbrengen, by seventy-two Rabbonim present, firmly asserting the Jewish People's sole and rightful ownership to the entirety of Eretz Yisroel, ruling a *pask din* according to Torah, which has the strength to determine and alter reality.

In a rare occurrence, the Rebbe called up a number of prominent Rabbonim and Roshei Yeshiva to approach and announce their *psak*, sharing words of Torah from his microphone. The names of all seventy-two remaining rabbonim were written down and submitted to the Rebbe.





JEM 72986



The Rebbe then requested that everyone say l'chaim with a lively niggun, echoing the minhag of the Sanhedrin¹ to hold a festive meal after an important ruling (like deciding on a leap year).

1. See Sanhedrin 70b.

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.

Taharas Hamishpacha with Unmarried Girls

Thank you for bringing informative and relevant content from the Rebbe's teachings to the public. I would like to share two *hora'os* from the Rebbe about my involvement with N'shei Ubnos Chabad that I believe can be instructive for others as well:

The Rebbe once spoke about Nshei Chabad in conjunction with the "Week of the Jewish Woman" held by the convention, with classes, speeches and activities over several days. In Montreal, we weren't able to do a full week but decided to hold an "Evening of the Jewish Woman".

I went to all the Jewish sisterhoods in Montreal, asking them to choose one member of their organization to honor at the event. Unfortunately, the plan was met with a lot of opposition from some members and rabbis from the local *frum* community who felt that honoring women publicly was "*pritzus*".

I wrote to the Rebbe asking whether I should go ahead with the event and publicize it, ignoring the naysayers, or should I try to explain and justify our position. A short time later Rabbi Leibel Groner informed me of the

Rebbe's answer: to completely ignore the opposition and continue with the event as planned.

Once, in the 5720's I went into *yechidus* for my husband in honor of his birthday. The Rebbe turned to me and asked what I do in *inyanei haklal* (communal activities). I told the Rebbe that I was involved in N'shei Chabad which holds different events and that we had a shiur every two weeks, alternating between Chassidus and Halacha.

The Rebbe then inquired which halachos we learn and I answered Hilchos Shabbos. The Rebbe asked why we don't learn about Taharas Hamishpacha and I said that the shiur was for N'shei ubnos Chabad and unmarried girls participate.

The Rebbe then asked what the girls' ages were and I said that they were around 18-20. The Rebbe told me that Taharas Hamishpacha would be relevant for them sooner or later and that since they were hearing about these matters anyway, it was better that they should hear about it in a holy and refined context (*tzad hakedushah*).

Since then, when it comes to anything related to Taharas Hamishpacha, I say yes!

Mrs. Chani Shmukler
MONTREAL, CANADA

Sicha in French

I want to share a heartfelt *yasher koach* to the Chassidisher Derher magazine for the uplifting and meaningful issue of the recent Tammuz Derher (magazine 132).

The interview-farbrenge with Rabbi Shlomo Zarchi, the article about Shabbos in the Rebbe's presence and the beautiful presentation of pictures and recollections of Chassidim from winter 5752 were all so apropos and much needed food for thought around Gimmel Tammuz.

I found the section of pictures and recollections of Chassidim from 5752 especially moving and pertinent in light of what the Rebbe said numerous times about the Frierdiker Rebbe, that special emphasis should be placed on following the last *hora'os* and learning the Torah that was said in the last few years before his *histalkus*.

It should be noted that I believe a discrepancy crept in on pg. 76, where it speaks about the famous *sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev 5752. In this special *sicha* the Rebbe spoke at length about the spiritual transformation of the country of France from a bastion of antireligious "enlightened" values to a country rich in Yiddishkeit and *hafotzas hamaayonos* through the efforts of the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe, and the *shluchim*, showing how the world is ready for the *geulah*. The Rebbe also said that this was evident in the transformation of the French anthem to a chassidische niggun with the

words "*Ha'aderes vhaemuna*".

It mentions that on this occasion, the Rebbe said a *sicha* in French to the guests at the farbrenge. I want to point out that in the different accounts of the farbrenge (*bilti mugah*) as well as the *yomanim* (diaries) documenting the farbrenge we do not find mention of this.

I believe that the author got confused with the farbrenge of Shabbos Parshas Chukas-Balak 5749, when a group of French guests were also present and the Rebbe spoke about the spiritual revolution which took place in recent generations in France.

On that occasion the Rebbe turned to the guests and began speaking in French saying, "To all the guests who arrived from France for the *Chag Hageulah* - "*Bruchim Haboim*". We give you the honor of singing your niggun - "*Haaderes vhaemuna*" until "*Hatehilah vhatiferes lchai olamim*". The Rebbe continued that when they return home they should publicize the message of "*Haaderes vhaemuna*" with *simcha v'tuv levav* and *bon mazel* (much *mazel*). Then the Rebbe started singing this niggun and encouraging it very strongly with much *simcha*. (This short *sicha* and description was included in *he'ara* 84 of the *mugedike sicha*. (Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol.2 pg. 571).

Thank you again,

Avrohom Moshe Dyce
GRESHAM, OREGON

