

Derher

A Chassidisher

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אליה, נשאתי
את-עיני--
הישובי, בשמים.

תהלים קכג, א



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לעילוי נשמת
הו"ח אי"א רב פעלים עוסק בצ"צ
ר' אברהם חיים ישראל ב"ר יוסף ע"ה
נלב"ע ביום י"ח אדר-שני ה'תשע"ו
וזוגתו מרת רעכיל ע"ה בת ר' עזריאל איכל הי"ד
נלב"ע ביום ב' ניסן ה'תשע"ה
ראפאפארט
טורונטו, קנדה
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נתרם ע"י בניהם ובנותיהם ומשפחתם שיחיו



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' דובער וזוגתו מרת שושנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
יוניק
להצלחה מרובה בכל אשר יפנו בגו"ר, מתוך הרחבה ונחת
חסידותי מכל יו"ח

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גופין

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה וזוגתו מרת רינה
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שיחיו
גולדהירש

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
ב"ר אברהם (מאיוור) ז"ל
דריזין
נלב"ע יום ג' דחור"מ פסח י"ט ניסן ה'תש"פ
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' חיים יצחק עזרא וזוגתו מרת פיגא ומשפחתם שיחיו
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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 הבהיר י"א ניסן
קכ"ב שנה להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר



שיר המעלות אליך נשאתי את-עיני הישבי בשמים:

Yud-Aleph Nissan is upon us, marking the beginning of the Rebbe's 123rd year.

The Rebbe points out that in the introduction to Kapitel 123 in Tehillim (written by authoritative commentators), the theme of the chapter is summarized: "The Psalmist laments the long and agonizing exile we've endured..." It details some of the pain and shame we've suffered through the generations and turns to Hashem in prayer, asking that He put an end to it and bring the *Geulah*.

The way he approaches his prayer is through "lifting my eyes to you, Who dwells in the heavens." Of course it's true that Hashem is with us here on earth too, the Rebbe notes. As a matter of fact, through our *avoda* in transforming this physical world into a holy place, Hashem dwells on earth even more than in the heavens. Still, before his prayer, the Psalmist turns his eyes heavenward and connects with Hashem in that way.

The Rebbe concludes with a powerful lesson for us to take from this Kapitel: Even though our most important *avoda* must be carried out within the physical world, we need to preface our work with a turn toward the heavens. We need to maintain a healthy connection with our Father in Heaven, and only then can we be guaranteed success in

our *avoda* within the world.¹

Approaching Yud-Aleph Nissan, the lesson rings true in our relationship and *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe: Throughout the year, we busy ourselves carrying out the Rebbe's *shlichus*, doing all we can to bring the *Geulah*. Our *avoda* manifests in many details: learning, davening, spreading Chassidus, mitzvot, and so much more. But Yud-Aleph Nissan is an opportune time to take a moment and reflect; as the Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom, 11 Nissan: "*Lhisboded*," to spend time alone in reflection. Take a moment to reinforce our connection to the Rebbe and our commitment to better ourselves as his Chassidim; to recommit ourselves to learning the Rebbe's Torah and following the path he sets for us, paving the way for the ultimate *Geulah*.

One of the most important methods of connecting with the Rebbe on a daily basis is of course the daily study of Rambam. This month of Nissan 5784 marks 40 years since the Rebbe launched *Takkanas Limud HaRambam*, and thus presents yet another unique opportunity to strengthen our commitment to this daily channel of connection.

May we merit that even before Yud-Aleph Nissan, we will experience the fulfillment of words from this year's Kapitel, "חננו ה', חננו", that Hashem will have mercy on us and bring the *Geulah*, in this month of *Geulah*, may it be *teikef umiyad Mamosh!*

בברכת חג הפסח כשר ושמוח.

The Editors
ימי הפורים ה'תשפ"ד

1. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayera, Chof Cheshvan 5743; Hisvaaduyos p. 458.



דעם רבינ'ס וווארט

A Word on the Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

תזריע

אדם מיִידיה בעור־בשרו שזאת או־ספחת או
בהרת וְהיה בעור־בשרו לְנֹעַ צִרְעַת וְהוּבֹא אֶל־
אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן אוֹ אֶל־אֶחָד מִבְּנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים: (יג, ב)

If a person has a se'eis, a sappachas, or a baheres on the skin of his flesh, and it forms a lesion of tzara'as on the skin of his flesh, he shall be brought to Aaron hakohen, or to one of his sons, the kohanim.

Rashi on this *possuk* notes that by *gzeiras hakasuv* (scriptural decree) both the impurity of *tzora'as*, as well as the purification thereof, come into effect exclusively by the pronouncement of a *kohen*.

This *halacha*—that the *tumah* of *tzora'as* comes into effect through the *kohen's* words—is unique to *tzora'as*, whereas all other forms of impurity (e.g. contact with a dead body) arise from the circumstances themselves, and do not need a *kohen's* declaration.

Another difference between the *tumah* of *tzora'as* and other *tumos* is that there is an extra measure of severity by *tzora'as*—the *metzora* is required to leave all three camps and sit in isolation.

The two differences go hand-in-hand with one another: The *kohen* is referred to as a “man of kindness” (“תומך ואוריד”) (לאיש חסידך) and personifies the qualities of kindness and love (as represented in the *birkas kohanim* which must be given “באהבה”—with love).

Therefore, it is precisely the *kohen* who is given the task of declaring a person *tamei* (with *tzora'as*), because only a

person who is kind can be trusted to pass such severe judgment regarding a fellow *Yid*. This individual will be deeply pained by the severity of the verdict, and will not approach it lightly. If he does go through with the declaration, we can be confident that it is a well-founded decision based on rigorous and thorough investigation.

Takeaway:

We can learn from this just how careful we must be when it comes to passing judgment on another *Yid* who appears to be lacking in *Yiddishkeit*, *rachmana litzlan*. When it comes to making such a critical and severe pronouncement, even the greatest sage who is well-versed in the entire Torah—but is lacking in true *ahavas Yisroel*—will not suffice. Only a man of kindness, whose heart burns with love for every single *Yid*—only someone like that can deliver such a verdict.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 27, p. 88)

מצורע

זאת תהיה תורת המצורע ביום מִהְרָתוֹ וְהוּבֹא אֶל־
הַכֹּהֵן: וַיֵּצֵא הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־מַחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְרָאָה הַכֹּהֵן
וְהָיָה נִרְפָּא נֹגַע־הַצִּרְעַת מִן־הַצִּרְעַת: (יד, ב-ג)

This shall be the law of the person afflicted with *tzora'as*, on the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the kohen. The kohen shall go outside the camp, and the kohen shall look, and behold, the lesion of *tzora'as* has healed in the afflicted person.

Meforshim ask a question: What is the meaning of the words “וְהוּבָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן”; “and he was brought to the kohen”? Wasn’t it the *kohen* who went out to him, as the next *possuk* continues: “וַיֵּצֵא הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה”; “And the kohen went outside the camp”?

An additional question: Why does the *possuk* use the word [“וְהוּבָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן”; “and he was brought [to the kohen]”] (instead of “וּבָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן”)? The language implies that the *metzora* was brought to the *kohen* against his will.

Chassidus explains: The *metzora* symbolizes an individual who has committed extremely serious *aveiros*. The fact that he needs to sit outside the camp is because of his complete dissociation, so to speak, with the realm of *kedusha*.

Regarding such a person, the *possuk* says “וְהוּבָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן”: Every single *Yid*—even one who has committed the most serious of *aveiros*—will ultimately do *teshuvah* and return to the “camp of *kedusha*”. And if he does not do so of his own will, he will be compelled to do so from above, as the *Novi Yechezkel* says: “But what enters your mind shall not come about, what you say, ‘Let us be like the nations, like the families of the lands...’”

The Torah continues: “וַיֵּצֵא הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה”: Though the beginning of the process may have to be in a manner of “וְהוּבָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן”—against his will—Hashem’s desire is that, ultimately, the *teshuvah* should not be forced upon the person, but rather that it should ultimately penetrate the core and affect his *pnimiyus*. With this process, the *metzora* transforms his place and his standing—both geographically as well as spiritually—to the point where it is ultimately even higher than where the *kohen* himself is coming from. For this reason, the *kohen* is called to join the *metzora* in his place—*michutz lamachaneh*.

Takeaway:

In previous generations, the *parsha* was referred to as *Zos Tihyeh*, but recently it is increasingly called *Parshas Metzora*—even though the *metzora* is a seemingly negative phenomenon. The reason for this is that since we are very near to the era of Moshiach, and the light of Moshiach already shines in the Torah, we are granted the ability to transform what *seems* negative to us now, and make it holy; to transform the *metzora* into holiness, to the extent that it becomes an entire *parsha* in Torah.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 7, p. 100)

אחרי מות

וְאֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא הֵבִיאוּ לְהַקְרִיב קָרְבָּן לַה' לִפְנֵי מִשְׁכַּן ה' דָּם יִחַשֵׁב לְאִישׁ הַהוּא דָּם שָׁפָךְ... לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־זִבְחֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הֵם זֹבְחִים עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׁדָה וְהֵבִיאוּם לַה' אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן וְנִבְחָר

זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמִים לַה' אוֹתָם: וְזָרַק הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־מִזְבֵּחַ ה' פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהַקְטִיר הַחֶלֶב לְרִיחַ נִיחַח לַה': (י', ד-ו)

Any man [who slaughters an animal outside the camp], but does not bring it to the entrance of the Ohel Moed to offer up as a sacrifice to Hashem before the Mishkan of Hashem, this [act] shall be counted for that man as blood he has shed blood...in order that the B'nei Yisroel should bring their offerings which they slaughter on the open field, and bring them to Hashem, to the entrance of the Ohel Moed, to the kohen, and slaughter them as peace offerings to the Hashem. And the kohen shall dash the blood upon the mizbeich of Hashem at the entrance of the Ohel Moed, and he shall cause the fat to go up in smoke, as a pleasing fragrance to Hashem.

In terms of one’s personal *avodas Hashem*, the animal’s fats symbolize one’s capacity to experience pleasure (since pleasure increases the fat in the body), while the blood of the animal symbolizes a person’s ardor and enthusiasm.

The *yetzer hara* might come to a person and say: “True, your ‘fats’ and ‘blood’ (the attributes of pleasure and enthusiasm) need to be channeled towards *kedusha* (the *מִזְבֵּחַ ה'*)—but you can also use them in other areas! Obviously not if it’s against Torah (which is ‘מחוץ למחנה’), *chas v’shalom*, but for kosher and permissible activities which can be categorized as neutral pursuits (*reshus*); such as for the purpose of making a livelihood and the like—it is still ‘במחנה’..!”

The Torah therefore tells us that the blood and fats must only be offered on the *mizbeach* (“על מזבח ה'”) and nowhere else—even if that place is “within the camp”; meaning, not directly opposed to *kedusha*. One’s pleasure, fervor, and enthusiasm must be reserved exclusively for *kedusha*, and not for any other purpose; not even for things that are permissible—or even important. If they are not matters of *kedusha*, they should be done out of necessity, but are not to be invested in with zeal and enthusiasm.

Takeaway:

“כך אומנתו של יצר הרע”—such is the scheme of the *yetzer hara*: He first tries to convince a *Yid* to invest his *chayus* and *geshmak* in permissible things—still within the “מחנה”. Once he has succeeded with that, he goes on to convince the *Yid* to invest his *chayus* and *geshmak* **outside** of the “מחנה”; and the *yetzer hara* doesn’t stop there... The way to deal with this enemy is to not allow him entry to begin with; not to concede to his first “compromise”.

How do we have the *koach* to withstand his pressure? “בראתי לו תורה תבלין”: By studying this *parsha* in the Torah, which instructs us on what to do and what not to do, then not only are we protected, but we can actually transform the *yetzer hara* and count him as one of us!

(Sichas leil Yud Alef Nissan 5741)

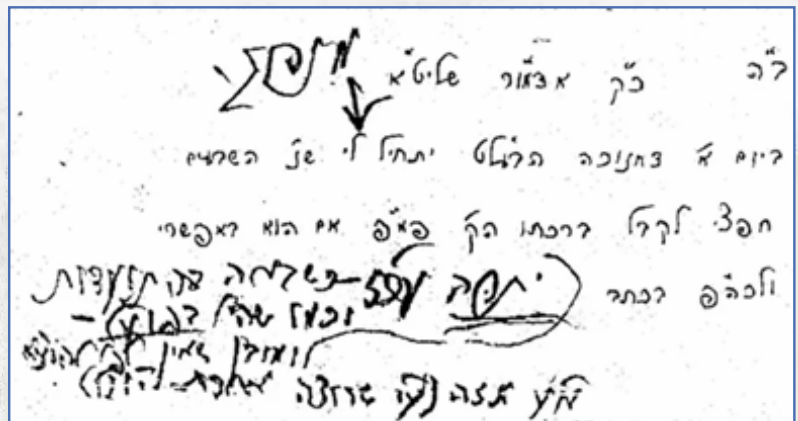


כתב יד קודש



לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' גדלי' בן הרה"ח
הרה"ת ר' יהושע ע"ה
קארף
גלב"ע ה' ניסן ה'תש"פ

נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' אלטר בניציון וזוגתו
מרת ח' ביילא ומשפחתם שיחיו
קארף



DON'T MISS OUT

The Rebbe responds to an individual who asked for a bracha upon entering his 70th year, "in person, or at least in writing":

[Observe] the customs [of a birthday].
[The bracha is] **much greater** than this
[in person or in writing] when it comes
through a farbrengen, which is what you
actually received¹. Obviously, a person
should not exclude themselves from this
(by wanting something different. This is
easy to understand).

1. I.e. by participating in the Rebbe's farbrengen, you already received the Rebbe's greatest brachos.

מנהגי [יום הולדת]
יתרה עכ"ז—כשבאה
בהתוועדות וכמו שהי'
במועל—ומובן שאין לפ'
להוציא א"ע מזה (ע"י
שרוצה אחרת—וק"ל).



FARBRENGEN 11 NISSAN 5745.

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 139537

FIRST SIYUM HARAMBAM

NISSAN 5745

The first Siyum Harambam, in Nissan 5745. Presented in honor of 40 years since the Rebbe launched takanas Limmud HaRambam, 5744–5784. This account is compiled from the diary of Mordechai Glazman, a bochur in 770 at the time.

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

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

Shabbos Parshas Vayikra, Rosh Chodesh Nissan

When the Rebbe arrived at 770 in the morning, he glanced at the notice on the door announcing the upcoming Siyum Harambam in Tomchei Temimim. The poster also displayed the Rebbe's response to the notification of the Siyum Harambam at the Hilton in Manhattan.

Toward the end of today's farbrengen, the Rebbe gave *mashke* to Reb Nosson Gourarie in honor of the Siyum Harambam scheduled for tomorrow in Buffalo. The Rebbe also gave *mashke* to his father, Reb Zalman Gourarie, and asked Reb Nosson, "Where's your brother-in-law?" When Reb Nosson called out, "Nachum?" The Rebbe corrected him, saying, "REB Nochum" (Sternberg.) The Rebbe poured him *mashke* as well.

Monday, 3 Nissan

Starting this week, Maariv was scheduled at 7:00 pm due to the longer days. As the Rebbe entered the *zal* for Maariv, the crowd sang the new niggun from the Rebbe's upcoming new Kapitel, "*Yeilchu Meichayil*" to the tune composed by Reb Shalom Brochshtat, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing. The niggun was sung again on Tuesday.

Tuesday, 4 Nissan

After Mincha, the Rebbe went to the library holding a bundle of 100 and 500 shekel bills. At the library, the Rebbe was *Mafrish Challah* (from the Matzos), and gave Reb Yehoshua Yuzevitch four boxes of Matzos to bring to Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe also gave him the aforementioned bills, and instructed him to deliver it to the *Vaad Haruchni* of Kfar Chabad, adding that, "They already know what to do with the money." The Rebbe then gave him two copies of the *Michtov Kloli*, one for himself and one for all the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe also instructed him to take some of the Matza as payment for all his hard work and to distribute the rest in Yerushalayim, as was usually done.

The Rebbe then asked Reb Yaakov Herzog for his travel itinerary, and upon learning that he would be traveling directly to England on Air India, the Rebbe handed him a box of Matzos for England along with a *Michtav Kloli*.

The Rebbe then asked for Reb Kuti Rapp. When he approached, the Rebbe inquired if he was familiar with



THE REBBE EXITS THE LIBRARY BUILDING
NEXT DOOR TO 770. CIRCA 5745.

Air India, to which he responded that he was not. The Rebbe suggested that he contact the "*Eretz Yisroel'dike*" airline (El Al), with whom he had connections, and request them to convey to Air India the importance of the Matzos. The Rebbe then handed him a *Michtav Kloli* as "*S'char Tircha*."

The Rebbe added "There are other Yidden present, and *Michtovim klolim* will be sent to them by mail."

The Rebbe asked Reb Chaim Baruch Halberstam with a smile, "Where is your toy [camera]? An artist without an instrument?!" Reb Chaim Baruch showed the Rebbe his tape recorder, which was recording the proceedings.

As the Rebbe left the library for his room, the people sang "*Vehi She'amda*."

In the evening, there was a Siyum Harambam at Tomchei Temimim. During the Siyum, Rabbi Mentlik delivered a *hadran*, and at the conclusion of the official program, Reb Yoel Kahan farbrenged with the *bochurim*.

Wednesday, 5 Nissan

Today, Reb Leibel Groner told Reb Kuti Rapp that the Rebbe was very pleased with the *Du"ch* describing the distribution of the Matza.



THE REBBE SPEAKS WITH RABBI GRUBNER AT THE FARBRENGEN, YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5745.

After Maariv, the Rebbe remained in the *zal* until after the final kaddish in the minyan that was taking place next door in *Cheder Sheini*.

Friday, 7 Nissan

As the Rebbe left 770 for the library, he distributed coins for Tzedakah, and gave to Reb Shloimo Cunin as well, saying, “You take every time!”

A few minutes before *Licht Bentchen*, the Rebbe was handed the booklet containing the Hadran on Rambam from Yud Tes Kislev 5735 that the Rebbe had edited a few days earlier.

Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Ches Nissan

At the conclusion of today’s farbrengen, the Rebbe poured L’chaim for the Talmidei Hashluchim from Morocco, using the *mashke* brought back from the Siyum Harambam there. The Rebbe also poured L’chaim for Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky

The Rebbe then gave a bottle of Mashke to Reb Mendel

Shemtov for the upcoming Siyum of the *Vaad Hashchuna*, scheduled for Yud Aleph Nissan. Following that, the Rebbe poured L’chaim for each member of the Vaad, as well as Reb Yisroel Duchman. The Rebbe then poured some of the *mashke* brought from Morocco into a new bottle, which he presented to Reb Menachem Gerlitzky for tomorrow’s Siyum at 770.

Sunday, 9 Nissan

Today, the Rebbe instructed that it would be a good idea to give out the (above-mentioned) Hadran on the Rambam at all of the siyumim.

Monday, 10 Nissan

Tonight there was a farbrengen in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan.¹

Before the third *sicha*, the Rebbe looked into a page that was in his siddur, the handout from the Siyum Harambam. (On one side of the page was a picture of the Rambam and on the other side, the Siyum and *Has’chala*.) The Rebbe also read the Siyum from this page in the next Sicha.

Later, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Grubner, head of the Vaad Harabanim in Detroit, to say Lchaim, and they spoke for several minutes. The Rebbe showed him something on the handout and, among other things, mentioned, "You are responsible for ensuring that everything goes well at the Siyum Harambam in Detroit." (The Vaad Harabanim played a role in organizing the Siyum there.)

When the farbrengen concluded, as the Rebbe was getting up from his place, he said "Yasher Koach" to Rabbi Bomzer, who was involved in the Siyum Harambam. After the farbrengen, as the Rebbe was leaving 770, he addressed Rabbi Gutnik from Australia with a broad smile, saying, "You are a Kohen, bentch the *kahal*!"

Tuesday, Yom Habahir Yud-Aleph Nissan

When the Rebbe arrived at 770 in the morning, he spent fifteen minutes distributing nickels for Tzedakah, including to adults.

Following this, the Rebbe spoke with a group of prominent supporters of the Shluchim. During the conversation, one of the supporters suggested that "The Rebbe should be the 'Chairman.'" The Rebbe replied: "*Chas v'sholom!* You should bring me the financial calculations?!"

Mr. David Chase, who was the sitting Chairman, then proposed that the Rebbe should be the "Chairman of the Chairman." The Rebbe responded, "I will be the Honorary President."

Later, the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

In the evening, Dr. Weiss spent over an hour in the Rebbe's room.

Wednesday, 12 Nissan

When the Rebbe arrived at 770, he distributed nickels to everyone present.

When the poet Reb Tzvi Meir Steinmentz passed, the Rebbe told him with a smile, "Mazal tov! Not for the poetry, although I read it in 'Kfar Chabad,' but for overseas." (His grandson Menachem Lazar had his *Upshernish* in Italy today.) When Rabbi Mentlik passed, the Rebbe instructed him to wait, and when the distribution was finished, he went into the Rebbe's room for a few minutes. There the Rebbe informed him that he wanted to sell his Chametz through Rabbi Piekarsky.

In the afternoon, it was announced that there would

be a farbrengen tonight for Yud-Gimmel Nissan.

In a really special moment, during the niggun "*Yemin Hashem*," the Rebbe energetically encouraged the singing with both hands!²

Thursday, Yud Gimmel Nissan

After Mincha, the Rebbe entered *Gan Eden Hatachton* for *Mechiras Chametz*. The Rebbe mentioned to Rabbi Piekarsky, the Rov involved in the sale, "I'm assuming that you always sell the Chametz via an '*Arev-Kablan*.'"³

Following the proceedings, the Rebbe apologized to Rabbi Piekarsky for "troubling a Rov on Erev Pesach."

Friday, 14 Nissan, Erev Pesach

At about 4:00 pm, the Rebbe's Matzos arrived from the bakery and were placed in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. The Rebbe then went to Mincha, and the Matzos were brought into the Rebbe's room.

After Mincha, the Rebbe distributed Matzos to a number of people. Following this, the Rebbe proceeded to the library, and on the way, gave out coins for Tzedakah to people present.

Second Night of Pesach

Tonight, the Rebbe again distributed matzos. At the end of the distribution, the Rebbe asked for Reb Berel Junik, who had already come by earlier, assisting Rashag. Reb Leibel Groner went to look for him. Meanwhile, the Rebbe said that one of Reb Berel's sons should take the Matzah on his behalf. Shimshon Junik took the Matzah for his father. When the Rebbe left *Gan Eden Hatachton* on his way to the Library, Reb Berel Junik was standing near the elevator door, and the Rebbe asked him if he had received the Matzah.

Monday, 17 Nissan, First Day of Chol Homoed

When the Rebbe entered the shul for Shacharis, he smiled broadly at Rabbi Yolles from Philadelphia. After Davening, Rabbi Yolles approached the Rebbe, delivering a note that the Rebbe placed in his siddur. With a



RABBI YOLLES, WHO WAS A KOHEN, STANDS NEAR THE REBBE AFTER RECEIVING AN ALIYAH, CHOL HAMOED PESACH 5745.

warm smile, the Rebbe engaged in a brief conversation before pausing for the post-davening announcement. Subsequently, Rabbi Yolles accompanied the Rebbe up the elevator (as was his custom every year on Chol Hamoed,) joining him in *Gan Eden Hatachton* along with his son-in-law and two grandchildren. After his family left, Rabbi Yolles remained there for a few minutes. As he departed *Gan Eden Hatachton*, the Rebbe gazed at him with a smile.

Tuesday, 18 Nissan

At the end of the Tzivos Hashem Rally, there was an announcement that the Rebbe would give out dimes to the “*Tankistim*” to distribute to everyone present for tzedakah. (The children each received four dimes.)

Tonight there was a gathering of Anash from outside Crown Heights in the Levi Yitzchak library.

At this event, Reb Yisroel Leibov related that he wrote to the Rebbe regarding a specific issue, that if the business of Anash was conducted with more *achdus*, a lot more could be achieved. The Rebbe’s responded with something to the effect of, “Moshiach is already here, and the Satan runs rampant, inciting conflict between brothers in a manner that defies logic.”

Friday Night, Acharon Shel Pesach

Tonight, as people were coming back from *Tahalucha*, they began to sing “Napoleon’s March” near the library. The Rebbe briefly opened and then closed the door. After a few seconds, the Rebbe went over to the first-floor window and opened the shutter, clapping and tapping along lightly on the window. After a few minutes, the Rebbe closed the Shutter.



THE SIYUM HARAMBAM OF THE TMIMIM, LED BY MEMBERS OF THE HANHALA AT 770.

Shabbos, Acharon Shel Pesach

Towards the end of the Moshiach Seudah farbrengen, the Rebbe declared, "A Kohen should have another four cups." Turning around, the Rebbe gestured to Rabbi Gutnik, a Kohen, indicating that he should drink an additional four cups of wine.

The farbrengen concluded at 11:30 pm, followed by Kos Shel Bracha.

As Reb Yitzchak Raitport passed by, the Rebbe handed him a bottle of *mashke* and inquired, "When will you publish another sefer?"

To Reb Shloime Zarchi, the Rebbe presented a bottle of Mashke with a broad smile, and said, "For *hatzlacha* with *shidduchim*!"

The Rebbe also gave a bottle to Reb Shmuel Melamed and told him, "For the Rambam stamps. The more stamps, the more *parnassa*."

A boy passed and told the Rebbe that he was a twelfth-generation descendant of the Baal Shem Tov. The Rebbe told him, "The Baal Shem Tov established a path in *avodas Hashem* that you should follow." When the boy mentioned that his brother wasn't following this path, the Rebbe responded, "It's your responsibility to influence him."

To Rabbi Avraham Hecht (rov of a prominent Sefardic shul), the Rebbe said not to forget to mention Moshe

Hasfardi [as the Rambam signs his name in the Mishneh Torah] at tomorrow's Siyum Harambam.

When the two-year-old son of Aharon Leizer Ceitlin from Tzfas passed by, the Rebbe poured him wine with a big smile, following him with his gaze as he passed.

The Rebbe gave each of the Talmidei Hashluchim from Morocco who were present a bottle of wine, and asked where the others were. (Eight of them came to New York before Pesach, but two had already left before Yom Tov.)

After almost three hours, Kos Shel Brocha concluded, and the Rebbe took some of the spilled wine from the plate, applying it between his eyes. Following this, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Mentlik to announce the grand Siyum Harambam for tomorrow, and then the Rebbe started "*Ki V'simcha*." The Rebbe departed for home at 2:45 am.

Sunday 23 Nissan, Isru Chag

Today the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

Since the vast majority of Temimim and Anash attended the Siyum Harambam in Manhattan, there was a small crowd present at Mincha and Maariv.

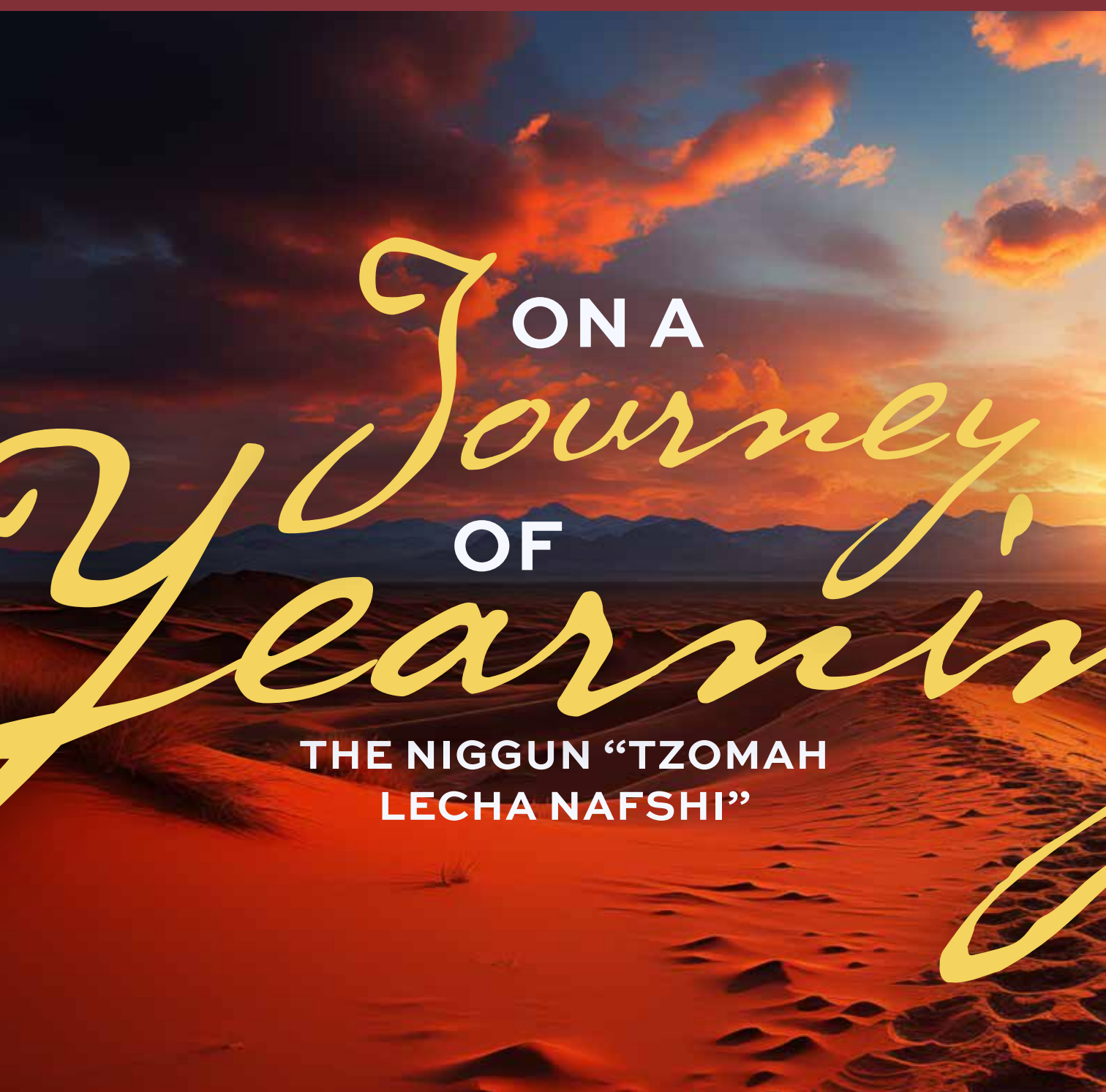
Shabbos Parshas Shemini, 29 Nissan

During today's farbrengen, the Rebbe gave a bottle of *mashke* to Rabbi Schanowitz for the Siyum Harambam scheduled for Motzei Shabbos at the "Ksav Sofer Shul" on Empire Blvd. The Rebbe also poured *mashke* for a few others involved, as well as for those participating in the Siyum Harambam in French. The Rebbe instructed one of them, Hatamim Sholom Chriqui, to announce the Siyum and specify that it would be in French. Misunderstanding the Rebbe's intention, he began the announcement in French. After being corrected by people nearby, he concluded the announcement in English. The Rebbe then instructed him to announce the Siyum in French as well.

1. This was the last time the Rebbe farbrenged on Yud Aleph Nissan.


2. See: videos.jem.tv/video-player?clip=1460

3. I.e., ensuring a third party guarantees payment, in case the buyer does not pay, as the Alter Rebbe insisted. See *Seder Mechiras Chametz Lefi Takanas Rabboseinu*, Rabbi Sholom D. Levine, 5757.



**THE NIGGUN “TZOMAH
LECHA NAFSHI”**

COMPILED BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG
WRITTEN BY: MENDEL ZAKLIKOVSKY



לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' אהרן בן הרה"ח הרה"ת
יהושע שניאור זלמן ע"ה
סערעבריאנסקי
גלב"ע ט' ניסן ה'תשע"ט
ולע"נ זוגתו מרת זלאטא בת ר' ארי' ליב ע"ה
גלב"ע י"ז אלול ה'תשפ"ג
תנ"צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' יוסף וזוגתו מרת חנה רחל שיחיו
סערעבריאנסקי

THE SCENE OF THE REBBE SINGING TZOMAH LECHA
NAFSHI AT FARBRENGENS IS AN IMAGE FAMILIAR
TO EVERY CHOSSID. HEARING THE REBBE'S HOLY
VOICE, THE SOUL-STIRRING MELODY, THE CHASSI-
DIM PASSIONATELY JOINING IN, MADE THOSE PRE-
CIOUS MOMENTS AN OTHERWORLDLY EXPERIENCE.
AS WE MARK SEVENTY YEARS SINCE THE REBBE TAUGHT
THE NIGGUN, A CHASSIDISHER DERHER PRESENTS FOR
THE FIRST TIME THE FULL STORY OF THIS SPECIAL NIG-
GUN; THE EVENTS SURROUNDING WHEN THE REBBE
TAUGHT IT, THE INNER MEANING OF THE NIGGUN, HOW THE
REBBE SANG IT, AND MANY MORE FASCINATING DETAILS.

TO BE B'SIMCHA

The *zal* slowly filled with Chassidim in anticipation of the Rebbe's farbrengen. The date was Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar, Parshas Kedoshim, 5714, and as per the Rebbe's custom on every Shabbos Mevorchim, a farbrengen would be held on Shabbos afternoon.

Shortly before two o'clock, the Rebbe entered, took his place, and made kiddush.¹

"Since the farbrengen is a continuation of Moshiach's seudah, we should begin with *Ani Maamin*," the Rebbe began.²

The crowd of Chassidim sang *Ani Maamin*, and the farbrengen proceeded in its usual fashion.

The next few *sichos* were a most *geshmake hemshech*, as the Rebbe taught how a Yid can fulfill his *avodas Hashem b'simcha*. At times, a Yid can feel that his own spiritual standing is quite low, even the Mitzvos he performs and the Torah he learns don't seem to have any tangible effect. How then can he keep his spirits high in *avodas Hashem*?

The answer is simple: although a Yid may not see any immediate effect from his performance of Mitzvos, the fact is, that all the *hamshachos* are already drawn down, and in the times of Moshiach, all that was accomplished will be revealed. "Bearing this in mind," the Rebbe said, "can make a Yid *b'simcha*."

The niggun Nye Zhuritzi Chloptzi, the Rebbe explained, expresses this sentiment. "Have no worry, my young friends, about what will be with us (lit. what will we have to drink)," the *niggun* reads. "When we reach the tavern, we'll have plenty to drink."



There's no reason to be despondent, all the *hamshachos* are being drawn down now, and when we reach the "tavern," the *geulah*, everything will be revealed.

"Sing the niggun Nye Zhuritzi Chloptzi," the Rebbe concluded.

THE POWER OF TZIMAON

"But what about now?" The Rebbe continued in the next *sicha*, "Now we don't feel anything, everything is hidden!" Seemingly, we're back to square one. How can a Yid be *b'simcha* in his *avodas Hashem*?"

The solution is through arousing within oneself a "tzimaon," a yearning. When one yearns for something, thirsts for something, the yearning itself lifts him up to what he is thirsting for!

This special potency of "tzimaon," the feeling of yearning, can even *quench* one's thirst.

As Dovid Hamelech wrote, "צמאה לך נפשי... כן בקדש חזיתך." The Baal Shem Tov explained that Dovid Hamelech, standing in a barren spiritual desert, an "ארץ צי' ועיף בלי מים," was davening that *halevai* he should be able to see and feel Hashem in all His Glory when standing 'bakodesh,'—even in the holiest of places. Because the *yearning itself* for *Elokus* that one experiences while in a spiritual wasteland can bring a person to the highest levels.

"There's a *niggun* from the Alter Rebbe to the *possuk* 'Tzomah lecha nafshi,'" the Rebbe said, and instructed to sing it.

A NEW NIGGUN

Silence reigns in the *zal*. The Chassidim aren't sure which *niggun* the Rebbe means.

After a few moments, a voice rings out from the corner. A Chossid begins an old tune to the words "Tzomah lecha nafshi." After he finishes, the Rebbe responds that he wasn't referring to that *niggun*.

Confusion prevails as the crowd struggles to figure out which *niggun* to sing. Another "Tzomah" is sung, but with no success. After the *niggun* finishes the Rebbe asks: "Maybe there's a third *niggun*?"

Another Chossid stands up and begins to sing a *niggun* that begins in Russian and concludes with the words "Tzomah lecha nafshi." To no avail. When he finishes his *niggun*, the Rebbe asks again: "Maybe there's a fourth *niggun*?"

The Chassidim are stumped. No further proposals are made. The room falls silent.

The next few moments feel like forever. The tension in the room could be cut with a knife. Silence.

The Rebbe leans his head in his hands. And after a few moments, the Rebbe's voice rings out: "Tzomah lecha nafshi... Komah lecha vesari... B'oretz tziyah v'oyeif bli moyim..."

The Rebbe sings the entire *niggun* solo, and the only sound heard in the packed *zal* is the pure melody emanating from the Rebbe's holy lips.

The Rebbe sang the *niggun* several times, teaching the intricacies of the tune to the Chassidim. After a few rounds of singing the *niggun* alone, the Rebbe asked that everyone join in and sing together. The *niggun* still hadn't caught on. The Rebbe sang it yet again, and after finishing, asked that the *bochurim* sing along, but the *bochurim* also hadn't caught on yet.

ESSEN EST ZICH

"And what can be done if the *tzimaon* is also lacking?" the Rebbe began the next *sicha*.

The solution is to think about this itself — how distanced you are from Hashem that you don't even feel the yearning to come closer. This itself will evoke within a Yid strong feelings of bitterness about his current state. And these feelings will arouse the *tzimaon*!

"This is the inner meaning of the *niggun* 'Essen est zich,'" the Rebbe said. "Bitterness about the fact that when it comes to eating, there's no need for *hisbonenus*; we manage to enjoy it automatically. But when it comes to davening, when it comes to having a *tzimaon* toward Hashem, there's a need for

NICHOACH

At the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732, the Rebbe issued a call to establish seventy-one (Ayin-Aleph) new *mosdos*²⁰ in connection with his seventieth year.

Sometime after that, Rabbi Hodakov called the chazzan Reb Moshe Teleshevsky and informed him that the Rebbe wanted to appoint him as a representative of the *Ayin-Aleph mosdos* to produce a new record of Chabad niggunim (later appended to the set of *Nichoach* records as volume eleven). Rabbi Hodakov asked Reb Moshe if he was ready to take the appointment upon himself, and when Reb Moshe agreed, he told him that the Rebbe wanted the record to be ready quickly, but the haste shouldn't diminish the quality of the record.

The Rebbe instructed that the first *niggun* be "Shalosh Tenuos" and then *Tzomah lecha nafshi*. The album should also include the Rebbe's father's *niggun*, *Shamil*, and *Uforatzta*.

Reb Moshe submitted a list of additional *niggunim* and the Rebbe told him to include the *niggun* from Morocco (*Ozreini Kel chai*), from Bukhara (*Atem shalom*), and from Gruzia (*Adon Haselichot... Mi hu zeh*).

After several days, Chazzan Teleshevsky was called to meet Rabbi Hodakov and was informed that the Rebbe was going to the Ohel the next day, and



THE SLEEVE (COVER) ON THE SPECIAL RECORD OF NICHOAACH PRODUCED BY THE 'VAAD AYIN-ALEPH MOSDOS'.

wanted a list of the *niggunim* that were to be included in the new record. Reb Moshe gave him the list and after returning from the Ohel, the Rebbe instructed to add the *niggun* "Nyet nyet nikavo."

Reb Moshe wrote to the Rebbe asking if he could a recording of the Rebbe singing *Tzomah lecha nafshi* from the Farbrengen of Yud Shevat (5733). The Rebbe responded that it was a good suggestion ("נכוונה"), and that he should note on the booklet accompanying the record that the track was taken from the farbrengen.²¹

An additional recording of the Rebbe singing "Tzomah," at the farbrengen of Chamisha-Asar B'Shevat 5737, was included in *Nichoach* record number twelve.

preparation and *hisbonenus*.”

“Sing the *niggun* ‘*Essen est zich*,’” the Rebbe concluded.

AN EIGHTH OF A NOTE

The farbrengen continued with a *maamar* and several more *sichos*.

At a later point, the Rebbe asked to sing the newly taught *niggun* again. Being that the Chassidim still hadn’t fully grasped the *niggun*, the Rebbe again sang it solo several times.

Before beginning to sing, the Rebbe said: “The [Friediker] Rebbe, my father-in-law, once said that he wouldn’t be particular about a “*zechtzentel*” (a sixteenth of a note). Now though, I won’t even be particular about an “*achtel*” (an eighth of a note).”

Slowly, the Chassidim caught on to the tune and joined the Rebbe in singing together. After one of the Chassidim sang the *niggun* with some mistakes, the Rebbe broke out in a smile and promptly began teaching the *niggun* yet again.

After several more rounds of everyone singing together, the Rebbe exclaimed, “I tried my best...”

When the Chassidim attempted to sing the *niggun*, they got several *tenuos* wrong. The Rebbe corrected them, saying, “The entire *niggun*, until the third stanza, ascends. The first two stanzas (including “*כן בקדש*”) are presented as a *baka-sha* and *tzimaon*, therefore the tune is ‘smooth.’ In the third

stanza, however, the words “*כן בקדש*” are [sung] as if “*כן*” means ‘indeed.’”

THROUGH THE YEARS

Already at the very next farbrengen, on Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan, the Rebbe said to sing the new *niggun* twice. The Rebbe instructed Chassidim to sing it several more times over the year.

In the following years, the Rebbe often said to sing this *niggun* at farbrengens. On special occasions, however, the Rebbe would sing parts of the *niggun* solo.

The *niggun* begins with “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*,” which the Rebbe would sing himself, and continues with a wordless part, which the Chassidim would sing together. The first iteration of *Kein Bakodesh* is sung twice. The Rebbe would sing the first one and Chassidim the second. Then *Kein Bakodesh* is sung again, in a different iteration, this the Rebbe would sing. The *niggun* concludes with a wordless melody, which the Chassidim would sing together. Following this, the Chassidim would start the *niggun* again and sing it together.

This *seder* seems to have taken shape gradually. At several farbrengens of the later 5710’s we hear the Rebbe singing different parts of the *niggun*, or at least starting it. The first time we hear the *niggun* being sung in the familiar way is at



NIGGUNIM AT THE FARBRENGEN, EREV YUD SHEVAT 5730.

the Purim farbrengen of 5719.⁴

In several instances when the Rebbe instructed to sing *niggunim* of all the Rabbeim, the Rebbe added “*Tzomah*”, apparently as the Rebbe’s *niggun*.⁵ At times the *niggun* was sung as a *hachana* to the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun* of *Daled Bavos*.⁶

There were different *tekufos* throughout the years with regard to how often the Rebbe sang the *niggun* himself, or asked that it be sung. There were times when the Rebbe would ask to sing the *niggun* often but sang it himself only rarely, while at other times, the Rebbe sang the *niggun* himself more frequently.

Interestingly, at many milestone farbrengens the Rebbe sang the *niggun* himself. Examples include Yud Shevat in the years 5720, 5730⁷, and 5740, as well as Yud-Aleph Nissan 5741, the start of the Rebbe’s 80th year. The last time that the Rebbe sang the *niggun* himself was on Shabbos Parshas Naso 5743.

Toward the end of the Farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5749, after a long while that the Rebbe hadn’t asked to sing the *niggun*, the Rebbe asked to sing “*Tzomah*”. The crowd fell silent, hoping that the Rebbe would begin singing the *niggun* himself, but the Rebbe motioned to Reb Yoel Kahn to begin the *niggun*.⁸

That was the last time, *leis ata*, that the Rebbe instructed to sing the *niggun*.⁹

CHOICE OF WORDS

Participating in the Rebbe’s farbrengen was always a heavenly experience. From the long, rich *sichos* to the joyous - or serious - *niggunim*, to be at a farbrengen meant to experience a *giluy Elokus*.

There were rare instances when the Rebbe would display *himmel’dike hanhoga*, overtly otherworldly behavior. One example is when the Rebbe would sing “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*.” In addition to the incomparable experience of hearing the Rebbe singing the *niggun*, he would sometimes alter the words of the *niggun* in different ways.

The farbrengen of Tes Shevat 5730, is remembered for the *siyum* of Moshiach’s Sefer Torah that took place at the farbrengen.¹⁰ Toward the end of the farbrengen, which was replete with *giluyim*, the Rebbe began to sing “*Tzomah Lecha Nafshi*.” When the Rebbe reached “*Kein bakodesh*,” the Rebbe finished “*לראות טובך וחסדך*.” The Chassidim, who responded after the Rebbe’s solo with song, also repeated “*לראות טובך וחסדך*.”¹¹ Similarly, at the farbrengens of Yud-Beis Tammuz 5723¹² and Purim 5729,¹³ the Rebbe sang “*לראות טובך וכבודך*.”

At the farbrengen of Chai Elul 5737, the Rebbe sang “*לראות נפשי וכבודי*.”¹⁴ After the crowd sang it once, the Rebbe repeated it, this time as regular.¹⁵

At the farbrengen of Purim 5742, when the Rebbe reached

MIHU YEHUDI

As the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Beshalach 5733 was concluding, and the Rebbe had already made a bracha acharona, the Rebbe suddenly began to sing “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*.” After the *niggun*, the Rebbe started to speak²²:

“The Torah of the Baal Shem Tov on the possuk ‘*Tzomah lecha nafshi*’ is known, that *halevai* (if only) when in a state of ‘*bakodesh*’ we would have the same yearning for Hashem that we have in a barren desert.

“We can apply the same with regard to the current situation with ‘*Mihu Yehudi*’ in Eretz Yisroel.

“Instead of Eretz Yisroel being a place from where Torah emanates to Yidden around the world (‘*כי מציון תצא תורה ודבר ה' מירושלים*’), we are seeing the opposite: specifically over there they are approving conversions through a twenty-five dollar certificate, and through this considering [the ‘convert’] to be a Jew all over the world!

“Until now, no one in chutz la’aretz ever thought of doing such a thing; only in Eretz Yisroel!

About this we can say, ‘*כן בקדש חזיתך*,’ *halevai* that in Eretz Hakodesh they wouldn’t deviate from the right path and deteriorate so badly...

the high part of “*Kein bakodesh*,” he sang “*כן בקדש חזיתך בארץ*,” he sang “*ציל בלי מים*.”¹⁶ During the second “*Kein bakodesh*,” the Rebbe sang “*לראות נפשך וכבודך*.”¹⁷

RUSSIAN CHASSIDIM

The plight of the Russian Yidden was a common theme in the Rebbe’s *sichos* of the earlier years. At many farbrengens the Rebbe spoke with deep emotion, often with tears, about their difficult situation.¹⁸

At several farbrengens, the Rebbe spoke about “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*” and connected it to the Russian Chassidim, sometimes even singing the *niggun* in direct connection. If only, the Rebbe explained, “we would have the same

* 5719-1959, 5720-1960, 5730-1970, 5740-1980, 5741-1981, 5743-1983, 5749-1988, 5723-1963, 5729-1969, 5737-1977, 5733-1973, 5742-1982

yearning and thirst [for Hashem] as they have [in Russia] every moment.”

One notion that the Rebbe emphasized was with regard to the Chassidim that had already managed to leave Russia, and had come to safer shores. The message of “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*” for them was, that just as in the “barren desert,” they thirsted and yearned for *Elokus*, so too now, safe and comfortable, they must keep their passion for Torah and mitzvos. The material comfort of the free world would complement their *tzimaon*, allowing them to do their *avodah mitoch harchava* (at ease, with a broad mind) and *b’simcha uv’tuv leivav* (with joy and gladness of the heart).¹⁹

AN UNQUENCHABLE YEARNING

The image of the Rebbe singing “*Tzomah lecha nafshi*,” with a sea of Chassidim is etched deeply on the hearts of

Chassidim who merited to be there, or to those who have seen videos of those special moments.

The very words of the *niggun* stimulate a deep yearning to the *yemei ha’or*. “צמאה לך נפשי” - my *neshamah* thirsts for you, “בארץ צי’ ועיף בלי מים” - in a parched and thirsty land that has no water.

The message of the *niggun* takes on added significance in the current *golus*, when we cannot see or hear the Rebbe. On the one hand, we are certain that the Rebbe is with us, even more than before, yet, on the other hand, our yearning for the *geulah shleima* grows stronger every passing day.

The Rebbe teaches us a powerful lesson from this *niggun*: The feeling of yearning - the thirst - to the *yemei ha’or* itself, can strengthen our connection even more and bring us closer to those precious moments.

Ultimately though, we will not be satisfied until we are reunited physically with the Rebbe, in the *geulah shleima*, may it be very soon. **1**



STIRRING SOULS

There are many stories of people who were positively impacted by the niggun “Tzomah”. We present one of the many stories.

Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchok Glick was a traveling shliach of the Rebbe who would be sent to various places throughout Europe to strengthen Yiddishkeit.

On Chanukah 5734, Rabbi Glick and his wife were in Barcelona, and got a phone call from Rabbi Hodakov with instructions to travel to the island of Majorca (a half-hour's flight from Barcelona).

Needless to say, Rabbi Glick and his wife took the short flight to Majorca, and immediately began searching for Yidden on the island. Right after they settled in, Rabbi Hodakov instructed them to translate the two *michtovim kloliyim* (one to all Yidden, and one to children) that the Rebbe had written for Chanukah into Spanish, and to distribute them to any Yidden with whom they came in contact.

One of the people Rabbi Glick met in Majorca was a young Yid named Benny. Benny was a wealthy individual who lived in a gorgeous home. Rabbi Glick arranged with Benny to meet him in his hotel, and had a very nice discussion about Torah and Mitzvos.

Before they parted ways, Rabbi Glick offered to

play a recording of the Rebbe. It was a recording of the Rebbe singing *Tzomah lecha nafshi*.

When Benny heard the soul-stirring notes of the Rebbe singing, he began crying like a baby. After composing himself, he told Rabbi Glick that the recording reminded him of his youth and that he felt an obligation to come back to his roots.

Benny constructed a Menorah atop his home, and brought about a big *his'orerus* to many Yidden on the island.

After Chanukah, Rabbi Glick wrote a detailed report about his Chanukah in Majorca and about the big *his'orerus* that happened, and sent it to the Rebbe.

On Erev Rosh Chodesh Shevat, Rabbi Glick received a letter from the Rebbe, in response to his *duc*²³

(It's interesting to note that while Rabbi Glick was on this shlichus, the Rebbe asked for him during a farbrengen at 770, thousands of miles away. The Rebbe later explained to Rabbi Hodakov that he knew that Rabbi Glick was not present, but he mentioned his name to give him additional *koichos* for the *shlichus*. See *Yomim Tovim im HaRebbe*, p. 71.)

1. It is noteworthy, that in those years the Rebbe wouldn't usually make Kiddush at the farbrengen, with some special exceptions. See “*Shabbos with the Rebbe*,” Derher Sivan 5783.

2. The farbrengen in its entirety can be found in *Toras Menachem* vol. 9, pg. 242 and further.

3. *Tehillim* 63, 2-3.

4. Listen at Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/4Jxb>.

5. E.g. Yud Shevat 5716, Rosh Hashanah 5721.

6. E.g. Yud-Beis Tammuz 5718 and 5720.

7. At the farbrengen on Friday, Tes Shevat, as related below.

8. According to the *yoman* of Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Mann.

9. The *niggun* was sung several times afterwards (at *kos shel bracha* etc.), but not at the Rebbe's specific instruction.

10. See “*Sefer Torah shel Moshiach*,” Derher Shevat 5776.

11. Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/Fw9p>.

12. Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/7e2R>.

13. Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/zaiQ>.

14. Just one month later, on Shemini Atzeres 5738, the Rebbe suffered a massive heart attack during Hakofos (see “*The Complete Story of Rosh Chodesh Kislev*,” Derher Kislev 5778). Some Chassidim connected this altered version of *Tzomah* with these events.

15. Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/jy3s>.

16. See also farbrengen of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5732.

17. Ashreinu audio: <https://ashreinu.page.link/XGW1>.

18. See “*Love from Afar*,” Derher Tammuz 5779.

19. See *sichos* Simchas Torah 5722, Rosh Hashanah 5726, Shavuos 5729, Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5732, Motzei Shabbos Yud-Tes Kislev 5733, et. al.

20. See “*Yud-Aleph Nissan Milestone Celebrations*,” Derher Supplement Nissan 5782 (120 Years).

21. *Hiskashrus*, issue 37 pg. 11-12.

22. *Toras Menachem* vol. 71 pg. 157-8.

23. *Kfar Chabad* issue 882 pg. 17.



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן מאה ועשרים ואחת שנה

ולזכות
הת' השליח זאב יוסף הלוי שיחי'
לאנג

בקשר עם יום הולדתו כ"ד ניסן
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה ולרפואה שלימה וקרובה

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' ארי' הלוי וזוגתו מרת דבורה
לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
לאנג

Where are the Talmidim?

From the beginning of the Rebbe's *Nesius* until 5730, the Rebbe conducted his *Sedarim* in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment on the second floor of 770 (where he ate all Yom Tov meals). Bochorim and Anash were able to stand nearby and observe the Rebbe and his holy conduct on these special nights.

A highlight of the Seder night was when the Rebbe recited Hallel. As can be seen on many video recordings, the Rebbe's davening throughout the year was generally quiet and without outward displays of emotion, Hallel at the Seder was an exception. The Rebbe sang the words slowly, in a heartfelt tune, at times shedding tears and in a choked-up voice. It was a heavenly sight that left a deep and lasting impression on all those present.

In 5729, the Rebbe was deeply engrossed in reciting Hallel when the night took an interesting turn:

"I was standing right near the Rebbe that night and I witnessed everything from up close. The Rebbe recited the words of Hallel with such concentration and *dveikus*, and much of the time his holy eyes were closed," Rabbi Yosef Hecht relates¹, "something we never saw in other years. The Rebbe's voice

was loud and reverberated deeply in our hearts. The Rebbe repeated the words 'לעושה נפלאות גדולות לבדו' three times, which was extremely unusual. It was obvious that heavenly affairs were being orchestrated at the time..."

One of the *bochorim* present wrote in his diary that when saying these words, the Rebbe hit his fist into the palm of his other hand. It was an awesome scene to behold.

Rabbi Hecht continues: "After proclaiming '*Lshana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim*' at the end of the Seder, the Rebbe tilted his head downward and began singing '*Prazos Teishev Yerushalayim*' with closed eyes, while waving his hands to encourage the singing. It was an awesome sight. This *niggun* was introduced a few months earlier, at the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, when the Rebbe asked that the words of this *possuk* be fit with this lively *niggun*. Since then, the Rebbe had sung it enthusiastically on various occasions..."

After pouring the wine from Eliyanu Hanavi's cup back into the bottle, the Rebbe began singing the *niggun* '*Prazos*' once again, and it seemed as though the Rebbe was in a different world. The Rebbe waved his hands again and again, and the whole crowd was singing and dancing. Finally, the Rebbe



A FARBRENGEN IN THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S APARTMENT.

stood up, dancing at his place with much joy, and everyone followed suit. The dancing was so intense that a chair broke, but the Rebbe didn't seem to notice.

The crowd kept on singing as the Rebbe walked downstairs to his room, and the Rebbe stopped a few times along the way to encourage the singing.

The next morning, the Rebbe's *Mazkirus* gave notice that no one would be allowed to join the Rebbe's *Seder* that evening.

Obviously, Chassidim, especially the *bochurim*, were devastated. A group of *bochurim* who had concluded a year in the yeshiva at 770 in the Kvutza program and were scheduled to return to Eretz Yisroel right after Pesach, asked the Rebbe's brother-in-law, Rashag, to ask the Rebbe to make an exception for them and allow them in for the *Seder*. Towards the end of the *Seder* that night, Rashag asked the Rebbe if these *bochurim* could be allowed in and the Rebbe agreed, saying, "There will probably be other exceptions as well..."

Later that night, the Rebbe held a farbrengen in the shul and explained passages of the Haggadah (as he did every year). Upon reaching the passage of "מעשה ברבי אליעזר ורבי"

יהושע," the story about the Tannai'm who sat at the *Seder* throughout the night until their students came and told them that morning had arrived, the Rebbe said:

"It was always difficult for me to understand why the [Frierdiker] Rebbe and his father, the Rebbe Rashab, did not allow their students to join them for the *Seder*. But then I realized that this conduct has its source in the Haggadah itself: We see in this story that the students of these great Tannaim did not join their Rebbes for the *Seder*, from the fact that *they came* and told their teachers that morning had arrived. I.e. they came from somewhere else, and they hadn't been with their teachers all night."

The Rebbe concluded: "Although in general a student should always be near his Rebbe, there are certain times when a student is supposed to be on his own. The time of separation actually helps form an even deeper, more *pnimius'dike* relationship with his Rebbe afterwards..."² ①

1. *Ki Karov*, issue #87 (Pesach 5782).

2. *Toras Menachem* vol. 56, p. 76.

TO OUR DEAR REBBE

In honor of the Rebbe's 70th birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732, the noted Chabad activist in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Shloimke Maidanchik, together with Reb Efraim Wolf, undertook a special project: collecting personal blessings and wishes from leaders and elected officials in Eretz Yisroel and bringing them to the Rebbe.

Using his many connections with the Who's Who of Israeli society, Reb Shloimke succeeded in gathering many handwritten wishes and compiled them into an album called "Sefer Habrachos Lshnas Hashivim," which he brought to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The book contained greetings from President Zalman Shazar, Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Mr. Avraham Shlonsky, Mr. Shimon Peres, and others.

Presented here are some of the notes.

Israel's President, Mr. Zalman Shazar, wrote:

In addition to my letter and the gift, I wish the greatest of blessings, honor, and love to my Rebbe, the beloved of my heart, upon reaching the good ripe age [70 years], in a good and auspicious time; along with the multitudes of well-wishers.

6 Nissan 5732.

Shneur Zalman Shazar

Israel's foreign minister, Mr. Abba Eban, wrote:

The greatest of my blessings and wishes to the great Rebbe of Lubavitch Shlita.

May the light of his Torah spread among the whole of the Jewish people, with blessings and peace.

Abba Eban

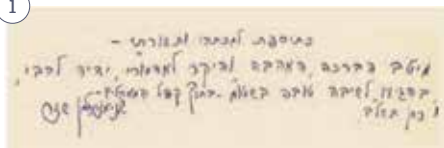
Chief Rabbi of Tel-Aviv (later Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel), Rabbi Shlomo Goren, wrote:

May Hashem bless the crown and beauty of Israel, the ga'on [genius/pride] and glory of Torah, lion of the highest stature, his holiness, light of

מבית הגזרים TREASURES FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

1

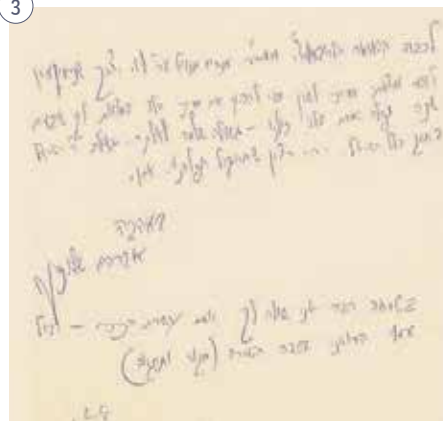


1. PRESIDENT ZALMAN SHAZAR
2. RABBI SHLOMO GOREN
3. MR. AVRAHAM SHLONSKY

2



3



Israel, pillar of the right side, our teacher Harav M. S. Shlita, the Rebbe of Lubavitch, as he reaches the ripe age [of 70 years]. May Hashem lengthen his years and days in his reign over the empire of Torah and Chassidus, till the coming of the righteous redeemer.

The Rebbe Shlita has succeeded in increasing the glory of Heaven and bringing the hearts of tens of thousands from every corner of the world closer to our Father in heaven.

Fortunate is he, and fortunate are the Chassidim of Hashem, full of strength, who heed his word, toiling with self-sacrifice in Eretz Yisroel and in the diaspora for the sake of Tzion and Yerushalayim, bringing the words of Hashem to forsaken Jews in every place. There is hardly a corner of the Jewish world where the name of Chabad is not extolled with praise and admiration. The fact that the embers of Judaism in Russia and its surroundings have not yet been extinguished is also due, in large part, to the self-sacrifice of Chabad.

May the giver of life give the Rebbe Shlita and all his people a long, good, and sustained life, with health and gladness of the soul, so they may spread the wellsprings of his holy Torah to all the Jewish people. May Hashem grant all his heart's wishes for goodness and blessing. In his day and ours, may Tzion and Yisroel be redeemed, dwelling securely in our holy and pure land in its entirety², and may we see the fulfillment of the Torah's blessing, "And I shall separate you from among all nations, to be Mine..."³

May he merit to come up to Yerushalayim in song together with all of the Jewish people.

6 Nissan 5732

Tel-Aviv — Yafo

Written and signed with the seal of blessings, of the Mikdash⁴ and the greater community,
Shlomo Goren

Mr. Avraham Shlonsky, noted Israeli poet and the Rebbe's cousin, wrote:

To the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Moreinu Harav M.M. ben Harav Levi Yitzchok Schneerson.

If only I could find the words to express the feelings of my heart as you complete 70 years. There is one prayer in all of our hearts: the complete and immediate redemption, the redemption of Reb Yisroel⁵ along with that of Klal Yisroel. May our prayers be answered, amen.

With love,

Avraham Shlonsky

[P.S.] With great joy, I am sending you ten volumes containing the fruit of my spiritual labor in the field of song (original and translation).

A.S.

Mr. Ariel Sharon, then IDF commander of the Southern Front, wrote:

To the dear Rebbe,

Warm blessings for your 70th birthday, till 120.

With the hope that your struggle will be emboldened, for the Jewish nation to trust in their strength; for the settlement of a Jewish presence all across the [liberated] territories; to strengthen the current borders; to grant freedom to the Jews of Russia.

With esteem and appreciation,

Gen. A. Sharon

Commander of the Southern Front

1. For an extensive account on how Reb Shloimke gathered the greetings based on a duch he wrote to the Rebbe, see HaKatar Shel Chabad, p. 173.

2. A reference to the Rebbe's campaign for the integrity and totality of Eretz Yisroel.

3. A reference to the Rebbe's campaign in response to the question of "Who is a Jew," for the integrity of the Jewish people

4. A play on the words of the Mishnah, Brachos 54a.

5. I.e. the redemption of each individual along with all the Jewish people.

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר זצ"ל ומרת
לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו שפאלטר

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

DEALING WITH MACHSHAVOS ZAROS DURING DAVENING

THE REBBE'S HORA'OS ON MAINTAINING
FOCUS AND AVOIDING INTRUSIVE
THOUGHTS DURING TEFILLAH

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

In the *ma'amar* Basi Legani, 5730, the Rebbe speaks at length about the cause of *machshavos zaros*—intrusive thoughts—during *davening* and what one can do about them.

“It is specifically during the *avoda* of learning and *davening* or doing a *mitzvah*, that he imagines that there’s something very important to him that he must do at this time. These thoughts come from the *Nefesh Habahamis* in order to confuse the *Nefesh HaElohis*.”

The Rebbe goes on to explain that distractions are a direct result of one’s actions. For example, if you’re busy thinking about your *parnasa*, that’s because you haven’t been focusing on your faith in Hashem, whose *bracha* is what brings success.

“The fact that thoughts about *parnasa* are disturbing him, to the point that he can’t engage in Torah and *avoda*, is caused by his own actions. If he would have properly contemplated the fact that ‘it is Hashem’s blessing that brings wealth,’ then the thoughts about *parnasa* would not have distracted him.”

The same is true, the Rebbe continued, about other types of intrusive thoughts—most are brought upon the person by their own actions.

But there is hope.

Despite the fact that *machshavos zaros* are caused by the person himself, the *avoda* of *davening* gives us the power to overcome them. It takes effort, tremendous effort, but it can be done.

Specifically, one should take time for private *hisbonenus*—contemplation, and before beginning to *daven*, attempt to remove all preoccupations from his consciousness. The Rebbe quotes the Rebbe Rashab in his *Kuntreisim*, and then concludes with an assurance the Rebbe Rashab provides:

“Those who believe that they cannot remove the preoccupations from their hearts should think about the fact that when they go to sleep, these preoccupations and worries are removed—and if they can remove these concerns for the sake of a physical, bodily need, all the more so they can do so for the sake of something that matters to their *neshama*.¹”

In letters and talks, the Rebbe gave numerous hora'os as to how one can prevent and dispel machshavos zaros.

As the Rebbe told one individual, “You are correct that the solution is not always the same, for it depends on the person’s situation, which changes. Nevertheless, there are general points which are always helpful.”² Here are some of those points, as well as additional hora'os the Rebbe gave to various individuals.

TZEDAKAH BEFORE DAVENING

“You should also give before *davening* on weekday mornings several coins to *tzedakah*, from time to time.”³

“You should [try to] give a few coins to *tzedakah* every weekday before *davening*.”⁴

TEVILAS EZRA-MIKVEH BEFORE DAVENING

“As is explained in *seforim*, you should make an effort to be scrupulous about *Tevilas Ezra* [going to *mikveh* before *davening*].”⁵

DAVEN FROM THE SIDDUR

“You must *daven* from the Siddur. Even at the points when you are contemplating something, the Siddur must be open before you, and when you feel your thoughts begin to wander, you should look inside the Siddur. Our sages tell us that the letters illuminate.”⁶

“The solution for this is to *daven* specifically from the Siddur, and in a state of *tahara*.”⁷

“The solution is to learn from the *sefer* and to *daven* from the Siddur. Even when you’re learning *ba’al peh* or contemplating something in your mind, the *sefer* should be open to what you’re learning.”⁸

LEARN TANYA PEREK 28

“You should learn, with proper depth, chapter 28 in the holy *Sefer Hatanya*, which includes a clear directive for your concerns [about *machshavos zaros*].”⁹

MEMORIZE CHASSIDUS

“You must have some concepts in Chassidus memorized word for word. This should include the *derush* ‘*Vehadarta P’nei Zaken*’ in Likkutei Torah, end of Parshas Kedoshim.”¹⁰

DAVEN WHERE THE MINYAN IS

“You should *daven* in the place where the *minyan* is *davening*, for the air is purer there.”¹¹

LEARN CHITAS

“You should keep the three *shiurim* that are applicable to everyone as established by my father-in-law, the Rebbe, namely Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya.”¹²

CHECK YOUR TEFILLIN

The Rebbe instructed someone who was dealing with *machshavos zaros* that he should check his *tefillin*.¹³



FIX YOUR PAST

“You write that you’re downtrodden by the fact that thoughts and temptations are confusing you during *davening*. *Seforim*, especially *sifrei Chassidus* and *Mussar* explain that these thoughts come mostly from undesirable actions that took place in the past. Therefore, besides the solution of removing your mind from these thoughts by focusing on thoughts of Torah, *mitzvos* and purity ... you also need to remove the effect of the undesirable actions of the past.”

The Rebbe continues by saying that the way to do that, in addition to regretting the past and resolving to improve in the future, is by taking steps to balance out the inequity of the past. If you didn’t fulfill a certain *mitzvah* in the past, resolve to keep it *beiddur*, and influence others not to stumble where you did.¹⁴ **T**

1. Maamar Basi Legani, 5730, seifim 14-16. See also seifim 17-19.

2. Igros Kodesh Vol. 18, p. 121.

3. Igros Kodesh Vol. 7, p. 362.

4. Igros Kodesh Vol. 13, p. 245.

5. Igros Kodesh Vol. 13, p. 245.

6. Igros Kodesh Vol. 7, p. 362.

7. Igros Kodesh Vol. 15, p. 375.

8. Igros Kodesh Vol. 17, p. 331.

9. Igros Kodesh Vol. 13, p. 244.

10. Igros Kodesh Vol. 7, p. 362.

11. Igros Kodesh Vol. 15, p. 88.

12. Igros Kodesh Vol. 13, p. 245.

13. Igros Kodesh Vol. 7, p. 362-363.

14. Igros Kodesh Vol. 15, p. 87-88.

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg

Pesach *with* *the* *Rabbi*

In honor of Zman Cheiruseinu, we present the following collection of stories, anecdotes and recollections about Pesach with the Rabbeim.

beim

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה' חי' מושקא תחי'

נדפס ע"י
הוריה הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו
טרייטעל



Pesach in Berdichev

In the days after Simchas Torah ת"ע, the city of Berdichev was plunged into mourning. Reb Levi Yitzchak, their saintly Rov for many decades, had passed away. The holy presence of the world-renowned Ohev Yisrael, one of the last surviving members of the Maggid's *chevraya kadisha*, no longer graced their city.

The sad news slowly made its way to Liadi in White Russia, far to the north of Berdichev in Ukraine.

It hit close to home for Chabad Chassidim. Reb Levi Yitzchak was one of Alter Rebbe's closest colleagues and strongest supporters. He had been close with the Alter Rebbe in their youth as talmidim of the Maggid, a staunch defender during the disagreements with Reb Avraham Kalisker, and a *mechutan* with the Alter Rebbe twice over.

Word soon spread that the Alter Rebbe himself would embark on a journey to Ukraine to be *menachem avel* the family of the Berdichever.

The journey served several other purposes as well. The Alter Rebbe collected funds to better the situation for Jews banished from the villages,¹ he visited the Ohel of the Baal Shem Tov, and he visited Reb Boruch of Medzhibozh in an attempt to resolve their differences. It would be at least six months before the Alter Rebbe

returned home to Liadi.

In Adar, the Alter Rebbe arrived in Berdichev for the *nichum aveilim*. During his visit, Reb Levi Yitzchak's rebbetzin made a special request. "Who will lead the Seder in our home?" she said. "Perhaps you could remain until after Pesach!"

The Alter Rebbe agreed. He instructed that one of the boxes of luggage be opened; it contained *shmurah* flour, and matzos were baked for Pesach. The Alter Rebbe spent the weeks before Pesach visiting the surrounding area, but Pesach was celebrated in the home of Reb Levi Yitzchak, sitting in his seat and leading the Seder in his stead. Many *maamarim* were delivered during the visit, and some of them are in an unusual style, reflecting the fact that many of the listeners were probably not acquainted with ideas of Chassidus Chabad.

During the visit, terrible news arrived in Berdichev. The entire *chotzer* in Liadi had burned to the ground in a devastating fire, and all the Alter Rebbe's possessions were lost—money collected for Eretz Yisrael, important documents, and all his *seforim* and *kesovim*, including irreplaceable manuscripts of Shulchan Aruch. It seemed like there was nothing to return to.

Hearing the news, the Berdichev Jewish community came up with a proposal: The Alter Rebbe should remain in their city, and fill the place of Reb Levi Yitzchak as Rov! From their perspective, there could be no better *memaleh makom*. The Mittlerer Rebbe—in Liadi at the time—was alarmed at the suggestion, and issued a letter asking Chassidim to help rebuild the *chotzer*, saying that their support could play a role in the Alter Rebbe's decision to return.

Ultimately, the Alter Rebbe declined the offer and journeyed back to Liadi. But the Yidden of Berdichev were left with many incredible memories of his historic visit.²

UNAUTHENTICATED
PORTRAIT BY AN
UNKNOWN ARTIST,
MADE IN THE SAME YEAR
OF THE HISTALKUS OF
REB LEVI YITZCHOK OF
BERDICHEV, BEARING THE
INSCRIPTION "REB LEVI
YITZCHOK BEN MEIR."



What Happened To The Food?

Only a select *minyan* of people participated in the Tzemach Tzedek's Seder, a few close guests and family members. The other guests would dine in the homes of Chassidim in Lubavitch. However, all the guests got their Pesach needs from the Rebbe's house. On Erev Yom Tov, they received wine, *maror*, *charoses*, and even matzah baked on Erev Pesach—and thus they were considered the Rebbe's guests.

One year, the elderly chossid Reb Yekusiel Liepler came to Lubavitch for Pesach. Reb Yekusiel did not visit the Tzemach Tzedek on regular occasions; whenever he felt a desire to see the Rebbe's countenance, he would pack a small bundle and set out to Lubavitch.

On the night before Pesach, Reb Yekusiel was preoccupied with thoughts of the intense and profound *avodah* of *Bedikas Chometz*. He prepared himself thoroughly, intending to remove not only the physical *chametz*, but also the spiritual *chametz* in his heart. Suddenly, the door opened. The *meshares*, Hershel der Shvartzer, approached Reb Yekusiel and gave him his Yom Tov package, saying, "Here, the Rebbe sent this for you."

Reb Yekusiel opened the package, glanced at its contents, and realized that if the Rebbe had just sent the food, it probably meant that he was to eat it this very moment to assist in his

avoda of *Bedikas Chometz*. He took the wine, *maror* and *charoses*, poured it into a *kvort*, and drank it down.

The night of Pesach arrived, and the entire town began their Sedorim. Suddenly, Reb Yekusiel burst into the Tzemach Tzedek's home. "Rebbe! I have nothing for the Seder; no wine, no *maror*, and no *charoses*!"

How could such an esteemed guest as Reb Yekusiel have been forgotten? Hershel der Shvartzer was immediately summoned, and he brought the list of recipients for the Rebbe to examine.

Reb Yekusiel's name was on it...

Hershel was puzzled. He distinctly remembered giving Reb Yekusiel the package and even reminded him where he was sitting. Suddenly, a thought occurred to Reb Yekusiel. "Ah, I remember the package he brought me during *Bedikas Chometz*... It truly 'revived' me..." It turned out that Reb Yekusiel had consumed the entire package the night before...

The Tzemach Tzedek smiled broadly, and instructed Reb Yekusiel to join him for the Seder.

Reb Yekusiel would later say that from that Pesach night at the Rebbe's table, he had fifteen years of *avodah*.³

Shehecheyanu—A Child's Explanation

During the Yom Tov meal of Acharon Shel Pesach 5666, when Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka was five years old, her grandfather the Rebbe Rashab related that he had overheard a conversation she was having with her sister: "I was in the *sefarim* room when I heard them arguing, and I was interested in what they were discussing." The Rebbetzin and her sister disagreed about the significance of Acharon Shel Pesach. Her sister maintained that it was a Yom Tov like any other, while the Rebbetzin argued that it was special; it is the only Yom Tov when

Shehecheyanu isn't recited.

The Rebbe Rashab commented that their argument reminded him of a similar discussion he and his siblings had with their father, the Rebbe Maharash, and grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, in the year תרכ"ה, when he was just four years old.

At the Yom Tov meal on Acharon Shel Pesach, he had asked his father, "Why is the last day of Pesach a Yom Tov?"

His older sister, Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, suggested that Acharon Shel Pesach celebrates



the fact that the Yidden successfully avoided *chametz* for a whole week. Hearing this, the Rebbe Maharash commented, “Devorah Leah, you have a good head.”

Later that day, the Rebbe Maharash and his children visited the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe Maharash repeated the conversation to the Tzemach Tzedek, who also approved, saying, “That’s a good logical explanation.” But then he called over the children and offered his own explanation. He told them that the first days of Pesach celebrate our *geulah* from Mitzrayim, while Acharon Shel Pesach celebrates our future *geulah*.

In a *sicha* on Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe spoke about the deeper meaning of both stories and explained that the ideas were linked. The reason we don’t recite *Shehecheyanu* on Acharon Shel Pesach, which was the Rebbetzin’s point, is connected to the Tzemach



REBBETZIN
DEVORAH LEAH,
DAUGHTER
OF THE REBBE
MAHARASH.

Tzedek’s answer. We don’t say *Shehecheyanu* since the *Geulah* we are celebrating has not yet occurred. This causes heartache to the Jewish people and the *Aibershter* himself, so it is not possible to recite *Shehecheyanu* on that day.⁴

The Mayim Shelanu Parade

One of the exciting moments every year in Lubavitch was *Mayim Shelanu*. The Rebbe Rashab himself would lead a procession to the river behind “Binyamin’s Shtibl,” surrounded by the *hanhala* and *mashpi'im* of the yeshiva, and followed by the bochurim, singing lively niggunim throughout.

Reb Chaim Mordechai Perlov writes that at this time of year, with the snow melting, the streets of Lubavitch were often muddy, and it was not an easy walk for the Rebbe Rashab. Drawing the water wasn’t straightforward either, as parts of the river were still frozen. The bochurim would wade into the river, while the Rebbe would stand on the bank, drawing water with a bucket attached to a long pole.

One year when the Rebbe Rashab was unwell, he didn’t leave his house for an extended period, but Chassidim suspected that the Rebbe would nonetheless want to participate in *Mayim Shelanu*. Hoping to convince the Rebbe to protect his health, they approached Rebbetzin Rivka, the Rebbe’s mother, suggesting she tell him not to go. Rebbetzin Rivka

replied, “I cannot interfere in my son’s spiritual matters.” The Rebbe Rashab went out that year as usual.⁵

Reb Folleh Kahn recalled a special moment that took place after *Mayim Shelanu*: After fetching the water, the bochurim would break into a lively dance in the *chatzer*, while the Rebbe Rashab would observe from his room. Once, he commented on a specific bochur, Shimson Milner from Vitebsk; “I saw how Shimshon Vitebsker was dancing after *Mayim Shelanu*—his *Yechidah Shebinefesh* was alight...”⁶

By the Rebbe Maharash as well, *Mayim Shelanu* was a big moment. This description was written by Mr. Tzvi Har-Shefer, formerly Lokshin, who grew up in Lubavitch during the Rebbe Maharash’s *nesius*:

“The drawing of *Mayim Shelanu* was a special moment. Amid great singing and joy, we would go down to the river. The Rebbe himself would lower the bucket into the water. The next day, the Rebbe would personally mix the dough and hand out pieces to be rolled into matzah. In the evening, many Lubavitch townspeople

would hurry to finish their seder, to watch the Rebbe conduct the seder with his family.”⁷

The matzah baking in Lubavitch was also significant. The Rebbe Rashab remained present in the bakery, reciting Hallel and supervising the women rolling the dough.

Reb Folleh recalled that the dough kneader, Reb Mendel Ladier, took his job very seriously, and would grip the dough-kneader, called the “*meiyreh*,” very tightly as he kneaded the flour and water. He was one of the teachers in the younger classes of Tomchei Temimim, but his

‘grip’ on the classroom was far weaker than his grip over the dough; he was a very kind person, and the children didn’t always obey his instructions. One year, while kneading the dough, the Rebbe Rashab humorously told him, “You should hold the ‘*meiyreh*’ [fear] in your classroom the way you hold the ‘*meiyreh*’ [dough-kneader] here.”

The Frieddiker Rebbe would stand next to the oven, supervising the baking process, and afterward, the Rebbe Rashab would present a matzah to every bochur who had participated.⁸

Mivtzah Matzah – תרס"ה

In the early 1900’s war broke out between Russia and Japan over Russia’s eastern territories. Hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers found themselves moving over Russia’s immense expanse from the European center all the way to the Pacific coast.

The Russian army included many Jewish troops, and those soldiers were often released to neighboring Jewish communities when a Yom Tov like Pesach arrived. Decades earlier, the Tzemach Tzedek had been instrumental in arranging Pesach accommodations for soldiers moving through White Russia. But now,

Jewish soldiers suddenly found themselves at the other end of the world, with no Jewish communities to speak of.

What would be with Pesach?

In תרס"ג, the Rebbe Rashab traveled to Paris to meet with Baron Tzvi Hirsch Ginsburg, who had influence with the Russian government. Baron Ginzburg was a *maskil* who opposed the Rebbe Rashab on matters of Jewish education, but the Rebbe Rashab hoped that he would join the effort to bring the soldiers matzah for Pesach.

The Baron was not enthusiastic. “*Yidden*



RETURNING FROM THE DRAWING OF THE MAYIM SHELANU.



hoben an eitze, s'iz doch faran a Pesach Sheni, Jews have a resolution—there is Pesach Sheni,” he told the Rebbe Rashab.

“Oifen front zeinen nita kein baronen, there are no ‘barons’ at the front,” the Rebbe Rashab responded. “Di soldaten zeinen proste Yidden, zei veisen nit fun kein chochmes, the soldiers are simple Jews, they don’t know of such clever excuses. Zei darfen hoben matzah oif Pesach, they need to have matzah for Pesach.”⁹

Not getting much help from the Baron, the Rebbe Rashab began a massive campaign to galvanize the Jewish world on this issue. Articles were published in newspapers, all the Rabbonim were asked to get involved, and a special committee was established to lead the project. Every single Jew in the Russian empire was asked to make a contribution.

Interestingly, when the Frieddiker Rebbe suggested that Tomchei Temimim publicly endorse the project, the Rebbe Rashab rejected the idea. This was a mitzvah project which was

a responsibility of the entire Jewish world, and the objective of Tomchei Temimim was a specific Chabad endeavor. The Rebbe preferred that each community be involved through their own Rabbonim—whether Misnagdim, Polisher Chassidim, or even followers of the other Chabad Rebbes. He refused to be the official chairman of the committee, wanting it to be seen as a Klal-Yisrael issue, not a Lubavitch one.

Nonetheless, the Rebbe Rashab remained closely involved, coordinating every detail. The Rebbe Rashab spent a full month in S. Petersburg, where efforts were made to convince the government to allow the project. The Rebbe Rashab even served as the personal alarm clock for Reb Shmuel Michel Treinin, phoning his home at seven in the morning to ensure that he was awake for an important meeting.

Back in Lubavitch on Pesach night of 5665, the Rebbe Rashab sat down to his Seder. There was nothing left to do; countless hours had been invested, endless money had been spent, and immense logistical arrangements had been made. It was now in Hashem’s hands.

At that moment, there was a knock on the door. A telegram had arrived in Lubavitch all the way from Harbin on the Pacific coast: the efforts had been a success. The matzah had reached the soldiers.

The Rebbe Rashab stood up and exclaimed, “Boruch Hashem”!¹⁰



A PAINTING MADE DURING THE WAR DEPICTING A BATTLE BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL SOLDIERS (LEFT) AND THE JAPANESE SOLDIERS (RIGHT).

JEWISH RUSSIAN SOLDIERS.
PESACH 5665.



The Incredible Hashgacha

Southern Ukraine is filled with expansive fields dedicated to cultivating wheat for the entire country, and, today, for much of the world. Naturally, much of the matzah throughout Russia was baked with flour from those areas, and as one of the leading Rabbonim in the area, Harav Levi Yitzchak—the Rebbe’s father—provided the *hechsher* at the local flour mills, confirming that the wheat was prepared in accordance with Halachah.

When the Communist government took control of all commercial establishments, including flour mills and bakeries, they realized that everyone had depended on Harav Levi Yitzchak’s certification for flour, and if matzah-baking—still legal in Russia—was to take place, it would be impossible without his approval. So, they summoned Harav Levi Yitzchak.

This story was told by the Rebbe on several occasions and was also recounted by Rebbetzin Chana. The account here is taken almost word-for-word from the Rebbe’s recounting of the story to children at a Tzivos Hashem rally on Chol Hamoad Sukkos 5743.

The authorities called Harav Levi Yitzchak and instructed him to provide certification

that year as well. They warned him that if he rejected any of the flour and did not certify it, he would be seen as harming the economy (as profits from flour sales went into the treasury), painting him as an enemy of the state.

Harav Levi Yitzchak was not impressed. “If you give me full authority over the supervision of flour mills and allow me to appoint my own *mashgichim*,” he told them, “I will provide certification for the flour this year as well. If not, I cannot and will not provide certification for the flour. Not only will I withhold certification, but I will also publicly declare and publish everywhere that the flour is not under my responsibility!”

The officials tried threatening and intimidating him, but nothing worked. Ultimately, they relayed the problem to higher authorities, and an order soon arrived from the “higher-ups”: Harav Levi Yitzchak’s instructions were to be fulfilled to the utmost.

Incredibly, through Harav Levi Yitzchak’s steadfast determination, matzos were baked in all the government bakeries using flour with the highest standards of kashrus, certified by Harav Levi Yitzchak Schneerson himself.

Passing the Torch

Reshimas Hayoman, which contains the Rebbe’s diary entries about his interactions with the Friediker Rebbe, is an incredible window into a private world which was—until its publication—entirely concealed from our view.

Some of the most fascinating entries pertain to the *hemshechiyus* of the Rabbeim. The Friediker Rebbe shared several linked stories that involved all (or most) of the Rabbeim.

One such story pertains to the Seder night. At the Seder in the year 5695, the Friediker Rebbe told the Rebbe:

“The niggun with which the Haggadah is recited is a tune that was passed through the

generations. It comes from the Alter Rebbe himself.

“When the Tzemach Tzedek was twelve years old, the Alter Rebbe called him over from his place at the Seder table and said, ‘Come hear how the Rebbe [i.e., the Maggid] says the Haggadah.’

“When the Rebbe Maharash was twelve years old, his father the Tzemach Tzedek likewise called him over and said, ‘Come hear how the Zaide says the Haggadah.’

“When the Rebbe Rashab was twelve years old, his father the Rebbe Maharash, likewise called him over and said, ‘Come hear how the

Tatte says the Haggadah.”

At this point, the Rebbe asked the Frierdiker Rebbe a question: did the twelve-year-old children—the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab—actually hear the voices of

the Rabbeim from the heavenly realms?

“Yes,” the Frierdiker Rebbe responded. “My father [the Rebbe Rashab] told me that from that moment on, he began to experience *hargashos niflaim*, amazing experiences.”¹¹

The Holiday of Redemption — ה'תש"ש

In Adar Sheni 5700, the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in the United States from war-torn Europe. Chassidim all over the world breathed a sigh of relief; the Rebbe's arrival was the culmination of half a year of intense efforts to rescue him and his family from Nazi-occupied Poland, via Germany, Riga, Sweden, and finally to the United States.

During his first month in New York, the Frierdiker Rebbe stayed in a suite in the Grey-stone hotel, which turned into the temporary Chabad headquarters. For Pesach, a delegation from Lakewood proposed that the Rebbe spend Yom Tov in their town—then a popular Jewish resort town—where the weather was better and where they would find respite from the tumult of the city.

The Frierdiker Rebbe agreed, and the trip was set for Tuesday, 8 Nissan.

It was a thrilling occasion. Many Chassidim in New York hadn't seen the Frierdiker Rebbe in many years, and this would be their first opportunity to spend a Yom Tov with the Rebbe. After months of dangerous travel, the Frierdiker Rebbe would finally be spending *Zman Cheiruseinu* on safe shores, with peace of mind, free again. Chassidim quickly arranged lodgings in Lakewood.

The following description of Pesach in Lakewood was printed in *Sefer Hasichos* of that year, attributed to “one of the participants.” In truth, however, it was written by the Frierdiker Rebbe himself.¹² It is presented here in its entirety:

On Tuesday, 8 Nissan, representatives of the Lakewood community arrived at the Greystone Hotel, and at 1:15 p.m. the Rebbe Shlita and his family left New York. At the New Jersey border, they were greeted by a delegation representing

the governor.

On the way, the Rebbe's car stopped twice to greet delegations of Anash and *temimim* from towns near Lakewood, who then joined the convoy while singing Lubavitcher niggunim – a reminder of the luminous days in Lubavitch. It evoked memories of this time of year, a few days before Pesach, when the Rebbe Rashab would return from abroad, and the *temimim* would greet him at the outskirts of Lubavitch.

At 2:30 p.m., when they arrived at the house in which the Rebbe Shlita was to stay, he was welcomed in the spacious living room, and he responded with a short sicha. [The reception was captured on video; crowds of people throng around the house when the Frierdiker Rebbe arrives, and after the reception, a lively *farbrengen* ensues among the Chassidim present. The excitement is palpable].

At five o'clock, he reappeared, wearing his Shabbos garb, *farbrenged* with Anash and *temimim*, and delivered the *maamar* entitled *Ohr LeArbaah-Asar*.

On the first night of Pesach, about sixty people were present at Maariv. The Seder began at nine o'clock with a minyan participating at the table, and some dozens of additional guests observing and listening.

The Haggadah and the sichos went on until 11:00 p.m., and the *seudah* and *benschen* were completed before midnight. More sichos and the conclusion of the Haggadah continued until 2:00 a.m.

From ten in the evening until one in the morning, the room was filled with the additional guests mentioned above. About one hundred people attended Shacharis, and the Yom-Tov meal that followed, including niggunim and sichos, lasted three hours.

The Seder on the second night began again at nine o'clock; the Haggadah and the meal continued till one in the morning, and the Seder ended at 3:30 a.m. About 120 people participated in Shacharis, and the seudah, which included niggunim and sichos, lasted two hours. At 7:00 p.m. the Rebbe Shlita delivered the *maamar* entitled *Ki Yish'alcha Bincha*.

The evening and daytime seudos of Shabbos were accompanied by niggunim and sichos, and at 7:00 on Shabbos, the Rebbe Shlita delivered the *maamar* entitled *VaYakem Edus BeYaakov*.

The Three Pesachs

Describing Pesach with the Rebbe obviously needs much more than one article. But three unique instances stand out in the memory of Chassidim—years when Pesach marked

Many guests arrived for the last days of Pesach. The evening and daytime *seudos* of Shvi'i Shel Pesach, with their *niggunim* and *sichos*, each lasted three hours. At 7:00 p.m., the Rebbe Shlita delivered the *maamar* entitled *Az Yashir*.

The seudah on Acharon Shel Pesach evening also included *niggunim* and *sichos*, and went on for two hours. The daytime *seudah* on Acharon Shel Pesach, complete with *niggunim* and *sichos*, went on for about five hours, and after *benschen*, those at the table were joined by all the other invited guests in a lively dance.¹³

the beginning of a positive change, special moments that evoked *Zman Cheiruseinu*. We asked two Chassidim, both bochurim at the time, to share their memories:

The First Time—Pesach 5738

Rabbi Yossi Groner relates:

“Throughout the winter of 5738 (following the Rebbe’s heart attack on Shemini Atzeres), the Rebbe davened in the upstairs zal. In addition to attending Krias HaTorah on Monday and Thursday, the Rebbe joined the bochurim’s Friday night minyan at 8:30 p.m., and davened there on Shabbos morning as well.

“Rotations were held to determine attendance, but the situation was far from ideal. Many people, especially working *balebatim*, didn’t have many opportunities to see the Rebbe; if they would normally see the Rebbe during all the tefillos every Shabbos, their opportunity was now relegated to Shabbos morning—only if it was their turn on the



THE FRIEDIKER REBBE ARRIVES AT HIS LODGING IN LAKEWOOD AND SAYS A SICHA AT THE RECEPTION. THESE MOMENTS CAN ALSO BE SEEN IN THE VIDEO “AMERICA IZ NISHT ANDERSH”

rotation.

“On Erev Pesach, the Rebbe informed my father [Rabbi Laibel Groner] that there would be a change; he would begin davening with the main minyan downstairs on Yom Tov morning. The Rebbe told my father to notify him when the minyan was up to *chazaras hashatz*, and the Rebbe would then join the minyan for Hallel.

“The news spread like wildfire: The Rebbe is coming back downstairs! The next morning, the shul was packed from wall to wall. Although the Rebbe had already returned home on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, and held the ‘*Seudas Hodaah*’ farbrengen on Zos Chanukah, this Pesach morning felt like another important stage in the Rebbe’s *gezunt*; the Rebbe would be spending Shabbos with all the Chassidim again.

“As it turned out, I was *zoche* to have a hand in the events as well.

“On Pesach night, my father mentioned that he was concerned; the Rebbe had seemed unsure that my father properly understood his instructions regarding Shacharis, which were given with a very long list of other *horaos*. I was confused; if that was his concern, why didn’t he just tell the Rebbe that he understood?

“My father was surprised by my response; ‘You never initiate a conversation with the Rebbe!’ he said.

“It was astounding to me. At that time he had worked in close proximity to the Rebbe for

30 years, yet his reverence and absolute *bitul* was still as it was on the first day!

“The next morning, the minyan was in middle of Birchos Krias Shema and I was conversing with a friend in the upstairs hallway. Suddenly, we heard the door to *Gan Eden Hatachton* open. There was a bochur standing in 770’s doorway. His face turned white, and he ran out the front door.

“Instinctively, I ran to the entrance and saw the Rebbe, in his tallis, holding the door of *Gan Eden Hatachton* open. The Rebbe asked me if I knew where the minyan downstairs was up to, and I said that when I was downstairs they were up to *Yishtabach*.

“The Rebbe thought for a moment and said, ‘Nu, be sure I am notified when they are up to *chazaras hashatz*.’ I answered, ‘Yes.’ (Whenever I observed my father receiving an instruction from the Rebbe he always simply answered “Yes.”)

“The Rebbe said ‘Thank you’ and walked back into his room.

“I ran downstairs as fast as I could and told my father what had just transpired, and he said, ‘You see [why I was concerned]?’

“That brief interaction with the Rebbe shook me to my core, and I could not sleep for three nights straight. It was totally unexpected; being alone with the Rebbe as the Rebbe gazed at me like that was incredibly overwhelming and gave me an unbelievable adrenaline boost.”

The Surprise Announcement— Pesach 5746

Rabbi Zushe Greenberg relates:

“In the winter of 5746, the Rebbe was not in the best of health. When the Rebbe came downstairs for Kabbolas Shabbos on Shabbos Mevorchim Adar Sheni, there was clearly something wrong. The Rebbe was in pain, and made his way to the front of the shul very, very slowly.

“We later learned that the Rebbe was

suffering from a condition in his leg that caused intense pain. It was quite evident on the Rebbe’s face; the next morning, it was announced that all davening would take place upstairs, in the small Zal.

“It was Shabbos Mevorchim, and skipping the farbrengen—a *hora’ah* of the Frierdiker Rebbe to the Rebbe—was unthinkable, so the Rebbe came downstairs that afternoon.

The Rebbe's entrance was painful to see, but incredibly, the Rebbe farbrenged with even more enthusiasm than usual. There was even an entire Hadran in honor of the Siyum Harambam.

"But that was just one bright moment. The Rebbe was in constant pain, and treatment and recovery demanded time and rest. In the weeks that followed, 770 felt like a ghost town. The Rebbe davened in *Gan Eden Hatachton* and later in the small Zal, which had very limited capacity. Aside from the few instances when the Rebbe came downstairs for a farbrengen, the usual crowds were not present. This situation continued, with slow improvements, for some six weeks.

"On Erev Pesach, I arrived at 770 to reserve a good place in the small Zal for Mincha and Maariv. It was quite empty; many Anash were planning to daven in local shuls and proceed directly home for the Seder. But then I saw

Rabbi Groner emerging from the Rebbe's room, his face shining. 'The Rebbe will daven downstairs!'

"I later learned that a special initiative had taken place that day; a minyan had recited the entire Tehillim at the kever of the Rambam, whose birthday is on Erev Pesach. This was at the height of the Rebbe's '*koch*' in Rambam, and when Rabbi Groner brought the Rebbe the news, the Rebbe said, 'they were by the 'great doctor,' so tonight we will daven downstairs.'"

"We rushed downstairs in excitement, and a few minutes later, the Rebbe arrived. The Rebbe was still walking carefully, but the change we were all waiting for was finally here. It was a tremendous moment—the Rebbe had reverted to the 'normal' *seder*, signaling that the worst was over.

"We all broke out dancing after Maariv; the next morning, the Zal was packed from wall to wall."

The Rebbe's Glowing Face—Pesach 5748

Rabbi Greenberg continues:

"Two years later, we experienced another very difficult period when the Rebbetzin was

nistalek on Chof Beis Shevat. Aside from the Shabbos Mevorchim Adar farbrengen, the Rebbe remained in his home throughout the





THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE SINGING AT THE CHILDREN'S RALLY, CHOL HAMOED PESACH 5748.

Shloshim; for the first time in almost forty years, there was no Purim farbrengen.

"It was an incredibly sad time. You could feel the *aveilus* everywhere. Needless to say, 770 again became a ghost town, as all the *tefillos* and *sichos* moved to the Rebbe's home.

"As Pesach approached, people began to whisper about the Rebbe's seder. Would the Rebbe remain alone in his room for the *sedorim*? The thought was very jarring. On Erev Pesach, as we waited outside 770 for the Rebbe to arrive, a *Polisher chossid* next to me began to express his concern. 'The Rebbe will be alone for the Sedorim? Terrible, how sad—something needs to be done about it!' Truth be told, this was not the feeling among the *bochurim*; Chassidim didn't get busy inserting themselves into the Rebbe's 'feelings'; but it was a question nonetheless.

"All these thoughts dissipated when the

Rebbe entered the shul for Maariv. The Rebbe's face was glowing; he encouraged the singing of '*Vesamachta*' along his whole walk to the front, and davening began in a very uplifting mode.

"That was only the beginning. After davening, the Rebbe turned around and wished 'Good Yom Tov' three times with a smile on his holy face. Again, we sang '*Vesamachta*,' and then suddenly, the Rebbe began a *sicha*! Everyone rushed to the front to get a good spot. I laughingly noticed that if beforehand, people were worried about the Rebbe's seder, now they were suddenly worried about their own...

"It was the beginning of a very uplifting Yom Tov. The Rebbe said a *sicha* every night, and was very *besimcha* throughout. Some of the most beautiful pictures of the Rebbe at children's rallies come from that Chol Hamoed. It was truly a Yom Tov to remember." ¹

1. See "Fields of Faith," *Derher* Adar I 5784.

2. Based on *Masa Berdichev*, by Rabbi Yehoshua Mundshine.

3. *Shvi'i Shel Pesach* 5697; *Sefer Hasichos* pg. 246.

4. *Toras Menachem* vol. 43 (5725 vol. 3), pp. 201-203, 243-250.

5. *Likutei Sipurim* p. 268

6. *Lubavitch V'Chayaleha* pg. 45.

7. *Otzar Sipurei Chabad* v. 18 p. 151.

8. *Lubavitch V'Chayaleha* pg. 46.

9. *Sefer Hasichos* 5702 pg. 89.

10. Based on "The Chinese Matzah Campaign of 1905" by Rabbi Eli Rubin on Chabad.org.

11. *Reshimas Hayoman* pg. 372.

12. This was true of several other Yomanim and articles as well, such as the description of the Frieddiker Rebbe's *sicha* before leaving to exile in Kostroma, and the article about the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchak, printed in *Kovetz Lubavitch*.

13. This rendition is based on the translation of *Sichos* In English.



The REBBE'S KAPITEL



In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, we present our readers with this card containing the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's Kapitelach. Please use this gift, conveniently sized to fit straight in your wallet, as a reminder to take the few moments every day and connect with the Rebbe in this special way. May we all merit to see the fulfillment of the Rebbe's brachos in our lives.



It would be worthwhile to recite every day *bli neder*—until the upcoming Rosh Hashanah—the Rebbe's Kapitel Tehillim (71). This will serve as a channel for the fulfillment of all the brachos he gave you in their entirety.

(The Rebbe in a letter dated 3 Menachem-Av 5710)

LUMINARIES

*Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah*

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

לע"נ
מרת גאלדא מרים בת ר' חנניה ע"ה
שיפרין
נלב"ע י"א ניסן ה'תש"פ
תנ"צ'בה'

נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' אליהו וזוגתו מרת
רבקה ומשפחתם שיפרין

The Maharal

Maharal and Chassidus:

Throughout history, our nation has been blessed with Gedolei Torah and Roshei Bnei Yisrael to guide us in every generation. They protected us and taught us the word of Hashem. Each *Nossi* was uniquely suited to his generation and its special mission.

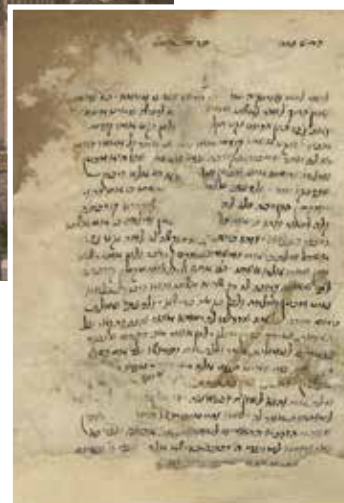
Some had a message that proved timeless, making an impression that is still with us today. Select few have had a profound influence on Chassidus and Chassidim.

One such *Nossi Yisrael* was the Maharal, scion of the royal house of Dovid Hamelech and - ancestor of the Alter Rebbe and the *Beis Harav*. The *Shalsheles Hayachas* in Hayom Yom begins the Yichus of the Rebbeim with the great Gaon – the Maharal of Prague, and then lists seven generations of descendants until the Alter Rebbe.¹

The Maharal's special connection to Chassidus can be seen in his Torah as well, which is a unique fusion of Kabbalah and Chakirah, teaching the esoteric part of Torah in a concealed way. The Rebbe also quotes Chassidim as saying that in Tanya, when the Alter Rebbe writes that it is based '*mipi sefarim umipi sofrim*', the *sefarim* in question



POSTCARD OF THE MAHARAL'S SHUL FROM THE PERIOD BEFORE THE WAR.



A 'DRUSH' ON PARSHAS
EMOR IN THE MAHARAL'S
HANDWRITING.

are the works of the Maharaal and the Shelah.²

The Maharaal's uncovering of *Pniniyus Hatorah* was not limited to his *seforim*. He supported the learning of Kabbalah and taught his students the secrets of the Torah. When Reb Eliyahu Baal Shem founded the first Yeshiva where the learning of *Pniniyus Hatorah* was officially part of the *sefer*, he was attacked by those who opposed the study of Kabbalah and was driven out of Germany. The Maharaal went to inspect the Yeshiva and was very impressed. The Maharaal and his sons became supporters of Reb Eliyahu Baal Shem, who eventually moved his Yeshiva to Prague.³

While his generation was not ready for the *giluy* of Chassidus, the Maharaal played an outsize role in preparing the Jewish community as a whole and the Torah world in particular, for the upcoming Chassidus revolution.

Interestingly, another connection we find between the Maharaal and Chassidus is the date of his passing – Chai Elul, 5369. Eighty-nine years later, the Baal Shem Tov was born, and forty-seven years after that, on the same auspicious day, the Maharaal's great descendent, the Alter Rebbe, came into this world.

Becoming the Maharaal

Rebbi Yehuda Livai was born in the year 5272 (1512) in the city of Posna (Posen). His father was an illustrious scholar named Reb Betzalel. The Maharaal was a descendant of Reb Livoi Hazaken from Vermaiza (Worms), who was a descendent of Dovid Hamelech.⁴

The Maharaal spent his formative years learning in the greatest Yeshivos of the time. From age 12 to 16, he learned in Premishla in the Yeshiva of Reb Yaakov Polak, founder of the Pilpul style of learning. After Reb Yaakov left Premishla, the Maharaal set out on "*galus*" (wandering) for two years - visiting different Talmidei Chachomim and growing in learning, while hiding his own immense wisdom.

Following his years of *Galus*, the Maharaal spent seven

years learning in Posna at the Yeshiva of Reb Yitzchok Kloiver, grandfather of the Maharshal, Reb Shlomo Luria. In Posna, the Maharal met the Maharshal, who was two years his junior, and with whom he would learn for the next decade.

After Reb Yitzchok's passing, The Maharal (age 26) and the Maharshal (age 24) traveled to Cracow to study in the Yeshiva there. There, they met the young Reb Moshe Isserlish (the Rama), who was just eighteen at the time, and they proceeded to learn together for the next three years. At that point, the Maharshal left Cracow, while the Maharal and the Rama stayed together for another two years.⁵

At age 32, the Maharal returned to Prague and married his long-waiting Kallah, Perel, daughter of Reb Shmuel Raich – a successful merchant from Prague. They had been engaged when she was a young girl of six, and the Maharal a boy of ten. Shmuel Raich supported the Maharal during his time in Yeshiva, keeping in touch with and waiting for the Maharal for the next twenty-plus years.

As a young Kallah, Perel knew that her Chosson was a great Talmid Chochom, and wanted to be able to keep up with him in learning. She studied with diligence, becoming a great Torah scholar in her own right. When she was 14, the Maharal prepared an exact seder of learning for her to follow in his absence. At that point, the Maharal felt she was too young to marry, and asked permission to go to Yeshiva for a few more years.

During the Maharal's time in Posna, Reb Shmuel Raich's business hit a rough spot, and he lost his entire fortune. He sadly wrote to the Maharal saying that he could no longer hold up his part of the deal – the *Nadan*, and if the Maharal wanted, the shidduch could be called off. The Maharal responded that he did not care if the family had money or not, and as long as Perel was willing to wait a bit longer for him to finish his learning in Cracow, he was fine continuing with the shidduch.

In the year 5303 (1543), war broke out in Bohemia (in which Prague was located), and Prague was overrun with soldiers and officers. At the time, Perel had opened a small store where she sold baked goods, among other items. With the meager income that her store provided, Perel supported her parents, and eventually also her husband.

One day, an officer appeared at the store and ordered a large amount of food. Since he had no money with him, he asked Perel if she would be able to give the goods to him on credit, and he would pay for them when he returned a few

days later. Perel explained that she was running out of the means to keep the shop open, and needed the funds. The soldier gave her a garment, telling her to keep it as collateral until his return. Should he not return, the garment would be hers to keep.

When the soldier did not return, the Maharal suggested to Perel that she check the garment for sewn-in diamonds and gold, since during wartime it was common practice for soldiers to hide their valuables in that way. Lo and behold, a small treasure was found, putting the Raich family back on their feet and allowing her father's newly flourishing business to support the Maharal's family from then on.⁶

Maharal of Prague

The city of Prague was one of the greatest Jewish centers of the time, with numerous prominent Shuls and Yeshivos. The Jewish quarter was filled with Jews of all types. The markets were run by sharp and upstanding shop owners and traders, the study halls with wise and studious *Talmidim* and *Rabbonim*. Additionally, there were several wealthy and powerful Jewish merchants and brokers who served as the Kahal's board members.

In a city the size of Prague, with the number of movers and shakers that the Jewish community produced, there were differing factions and opinions on a host of issues, and any leader who would take control of the city would need to be a strong unifying force.

The Maharal was the voice of Torah, he stood steadfast for Torah's values and stayed committed and dedicated to his community's welfare, both physical and spiritual.

From the Reshimos of the Frieddiker Rebbe, it seems that a few years after the Maharal got married, at age 35, he was appointed head of the Rabbonim in Prague. He seems to have held this position for the next decade at least.

The Maharal was a partner in two small businesses, and that is how he made his living. He donated the wages he received from the community to the upkeep of the Yeshiva that he had founded.

[It is interesting to note that in many histories of the Maharal, he is said to have held the position of Rov of Prague for a very short time. The rest of the time, they have him either as Rov in Nikelsburg (20 years) and Posna (twice, for several years each time), or just as a private citizen living in Prague. From Sefer Hazichronos, however, it is clear that he



THE FLAG OF REB SHLOMO MOLCHO.

SEAT OF THE
MAHARAL IN THE
ALTNEU SHUL IN
PRAGUE.

was Rov in Prague for the majority of this time.]

As head of the Rabbonim, the Maharal led the Kehillah's religious affairs, answering Shailos, establishing a Kloiz (see below), running the Beis Din, and writing Teshuvos to fellow Rabbonim and Kehilos.

The Maharal ran the community from the famous Altneu Shul - also called the Maharal's Shul. Interestingly, this shul was visited by the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe Rashab. The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted that at that shul he saw a Sefer Torah written in the days of Ezra.⁷ The Rebbe mentioned the Shul as well, with regard to the flag hanging in the shul, the flag of *haKadosh* Reb Shlomo Molcho.⁸

Hanging on the wall in the Altneu shul is a list of *minhagim* and *Takanos* that the Maharal instituted for his Kehillah and for the Jewish people at large. The Maharal also founded the Chevra Kadisha of Prague, putting in place many *minhagim* and *Takanos* for them and forming the model that Chevra Kadishas follow to this day.

Throughout this time, the Mahral continued to write his many *seforim*, elucidating and clarifying various areas of *hashkafa* and Halacha, with his novel perspective and language.

The Maharal wrote and taught in a unique way, using different parts of Torah, and creating his own special "voice." The Maharal's Torah is steeped in Kabbalah, yet is written and explained in the language of Chakirah. On that note, it

is interesting to point out that the Rebbe explains that the Maharal's Pirush on Rashi, the Gur Aryeh, is based in *Sod*.⁹

The Maharal's Kloiz

Additionally, the Maharal founded his own Yeshiva called the "*Kloiz*". The name was meant to distinguish his Yeshiva from the growing Pilpul movement that had been taking root in Yeshivos across the region. The Maharal was adamantly opposed to the Pilpul style of learning and wrote against it quite sharply.

The style of Pilpul has the student discuss the sections of Gemara and topics in theoretical and often hypothetical ways. On the one hand, this allows the *Talmid* to exercise their analytical mind, but it often leads him on a path to nowhere, not bringing him to "*asukei shmate'sa aliba d'hilchesa*," finding the correct *psak halacha*.

The approach of Pilpul ("Chilukim") was propagated by Reb Yaakov Polak and spread throughout Yeshivos in the following generation, with many Talmidei Chachomim embracing the new style of learning. While numerous Gedolei Yisrael spoke against Pilpul, many supported it to some extent. In Kuntres Eitz HaChaim, the Rebbe Rashab quotes the Maharal and concurs with his opposition to Pilpul.

Maharal and the Kaisers

The Maharal's reputation spread across the Jewish community and beyond. He corresponded with some of the leading gentile minds of his time, including monarchs, priests, estate holders, and astronomers.

At the time, Prague was the seat of the 'Holy Roman Empire', and the Maharal made several visits to its castle, where he met the rulers and princes of his day. The Frierdiker Rebbe tells a beautiful story about how the Maharal assisted the princes Ferdinand and Maximilian and saved the Jewish community of Prague. In later years, we hear of the Maharal's meeting with the Emperor Rudolf, successor to Maximilian.

At one point the Maharal solved a complicated mathematical problem that had been bothering a certain prince. The prince was impressed and invited the Maharal to stay for a week, during which the Maharal opened his eyes about everything from the sciences and philosophies to the secret of the Jewish people's survival. This led to a friendship between the Maharal and the Jewish estate managers and both dukes and the royal family.

While the emperor and his family were decent and courteous, the Christian clergy pressured them into ordering the expulsion on Jews from Bohemia and Moravia.

Thanks to the Maharal's influence at court, and after sending an influential Jewish *askan* named Mordecai Tzemach to the pope in Rome, the decree was finally annulled.

It is interesting to note that the story took place in the years 5317 - 5320 (1557-1560), and the Maharal is described as head of the Rabbonim of Prague, at the age of 45.

Thirty years later, the eccentric and wise Kaiser Rudolf became emperor. He was a studious and curious man, and not very religious.

The Kaiser was friendly toward the Jewish community and a strong admirer of the Maharal. The emperor's door was always open to the Maharal, and they sat together for many hours, the Maharal sharing his wisdom with the enlightened king.

The Christian leadership was bothered by Rudolf's enlightenment and his relationship with the Maharal. They arranged for three cardinals to be sent by the pope to inspire the emperor to distance himself from the Maharal. Part of their plan was to create a public debate between the Maharal and the cardinals.

Knowing what the outcome would be, the emperor saw



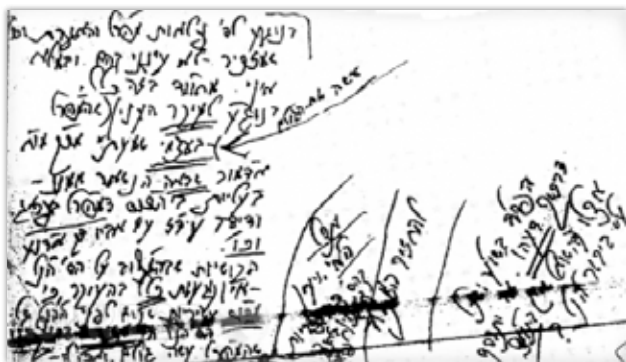
REAR OF THE ALTNEU SHUL, SHOWING RUNGS LEADING TO THE ATTIC WHERE THE REMAINS OF THE GOLEM ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN STORED.

this as a great opportunity to prove the Maharal's greatness compared with the backward church. He invited political leaders and influential academics from all over to witness the debate and made sure to have everything recorded by professional scribes.

The debate lasted ten days, in which the Maharal obliterated the arguments of his opponents. The loss was so crushing, that the cardinals tried stopping the transcripts from being made public. Happy to prove his point, the emperor refused and proceeded to publicize the entire polemic for all to see, causing much embarrassment to the clergy.

Seeing the danger this could cause the Jewish community and himself, the Maharal left Prague for three years, spending the 5352 (1592) in Posna. In his absence, his son Betzael took his place, with instructions that, on certain complicated questions, he should confer with his mother, the learned Perel.

Speaking of the miracles associated with the Maharal, the Rebbe refers to a debate between the Maharal and the Kaiser, likely a reference to this story.



A HANDWRITTEN NOTE BY THE REBBE ABOUT THE MAHARAL'S CREATION OF THE GOLEM.

ובהנוגע לעיקר הענין (שהמהר"ל עשה את הגולם) - בעצמי שמעתי מכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר שראה הנשאר ממנו - בעליית ביהכנ"ס [בית הכנסת] דמהר"ל בפראג. ודיבר עד"ז [על דבר זה] עם אביו כ"ק אדנ"ע [אדמו"ר נשמתו עדן] וכו

The Maharal even seems to have met Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler, two world-famous astronomers that Emperor Rudolf had brought to Prague. Additionally, his *talmidim*, the Tosfos Yom Tov and the Tzemach Dovid were also quite knowledgeable in these areas. The latter worked together with the famous astronomers and wrote Seforim about astronomy and Jewish History.

The Golem

It would be amiss to have a column on the Maharal without mentioning the Golem.

In a sicha on Chai Elul 5730, the Rebbe mentioned that in the days of the Maharal there were open miracles, and whenever it was necessary, things went in a supernatural way. As an example, the Rebbe brings the story of the debate. (See above) Perhaps another expression of the higher-than-nature we find in the Maharal is the famous Golem.

While there are many legends and stories about the Golem, most cannot be corroborated. Still, we know that the Golem did exist.

In a *ma'aneh* to someone who questioned the Golem's existence, the Rebbe wrote that we know that there definitely was a Golem, as the Frieddiker Rebbe went up to the attic of the Alteneu Shul and saw "its remains". The Rebbe also explained that even if the source of the stories (*Nifalos Hamaharal*) are fictional, it doesn't change the fact that for generations before the book was printed everyone (including non-Jews) knew

that the Maharal created a Golem.

The Golem was created through special Kabbalistic formulas to help guard and protect the Jewish people of Prague. Eventually, the Maharal decided he was no longer needed, so the Maharal had him interred in the attic of the Alteneu Shul. The Maharal ordered that no one be allowed in the attic and it has remained off-limits until today.

When the Frieddiker Rebbe was a child, he visited Prague with his father. The Frieddiker Rebbe bribed the *Shamash* of the Shul, and climbed a ladder to the attic where the Golem was located. When the Rebbe told the story in 5710, the Rebbe said that he had asked the Frieddiker Rebbe what he saw and didn't receive an answer.

The Rebbe Rashab scolded his son, and later told him that he had to do months of work to ensure that the Frieddiker Rebbe wouldn't be harmed.

The Rebbe mentioned the Maharal's miraculous nature in connection with the rescue of Rav Yitzchak Hutner, a distinguished Talmid Chochom who was very involved in the Torah of the Maharal. In the summer of 5730, Rav Hutner was on a plane that was hijacked by terrorists and was taken captive. The Rebbe invoked the Maharal's *zechus*, saying that those who occupy themselves with the Maharal's Torah (Rav Hutner) should be saved in his merit, in a way that is higher than nature. Rav Hutner and the other hostages were freed within a few days.

Takanaos And Minhagim Of The Maharal

The following is a quote from a *sicha* of the Frieddiker Rebbe:

"The Maharal of Prague was the great *Iluy* (prodigy) of his time - a *Ge'on Hageonim* in both the revealed and esoteric parts of Torah, as well as Jewish philosophy. He was talented in Music (*baal chush in neginah*) and gifted with all types of knowledge (*baal kisharon*). He was a kind and pleasant person (*baal middos tovos*), and above all an amazing educator and mentor who ingrained *minhagei Yisrael* in *Bnei Yisrael*."¹⁰

The Frieddiker Rebbe related that in Lubavitch they were very insistent on following *minhagim*, especially *minhagim* of the great Tzadik, the Maharal. The *minhag* the Frieddiker Rebbe was referring to, was to light three candles over the *Aseres Yemei Teshuva*: A *Teshuva Licht* for Shabbos Shuva, as well as a *Lebedige Licht* and *Neshama Licht* for Yom Kippur¹¹.

Additionally, in *Sefer Hazichronos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe mentions the *minhag* of reciting Parshas Haazinu before davening as a *Segulah* for clearing one's heart, and that saying it often is a good *segulah* for *parnassa* and long life.¹² Another *minhag* known from the Maharal's Shul was saying *Mizmor Shir L'Yom HaShabbos* twice on Erev Shabbos.¹³

The Maharal was also known for the special emphasis he put on the "Nusach" of davening, the tunes and melodies. The Maharal would appoint *Baalei Tefilah* who were earnest and devoted, and their heartfelt devotion could be felt in their singing.

The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted that one year, the Maharal felt that the Yidden needed better tunes to daven with. He performed a *she'elas chalom*, and received our current Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Nusach from on high.

The Nusach is referred to as the Skarobover *niggunim* and have spread across the Jewish world. The Tzemach Tzedek explained that these tunes granted from *Shomayim* at the behest of the Maharal are the same as those used in the Beis Hamikdash.¹⁴

On the topic of the Yomim Noraim, the Rebbe writes in *Reshimas Hayoman*, that in Lubavitch there was a Shofar that had belonged to the Maharal, which apparently was very long. At some point, a *sedek* (crack) appeared, and it could no longer be used for *Tekios*.¹⁵

The Tzemach Tzedek said that the Chinuch, guidance, and *minhagim* that the Maharal established within the Jewish people are even greater than the Seforim he wrote — comparing it to the difference between writing and engraving. The latter is greater since it can never be erased.¹⁶

Lesson from The Maharal

Another famous *minhag* begun by the Maharal was to give *kasha* to birds in honor of Shabbos Shirah.

The Frierdiker Rebbe describes that the Maharal instituted that every year the Shabbos of Beshalach – teachers would bring the children to the Shul's courtyard for Shabbos Shirah.

The Maharal would tell them that this was the parsha of *Krias Yam Suf*, and had the teachers tell the children the miracles that happened at *Krias Yam Suf* and how the children plucked fruit from the trees that grew out of the walls of water and fed the singing birds. He would then instruct that the children be given *kasha* with which to feed the chickens and birds.



THE TZIYON OF THE MAHARAL AND HIS WIFE PERL IN PRAGUE. NOTE THE SYMBOL OF A LION IN THE TOP CENTER OF THE MATZEVA.

The Maharal would then *bentch* the children and their parents that they merit to grow up *L'Torah, l'chupa, ul'maasim tovim*.¹⁷

The Rebbe explains that we learn a very powerful message from the Maharal in this story. The Rebbe contrasts the Maharal's greatness and the importance of his Torah study and his time, and the fact that the Maharal created a special *minhag* just to get the children excited about *Krias Yam Suf*. The Rebbe explains that herein lies the greatness of the Maharal – he did not just stay in his room working on his *seforim*, but rather went out to the courtyard with all the children and established a beautiful and simple *minhag* – displaying the true role of a Jewish leader, to impress upon even small children the beauty, joy, and importance of Yiddishkeit. In addition, he would give the precious children a *bracha* that they grow up as honest Jews.¹⁸ **1**

IN HIS TORAH

"כאשר יצאו ישראל ממצרים קבלו הטוב בעצם, עד שהיו ראויים בעצמם להיות בני חורין מצד מעלתם, וזאת המעלה עצמית לישראל, שהם ראויים להיות בני חורין מצד עצם מעלתם. ודבר מקרי לא יבטל דבר עצמי כלל, כי עדיין על ישראל המעלה הזאת, שהם בני חורין בעצם, עם השעבוד במקרה."

"כי אחר שהוציא הקב"ה את ישראל ממצרים, ונתן אותם בני חורין, ולא עוד אלא אף מלכים, שנאמר "ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש", זה השם הוא לישראל בעצם, והמעלה והחשיבות שיש בזה לא נתבטל בגלותם, שהוא במקרה. ולפיכך אומרים חכמי ישראל "כל ישראל בני מלכים הם" אף בגלותם."

גבורות ה' פרק ס"א

There is a famous concept explained by the Maharal that the Rebbe spoke about many times: Yetzias Mitzrayim changed the Jewish people's essence – once Hashem freed the Yidden from Mitzrayim they could never again be enslaved. Their essence is now that of Bnei Chorin – free people, and even the darkest of circumstances cannot take that away.

The Maharal connects this idea to "Kol Yisrael Bnei Melochim Heim", all Yidden are referred to as kings and princes – proving that even in galus – Yidden are royalty and impervious to repression and slavery.

The Rebbe explains that the difference between Galus Mitzrayim and the later galuyos was that Mitzrayim was the essence of negativity and therefore the complete antithesis to Yidden and Yiddishkeit. The other galuyos, on the other hand, were off-shoots and expressions of evil, not evil itself, and therefore they can't fully counter the essence of the Jew.

This is why in our current galus our minds and hearts can be tainted and our bodies can chas v'shalom be harmed, but our neshama – our etzem cannot be touched.¹⁹

1. Hayom Yom, Pg. 4. Mentioned in the Sicha of Chai Elul 5730.

2. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Tavo, Chai Elul 5730; Toras Menachem vol. 61, p. 212.

3. Sefer Hazichronos part 2.

4. Legend has it that he was born on the first night of Pesach, stopping a blood-libel with his birth.

5. Sefer Hazichronos 2.83. In many of the works on the Maharal, historians believe that he learned on his own because he seldom

quotes anyone as his teachers. In Sefer Hazichronos it is clear otherwise.

6. Sefer Hazichronos. Other sources vary in the details of this account.

7. Chol Hamoed Pesach 5691 – day 2.

8. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Shushan Purim 5714; Toras Menachem vol. 11, p. 161.

9. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah 5732; Toras Menachem vol. 67, p. 218.

10. Sicha 13 Shevat, Beshalach, 5702.

11. Sicha Yom Beis D'Rosh Hashanah 5704.

12. Sefer Hazichronos, Chapter 29.

13. Igros Kodesh 3, p. 76 (22 Shevat 5709).

14. Leil Shviei Shel Pesach 5698.

15. Reshimas Hayoman – Rosh Hashana 5695.

16. Sicha 13 Shevat, Beshalach, 5702.

17. Ibid.

18. Sicha Motzei Shabbos Parshas Beshalach, 11 Shevat 5721; Toras Menachem vol. 30, p. 52.

19. Likkutei Sichos vol. 32, Chag Hapesach (Seif 8).



“

MAY WE MERIT

Mugedike Maamarim!

”

A CONVERSATION WITH
RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BROOK

INTERVIEW BY:
RABBI MENDY GREENBERG



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר בקשר עם יום הבהיר
י"א ניסן מאה ועשרים ושנים שנה

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער זוזגתו מרת חיה
מושקא וילדיהם ברכה ליפשא, עליזה,
שיינדל ומנחם מענדל שיחיו שוחאט

It was Simchas Torah תשנ"ב. A heaving mass of people crushed around the 'shvil,' the narrow pathway leading from the Rebbe's *bimah* to the center of the shul.

The moments surrounding *hakafos* were known among Chassidim as an *eis ratzon*. People clamored for the opportunity to approach the Rebbe and request a special bracha, or even just to wish the Rebbe, "*Derleben iber a yohr*," that they should be *zoche* to experience the exalted *hakafos* with the Rebbe again next year.

Bochurim would usually hang back. Speaking directly to the Rebbe seemed to be the purview of older chassidim or *balebatim*; *bochurim* tended to stay in the background. But on this occasion, one *bochur* approached the Rebbe.

For several years, chassidim had been living with the '*kuntreisim*,' new *maamarim* released by the Rebbe for every *yoma d'pagra*. The *maamarim*, "*hanachos*" transcribed by Reb Yoel of *maamarim* from earlier years, would be carefully edited by the Rebbe and released for the special date. Chassidim around the world waited for the new *kuntreisim* and *koched* in them greatly. Hundreds of *bochurim* committed them to memory.

But suddenly, it had all come to a halt. Since Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe had not returned any of the *maamarim* that had been submitted.

To this *bochur*, it was unthinkable. As the Rebbe carefully reached the bottom of the staircase on the way to the first Hakafah, he approached.

"*M'zol zoche zein tzurik tzu di muggedike maamarim.*" May we once again merit that the Rebbe edit *maamarim*.

For a moment that seemed like an eternity, the Rebbe gazed at him. And then the Rebbe said "Amen."

The next *yoma d'pagra*—Chof Cheshvan—a *maamar* was released.



Over the last few years, *Derher* has produced articles that cover many aspects of the Rebbe's Torah; Reshimos (Tammuz 5775), Igros (Tammuz 5776), Farbrengens (Tammuz 5778), Likkutei Sichos (Tammuz & Elul 5777), Hayom Yom (Cheshvan 5776), the Rebbe's Haggadah (Nissan 5779), Rashi Sichos (Tishrei & Shevat 5775) and much more. One topic remained to be discussed: the Rebbe's *maamarim*.

In honor of the great and holy day of Yud-Aleph

Nissan, a day focused on enhancing and deepening our *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe, we present the first of a two-part series, discussing the Rebbe's *maamarim*.

The *maamarim* are central to the Rebbe's *nesius*; from the Alter Rebbe to our day, the *maamar* was the primary medium through which the Rebbe's Torah was transmitted to the chassidim.

A *maamar* is not just a formalized '*drasha*.' It is *Divrei Elokim Chaim*, the 'Words of the Living G-d'; when a Rebbe recites a *maamar*, the *Shechinah* is "*mida-beres mitoch grono*," (speaks through his voice) a direct transmission of *Elokus*. During a *maamar*, the chassidim would rise and the Rebbe would bind his hand with a handkerchief to 'bind' himself to *Olam Haze*.

To begin the story of the Rebbe's *maamarim*, we approached the *bochur* from that Simchas Torah night, Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook.

Today, Rabbi Brook stands at the helm of Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak, which oversees the publication of much of the Rebbe's Torah. Over the past thirty-five years, Rabbi Brook has been responsible for the collection, preservation, and publication of the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim* in hundreds of volumes.

Most relevant here is Rabbi Brook's personal involvement in the release of the *kuntreisim*—for which he approached the Rebbe that Simchas Torah.

The task of preparing *maamarim* for the Rebbe's *haga'ah* rested on the shoulders of the Rebbe's *chozer*, Reb Yoel Kahan *a"h*. It was also a much larger effort, however; a *maamar* needed to be selected, studied, rewritten, footnoted, edited, given to the Rebbe for *haga'ah*, typed again, published, and disseminated. The work needed to proceed at a quick pace, and the writers, editors, and publishers needed to work in concert. One of the individuals working closely with Reb Yoel to help each *kuntres* come to fruition was Reb Chaim Shaul.

As we began exploring the vast subject of the Rebbe's *maamarim* for this overview, we sat down for a wide-ranging conversation with Rabbi Brook. A second article will, *iy"H*, follow in an upcoming issue, taking a deeper look at the unique style and *tochen* of the Rebbe's *maamarim* themselves.

May we be *zoche* to hear new *maamarim* from the Rebbe, "*Torah chadashah mei'iti teitze*," *b'karov mamosh*.

A Chassidisher Derher

Basi L'gani

The story of the Rebbe's *maamarim*, of course, begins at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5711, when the Rebbe delivered the inaugural *maamar* Basi L'gani.¹

In the early years, the Rebbe did not allow recordings of farbrengens, and for decades, the recording of that farbrengen was not made public. When it emerged in the late 5740s, it created quite a stir.

I wanted to play it for Reb Yoel and see his reaction, but he never seemed to agree. One day, after nudging him for a while, I just slipped the audio cassette into a player as he worked on a new *maamar* for *haga'ah*, and pressed play.

Hearing the Rebbe's voice from 40 years earlier, Reb Yoel's ears perked up. He stood up, began listening, and was hooked. When one side of the cassette came to an end, he told me immediately, "*drei iber*, turn it over." He listened to the entire *maamar*, from start to finish. It was transporting him forty years back. He commented that the speed and tone of the audio didn't properly capture the Rebbe's voice; it wasn't exactly as it had sounded then.²

One thing that we all immediately noticed from the

recording was the accuracy of the *hanacha*; it seems to be almost exactly word-for-word. After Reb Yoel listened to the recording, I asked him to explain: how is the transcript so perfect?

At first, Reb Yoel dismissed me. "We were younger, we had better heads," he said. But after a bit more nudging, he gave a taste of what happened after the Rebbe said that *maamar*.

"Right after the farbrengen," Reb Yoel said, "we reviewed the *maamar*. The next morning after Shacharis, we reviewed the *maamar* again. On the way to the yeshiva building at Bedford & Dean for breakfast, we reviewed the *maamar*. Every waking moment until Shabbos was occupied with reviewing the *maamar*. We must have repeated it twenty times."

Reb Yoel would often share another story from that farbrengen.

After the Rebbe left, the crowd was dancing with tremendous enthusiasm. From his spot among the *bochurim*, Reb Yoel looked to see what Reb Elya Simpson was doing. Reb Elya was one of the elder Temimim who had seen 'Lubavitch of old'; he had even served as a *chozer* for the Rebbe Rashab. What was his reaction to the *maamar*? Reb Yoel noticed that he too, was springing up and down, dancing like a young man. This made a big impact on him; for the *bochurim* to dance was natural, but seeing the effect the *maamar*



RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BROOK, AS A BOCHUR, RECEIVES LEKACH FROM THE REBBE ON 6 TISHREI 5751.

* 5711-1950, 5740s-1980s, 5751-1990

had on the elder chassidim made a big impression. It was clear that he was very moved, seeing that there was a hemshech to the Rebbeim, and that Lubavitch would continue to thrive.

Basi L'gani on the Table

The night before Yud Shevat, an interesting story took place. Late that evening, the Rebbe called Reb Moshe Groner to his home; a Jew was in the hospital, and the Rebbe wanted Reb Moshe to visit him and ensure that he was receiving the medical care he needed.

When the Rebbe stepped out of the room to take a phone call, Reb Moshe glanced around the dining room and noticed many *sifrei Chassidus*—from all the Rebbeim—open on the table, along with notes written by the Rebbe. They were open to all the sources the Rebbe would cite the next evening, in the *maamar Basi L'gani*.

When I first heard that story from Reb Moshe Groner, it made quite an impression on me, and I ran to share it with Reb Yoel. He confirmed the story; “Yes, I heard it from Reb Moshe that very night, in 5711.” Of course, they didn’t yet know that these would be the sources for the *maamar*.

The notes that he saw were never found, but we do have numerous similar notes from other *Basi L'gani maamarim*, listing the sources the Rebbe would quote in the *maamar*. Many of these are published in ‘Toras Menachem–Basi L'gani.’ On occasion, the Rebbe would send the notes to Reb Yoel—sometimes even before the *maamar* was said.

In one unique instance, Rabbi Groner writes in his diary that he watched the Rebbe write out one such *reshimah*—but later, the Rebbe gave him an entirely different one to give to Reb Yoel. The Rebbe had apparently written one for Reb Yoel, and another to keep for himself.

The Rebbe's Kuntreisim Series

Reb Yoel had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe in honor of his birthday the week after Yud Shevat, and the Rebbe asked him about the *hanachah* of the *maamar*

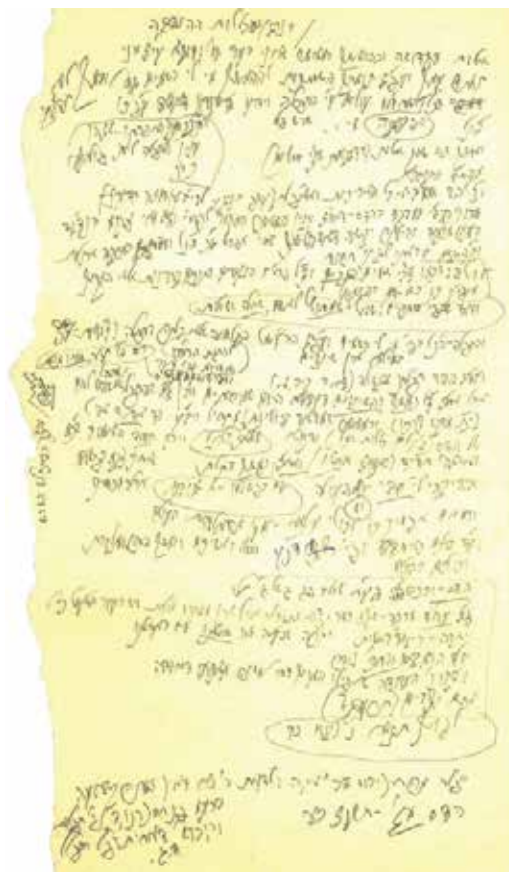
Basi L'gani. Reb Yoel was puzzled; he had been expecting a *ksav* from the Rebbe. All the Rebbeim with the exception of the Alter Rebbe had written their own *maamarim*, and there was no reason to assume the Rebbe would be different.

“And what about the *maamar* from Shabbos (Hayosheves B'Ganim)?” Reb Yoel said that the kabbalistic parts were difficult to understand, and it was difficult to hear (the Rebbe cried during the *maamar*).

With a smile, the Rebbe asked him, “*Vos, tzu fill mashke genumen*, did you say too much l'chaim?”

In the end, the Rebbe said that Reb Yoel should compose *hanachos*, “and we’ll see.”

Reb Yoel sent in *hanachos*, but didn’t hear anything back for three months. Then, late on Yud Aleph Nissan afternoon, after the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, Rabbi Hodakov called Reb Yoel and gave him the Rebbe’s edits. That morning, the Rebbe had brought the pages to the Ohel and read the entire *maamar* there, word-for-word. Only then, did the Rebbe approve it for publication.



THE REBBE LISTS FOR REB YOEL THE SOURCES QUOTED IN THE MAAMER OF BASI L'GANI 5729.

VAAD HANACHOS BLAHAK

The *maamar* also came with a request. “If possible,” Rabbi Hodakov said in the Rebbe’s name, “Please have it ready for Yud Gimmel Nissan.” This seemed like an impossible task, but somehow, they made it happen; by Mincha time on Yud Gimmel Nissan, the *maamar* was ready for distribution. In those days, that was considered miraculous.

This was the first time the Rebbe’s name was published with the title of “*Admor*,” on an official *shaar blatt* of Kehos. The rush to print is evident in the somewhat sloppy front page; it is clearly a copy of a *kuntres* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, with the Rebbe’s name somehow pasted on top of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s name, in a different font.

It is also clear from the front page that chassidim assumed the Rebbe would continue editing every *maamar* (by that time, the Rebbe had already delivered four new *maamarim*): like the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *kuntreisim*, this *kuntres* was numbered; the letter Alef is stamped on the top left-hand corner, indicating that more similar *kuntreisim* were to come. In the end, only *Hayosheves Baganim* followed in the series; Reb Yoel continued writing *hanachos*, but the Rebbe did not edit them. The next *mugedike* maamar was *Basi L’gani* 5712. The next year, in 5713, even *Basi L’gani* was not edited by the Rebbe.

The result was that the Rebbe’s Torah, for the most part, went unpublished. The Rebbe farbrenged every Shabbos Mevorchim and *Yoma D’Pagra*, and there was enough to fill volumes upon volumes, but it was unthinkable to publish the Rebbe’s Torah without his personal *haga’ah*, as the Frierdiker Rebbe had done for his own *sichos* and *maamarim*.

The Dollars Line At Farbrengens

The following story took place sometime later, in early 5714. I heard it from Reb Yoel, but he did not remember the exact date.

In those days, it was very common to approach the Rebbe at farbrengens. In fact, it was a bit out of control; “You know how the dollars line looks,” Reb Yoel said, “that’s how the farbrengens looked during the niggunim—there was a line of people waiting to approach the Rebbe; one wanted a bracha for a birthday, another for a simcha, another for an ill person, and so on. As each person would approach, the Rebbe would say ‘nu?’

and the person would make his request.”

At this farbrengen, Reb Moshe Dubinsky joined the line. When his turn came, the Rebbe said “nu?” to which he responded, “*Der maamar*.” He didn’t need to say another word; the Rebbe – and the crowd – understood exactly what he wanted, that the Rebbe should be *magiah maamarim*, at the very least, the *Basi L’gani maamar* of that year.

“*In di ershte drei bist du klar*, are you well-versed in the first three *maamarim*?” the Rebbe asked him.

“Yes,” he responded.

The Rebbe didn’t respond, and Reb Moshe moved on.

On Rosh Chodesh Shevat that year, the Rebbe suddenly gave out *Basi L’gani* from the year before. When it arrived from the printer, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Hodakov to give a copy to Reb Moshe Dubinsky, “because he was among those who were *mishtadel* that the *maamar* should be *mugeh*.”

For me, this story is very important. Most people on the line at the Rebbe’s farbrengens were there for their personal needs. One chossid, however, was there with a request for something that was of no personal benefit for him; he simply wanted the *maamar*; like the Alter Rebbe would say, “*ich vil mer nit az dich alein*.” This chossid made an impact.



THE FIRST TWO
MAAMORIM OF THE
REBBE AS THEY WERE
PRINTED IN KUNTREISIM
WITH THE NUMBERS
1,2 AT THE TOP.

VAAD HANACHOS BLAHAK

We later discovered that the Rebbe had begun transcribing some *maamarim*: a synopsis of *Ki Sisa* 5711 and the beginning of *Vekibel Hayehudim* 5711, but neither were ever completed.³ There are instances where the Rebbe wrote out entire *maamarim* in shorthand—like *Basi L'gani* 5713, 5717, 5720, and 5735—but those were clearly not for public consumption.

There are several letters in *Igros* that indicate that the Rebbe wanted very much to be *magiah* more of his Torah, but it was simply not possible due to the incredible demands on the Rebbe's time.⁴ The Rebbe once told Reb Avraham Pariz, "A Yid's heart is being cut open, his blood is being spilled, and he asks for a bracha—and I should be occupied with publishing Chassidus?"⁵

Reb Moshe's Binders

Despite the fact that the *maamarim* and sichos were not being edited and released on a regular basis, they were being carefully compiled. Each year, Reb Moshe Groner would collect everything that Reb Yoel had typed, and present it to the Rebbe in a binder.

The Rebbe was very attentive to this collection. When *maamarim* were missing, the Rebbe would ask Reb Moshe to arrange for Reb Yoel to write a *hanachah*,

without telling him that it was a directive from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe would also write comments on the *maamarim*, such as what the *maamarim* were based on—in those years, usually *maamarim* from the Rebbe Rashab, many of which were not yet in print. Those comments appear in the footnotes of *Toras Menachem* in bold type. There were occasionally other comments as well. When *Lecha Dodi* 5714 was edited by the Rebbe and published in 5739, the Rebbe wrote—in somewhat of a 'himmeldike' comment—that his own *maamar* was, "*kanireh*, seemingly," based on the *maamar* from תרפ"ט.⁶

These binders—which Reb Moshe prepared through 5720—were the basis for all the *Sifrei Maamarim* we began to publish in the late 5740s.

Of course, the editing process included several more steps; the editors would review available recordings, learn the *maamar* the Rebbe had referenced, add footnotes, and polish the language (Reb Yoel would sometimes write three pages without a single paragraph break). They would also correct *pessukim* and *maamarei chazal* which Reb Yoel would record as the Rebbe had said them [the Rebbe would usually slightly change the wording of each posuk, because *Torah Shebiksav* is meant to be read from within a sefer—ed.]. Nonetheless, the final version was, by and large, the product of Reb Moshe's binders.



AT THE KABBOLAS PONIM OF HIS SON, ON 3 ELUL 5713, REB MOSHE DUBINSKY IS SEEN STANDING BETWEEN THE REBBE AND THE CHOSSON.

The Maamar—A Distraction?

Most are familiar with the special setting in which the Rebbe would say a *maamar*. Thousands of chassidim sing a soul-stirring niggun and rise to their feet. The Rebbe begins the *dibbur hamaschil* with a special tune.

That's not what happened during the first year of the *nesius*. That year, the Rebbe would open with a short *sicha*—usually about the *maamar* of the previous Rabbeim upon which this *maamar* would be based—and then transition directly into the *maamar*. On Yud Shevat 5712, this *seider* changed for the first time; the Rebbe asked for a niggun to be sung, and then began the *maamar* directly.

In the early years, the *maamar* would be delivered at the farbrengen's start. The Rebbe once explained that before delivering the *maamar*, it was difficult to focus on the farbrengen; the Rebbe called it a “*machshavah zarah*” of sorts. Unlike *sichos*, in which the Rebbe was not necessarily *medayek* in every word, the *maamar* “is not only the *arum* of Torah, but Torah itself,” and he is *medayek* “not only in the general *tochen* but in every

detail and every word.”⁷ Delaying the *maamar* would therefore create an interference with the farbrengen.

The Rebbe gave this explanation in 5713, and over the years, the *seider* changed; the *maamar* was generally in the middle of the farbrengen, sometimes even at its end. Nonetheless, vestiges of this concept remained. For many years, it was considered inappropriate to approach the Rebbe at the farbrengen until after the *maamar*; after the *maamar*, the Rebbe would seem more at ease. This ‘rule’ was still in effect with regard to Shabbos farbrengens when I arrived to learn in 770 in late 5745.

The First Maamar K'Ein Sicha

Anyone who studies the Rebbe's farbrengens will notice that often, instead of the regular *maamar*, the Rebbe said a *maamar* “*kein sicha*”—the content of a *maamar*, delivered in the form of a *sicha*.

This began in an interesting way. Shabbos Zos Chanukah 5713 was not Shabbos Mevorchim, and the Rebbe didn't follow the normal ‘*seider*.’ Instead, the farbrengen was long, and very *avodadik*. The discussion centered around a *maamar* of the Tzemach Tzedek. At the beginning of the *sicha*, the Rebbe repeated a segment of the *maamar* and elaborated on it, then repeated another *ois* of the *maamar* and elaborated further, and so on.

Before the Rebbe began the first segment, he noted that this was a *maamar*, but that he would say it in a way that “will be more comfortable for you, and you won't need to stand up.” That was, in essence, the first *maamar kein sicha*.

The second such *maamar* was *Lecha Dodi* 5714, during the surprise Farbrengen in honor of the Rebbe's 25th wedding anniversary on Yud Daled Kislev. Several more followed over the next few years. The pattern soon became clear. Whenever the Rebbe held a farbrengen on an unusual date which wasn't a Shabbos Mevorchim or major *Yoma D'Pagra*, the Rebbe would deliver the *maamar kein sicha*.

This became far more common in the early 5720s, and in 5725, when the Rebbe began holding a Farbrengen every week, this became the normal *seider*. Between the two Rashi *sichos*, the Rebbe would deliver a *maamar kein sicha*. Regular *maamarim* were reserved for Shabbos Mevorchim and special dates. The next



THE REBBE'S TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MAAMAR “KI SISA” 5711.

year, the *maamar kein sicha* became common on Shabbos Mevorchim as well, and regular *maamarim* were delivered only on special occasions. This became the normal *seider* for the next twenty years, until the Rebbe stopped saying regular *maamarim* altogether after Tishrei 5746.

I don't purport to understand the Rebbe's *ruchnius-diker* matters, but on numerous occasions the Rebbe expressed his disappointment about Chassidim's lack of interest in *maamarim*.⁸ Later, when I was involved in the *kuntreisim*, we did our best to make sure that the *maamarim* were studied and memorized by as many *bochurim* as possible.

Interestingly, the Rebbe said regular *maamarim* during the Motzei Shabbos farbrengens that were held in the years after the heart-attack. I once noticed that there were only two full years of regular *maamarim*—5712, before the Rebbe began saying *maamarim kein sicha*, and 5739, when most farbrengens were held on Motzei Shabbos.

Who Defines What a Maamar Is?

After the Rebbe had a heart attack, the Rebbe said a 22-minute *sicha* from his room on Motzei Yom Tov, and an even longer one on Motzei Shabbos Bereishis. The Rebbe was *magiah* those sichos, and during the process, the Rebbe instructed that something be added to “the *maamar*.” Reb Yoel suddenly realized what he thought was a short segment of Chassidus in the middle of the *sicha* was actually a *maamar*!

Normally, a *maamar kein sicha* was easy to identify. The Rebbe would begin with a *posuk*, and continue with an explanation of chassidus that sounded like those in a *maamar*. I have many *yomanim* from the 5720s which note that the Rebbe also held a handkerchief during the *maamar kein sicha*; that was definitely the case in my years in 770. There was another identifying factor. The Rebbe's brother-in-law Rashag would stand up, whenever he would hear the Rebbe start a *dibur hamaschil*.

Sometimes the distinction was less clear; like the *sichos* from the Rebbe's room, and the Shabbosim in 5725 where the Rebbe seemed to continue the Rashi *sicha*, only to transition into speaking a few words about the week's Likkutei Torah at the end. When



AN EXCERPT FROM THE WEEKLY PUBLICATION “BAIS CHAYENU” WITH A YOMAN REPORTING ON WHAT CHASSIDIM THOUGHT WAS A NEW ‘MAAMAR K'EIN SICH’ SAID BY THE REBBE.



THE REBBE RECITES THE SICH’ ON THE NIGHT OF 15 SHEVAT 5752.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Shagalov and Rabbi Seligson compiled a *mafteach* with all the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*, they asked what to do about those *sichos*, and the Rebbe wrote "*b'chol safek, lihachmir*"—when ever in doubt about whether something is a *sicha* or *maamar*, designate it as a *maamar*.

In the early years, these were often written down in the *hanachos* as *sichos*. In the farbrengens of early 5725, which the Rebbe personally edited,⁹ the *maamarim* are all included as *sichos*. But as time progressed, it became clear that the Rebbe regarded them as *maamarim*. Even in 5725, as they were being published as *sichos*, the *manichim* would often refer to those sections as *maamarim* in their correspondence with the Rebbe.

These matters were overlooked in the early years for the simple reason that the Rebbe blessed us with a never-ending stream of new *sichos* and *maamarim*, and the *manichim* could barely keep up; there simply wasn't enough time to deliberate about what was a *sicha* and what was a *maamar*.

Now, when we are able to pay proper attention to every *sicha* and *maamar*, we make sure to publish them correctly. That's why, in recent years, people have noticed that *sichos* are suddenly being released as *maamarim*; some examples are the *sicha* of "*viyeird miyam ad yam*" from Yud Beis Tammuz 5733, the first *sicha* of Rosh Chodesh Elul 5742, and others.

I once found a letter in Igros that was very illuminating. On Shabbos Hachodesh 5717, the Rebbe said a regular *maamar* and also a *sicha* which began with the same *possuk*. In a letter to Rabbi Yolles that week, the Rebbe writes, "as it was explained in the *maamar* during the farbrengen yesterday..."—and it's clearly referring to the [*maamar k'ain*] *sicha*!¹⁰ Two *maamarim* during a single farbrengen is usually considered extraordinary, but if you factor in the *maamar k'ain sicha*, it actually becomes more commonplace.

Reb Sholom Charitonov once argued to me that even the *biurim* on the Rebbe's *kapitel* from the farbrengens of Nissan 5732 should have been published as *maamarim*. Interestingly, there were some instances when the opposite took place. On Motzei Chamisha Asar B'Shevat 5752, the Rebbe said an entire *biur* in chassidus regarding the *shiva minim* with his eyes closed, and everyone considered it a *maamar*, but the Rebbe wrote that it should be printed as a *sicha*.

The Big Shock

On Yud Tes Kislev 5746, a *maamar* was expected as usual, but the farbrengen went on and on without it; at the very end, the Rebbe seemed to 'sneak in' a short *maamar k'ain sicha* in just a few short minutes.

No *maamar* on Yud Tes Kislev was quite a shock. When Yud Shevat came around, everyone was convinced that there would be a *maamar* as usual; the alternative was unthinkable. But, as we know, *lo machshivosai machshivoiseichem*. The Rebbe began the fifth *sicha* with the words, "*Oif Basi Ligani Achosi Kallah...*"

There were no more *maamarim* until the night of Bedikas Chametz 5749. The Rebbe turned around to say a *sicha*, but unbeknownst to us, he had wrapped his hand in a handkerchief under his siddur. Today, it's very visible on the video, but I was there, and we didn't notice anything. Suddenly, the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Groner and said, "*Der niggun*." He immediately began singing the *maamar niggun*.

It was such a shock in Crown Heights that they set off the alarm that was usually reserved for Erev Shabbos.

In those days, the Rebbe had begun saying *sichos* on special evenings, and many people had phone lines to WLCC that they would call to stay informed. When the Rebbe would leave the Ohel, a message would be posted (the bochurim driving behind the Rebbe had a beeper button they would push as the Rebbe's car drove out of the cemetery). Another message would go out when the Rebbe reached Atlantic Avenue and Eastern Parkway, another when the Rebbe arrived, and another when Mincha began. But this time, they didn't rely on people calling; they set off the alarm in the entire *shchunah* to alert people to call in.

One more special *maamar* like this took place on the night of Erev Shavuot. That was the last time the Rebbe said a *maamar* with the special niggun.

The Big Argument

I once found a bulletin from Tzach that was posted before Yud Alef Nissan 5717, asking chassidim to unite in an "*ichud ruchni*" in honor of Yud Alef Nissan by learning "all five of the Rebbe's *maamarim*" which were *mugah*: The first three Basi L'ganis, Hayosheves Biganim 5711, and Mayim Rabim 5717. The Rebbe wrote on it,

“*re’eh Tanya reish Perek Hei*.” The word *ichud* means a regular unity, but the Rebbe said that it was far more—in the words of the Alter Rebbe, “הוא יחוד נפלא שאין יחוד” (it is a wonderful, singular union, which has no parallel anywhere in the material world—to become completely one and unified from every side and angle.”

In those days, there were only five *mugedike maamarim*, and for the next thirty years, not much changed. On unique occasions, the Rebbe would edit *maamarim*. Sometimes, these were *maamarim* which were associated in a *ruchniusdiker* way with important world events, like Mayim Rabim 5717 during the Sinai Campaign, or *maamarim* the Rebbe said on special occasions, such as the surprise farbrengens that sometimes took place in the 5730s. Usually, this came without prior knowledge; the Rebbe would simply edit the *hanachah* that had been submitted, and send it out to be published. On occasion, however, Reb Yoel would prepare a special *maamar* for *hagaha* as well.

In 5746, after five years with not a single *mugedike maamar*, we got a surprise, *m’lemaalah*. A few hours after Shabbos Mevorchim Kislev had ended, the Rebbe took the draft of that week’s *maamar*—a rough version that would circulate in 770 before the formal *hanachah* was released—and was *magiah* the entire thing. Afterwards, as was common in those years, the Rebbe edited it a second time. There are question marks which remain in the *maamar* from the Rebbe’s first *haga’ah*—once it was *mugeh*, nothing was added or removed.¹¹ There was literally dancing in 770 when it happened; every single *bochur* knew that *maamar* by heart.

Later that year, shortly before Shavuos, Beis Rivkah held a *Hachnosas Sefer Torah* for one of the *Sifrei Torah Haklolim*. In the hope that the Rebbe would edit a *maamar* in its honor, Reb Sholom Charitonov prepared the *hanachah* of *Lehavin Inyan Kesivas Sefer Torah*, which the Rebbe had said at the *siyum* of the *Moshiach Sefer Torah*. Shortly afterward, the *maamar* was returned, *mugah* from the Rebbe.

That wasn’t it. The Rebbe had also torn off the introduction, which said that it was in honor of the *Hachnosas Sefer Torah*, and instead wrote, *Likras Chag HaShavuos*.

Why did the Rebbe change the introduction?

Some theorized that the Rebbe wanted to avoid favoring one *mosad* over others. Others argued that the Rebbe was indicating his desire to publish *maamarim* for Yomim Tovim, as the Frierdiker Rebbe had done in his later years.

Reb Yoel was opposed to the latter approach. “The Frierdiker Rebbe’s Chassidim were spread throughout the world, so he sent *kuntreisim*. In his later years, the *kuntreisim* were because he was no longer saying *maamarim* at all. But the Rebbe is saying *maamarim* [*k’ein sicha*] almost every Shabbos!”

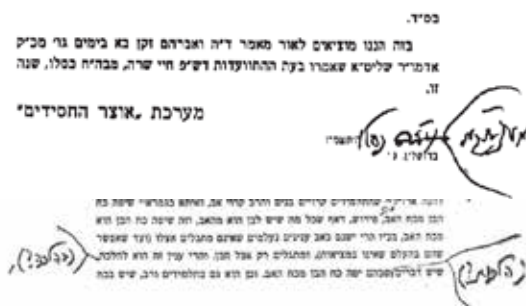
Rabbi Hirshel Notik argued that they should at least try and submit a *maamar* for the next *yoma d’pagra*.

Reb Hirshel’s main role was typist of the Rebbe’s farbrengens; he would—and still does—prepare the rough transcript of the Rebbe’s words which were later edited into a proper *hanacha*. He would work closely with Reb Yoel, and he happened to have a Yud Beis Tammuz *maamar* ready from ten years earlier when the Rebbe had requested that the three *maamarim* of Yud Beis Tammuz 5736 be integrated into one *maamar* for *haga’ah*. At the time, the work was submitted to the Rebbe very late and the *haga’ah* didn’t happen. Now, he decided to submit it to the Rebbe again.

When the *maamar* was released in time for Shabbos Yud Beis Tammuz, it generated incredible excitement. At the time, I was in Gan Yisroel Detroit, and we immediately drove the forty-five minutes from Kalkaska to a Fedex store in Traverse City which had the newest technology, a fax machine, to receive the *maamar*.

When the Rebbe again was *magiah* a *maamar* before Rosh Hashanah, we understood that this would be a new *seder*.

These *maamarim* were not plain *hanachos*. When



הורב קריי אב, ואינא בנמראי ישיפה כח הבז מכת האב, פירוש, דאף שכל מה שיש לבן הוא מהאב, וזה ישיפה כח הבן הוא מכת האב, בכיו הרי ישנם באב ענינים נעלמים שאינם מתגלים אצלו (ועד שאפשר שהם בהעלם שאינו במציאות), ומתגלים רק אצל הבן. והרי ענין זה הוא להלכה (בהלכה), שיש דברים (הלכות) שבהם ישא כח הבן מכת האב. וכן הוא גם בתלמידים ורב, שיש בכת התלמידים לחדש ענינים

THE REBBE CROSSED OUT THE DATE 'EREV ROSH CHODESH KISLEV' AND INSTEAD WROTE IN 'MOTZEI SHABBOS MEVORCHIM KISLEV', WHICH WAS THE TIME HE WAS MAGIHA THIS MAAMAR. WHILE EDITING, THE REBBE MADE SEVERAL QUESTION MARKS DUE TO THE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES OF WRITING CERTAIN WORDS. THE QUESTION MARKS STILL REMAIN IN THE FINAL PRINTED VERSION.

Reb Yoel prepared a *hanachah* for the Rebbe's editing, he wasn't just typing words that the Rebbe had said during a *maamar* in previous years. The Rebbe made it very clear that *sichos* and *maamarim* needed to be carefully composed and reworked. If the Rebbe wrote on a *hanachah* that it was "literally word-for-word," that was not a compliment.

When the Rebbe said a *maamar*, sometimes he would leave something unsaid, or elaborate more on one concept than another. When Reb Yoel prepared it for the Rebbe's *haga'ah*, he was to incorporate ideas from other *maamarim*, and write it in a more thorough fashion. When this wasn't properly done, the Rebbe would note it in his edits.

When I Disappeared from 770

The new *sefer* began about one year after I arrived to learn in 770. At the time, I was deeply involved in the project to publish *Sichos Kodesh*, spearheaded by Rabbi Gershon Eichorn and Rabbi Yoske Greenberg. I did everything that it entailed—printing, editing, schlepping boxes to the binder in Boro Park—whatever was necessary, I did it.

When the project ended, we were left with a significant archive of *maamarim*, so we decided to publish a *Sefer Maamarim* for the first time. Rabbi Eichorn was still involved, but since he was still dealing with debts from *Sichos Kodesh*, *Sefer Maamarim* became my financial responsibility.



THE FIRST TWO VOLUMES OF THE SET OF THE REBBE'S MAAMARIM THAT WERE PRINTED BY 'VAAD KISVEI KODESH'. THIS WAS THE FIRST PROJECT OF ITS KIND TO PUBLISH ALL OF THE REBBE'S MAAMARIM FROM 5711 IN A NEAT FORMAT WITH SOURCES.

To publish the first three volumes, I borrowed seventy thousand dollars. I laugh about it now; I was a *bochur* without a penny to my name, and somehow, we accomplished amazing things. In the middle of 5748, we rented a basement on Montgomery Street, purchased two computers and a printer, brought in all the necessary *seforim*, created a comprehensive archive of all the Rebbe's *maamarim*, and "Vaad Kisvei Kodesh" was born.

It was a big secret. There were all sorts of *vaadim* and *manichim* who claimed the rights to print the Rebbe's Torah, and many thought that it was inappropriate for *bochurim* to take on such a responsibility, so we made sure that nobody knew about it. Only Rabbis Gershon Eichorn, Naftali and Moshe Marinovsky, Arik Raskin, Yisroel Shimon Kalmenson, Dovid Olidort, and a few others knew about the project.

My friends noticed that I had suddenly disappeared. In the merit of another job—being one of the *shomrim* near the Rebbe's room every Friday night in 770—I was allowed access to all the *tefillos* in the Rebbe's home, and the rest of my day was spent in our basement. I wasn't seen in 770 from Shabbos to Shabbos. I told one of my best friends that I had taken a job in my brother's business in Manhattan, but that lie only lasted until he was on a *Mivtzoim Tank* in Manhattan, and knocked on my brother's door looking for me. The secret continued until the first *seforim* arrived in Tishrei 5749, and for the first time, we had a real *sefer* of the Rebbe's *maamarim*.

Today, *bochurim* ask how much they will get paid per hour, but that's not how it worked in our day. The *bochurim* worked for the cause, and felt extremely privileged to be involved in publishing the Rebbe's Torah. I didn't make a cent; when I needed money for basic expenses, I would shnorr ten dollars from my married brother to buy some food and so on. This was totally normal and was the case for the seven years of my involvement in the Rebbe's Torah as a *bochur*.

Reb Yoel in Our Apartment

Reb Yoel knew what we were doing, and once visited to research some *maamarim*. After spending some time in the basement, he suddenly realized he was in Gan Eden! Until then, he was working on the *maamarim* in random locations, and Reb Hirshel Notik would assist him, but he was a *yungerman* who also needed



THESE CANDID PHOTOS SHOW RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BROOK ASSISTING REB YOEL AS HE TRANSCRIBES THE REBBE'S MAAMORIM AND PREPARES THEM FOR THE REBBE'S HAGAH. CIRCA 5751.

to earn a living. Here he had a ready desk, seforim, computer, and all the Rebbe's *maamarim*—and a group of bochurim, with all the time in the world, excited to help him. What more could he have asked for?

We became his team. Our goal was to give him everything he could possibly need to prepare another *maamar*. We would type his handwritten papers, find *mekoros* for him and help him prepare footnotes. We would bring food for him to eat, cigarettes to smoke (he stopped smoking later in life), and anything else necessary. On occasion, he would sleep in our basement as well.

We knew that the Rebbe was willing to be *magiah maamarim*, but if it were all left to Reb Yoel, he wouldn't be able to keep up the pace; in earlier years, there were instances when the Rebbe was willing to be *magiah* and the *hanachos* were simply not ready in time. We were determined to make sure that wouldn't happen.

When it was time to prepare a *maamar*, we would lay out all the *maamarim* from that date. After several hours of deliberation, he would choose four or five. Then he would spend an entire night learning the *maamarim*, writing notes, and deciding which to work on.

Reb Yoel was a unique personality. Most people need a break after concentrating for an hour, but he was the opposite—he would lose his train of thought if he took a break. As a result, he would sometimes work on a *maamar* for twenty, thirty or even forty hours straight; we would take turns going to sleep, but he would stay at it for as long as he was physically able.

In general, sometimes he lived in what seemed to be a bit of a different world, and we would try to bring him back to earth. A *maamar* could take somewhere

between thirty and sixty hours. Sometimes, after many hours of work, he would say, "I'll come back in the morning"; 'Morning' is a very vague time-frame, so I would call his home and knock on his door and make sure to bring him back as quickly as possible. We never let up, but he appreciated us all the same; he knew that we only had good intentions and that, as a result, he was able to work at a far faster pace than before.

After the *maamar* was ready with the Rebbe's *hagahos*, we would take the papers to Empire Press and make sure it was typed and prepared for publication as quickly as possible. When it was finished, we would take the galleys and bring them to Reb Yoel's home to proofread. When it was published, we would fax it to all the yeshivos and make sure that *bochurim* reported on who and how many *bochurim* learned it *baal peh*, so we could bring the Rebbe *nachas ruach*. It was common to bring a report of two, three, or even four hundred bochurim who had learned it by heart.

Between the new *kuntreisim* and the *Sifrei Maamarim*, our entire lives were consumed with the *maamarim*.

To Pick a Date

In Nissan of 5747, I happened to be standing in the *Mazkirus* office when Rabbi Groner came running in excitedly; "the Rebbe named the *kuntres* 'Kuntres Yud Aleph Nissan!'"

This wasn't something to be taken lightly. When the *kuntreisim* began, they were prepared only for dates on which the Frierdiker Rebbe had released *kuntreisim*. Chassidim knew that the Rebbe was often wary of *chiddushim*, and preferred to do things as they were

done in previous years. Using the Frieddiker Rebbe's dates was, therefore, a good basis. Now, however, they had asked the Rebbe whether to call the next *maamar* Kuntres Chag HaPesach or Kuntres Yud Aleph Nissan, and the Rebbe chose "Yud Aleph Nissan."

A new date was a minor cause for excitement. In 5750, the Shabbos Chazon *maamar* was very delayed, so we included an option in the *pesach dovor* that it be published for Shabbos Nachamu instead. When the Rebbe returned the *hagahos*, he indicated that we should determine the date. Reb Yoel immediately chose Shabbos Nachamu—because that was a new date, which would give us the ability to offer that date next year.

One example of how the Rebbe focused on this matter took place before Chof Beis Shevat 5751, when we submitted a *hadran* and a *maamar* for the Rebbe's *haga'ah*. The Rebbe returned it with a question: "*Hakuntres deshtaked?*" The Rebbe wanted to see the *kuntres* of the year before, to see whether we had similarly released both a *hadran* and a *maamar*.

I ran home, where I had a hole-punch binder with all the *kuntreisim*, and brought the last year's *kuntres* to Mazkirus. The next day, the Rebbe returned the *maamar* with his edits, crossed out the line about the previous year's *kuntres*, and returned my hole-punched *kuntres* as well.

The Last Ten Maamarim

Throughout the years of the *kuntreisim*, there were several periods when the Rebbe didn't return the *maamarim*, such as between Chanukah and Yud Alef Nissan 5747, and Cheshvan through Teves 5749. Some individual *maamarim* were skipped as well, perhaps because the Rebbe didn't have time to be *magiah* them. But this general *seder* continued uninterrupted until suddenly, on Chai Elul 5751, the Rebbe wasn't *magiah* the *maamar*.

There was a *kuntres* on Rosh Hashanah, but again, nothing for Shabbos Shuvah, Sukkos, or Simchas Torah. On Hoshanah Rabbah night, Rabbi Groner called me in and gave over a message from the Rebbe: "*M'hot upgeredt m'vet mer nish magiah zein*. It was agreed that there won't be any more *haga'ah*...." I asked him what the Rebbe meant; I recalled no such previous message. "These were the Rebbe's exact words," he replied.

I was shocked to my core. I decided that I needed



THE REBBE CHOOSES THE TITLE "KUNTRES YUD ALEPH NISSAN" FOR THE MAAMAR.

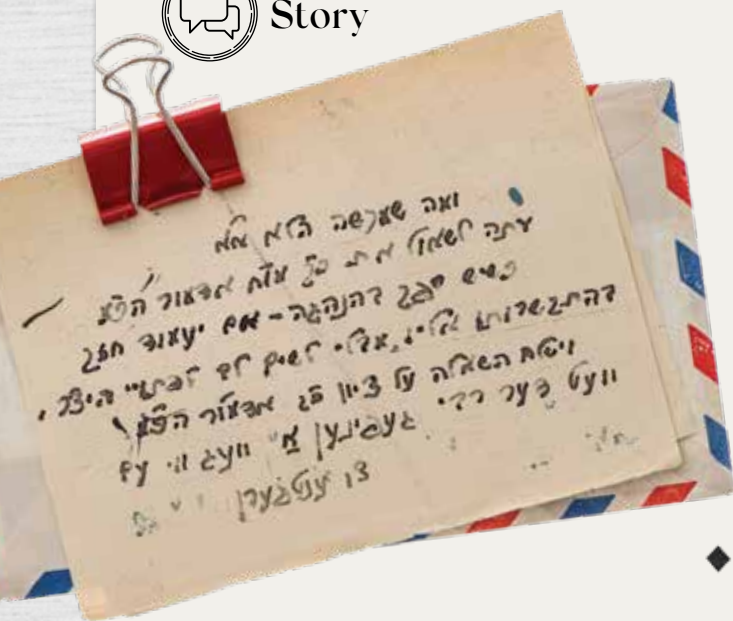
to do something. So, at Hakafo's the next evening, as the Rebbe came down the stairs, I gathered the courage (after a little bit of *l'chaim*) to ask the Rebbe for a bracha, "*M'zol zoche zein tzurik tzu di muggedike maamarim*." The Rebbe looked at me for a moment, and then said, "Amen." The next *yoma d'pagra*—Chof Cheshvan—a *maamar* was released.

In the months between Simchas Torah and Chof Zayin Adar, we merited to receive another ten *maamarim*, culminating with *Kuntres Purim Katan* with *V'Atah Titzaveh*. May we be *zoche* to "*Torah chadashah mei'iti teitze*," to hear new *maamarim* from the Rebbe, *b'karov mamosh!* **T**

1. For a full yoman of that evening, see *Leben Mitten Rebbe's*, *Derher Shevat* 5780.
2. This is common for the recordings from the early years, and is usually corrected on JEM's *Ashreinu* platform.
3. These are published in *Toras Menachem* vol. 3, pp. 257 & 283.
4. See *Igros Kodesh* vol. 5 pg. 313, vol. 6 pg. 164, vol. 8 pg. 257.
5. For a similar story regarding Sichos, see *Derher Cheshvan* 5779, pg. 45.
6. *Toras Menachem*—*Drushei Chasunah* pg. 312.
7. 12 Tammuz 5713; *Toras Menachem* vol. 9 pg. 40.
8. See 11 Nissan 5723 (*Toras Menachem* vol. 36 pg. 260), Simchas Torah 5732 (*Toras Menachem* vol. 66 pg. 115), Mikeitz 5735 (*Toras Menachem* vol. 79 pg. 28) and Vayeshev 5744 (*Toras Menachem* vol. 2 pg. 667).
9. Published in the *hosafos* of *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 5.
10. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 14 pg. 530.
11. *Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat* vol. 1 pg. 318.



Story



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

ולזכות שיינא בת סימא חסידא תח' לרגל יום הולדתה י"ג ניסן,
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות. והצלחה רבה במילוי שליחותו של
כ"ק אדמו"ר בהוראה הדרכה והשפעה

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

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

We Need To Do Our Part



AS TOLD BY
RABBI MENACHEM LERMAN
(Brooklyn, NY)

Twenty-two years ago, my eldest daughter was 23 years old and not yet married. I had three younger daughters as well, all of marriageable age, and this was causing tremendous stress to me and my wife.

Since I live in Crown Heights, in close proximity to the Ohel, I have the custom of going to the Ohel at least once a week, usually on Motzei Shabbos. One time, when I was at the Ohel, I wrote in my *tzetel* that I had once heard from the Rebbe that one who helps Shluchim is essentially helping the *Meshaleiach*. I commit to donating \$10,000

to various Shluchim around the world, and I asked for a *bracha* that my daughter get married very soon.

This was a sum that was beyond my means at the time, but I felt it was important to make a sacrifice in order to merit the Rebbe's *brachos* for my family.

I immediately started making payments, and a few months later, during the week that I completed paying off my pledge, the name of my future son-in-law was suggested. Soon they were engaged.

The next time I was at the Ohel, I thanked the Rebbe for



THE DOLLAR OF THE
REBBE WITH THE
BRACHA FOR AN
IMMINENT SHIDDUCH.

this wonderful *bracha* and suggested the same “deal” in the merit of my second daughter. Baruch Hashem, my eldest daughter’s wedding was a beautiful simcha, and on the last day of Sheva Brachos, my second daughter got engaged. I had not even finished paying the second pledge.

Shortly afterwards, I repeated my pledge in honor of my next two daughters and Baruch Hashem, within the year, we merited to marry off our four eldest girls.

Since then I have shared this story with friends and family to emphasize the importance of making a sacrifice in order to merit the Rebbe’s *brachos*. The Rebbe sees and hears us and is ready to intercede with Hashem on our behalf, but we must be ready to do our part, above and beyond our regular means.

Once, I met a friend from out of town at the Ohel who shared that he had made the trip specifically to daven for a certain miracle he needed in his life. I asked what he had committed to doing in return and, after a few moments of silence, he walked back to the tent to write another *tzetel* and entered the Ohel again. Shortly thereafter he experienced *simchos* in his family.

Five years ago, another daughter of mine came of marriageable age, and when I was at the Ohel on Erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, I davened for a special *bracha* that she soon become a Kallah.

I own a fruits and vegetables store on Albany Avenue, and I often order large quantities of produce from

big wholesalers. On 2 Menachem Av, I made a large order, paid the cash, and received a few dollar bills as change. When the delivery arrived at my store, I pulled out the dollar bills I had just received to tip the truck driver but suddenly thought perhaps the dollar bill was from the Rebbe. Until today, I don’t understand what compelled me to hold back, and as I looked closer, I saw the following words written on the top of one of the dollars:

כ"ז טבת תשנ"א - זיווג במהרה ממש בקרוב

27 Teves 5751 - [May you find a] match very quickly in the near future.

This was such an amazing *Hashgacha Protis* and a clear sign to me of the Rebbe’s *bracha* that my daughter would imminently become a Kallah. I gave her the dollar, and sure enough, she became engaged soon afterward. When I asked her for the dollar so I could share it with others who need a *bracha* for a shidduch she said, “Tatty, I don’t understand it, but the dollar is gone!” Clearly, the dollar had concluded its mission for my family... **T**

YOUR STORY

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



לעילוי נשמת
הבחור היקר והנחמד
ברוך שניאור זלמן ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו שיחי'
נלב"ע ל' ניסן ה'תשע"ח
תנ"צ'ב'ה'

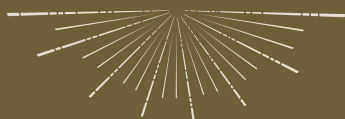
נתרם ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו וזוגתו
מרת אסתר גאלדע ומשפחתם שיחי'
פלאטקין



Matzah Distribution

7 NISSAN 5749

*A special gallery of photos of the Rebbe's
matzah distribution before Pesach, 5749:*



Compiled By: Rabbi Shabi Soffer







Every year before Pesach, the Rebbe would distribute matzah to Chassidim.¹

1. For more on this annual tradition and how it developed over the years, see *Moments* in the Derher Magazine, Nissan 5778.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309674

The Rebbe distributes matzos, along with a dollar for Tzedakah and a *Michtav Kloth*, to select individuals for distribution in their respective communities.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309689



On this unique occasion, the Rebbe exits 770 to escort the shluchim from Eretz Yisroel and see them off as they depart for the airport with the matzos.







CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309677



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309678



The Rebbe returns to 770. Upon entering, he stops in the office of Rabbi Leibel Groner and distributes matzos to the last group.

Letters

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

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

Government Proclamations

Dear Editors,

Thank you very much for your magazine and the chassidishe content you publish every month.

The recent Cheshvan issue included an article titled 'When I went on Shlichus.' The section about Rabbi Pinchus Feldman of Sydney, Australia includes a picture of Rabbi Feldman presenting a photo to the Rebbe at Dollars. I would like to share some interesting background behind this picture:

Yud Shevat, 5750, marked forty years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, and was preceded by many *hachonos* of *anash*, *bochurim* and *shluchim*. Thousands of chassidim traveled to be in 770 with the Rebbe for this momentous occasion, and the Rebbe personally gave out 10,000 copies of a special Tanya to the guests.

One of the things that the Rebbe encouraged and received *nachas* from, was governments issuing proclamations in honor of Chabad and expressing their support for the Rebbe's initiatives in the realm of moral education.

At Dollars on Sunday, Erev Yud Shevat, 5750, a group of *shluchim* to Australia passed the Rebbe for dollars. The encounter is recorded in the "Beis Chayeinu 770" publication, issue 27.

Rabbi Chaim Gutnick came first, holding a big framed National Scroll of

Honor for the Rebbe in connection with forty years of leadership, and told the Rebbe that the day will come when the Rebbe would conquer the whole world. He continued by saying that "the fifth continent" (Australasia) already belongs to the Rebbe as the Australian Prime Minister asked to give over his good wishes and blessings to the Rebbe in connection with the forty-year milestone.

The Rebbe responded by saying "*a groish yasher koach*" and Rabbi Gutnick told the Rebbe that when he was in Eretz Yisroel he spoke about the revolution that the Rebbe is making in Australia, and it made a *kiddush shem Lubavitch*.

The Rebbe responded by asking if Rabbi Gutnick made sure that things were done in a "big" [vast and broad] manner because it is dependent on you.

The Rebbe then helped move the large Scroll of Honor to the side where gifts to the Rebbe were placed, and then Rabbi Pinchus Feldman approached and gave the Rebbe the photo displayed in the above mentioned article, depicting the Prime Minister of Australia signing the Scroll.

The Rebbe gave him an extra dollar and said that it's for the picture and towards the costs that were incurred producing it.

The Rebbe also spoke to Rabbi Levi Shemtov who at the time was a *bochur shliach* in Sydney and was involved in

facilitating the National Scroll of Honor.

At the end of the encounter, Rabbi Shemtov said to the Rebbe that Hashem should help that we should always be able to fulfill the holy will of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe responded to this by saying: “*B’korov mamash*. The main thing is, my *kavona* is, that Moshiach should come.”

A few seconds later, the Rebbe called him back and said, “You probably heard that I speak about this.”

At the end of the Dollars distribution, the Rebbe himself carried the large Scroll of Honor from the dollars *shtender* near the elevator into his holy room.

I thought this was meaningful to share in connection with the *hisorerus* by shluchim, arranging that the officials of their local cities, counties and states proclaim Education Day in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan according to the Rebbe’s *horaah* at the farbrengen of Chof Av 5738 (Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2 pg. 254).¹

Chezy Deren

YESHIVAS OHOLEI YOSEF YITZCHOK - DETROIT
OAK PARK, MI.

The Illustrated Childrens Haggadah

In connection with the article “Haggadah for children” - Engaging children with a child-friendly Haggadah” published in Derher Magazine issue 129, we present the following story based on an interview with Rabbi Reuven Cohen, Leeds UK:

At the farbrengen of Purim 5747, the Rebbe announced - as a follow-up to his *hora'ah* that every child should have their own Chumash, Siddur and Tzedakah box - that he was going to issue a “*gzeirah chadasha*” – that every child should have their own new Haggadah which should be

beautifully illustrated to “draw their hearts”.

The Rebbe explained that Pesach is a special time for “telling the story to the children” and therefore investing efforts that they should stay awake at the Seder is necessary.

It was typical of the Rebbe to give a *hora'ah* to do something new and radical that would entail a lot of effort, yet needed to be achieved in a short time. This approach shows us how much we are able to accomplish if we just put ourselves to the task.

My wider family is blessed with artistic talents for painting and drawing. My own particular skill is in cartooning, which has always been a helpful tool alongside my involvement in Chinuch throughout my Shlichus in Leeds. Consequently, I considered the possibility of producing a Haggadah illustrated with cartoons to fulfill the Rebbe’s request.

I discussed this with Rabbi Angyal, Head Shliach in Leeds, and he thought it was a great idea and encouraged me to go ahead with it. I set to work on the project, and worked for seventeen hours non-stop to produce “The Illustrated Childrens Haggadah”.

Limited to “old-fashioned” ways of producing materials in those days, “cut and paste” meant literally taking original hard copy texts, cutting with scissors, and pasting with glue.

I cut out the text from the Hebrew-English Kehos Haggadah and drew cartoons around it, telling the story of the Haggadah.

We printed 500 copies to distribute to

all the Jewish children of Leeds and Boruch Hashem, the Haggadah was well-produced in time and well-received. Indeed, I believe some adults still have and use their copies! Of course, I sent in a copy of the Haggadah to Rebbe.

Even though I didn't often receive answers to my letters, I must admit that I was surprised when I did not receive any response or acknowledgment. I was sure that the Rebbe would have been pleased with the production, and possibly would have enjoyed the humor.

Years later, towards Pesach, there was an exhibition of Haggadahs in the Rebbe's Library. I was excited to hear that among the ancient and rare Haggadahs on display, my cartoon Haggadah had been included.

In 5775, we had the idea to produce a reprint, this time in full color. As I was mulling over the idea, I recalled not having received a reply from the Rebbe.

Then I had a "lightbulb" moment of explanation:

As mentioned, I had used the entire text and format of the Kehos Haggadah. However, I had not requested nor received permission from the administration of Kehos! It is well-known that the Rebbe was very concerned that when using Kehos texts, permission must be obtained, which I had not done with the Haggadah I had made and sent to the Rebbe. When I subsequently contacted Kehos to obtain permission for the 5775 reprint, they immediately concurred with my conclusion that this could have



been the reason for not receiving an acknowledgment.

Boruch Hashem, the reprint was indeed produced with permission from Kehos for local distribution, and again, was well-received.

Rabbi Reuven Cohen
LEEDS UK

1. See extensive article "Education Day, U.S.A - The Rebbe's Vision for Education" in Derher Magazine 67 pg. 44).





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