

A Chassidisher **Derher**

דערהער

אע"פ וואס ס'איז שלשים
שנה זינט די הסתלקות ..
זאגט מען אז "רועי ישראל לא
יפרדו מעל צאן מרעיתם", און
מ'איז פארבונדן מיט אים איצט
פונקט אזוי ווי דאס איז געווען אין
דער ערשטער רגע און אין דעם
ערשטן טאג נאך די הסתלקות...

(ש"פ יתרו, כב שבט תש"ב)



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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 ההילולא ג' תמוז

RAISED BY THE REBBE

Thirty years have passed since Gimmel Tammuz. Who could believe that we are still in *galus*? Already decades ago, the Rebbe said that the fact that Moshiach is not yet here is a “דבר הכי אינו מובן כלל וכלל”—utterly incomprehensible!

Yet — the Rebbe told us to soldier on, increasing in Torah (especially on the subject of *Geulah* and Moshiach) and mitzvos (especially Tzedakah and Ahavas Yisroel); to do everything we can to hasten Moshiach’s coming, and prepare for *Geulah*, to live with a Moshiach mindset.¹

As we stand on the threshold of Gimmel Tammuz 5784, the Rebbe’s words ring with even greater urgency, and call us to increased action.

At the same time, we can’t help but feel and appreciate the Rebbe’s constant presence in our midst.

The Rebbe once spoke² about the Torah’s description of Yosef’s passing in Mitzrayim: On the one hand, the Torah emphasizes that at 110 years old, he passed away earlier than his forebears and the other Shevatim. But the Torah also makes a point that he lived a long and fruitful life, surviving to see the third and fourth generations of his offspring.

The [Friediker] Rebbe, the “Yosef” of our generation, says the Rebbe, is similarly blessed. His *avoda* is ongoing and everlasting—to the point that “וירא יוסף”—Yosef sees his *avoda* carrying on for a third and fourth generation,

eventually bringing the final *Geulah*. Moshiach will come through the *avoda* of our “Yosef”—and his predecessors, all the Rabbeim, who spread Chassidus to the outside, and whose *avoda* continues even three or four generations later.

...His *avoda* continues also in the generation following his *histalkus*; it expands and grows exponentially, through his *talmidim*, and their *talmidim*, increasing with each passing generation. There is no “gap” or interruption between one generation and the next. On the contrary, the generations are intimately connected. As the Torah says about Yosef, “וירא יוסף”—Yosef sees each progressing generation, and the members of the new generations are “נוולדו על ברכי יוסף”—born and raised on Yosef’s lap, as Rashi explains, “גדלן בין ברכיו”; he raises them and carries them into adulthood.

There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that for thirty years, the Rebbe has been raising us, caring for us, lifting us, giving us everything we need to keep doing his shlichus, and completing the work in the final moments of *galus*.

“One might think that after thirty years, we are already fully-grown adults and can stand on our own feet,” the Rebbe says. “But the truth is, the shepherds of the Jewish people do not forsake their flock... We are connected to the Rebbe in the same way we were on the day after, and in the moment after, the *histalkus*...”

“We need to hold steadfast to the Rebbe’s “*kliamke*” (lit. doorknob) and his open door. We must go to his *Tziyun* and write *pidyonos*, asking for his *brachos* and that he should invoke mercy on our behalf, even asking that he should grant us the proper receptacles with which to receive these *brachos*...”³

May we all live up to the trust the Rebbe has in us, and use the *brachos* in the proper manner: to fulfill his *shlichus* in the fullest measure, brightening the entire world with the coming of Moshiach, now!

The Editors
ט"ו סיון ה'תשפ"ד

1. See “*Crossing the Threshold*,” Derther Adar II 5774.

2. Shabbos Parshas Balak, 14 Tammuz 5750; Sefer Hasichos 5750 vol. 2, p. 554-560.

3. Shabbos Parshas Yisro 5740; Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2, p. 117

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת ר' ישראל מנחם
בן הרה"ח ר' אלתר הלל ע"ה
רבינוביץ
גלב"ע כ"א סיון ה'תשע"ו
ת"נצ"ב'ה'

גדפס ע"י
משפחתו שיחיו

דעם רבינ'ס און ארט

A Word
on the
Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

חוקת

וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלָיְךָ פָּרָה אֲדָמָה... (ט"ב)

And they shall take for you a red cow...

The word "אֵלָיְךָ" implies a deep and personal connection between the mitzvah of *para aduma* and Moshe Rabbeinu. Indeed, we find this connection in a Midrash: "Rebbi Yossi ben Rebbi Chanina said: Hashem said to Moshe, 'To you I reveal the reason for *para aduma*, but for everyone else it is a *chuka* (law without a reason)'; "Rebbi Yossi ben Rebbi Chanina said: [The *possuk* is] an allusion [to Hashem telling Moshe] that 'all of the other *paros adumos* will disappear—but **yours** will remain.'"

What is the meaning of this link between Moshe Rabbeinu and the *para aduma*?

Meforshim on our *parsha* explain that the *para aduma*'s capability to cleanse a person of *tumas meis* (impurity arising

from contact with a corpse) stems from the fact that it served as an atonement for the *chet ho'egel*. If not for the *chet ho'egel*, the *Yidden* would have been rid of the *malach hamoves*, and the whole concept of death would have been eradicated from their midst. Since the *para aduma* served as an atonement for the *source* of death—the *chet ho'egel*—it, therefore, had the power to 'atone' for the *results* of death—to cleanse a person of *tumas meis*.

This is where Moshe Rabbeinu comes in: In order to overcome mortality and death, a counter-force is needed, the concept of *nitzchiyus*—immortality.

The Chachomim tell us that the handiwork of Moshe is eternal; even regarding the very life of Moshe, we are taught that "משה לא מת"; Moshe never passed away. In other words, Moshe Rabbeinu embodies the idea of *nitzchiyus*.

In order for the *mitzva* of *para aduma* to fulfill its role of purifying a person from *tumas meis*, there needs to be the element of Moshe Rabbeinu tied to it—the element of *nitzchiyus*.

Takeaway:

A person can attain an element of *nitzchiyus* through total *mesiras nefesh* and *bittul* to Hashem. If a person experiences a case of spiritual “death”—separation from *Elokus*—he can “purify” himself and reconnect with the Source of life by arousing a feeling of *mesiras nefesh* and *bittul*. This will impact his *avodas Hashem* as a whole, influencing a change for the better.

Davening is an opportune time to awaken this feeling of closeness and devotion to Hashem. Over the course of the day, one can think back to davening and feel empowered to overcome any obstacle in *avodas Hashem*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 33, p. 127)

בלק

וַיָּקָם בִּלְעָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׂ אֶת-אֶתְנֹנּוֹ... (כב, כא)

And Bilam arose in the morning
and saddled his donkey...

“From here [we learn] that hate causes a disregard for the standard [of dignified conduct], for he saddled it himself. Hashem said [to Bilam], “Rasha! Their father Avraham has already preceded you, as it says, ‘Avraham arose in the morning and saddled his donkey.’” (Rashi)

Hashem’s words to Bilam, “Their father Avraham has already preceded you,” imply that Bilam’s act of saddling the donkey was actually *to his credit*(!), and thus could have assisted him in his mission of cursing the *Yidden*. Only because “their father Avraham has already preceded you,” were his evil hopes dashed.

This presents an obvious question: How can an act of hatred ever have been considered a *merit* for Bilam?!

Later in the *parsha* we find that when Bilam comes to the realization that Hashem is not going to allow him to curse the *Yidden*, he tries a different tactic, reminding Hashem of the *Yidden’s aveiros*, in the hope that by doing so, Hashem’s anger would be aroused and he would then be able to curse them (see Rashi 24:1).

We can apply the same thinking here: Bilam’s intent in saddling the donkey by himself—which is an expression of his irrational hatred of *Yidden*—was to hint at the fact that the *Yidden* also behaved irrationally sometimes; as expressed in the fact that they committed various *aveiros* throughout their journeys in the desert. This, he hoped, would provoke, *chas v’sholom*, Hashem’s anger towards them, and help him succeed in carrying out his evil plan.

It is in response to this that Hashem said, “Rasha! Their father Avraham has already preceded you”: Avraham’s act

of saddling the donkey himself, which was an expression of his eagerness to fulfill Hashem’s will—a *super-rational* behavior—preempted the actions of Bilam. In other words, the *superrational* behavior of Avraham—stemming from his *love* for Hashem—preempted and undid the *irrational* behavior of Bilam—which stemmed from his *hatred* for *Yidden*.

Takeaway:

The *yetzer hara*—who hates holiness and goodness—can cause a person to veer off the straight and narrow path of Torah by acting irrationally and committing an *aveira*.

The remedy for such situations is to invoke the intrinsic and superrational love for Hashem that every *Yid* possesses as an inheritance from Avraham Avinu. Through awakening this superrational love, not only is one able to get rid of his *aveiros*, but he can also redeem the sparks of *kedusha* which have become trapped in the hands of *kelipa* because of his *aveiros*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 28, p. 157)

פינחס

פִּינְחָס בֶּן-אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן-אֶהֱרֹן הִכְהֵן הַשֵּׁיב אֶת-חַמְתִּי מֵעַל בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאוֹ אֶת-קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא-כָלִיתִי אֶת-בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי. לָכֵן אָמַר ה'נְנִי נָתַן לִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי שְׁלֹמִים. וְהָיְתָה לִּי וְלִזְרֹעוֹ אַחֲרָיו בְּרִית כְּהֵנָּה עוֹלָם תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר קִנְאָ לְאֵלֹקָיו וַיַּכְפֹּר עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (כה, יא-יג)

Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon Hakohen has turned My anger away from the *B'nei Yisroel* by his zealously avenging Me among them, so that I did not destroy the *B'nei Yisroel* because of My zeal. Therefore, say, “I hereby give him My covenant of peace. It shall be for him and for his descendants after him [as] an eternal covenant of *Kehuna*, because he was zealous for his G-d and atoned for *B'nei Yisroel*.”

These *pesukim* are puzzling: Pinchas wasn’t the only one to “turn Hashem’s anger away from *B'nei Yisroel*”—Moshe did the same (and not just once, but *many* times, as related in the Torah)! What was different about Pinchas that he merited such an incredible reward—the *Kehuna*—for him and all his future descendants?

Furthermore, not only do we not find Moshe being rewarded with a special covenant “for him and for his descendants after him,” but we actually find that when Moshe asked Hashem for something similar—to “let my sons inherit my honor”—Hashem *denied* his request!

Here is the answer according to Chassidus: It is true that both Moshe and Pinchas had the merit to save the *Yidden*, but they did so in different ways: Moshe took the *spiritual* route, through intervention from *above*—he davened to Hashem, and Hashem answered his *tefilla* and aborted the decree. Pinchas, on the other hand, turned away Hashem's wrath through a *physical* act which caused the situation *below* to change—he killed Zimri, thus arousing the *Yidden* to do *teshuva* and thereby end the plague.

This distinction is reflected in the type of self-sacrifice that they demonstrated on behalf of the *Yidden*: Moshe was willing to give up his *spiritual* life—the life of his *neshama*—for their sake (as the *posuk* says, "...but if not, erase me now from Your book which You have written"); whereas Pinchas *literally* risked his life for them (as Chazal relate, that the people of Shevet Shimon wanted to kill Pinchas and he was saved by a miracle).

Moshe and Pinchas represent two different paths in one's *avoda* to influence and sanctify one's environment: Moshe represents a "top-down" approach, drawing down *giluyim* from above, which causes darkness and materialism to dissipate. Pinchas represents the method of "bottom-up"—changing the physical world from within, refining it, and raising it to a higher spiritual level.

One difference between these two approaches: The influence of the "top-down" approach doesn't penetrate the innermost parts of material reality. Therefore, its effect can only be temporary and eventually disappears together with the *giluyim* that prompted it. But when the approach is "bottom-up," it causes a change from the inside, and its effect is therefore sustainable and everlasting.

Since Pinchas's act was in the "bottom-up" category, the effect of which is *eternal*, he was rewarded with an *eternal* covenant ("It shall be for him and for his descendants after him")—the *bris* of *Kehuna*.

Takeaway:

There are people who are very passionate when it comes to *ruchniyus*; like davening and learning; but ignore the *avoda* of uplifting their *gashmiyus'dike* life. Or, they *are* involved in doing their *avoda* with *gashmiyus*, but they are not concerned with what is happening with those around them. These lifestyles are not always sustainable. True, while one is occupied with affairs of the *neshama*—or even with *avoda* with *gashmiyus*, but staying in his own bubble, so to speak—he is, indeed, in a wonderful, spiritually healthy space. But then, when he is forced to deal with worldly affairs, not only does he not remain above it all, but on the contrary, they drag him down, *rachmana l'tzlan*.

In order for one's *avodas Hashem* to be sustainable, it is crucial that together with the inner spiritual *avoda*, one must also deal with the outside—both with his personal "outside", as well as the literal outside—and utilize them for the purpose of Torah and *mitzvos*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 18, p. 344)

מטות-מסעי

The Torah uses two different names when referring to the tribes of *B'nei Yisroel*—"שבטים" and "מטות"; both of which (loosely) mean "branches."

The difference between the two names is that "שבט" means a branch that was just recently cut from the tree (or is even still attached to it), and contains moisture from fluids of the tree; whereas a "מטה" has been detached from the tree long enough to become a dry rod, and has no more moisture from its source.

The above leads to another distinction: The moist "שבט" is soft and weak, and can therefore be bent and turned any which way. However, the dry "מטה"—which has seemingly lost all connection with its source—is tough, strong, and harder to bend.

These two interconnected distinctions represent two modes of existence of *Yidden*: The "שבט" symbolizes a time in which the connection between *Yidden* (the "branch") and Hashem (the "Tree") is evident and visible to all (like during the Beis Hamikdosh eras). Whereas the "מטה" symbolizes a time in which this relationship is concealed and not visible to the naked eye; as is the case during the time of *galus*.

Just like in the *moshol*, the "מטה" being further from its source is the reason for its strength, so too in the *nimshol*: It is precisely the (apparent) distance and separation of *Yidden* from their divine source that awakens within them previously untapped strengths and capabilities. It is with this new-found strength and resilience that we are able to overcome the hardships of *galus*, and the temptations of the *yetzer hora*; we are determined to remain connected to Hashem despite all the difficulties.

Thus, it is *davka* when we are in a state of (seeming) disconnect, when Hashem conceals Himself, that we can reveal a much deeper and more real connection with Hashem.

Takeaway:

The purpose of *galus*—an existence in which *Elokus* is concealed, and we are able to feel disconnected from Hashem—is to reveal within a *yid* an even deeper and more powerful resolve and energy in his *avodas Hashem*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 18, p. 382; *ibid.* vol. 28, p. 281)



לע"נ
 הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש
 בן הרה"ח ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה
 בראנשטיין
 נלב"ע כ"ג סיון ה'תשס"ג
 תנ"צ'ב'ה'
 ולזכות תבלחט"א אשתו מרת ביילא תחי'
 בראנשטיין
 נדפס ע"י
 משפחתם שיחיו

INNERMOST ESSENTIAL CONNECTION

The following are some of the Rebbe's edits¹ to a letter sent in close proximity to Yud Shevat 5724, where the Rebbe discusses the beautiful brachos that Chassidim and mekusharim can receive on the day of a Rebbe's Hilula, by tapping into the energy of the day in the proper way.

It should be noted that this letter was originally written earlier, in time for the Alter Rebbe's yom hahilula of Chof-Daled Teves, and was instead sent later, in time for Yud Shevat. Many of the Rebbe's edits reflect this change.

In order to maintain an easier flow and understanding of the content, the English translation does not include the portions that the Rebbe crossed out.

*The words that the Rebbe added in his holy handwriting are in **bold type**:*

1. Published in Teshura Butler-Loewenthal 5783. The full letter is published in Igros Kodesh vol. 23 p. 87-8.

ובעמדנו ימים ספורים לפני יום ההילולא של כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הזקן (מוצש"ק פ' שמות תקע"ג), אשר אז הוא יום עלייתו העלי מהיכל להיכל ומדרגא לדרגא, כמובן כמרומו בכ"מ מהומבואר ובביאור בכתבי האריז"ל, וכיון אשר ע"פ דברי בעל ההילולא אדמו"ר הזקן (באגה"ק שלו סי' ז"ך וביאורו) ע"י ההתקשרות אליו הצדיק, וצדיקא דאתפטר אשתכח בכלהו עלמין יתיר מבחיוהי, רוח אייתי רוח ואמשיך רוח, בנוגע לחיים רוחניים והרהורי תשובה תורה ומצוות ומעש"ט, וכן גם במילי דעלמא (עיינן שם באגה"ק) מובן מזה שעלייתו הצדיק מביאה גם לעליית כל אלו אשר רוחם אייתי דוח ואמשיך רוח, עלי' במילי דשמיא ובמילי דעלמא, וכל הקרוב קרוב וכל - (ע"י ההתחזקות והוספה בהליכה בדרך ישרה אשר הורנו מדרכיו ונלכה והליכה באורחותיו) - קודם לברכה. ובמיחוד בצדיק נשיא ישראל, אשר אפילו בחיים חיותו בעלמא דין בהיותו חי על פני האדמה ה' בהנהגה דאבות לבנים לכל אחד ואחת מישראל, אשר בדאגה לעניניהם דעוה"ז הגשמיים ולעניניהם דחיי עוה"ב, בשייכות והתקשרות דרבי וחסידי ועד להאופן - דמאור ואור, התקשרות פנימי ועצמי. בברכה חדש טוב ולבשו"ט מהתועדות-הילולא פעילה ביום ההי בשעתה ובכל השנה הבע"ל

As we stand a few days before the *Yom Hilula* of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, which is the day of **ascension** from one level to the next, **as alluded to** in several sources **and** explained in *Kisvei Ha'Arizal*.

And since, according to the words of **the Alter Rebbe** (in *Iggeres HaKodesh Siman 27* and its explanation), connecting to **the tzaddik** ([and a tzaddik who has passed on is found in all worlds even more than during his [physical] lifetime]) brings about that one spirit [i.e. the inspiration of the person below] elicits and draws down another spirit [i.e. spiritual blessing from above] for [good, healthy] **spiritual life and thoughts** of *teshuvah* and good deeds, as well as [extra blessings in the realm of] material life.

It is therefore understood that the ascension of **the tzaddik** causes an elevation for all those whose spirit [down here in this world] evoked the [heavenly] spirit, [causing for them] **an elevation** in spiritual matters and material matters.

And the closer one is [to the tzaddik] (by strengthening oneself and doing more to follow the straight path he showed us of his ways, **and walking** in his ways), the more precedence one takes in receiving his blessing.

This is **exceptionally** true with regard to **a tzaddik**, a *Nossi* of the Jewish people, who, **while he was living on the face of the earth**, acted toward every single Jew as a father toward [his] children **by concerning himself with their needs** [both] **in this physical world and their needs in matters of the world to come** [and he maintained a connection with them] **in a manner of connection and *hiskashrus* of a Rebbe to a chossid** [in the deepest sense] **to the point** [of connection between] **the luminary and its light**, [i.e.] **an innermost, essential connection**.

With blessings for a good month, and may you bear good news about [conducting] fruitful *farbrengens* in their proper time, and throughout the coming year.



10 TEVES 5749

THE YEAR GONE BY

TAMMUZ 5748¹

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

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

Wednesday, 30 Sivan, 1 Rosh Chodesh Tammuz

Today, I had the privilege of being in the Rebbe's house for Mincha. Reb Zalman Gurary davened at the *amud*, commemorating a yahrtzeit. The Rebbe did not recite the Mishnayos aloud at the end of davening. Instead, he subtly signaled to Reb Zalman to conclude.

After Mincha, Rabbi Hodakov accompanied the Rebbe to the kitchen, where they conversed for a while, something that occurs every Rosh Chodesh.

Shabbos Parshas Korach, Gimmel Tammuz

At today's farbrengen, the Rebbe discussed the Gemara which states: When the *neshama* ascends (after 120), one of the questions asked is "Did you conduct your business (נשאת ונתת) faithfully?..." The Rebbe addressed why the first question pertains to business rather than something more fundamental. He explained that 'business' refers to one of the primary objectives of the *neshama* coming to the world — Jewish education, a key campaign of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Speaking in a high-pitched tone and with much emotion, the Rebbe emphasized that everyone has an obligation to be involved in this endeavor. Thus, individuals are questioned about their contribution to this crucial responsibility: "Did you teach a Jewish child Aleph Beis?!"

Thursday, 8 Tammuz

Today the Rebbe went to the Ohel and returned at around 9:45 pm.

Shabbos Parshas Chukas, 10 Tammuz

The farbrengen today began at 1:30 pm. In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe noted that today marks one week from Gimmel Tammuz and is the Shabbos preceding Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz. The Rebbe also mentioned that a farbrengen for Yud-Beis/Yud-Gimmel Tammuz should be arranged in the upcoming week.

In the second *sicha*, the Rebbe expounded more on the Chag Hageulah of Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, stressing the importance of reliving this redemption anew

every year, including through arranging farbrengens.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe remarked that some people are looking at the clock, wondering when the farbrengen will end so that they can go home, eat Shalosh Seudos, and relax. "But we haven't even sung *Padah Vishalom* yet!" the Rebbe exclaimed. "We should now take the time to do so."

The Rebbe then began *Padah Vishalom*, singing along with the crowd for the first line, and strongly encouraged the singing throughout the niggun.

After the niggun, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing the "*Beinoni*." Following that, the Rebbe began "Nyet nyet."

The Rebbe then said *L'chaim* six times to all sides of the room, and finished his cup. Afterward, the Rebbe smiled and remarked, "*Halevai mimenu yiru vichein ya'asu* — If only they would 'learn and do!'" Upon hearing this, everyone in attendance joined in saying "*L'chaim*," and then enthusiastically sang "*Al Hasela Hach*" for about fifteen minutes.

Sunday, 11 Tammuz

Today, the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

After Mincha-Maariv, the Rebbe said a *sicha* for approximately half an hour.

The Rebbe started by wishing a "Gut Yom Tov" to everyone in attendance, as well as to those who are listening via hookup or may hear about the *sicha* later. In the first part of the *sicha*, the Rebbe expounded on the Maamer "Baruch Hagomel" from the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The Rebbe then went on to make an unexpected announcement: Everyone should write down three actions they've undertaken since Yud-Beis Tammuz last year (5747) in matters for which the Frierdiker Rebbe poured out his heart, and sign it with their name, mother's name, and family name. They should then mark the envelope with a large Ches for "new" (חדש) and "secrecy" (חשא). These letters will be taken directly to the Ohel and not be read. However, it's important for people to include their name and family name on the envelope, so it's known who participated and who didn't. The purpose of this is to encourage individuals who may not have much to write down to reflect on their actions and feel motivated to improve.

After the *sicha*, the Rebbe distributed dollars to all present. Later in the evening, as the Rebbe had instructed at the Shabbos farbrengen, Chassidim farbrenged in 770.

Monday, Yud-Beis Tammuz, Chag Hageulah

Today, the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

After Mincha-Maariv, the Rebbe said a *sicha* about *kapitel* 109, the new *kapitel* of the Friediker Rebbe. In this *kapitel*, Dovid Hamelech speaks about the “Haters,” which nowadays refers to those who obstruct *Hafotzas Hamaayanos*. The Rebbe also expounded upon the meaning of the Brocha in the *possuk*, “*Odeh Hashem mi’od befi uvsoch rabim ahalilenu.*”

Tuesday, Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, Chag Hageulah

Today, the Rebbe again went to the Ohel.

After Maariv, the Rebbe said a *sicha*, followed by the distribution of dollars for Tzedakah.

Wednesday, 14 Tammuz

At 8:00pm tonight, a *Yechidus Klolis* was held in 770 for guests, as well as for *Chassanim* and *Kallos*, and Bar and Bas Mitzvos. A live video broadcast of the *yechidus* was played outside in the courtyard of 770.

After *yechidus*, Maariv took place in the upstairs *zal*.



THE REBBE AT THE AMUD IN HIS HOME, 18 TAMMUZ 5748.

Since the air conditioner wasn't working, only thirty people were permitted inside the *zal*. The rest of us participated from the courtyard, where we listened to the Rebbe daven through the window.

Shabbos Parshas Balak, 17 Tammuz

At today's farbrengen, the Rebbe addressed the postponement of the fast of Shiva-Asar B'Tammuz to Sunday, expressing the hope that it be postponed forever.

In the third *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the significance of studying Hilchos Beis Habechirah during the three weeks. Additionally, the Rebbe announced that "This is the year of the boy and girl (שנת הילד והילדה)," once again emphasizing the importance of Jewish education. The Rebbe stressed that every child should be encouraged to attend a proper summer camp to avoid exposure to the negative influence associated with "the public domain."

The Rebbe also spoke about the importance of not just "believing" in the coming of Moshiach, but actively anticipating and awaiting his arrival.

Following this, the Rebbe distributed Mashke, and began the Niggun "Vaharikosi Lachem Bracha." Throughout the Niggun, the Rebbe encouraged the singing with his hands.

Sunday, 18 Tammuz, (Postponed) Fast Day

During *Chazaras Hashatz* of Shacharis, while reciting "Aneinu," the Rebbe paused many times, apparently crying silently.

After Mincha, the Rebbe said a *sicha* for about thirty minutes.

The Rebbe spoke about the advantage of the fast being on Yud-Ches Tammuz, "Chai" which represents revealed good, over Yud-Zayin, which only has the numerical value of "Tov" — good.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 25/6/00 (25 NISSAN 5749)

Thursday, 29 Tammuz

Today, the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

After Mincha-Maariv, the Rebbe said a *sicha*, speaking about the importance of studying the Halachos of Tisha B'Av, and bemoaned the fact that people hadn't considered this earlier.

Additionally, the Rebbe underscored the importance of increasing in tzedakah, davening, and Torah study during the Nine-Days. **1**

1. Compiled from the diary of Avraham Shmuel Mann, a Bochur at the time.

COMPILED BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG
WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

CLARITY

**THE REBBE'S
GUIDANCE
FOR MAKING
THE RIGHT
DECISIONS**

TV

יש רבי בישראל, ואיז
הוא נכנס בהגבלות
הטבע, והרוצה
ללכת לבטח דרכו:
במסחר, בהנהגת
הבית, וכו' – לא ירים
את ידו מבלי לשאול
את פי הרבי...

AMONG THE JEWISH
PEOPLE THERE IS
A REBBE, WHO IS
NOT SUBJECT TO
THE LIMITS OF THE
NATURAL ORDER. ONE
WHO WISHES TO WALK
SECURELY ALONG
HIS PATH, WHETHER
IN BUSINESS,
FAMILY LIFE, ETC.,
SHOULD NOT LIFT A
HAND [IN ACTION]
WITHOUT ASKING
THE REBBE FIRST...¹

לזכות
דניאלה ברכה בת שיינא חנה לרפואה
שלימה וקרובה ובריאות איתנה

ולחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק
אדמו"ר לכל המשפחה שיחיו

OVER THE YEARS,
THE REBBE WAS
CONSULTED BY PEOPLE
FROM ALL WALKS
OF LIFE SEEKING HIS
ADVICE ON EVERY
CONCEIVABLE TOPIC.

From *avodas Hashem*, to critical medical advice; from *chinuch* to *parnassa*; from major to minor life decisions; everything crossed over the Rebbe's table. The Rebbe would instruct, guide, and advise, and Chassidim knew that for best results, they ought to listen.

The Alter Rebbe writes in a famous letter that his Chassidim should not ask advice about material matters, as the answers to these subjects are under the jurisdiction of *Nevi'im* only.² The Rebbe points out that, nevertheless, Chassidim continued asking advice in these matters of the Alter Rebbe and all the subsequent Rabbeim, "because the answer of a Rebbe to these questions emanates from him as a *Novi mamash!*"³

Despite all of the above, as the years progressed, the Rebbe indicated several times that he wished to wean the Chassidim off of the reliance on the precise guidance to which they had grown accustomed.

Given the astronomical number of people seeking the Rebbe's advice, this would seem like a



VEVIL - SCHILDKRAUT VIA JEM 149404 (© NISSAN 5748)

necessary—albeit difficult—development. But as is often the case, the Rebbe sheds light on the issue and reveals that this step is about empowering each individual to find the spiritual strength within themselves by remaining steadfast in their connection to the Rebbe and living by his teachings.

In a *sicha* delivered on 8 Adar II, 5741, the day after Moshe Rabbeinu's yahrtzeit, the Rebbe illuminates the issue:

“There was a time when the [Frierdiker] Rebbe would take hold of each individual by the hand and tell them in their ear what their mission was and how to go about doing it. Then the person would go and carry out the mission exactly in accordance with the Rebbe's instructions. Today, however, things are different. Many times a person will need to do things on their own, relying on their own intuition.

“A person might mistakenly say: ‘Back then, when I was acting exactly in accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, I was always sure to do my *avoda* properly. Today however, I don't hear anything from the Rebbe directly, so I'll just sit at home. I won't do anything because I haven't been instructed exactly what to do; I feel alone; without the guidance of my Rebbe...’

“This, then, is the lesson of 8 Adar: Yehoshua is now picking up on his own, and he still does his *avoda* in a complete fashion, with all of his faculties.

“...This is true in every generation as well: there comes a time when a person needs to ‘stand on their own feet’, relying on their own intuition, based on the principles they learned from their Rebbe.

“This is what shlichus is really all about: A shliach is sent to the other side of the world, where he won't be able to receive direct, specific instructions about every issue that arises. He will need to use his own intellect and decide how to act, based on general instructions he heard from the Rebbe previously, and thereby fulfill his shlichus in the best possible manner.

“Chassidus Chabad teaches that there is no ‘*bederech memeila*’ (one does not become a Chossid automatically, without internal effort); a person is expected to work on their own and achieve.

“When a person is on shlichus on the other side of the world, even though his ‘official’ shlichus may be in one area only, he cannot suffice with that. If another opportunity arises for him to do more, he should grab the opportunity. He need not wait for specific instruction on the matter ‘from above.’

“When a shliach is sent on a mission, the one who sent him, the Rebbe, gives him general instructions for what to do, along with blessings for success and the necessary *kochos* to do the shlichus. But once the shliach is in the field, he will need to use his own intuition and act accordingly.

“...And if the shliach will ask (justifiably): ‘How can I be sure that I'm doing the right thing while relying on my own intellect, without receiving specific instructions from the

Rebbe?’ The answer is already stated in the Torah: ‘*Yagaata umatzasa*’—if you work hard enough, you will certainly succeed at reaching the correct conclusion and doing things in the exact way the Rebbe wants...”⁴

The Rebbe repeated this theme later in the decade, towards the end of the 5740s, starting with the major campaign of “*Asei Lcha Rav*”—that every individual must find themselves a *rav*, a mentor to guide them and to whom they can be accountable in matters of *avodas Hashem*. With time, the Rebbe spoke about the issue of personal guidance and how to conduct oneself in even greater detail, specifying what to do in areas of doubt.

First, the Rebbe clarified that everything we need to know in life is found in Torah, more specifically in Toras HaChasidus, and in our generation, in the Torah of the Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*:

“Nowadays, after so much work has been accomplished in spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit, and *hafatzas hamaayanos*, through the power and the shlichus of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*, every person has since been given the ability to draw the right conclusions [when in doubt]. Especially through studying and toiling [in understanding] the Torah of the Rebbe, and working hard at its dissemination. For the [Frierdiker] Rebbe taught in many of his *maamarim* that the ultimate status of a student is when he is able to think in the same terms as his Rebbe (חושׁי התלמיד נעשים כחושׁי הרב), thereby reaching the same conclusion as would his Rebbe...”⁵

Moreover, the Rebbe added by standing strong in our *hiskashrus*, “*true hiskashrus to the Nossi Hador*,” by learning his Torah and following in his ways to the fullest (“למייעבד כדבעי”), one can avoid the need for doctors altogether, and receive healing directly from Hashem Himself. One would not need to seek the counsel of wise friends with regard to business and so on, for Hashem Himself will place the correct ideas in his mind to begin with.⁶

In addition to the above, the Rebbe spelled out on various occasions how a person should conduct themselves when in doubt, and what to do when in need of *bracha*:

HEALTH

When it comes to matters of health, the Rebbe pointed to the instruction in Torah of “*v'rapoi y'rapei*,” to seek the counsel of a medical professional, especially a doctor with whom one is acquainted (who will offer advice with care), one who is an expert in his field, or both.⁷ At times the Rebbe said that even better would be to consult with two expert doctors, and if they disagree on protocol—to consult a third and follow the majority.⁸

A YUNGERMAN SPEAKS WITH
THE ROV OF CROWN HEIGHTS,
RABBI ZALMAN SHIMON
DVORKIN, AT THE KOLLEL.



LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM145064 (CHESHVAN 5736)

LIVELIHOOD

Regarding advice for livelihood and business matters, the Rebbe said that one should consult with wise friends, based on the *possuk* “*Us’shuah b’rov yoetz*” (salvation comes with many counselors). Ideally, one should seek the advice of two individuals who are friends and have your best interest at heart.⁹

When hearing their advice, one need not submit himself completely to their opinion. Rather, he should take their words into consideration, since they are his good friends, while his own view is merely one person’s opinion, and a biased one at that.¹⁰

ASEI L’CHA RAV

In matters of *Yiras Shamayim* and *avodas Hashem*, the Rebbe repeated numerous times that one must fulfill the words of the Mishnah, “*Asei l’cha rav*,” to consult with a *rav*, *mashpia*, or spiritual mentor who will guide you. In fact, the Rebbe referred to this instruction as a “*bakasha nafshis*,” a personal and heartfelt request that everyone choose a *rav* for

themselves. The Rebbe gave the added explanation that because a person is biased when it comes to assessing their personal standing, it’s important to seek the guidance of an objective party and listen to their words.¹¹

The Rebbe emphasized that though the Torah is a “Torah Or”; its instructions clear and illuminating, at times, one might still have doubts as to what to do in a specific situation, since we find ourselves in a world that conceals *Elokus*. Because this might get in the way of his constant obligation to serve Hashem, Torah instructs a person to turn to the necessary address for guidance and not waste any time in this regard.¹²

CHESHBONO SHEL OLAM

Shortly after the Rebbetzin’s *histalkus*, on Motzei Shabbos Parshas Teruma, 2 Adar 5748, the Rebbe delivered a surprise *sicha*, discussing a difficult topic:

The Rebbe said that he had heard a story from the Frieddiker Rebbe about someone who came to the

Tzemach Tzedek to discuss the matter of “*cheshbono shel olam*,” i.e. what would take place after 120 years. At the time he heard this story, the Rebbe noted, he did not understand why the Frierdiker Rebbe was relating it to him, but obviously, there was a lesson to be learned.

The Rebbe explained at length that when one is in doubt, the question should be addressed to Chassidische *rabbonim*, i.e. *rabbonim* who are proficient in *nigleh* and halacha, thereby possessing the power of

rendering a *psak din* according to Torah, with the added measure of having studied Chassidus, *Pninius HaTorah*. More specifically, the Rebbe said, the questions should be addressed to three Chassidische *rabbonim*, and with their ruling, all doubts would be removed. Members of each respective community should address their questions to the Chassidische *rabbonim* in their local community. The *rabbonim* were given the power to render correct decisions, in a good and auspicious manner.¹³

GO SEE A DOCTOR!

During the first International Kinus Hashluchim of 5748, the Rebbe spoke about the constant flow of *brachos* that each of the *shluchim* receive from the *mishaleach* (the Rebbe); the Rebbe added:

A person who is busy worrying about material matters will not have time or energy to receive the blessings from the Rebbe. He is too busy with his melancholy and worry, and one worry drags another worry along in its wake (similar to the rule of “*mitzvah gorreeres mitzvah...*”)

He becomes so used to worrying about things that it becomes very difficult for him to change his nature in this regard. This stops him from being able to learn Chitas properly (instead, he just reads the words without understanding the meaning), and certainly, he can't learn Rambam...

...He doesn't have time for that. He's too worried about material pursuits and monetary issues.

The answer to this is: our Rabbeim taught us to “*tracht gut—think good, and it will be good!*”

He says that he can't follow this because it's not in his nature.

If this is really the case, go to a doctor and get pills to calm down your nerves! If you had a runny nose for three days straight, you wouldn't sit around and let it get to you; you would go see a doctor. The same is true in this case, go see a doctor and take care of your problem!

If, however, he sticks with his nature of worrying, this causes that no matter how many *brachos* he receives, he still continues to worry.

I received a letter from an individual and responded

well to his concern. The next day I received another letter from him, in which he said that he's certain there's a heavenly *gzeira* leveled against him and that things won't work out in his favor. He knows that we can get rid of this *gzeira*, and he's asking for a *bracha* that it should go away.

There are no *gzeiros* or anything of the sort! On the contrary, there are all the *brachos* from the Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*. However, one must make a proper receptacle to catch these *brachos*; not by worrying but by **thinking good, and it will be good!**

If one would only rid himself of all the things blocking the channel of *brachos*, he would see even more *brachos* and miracles from the Rebbe than what was seen until now.

And sometimes, he thinks he's missing things in certain areas of his life, but if he rethinks his approach he may realize that he's not missing anything at all. His father never had any of these extras, nor his grandfather. Why, then, does he need them?

(The advent of television [and other means of technology] has only brought about more stress and waste of time, besides the fact that they expose people to all sorts of questionable ideas, and when children see them, they become curious about them. Then one needs to spend time countering these ideas and explaining, etc.)

He thinks that since it's a *mitzvah* to daven to Hashem every day for his needs, he must come up with new needs, even things that he truly doesn't need!

If he still needs help after all this, he should go to his *rav* and discuss it with him, then follow his advice.

(Based on the Yiddish transcript of the sicha, hashlamos se'if 3)



BRACHOS

Throughout these *sichos*, the Rebbe emphasized time and again that when people write to him requesting *brachos*, there's no need to wait for a written response. All the letters with requests for *brachos* are taken to the Ohel of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and he ensures that everyone is blessed with whatever they need from the source of all blessings, Hashem Himself.¹⁴

To an individual who came to the Rebbe at dollars and asked for an answer to a letter he had written, the Rebbe responded as follows:

“It's exactly as if I have already read the letter, and I will mention it at the Ohel of my father-in-law. Hashem should help you that it will all turn out good. *Bsuross tovoss*.”

“I have announced a few times that when people write to me, I take the letters to the Ohel, and I mention them there, and then my father-in-law does what he has to do. There's no need to wait for a written response from me through the mail.”¹⁵

GORAL

The Rebbe mentioned a few times that there is a custom among many Yidden that when a person is faced with options that are equally valid according to Torah,¹⁶ it can be decided by way of a *goral*: opening a Chumash and acting in accordance with the words of the *possuk* that meets the eye.¹⁷ In at least one instance, the Rebbe advised parents who were offered several ideas for shidduchim and were unsure which one to pursue first, that (among other things) they should open a Chumash or Tehillim randomly and discern what to do from the first *possuk* they encounter.¹⁸

At a farbrengen in 5749, the Rebbe explained that looking for a sign in this manner is only possible

when one does not already have clear instructions from the Torah on how to act. However, when you know that according to the Torah you're supposed to do something, there's no need to look for signs or indications; you just need to do it. If you were given a shlichus from the Rebbe to spread Torah, Yiddishkeit, and Chassidus, you should not hesitate; you should act!¹⁹

On another occasion, the Rebbe added that it would be inappropriate to use holy *seforim* for mundane matters, and therefore one should refrain from using a *sefer* to ascertain how to act in matters other than Torah and mitzvos. Instead, one can look out the window and gather an indication from the first thing that meets the eye, or something similar to that.²⁰

IN A POSTSCRIPT TO A LETTER THE REBBE WROTE TO REB SHOLOM POSNER DATED 10 NISSAN 5710, THE REBBE WRITES THIS FAMOUS REPLY ABOUT WHAT TO DO WHEN IN DOUBT AND WE CAN NO LONGER RECEIVE THE REBBE'S ADVICE AS IN THE PAST.



THE REBBE WILL FIND A WAY

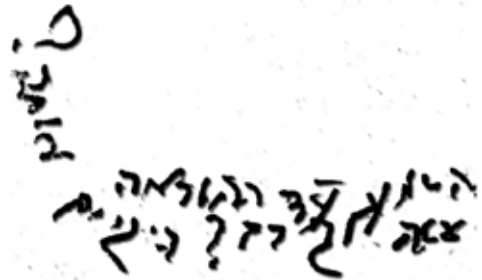
In summation, the Rebbe gave us clear guidelines on what to do when in doubt, when one cannot receive an answer directly from the Rebbe.

Most importantly, we need to keep our connection with the Rebbe healthy and strong, and we will thereby be worthy of carrying out his wishes in the proper manner, always. As quoted above, the Rebbe taught that by toiling in the Rebbe's Torah and studying it diligently, a Chossid can rest assured that he will make the proper decisions based on the Rebbe's teachings.

As the Rebbe famously responded to a Chossid who asked what to do when in doubt:

ומה שמקשה הלא א"א עתה לשאול את כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר
הכ"מ כשיש ספק בהנהגה - אם יעמוד חזק בהתקשרותו

IN A POIGNANT MA'ANEH THE REBBE ASKED QUESTIONS: השמע ע"ד [על דבר] ההוראה עשה לך רב? היקיים אותה? (TRANSLATION: HAS HE HEARD ABOUT THE HORA'AH OF 'ASEI L'CHA RAV'? WILL HE FULFILL IT?)



אליו, מבלי שישם לב לפתווי היצר, וישלח השאלה על ציון כ"ק אדמו"ר הכ"מ - וועט דער רבי געפינען א וועג ווי עם צו ענטפערן.

Regarding what you ask, that now we cannot ask the [Frierdiker] Rebbe when there is doubt how to conduct oneself: If you will remain steadfast in your *hiskashrus* to him, without paying attention to the arguments of the *yetzer hara*, and you will send your question to the Ohel of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe; the Rebbe will find a way to answer you.²¹

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 54.

2. Tanya, Iggeres Hakodesh siman 22.

3. Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei 5711, Toras Menachem vol. 2, p. 107. See also Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751, Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol. 2 p. 790 fn. 101.

4. Shabbos Parshas Vayikra 5741; Sefer Hashlichus p. 256.

5. Shabbos Parshas Beshalach 5748, Sefer Hasichos vol. 1, p. 240.

6. Chamisha Asar B'Shevat 5748; Sefer Hasichos vol. 1, p. 248.

7. 11 Nissan 5748; Hisvaaduyos vol. 3, p. 47.

8. E.g. Shabbos Parshas Beshalach 5748, *ibid*.

9. Shabbos Parshas Beshalach 5748, fn. 128, et. al.

10. 13 Nissan 5747; Hisvaaduyos vol. 3, p. 87.

11. Shabbos Parshas Devarim 5746; Likkutei Sichos vol. 29 p. 247-248. For more on this campaign, see "Guidance" - Derher

Cheshvan 5781.

12. Yud Shevat 5747; Hisvaaduyos vol. 2 p. 410.

13. <https://ashreinu.page.link/56aM>.

14. Sefer Hasichos 5748, vol. 1, p. 248-249 et. al. See also Yechidus Klalis, 21 Shevat 5748, Hisvaaduyos vol. 2, p. 341.

15. chabad.org/142980.

16. This detail is from Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5749 cited below.

17. Shabbos Parshas Tzav 5729; Sichos Kodesh p. 7.

18. Heichal Menachem vol. 2, p. 217-218.

19. Shabbos Parshas Noach 5749; Hisvaaduyos vol. 1, p. 310.

20. Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5749; Hisvaaduyos vol. 3, p. 224, 231.

21. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 266.

מכירת הגזלים
TREASURES
FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

Mibeis Hagnazim p. 64, article 21.

“MAY
THEY
SEE THE
REBBE
AGAIN”

During the Friediker Rebbe's final years, he suffered greatly from ailing physical health. Nevertheless, his workload was steadily active and even increased: he oversaw the activities of spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus all over the world, wrote many letters daily, received individuals in *yechidus* several times a week, and delivered *maamarim* and *sichos* orally and in writing.

Anash and Temimim at 770 deeply felt the Friediker Rebbe's pain; something which is noticeable from the content of one of the *pannim* they gave to the Friediker Rebbe on Erev Rosh Hashanah.

Presented here are two *pannim-klali'im* written on behalf of all of Anash: one with a request that the Friediker Rebbe be restored to his full health and continue his holy work with great success, and the other with a request for Anash and all the Jewish people who found themselves persecuted under oppressive regimes.¹

Dozens of Chassidim signed their names at the bottom of each *pan*. The Rebbe's name is at the top of the column on the right.

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

P”N

Kvod Kedushas Admur Shlita

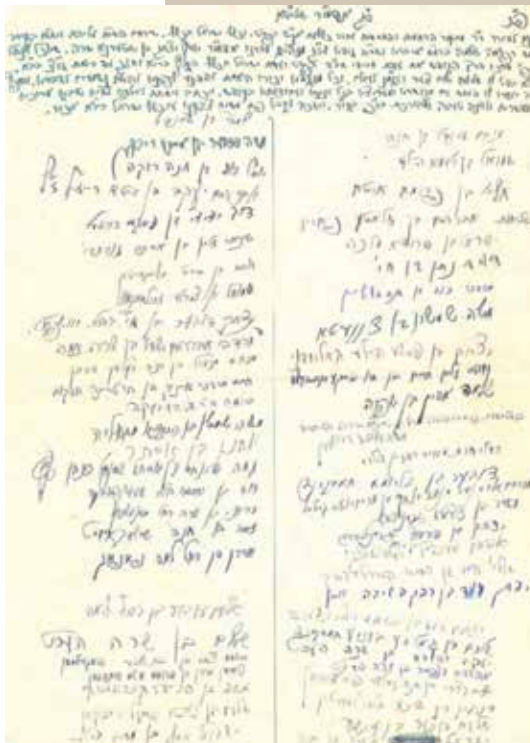
We request to invoke much compassion, from the source of compassion and kindness, on behalf of all of Anash in particular, and on behalf of all of Klal Yisroel in general, that Hashem should have mercy upon them and immediately send a complete recovery in all 248 limbs and 365 veins to the holy leader of our generation, our Rebbe Yosef Yitzchok ben Shterna Sara. He should be able to lead in his holy way the community of Chabad Chassidim in particular, and all the Jewish people in general, with a strong and healthy body, until the coming of Moshiach, speedily. He should never have any pain or anguish, Heaven forbid. All those who oppose him should recognize the truth and submit themselves before him, heeding his words and, together with all his *mekusharim* and admirers, willingly assisting him in all his affairs and matters of holy work. May he be inscribed and sealed immediately for a good, long, and happy life, and for a good, blessed year in all aspects, materially and spiritually. May he merit to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu speedily with all the Jewish people, Amen, so may it be His will.

P”N

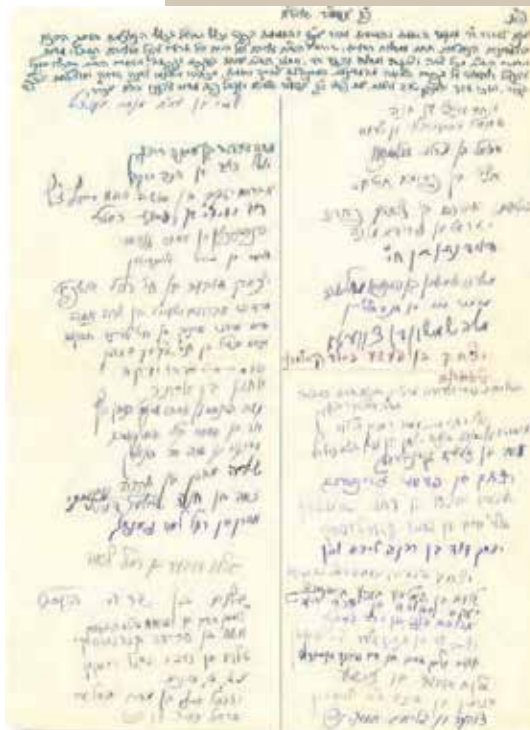
Kvod Kedushas Admur Shlita

We request to invoke much compassion, from the source of compassion and kindness, on behalf of Anash and Temimim in particular, and all of Klal Yisroel in general, who find themselves in the “vale of tears,” in lands under the jurisdiction of wicked regimes. May Hashem have mercy upon them, their families, and their children, easing the effect of the birth pangs of Moshiach’s coming, and may Hashem guard them from all trouble and distress, from sickness and evil occurrences. May Hashem strengthen them in body and spirit, and may Hashem help them to be able to easily save themselves and escape to one of the countries with kind, compassionate governments. May they be written and sealed for a good and successful year in all aspects, materially and spiritually. And may they merit, in a good manner, to see the Rebbe again, and to greet Moshiach speedily, Amen, so may it be His will.

1. Writing two *pannim klali'im* in this manner and giving them to the Frierdiker Rebbe was common practice in those years. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad—Elul-Tishrei, p. 45.



PAN ASKING FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE FRIEDIKER REBBE.



PAN ASKING THAT THE FRIEDIKER REBBE HAVE HATZLACHA IN ALL OF HIS MATTERS

By: Rabbi Bentzion Schtroks

If I Had Twenty

Yankel'ac

REB YAAKOV MASKALIK (ZURAVITCHER)

Even in the most difficult times and circumstances, Reb Yaakov Maskalik exhibited an inner joy; it overflowed in his words, his actions, and his mere presence. It remained steadfast even through the bitter exile in Kazakhstan. Ahavas Yisroel and genuine concern for others were integral to his character, so much so that during his studies in Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe Rashab drew parallels between him and Reb Levi Yitzchok m'Berditchev. His profound sense of compassion and willingness to assist at any cost persisted throughout his endeavors to fortify Yiddishkeit in Russia.



לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' משה בן הרב נפתלי ע"ה
גרינברג
גלב"ע י' תמוז ה'תשע"ג
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' ישראל מרדכי חוגתו מרת
חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו גרינברג
על פסא, טקסט

Reb Yaakov Zecharya Maskalik

(also known as Reb Yankel Zuravitcher) was born in Schedrin. His parents, Reb Zev Volf and Yehudis Maskalik were Koidinover Chassidim and raised their children with a pure, chassidishe education.

Throughout his childhood, Reb Yaakov and his family lived in Schedrin, a town established by the Tzemach Tzedek and inhabited primarily by Lubavitcher Chassidim. Reb Yaakov absorbed much from the Chabad atmosphere surrounding him and was intrigued by the ways of the Lubavitcher Chassidim.

At age fifteen, Reb Yaakov decided to travel to Lubavitch to study in Tomchei Temimim. At first, his parents were reluctant. However, as they saw the development of his character and his sincere *avodas Hashem*, they gave him their full support.

Reb Yankel was among forty bochurim aspiring to join the esteemed yeshiva. Following a rigorous assessment process, which included evaluations of his Torah knowledge, conduct, and character traits, Reb Yaakov received high praise from both of the two assessing committees and, in Cheshvan 5661, he was admitted to Tomchei Temimim.

Reb Yaakov excelled in the learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus, but what made him truly unique was his Ahavas Yisroel. The Rebbe Rashab commented: “There is a *bochur* in the yeshiva who is an example of Reb Levi Yitzchok m’Berditchev¹.”

For eight years, Reb Yaakov learned at Tomchei Temimim. During his last few years there, he looked after the material needs of the younger *bochurim*,

earning the title “mother of the *temimim*.”²

Reb Folleh Kahn recounts:

“When Reb Yaakov Maskalik was still in the yeshiva of Lubavitch, he was already known for his generous heart, and would often be referred to as: ‘*Der mame*.’

“Some *bochurim* could not afford to pay for lodging and would sleep in the study hall. Most would bring blankets from home, but they needed to obtain mattresses. Reb Yaakov took it upon himself to ensure that these *bochurim* had mattresses. He would procure sacks and straw, and sew them into mattresses.

“Whenever a *bochur* was hurt, he would turn to Reb Yaakov, who would take care of the treatments.”³

Rising to the Occasion

In the year 5668, a shidduch was suggested with Miriam Rochel Margolin, daughter of Reb Tuvia Margolin from Zhlobin, and they got married after Shavuos. The young couple remained in Zhlobin for three years and were blessed with two daughters.

Shortly before his wedding—as per the instruction of the Rebbe Rashab—Reb Yaakov had begun to study Shulchan Aruch in order to receive *semicha*. He was tested and did *shimush* with Reb Menachem Mendel Chein, the Rov in Niezhin, one of the only Rabbonim to whom the Rebbe Rashab sent alumni of Tomchei Temimim to for *semicha* and *shimush*.⁴



REB YAAKOV LEIB PARETZKY (JACOBSON) WITH HIS FAMILY, ZURAVITZ, 5673.

Referring to Reb Yaakov, the Rebbe Rashab commented: “There is a bochur in the yeshiva who is an example of Reb Levi Yitzchok m’Berdichev.”

In the winter of 5671, Reb Lipman Dov Cohen, the former Lubavitcher Rov of Zuravitch, passed away. Some congregants of the local Nusach Ashkenaz Shul wanted to appoint the Rov of their Shul, Reb Boruch Rabinovitz, as the Rov of the city. The Chassidim, who comprised the majority of the community, did not accept the proposal.

Some sources suggest that the Rebbe Rashab sent Reb Yaakov to Zuravitch to fill the position of Reb Lipman Cohen. What we know for certain is that after Pesach of that year, Reb Yaakov visited Zuravitch and stayed in the home of Reb Yaakov Leib Jacobson, father of Reb Yisroel Jacobson⁵.

Reb Yisroel Jacobson related:

“In the summer of 5671, Reb Yaakov Maskalik visited our town. Since my father was the only shochet in the city, and we were the only ones with space to accommodate guests, he stayed at our home.

“He gave speeches that were greatly enjoyed by the community, radiating warmth and friendliness, enhanced by his distinguished and handsome appearance.”

Three months later, in Menachem Av 5671, Reb Yaakov was appointed to serve as Rov of Zuravitch.

The people who had campaigned for Reb Boruch Rabinowitz couldn’t refute Reb Yaakov’s appointment, but they weren’t pleased. When they realized how pure and good-hearted Reb Yaakov was, they decided to use this to their benefit.

They commissioned a delegation who successfully convinced Reb Yaakov that his appointment had left Reb Boruch without a livelihood and that he should commit to finding Reb Boruch a monthly income of four hundred rubles per month. Since Reb Yaakov avoided the slightest possibility of causing harm to another person, he agreed there and then to sign a prepared document assuming the responsibility.

The actions of this group deeply pained the Chassidim, especially as they took advantage of Reb Yaakov’s

pure, kind-hearted nature and his extraordinary Ahavas Yisroel. It was obvious that they relied on these characteristics to do away with practically all of his earnings.

Seeing how disturbed the Chassidim were by this, Reb Yaakov firmly refused to allow any actions that would reignite the flames of *machlokes* and insisted that the matter be settled peacefully.

Upon hearing of the issue, the Rebbe Rashab sent Reb Zalman Havlin to help resolve it. Reb Zalman was suitable for the sensitive and delicate task as he was well-liked and exceptionally talented; his reliability and directness earned the trust even of those who opposed him.

Reb Zalman, with his calm and meticulous approach, gradually guided the group to acknowledge their error and void the contract they had coerced Reb Yaakov into signing⁶.

As the ordeal came to an end and Reb Yaakov was unanimously accepted as the Rov by all of the residents of Zuravitch, the spirit of Lubavitch gradually began to influence all aspects of community life. The classes in Chassidus grew larger and more frequent. Reb Yaakov’s farbrengens drew crowds from all walks of life, and his positive energy attracted the entire community—including former opponents—to unite around him.

Reb Yaakov motivated parents to send their children to Tomchei Temimim, and his inspiration also increased the number of people who traveled to Lubavitch for *yomei depagra*, especially during the month of Tishrei.

Reb Yaakov instituted many chassidishe customs, which were accepted lovingly and respectfully; a result of his sincerity and mirroring his love and respect for his flock. Among many other things, Reb Yaakov saw to it that the Mikvah be heated for Shabbos so that more people would use it on Shabbos morning before davening.⁷

A Beacon of Hope

As time went on, Reb Yaakov's family grew. While his family lived in Zuravitch, his wife gave birth to three children.

After World War I and the Communist takeover, the regime began to impose its views onto the people. The Jews were the first to suffer, and Zuravitch was not spared.

The local government started to oppress all of the religious institutions and those who worked in them. This is when Reb Yaakov's stubborn side revealed itself. He fought fiercely against government restrictions. Even when the persecution intensified and accusations and charges against Rabbonim, Shochtim, Mohalim, and others increased, Reb Yaakov diligently carried on his responsibility as Rav and did whatever he could to protect observance of Yiddishkeit while being careful not to endanger anyone.

Despite the immense pressure he faced leading the community through the most challenging times, he maintained a calm demeanor, radiating positivity and never displaying the weight of his burdens. Those who were there at the time later related that Reb Yaakov continuously kept uplifted spirits, and his face glowed with a contagious joy.

On the *Kol Mevasser* radio show that would air in Kfar Chabad in the late 1980s, Reb Abba Levin said:

“Reb Yaakov was an individual who was filled with emotion, as the Yiddish expression goes: ‘*A hartzigehr Yid*’. He was always joyful, and whenever you saw him, he had a bright smile on his face. In short, he was a Jew who had an extraordinary feeling for others. He was completely devoted to helping Jews both physically and spiritually. When he would begin to speak with you, he would routinely open up with an affectionate phrase like “*Tzadikel*, how are you?” or, “*Chossidel*, how is it going?” He never started a conversation with merely: “How are you?” or “How is it going?” Anyone who was broken—and there was no shortage of broken people at the time—would find comfort when they encountered Reb Yaakov. His smile never disappeared, even when he faced personal challenges.”

Balancing Act

Although Reb Yaakov was very successful in his communal work in Zuravitch, he faced significant challenges in his personal life.

In 5680, Reb Yaakov's daughter Riva passed away at the tender age of three. Three years later, his wife Miriam Rochel became infected with pneumonia. Unfortunately, all of the cures that her doctors tried proved unsuccessful, and on the 7th of Adar 5683, she passed away. Reb Yaakov was left with four orphaned children, the oldest being fourteen years old and the youngest being two.

For two years following his wife's passing, Reb Yaakov single-handedly raised his four children. Despite this responsibility, he remained deeply engaged in serving his community, which by then had largely become an underground operation.

After two years, Reb Yaakov felt that his community work demanded an ever-increasing amount of his time, which came at the expense of caring for his four children. Not only was Reb Yaakov responsible for leading his local community in Zuravitch under the communist regime's watch, but he also embarked on travels to cities across Russia to fulfill the shlichus of the Friediker Rebbe, causing him to be away from home often.

This prompted him to choose between continuing his vital community work and looking after his four children. With a heavy heart, Reb Yaakov entrusted his friend Reb Chaim Eliezer Gorelick, who lived in Rogatchov, with the care of his children.⁸

Unwavering Resolve

Reb Yaakov's efforts to fortify Yiddishkeit in Russia—establishing schools, recruiting and funding teachers, organizing *shiurei Torah*, constructing mikvaos, and more, began primarily after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rashab, under the leadership of the Friediker Rebbe.

At first, Reb Yaakov was part of the group tasked by the Friediker Rebbe with carrying out clandestine operations to preserve Yiddishkeit amidst the ongoing persecution, and to report to the Friediker Rebbe regarding the spiritual and physical needs and welfare of Chassidim living in towns throughout Russia.⁹ Over time, however, as many of the group's members were arrested and others were expelled from Russia, Reb Yaakov was the only one

remaining to direct the operations.¹⁰

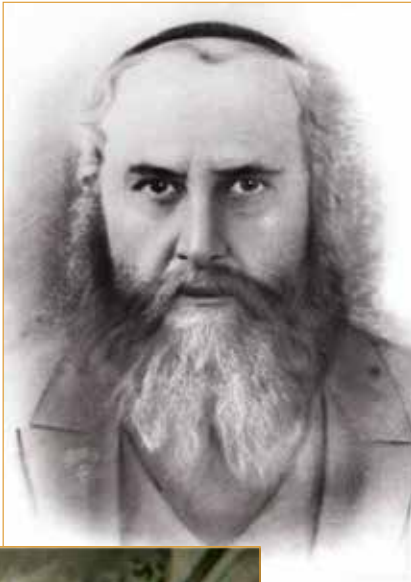
Reb Yaakov plunged ahead with his efforts, carrying out his work with dedication, day in and day out, never complaining. The Friediker Rebbe said, “If I had twenty Yankelach I would turn over Russia.”¹¹”

During this period, the Friediker Rebbe was arrested and exiled to Kostroma. After being freed, he returned to Leningrad, but since he was not able to stay there, he soon moved to a suburb of Moscow called Malachovka.

Since it was known that the government had undercover agents watching the Friediker Rebbe and everyone who he met, strict instructions were issued to the Chassidim that no one should come there.

The only ones the Friediker Rebbe allowed to stay near

A PORTRAIT CIRCULATED AMONG THE CHASSIDIM REMAINING IN RUSSIA, MADE FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE FRIEDIKER REBBE TAKEN IN LENINGRAD, SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE TO RIGA IN 5688.



REB MENDEL MASKALIK, ELDEST SON OF REB YANKEL.

“If I had twenty Yankelach, I would turn over Russia.”

THE BRACHOS THAT REACH THE MALOCHIM

Reb Simcha Gorodetsky related the following story:

On Shemini Atzeres 5682 or 5683, I merited to sit at the Yom Tov table in the Friediker Rebbe’s sukkah in Rostov. Also present were Reb Itche Der Masmid and Reb Yaakov Zuravitcher, although Reb Yaakov was busy dancing with the children in the courtyard. Their dancing and singing were lively and we heard it in the sukkah. Reb Itche commented several times: “Ah, ah, it is disturbing.” but the Friediker Rebbe did not respond. Finally, upon repeating this again, the Friediker Rebbe told him: “When one reaches *emes*—truth, even to the tip of the first *Yud* of the letter *Aleph* in *emes*, this too is *emes*.”

Later in the conversation, Reb Itche said something that I couldn’t hear properly, and the Friediker Rebbe told him: “You are asking for something which is associated with [high] levels. On high, there are several groups of *malochim* (the Friediker Rebbe enumerated several groups by name), and they wait all night; the office is closed until Reb Yaakov wakes up in the morning, washes his hands, and recites *Birchas Hashachar*, then all of the offices open up and the *malochim* sing *shira*: “*B’ron yachad kochvei boker...*”²⁹

him were relatives and a few others, including Reb Yaakov, whom the Friediker Rebbe appointed his personal secretary during his time in Malachovka.

During that time, Chassidim in other countries coordinated a massive effort to enable the Friediker Rebbe to leave Russia. Every step was reported back to the Friediker Rebbe for approval and guidance. To avoid government censorship, the letters would arrive through



REB YEHOShUA
ZELIG DISKIN.

TORN SLIPPERS

Reb Avrohom Drizin once related:

“The Friediker Rebbe once expressed: ‘Since the creation of the world there was never a *klipah* as heavy as Trotzky (a prominent figure in the Communist party and the Russian government). [As the possuk says:] ‘And this against that’, there is also an equivalent on the side of *kedusha*. It is not necessary to enumerate who this is, but suffice to say that he wears torn slippers.’

“The [Friediker] Rebbe was staying in a hotel at the time, and nobody was allowed to be there aside from Reb Yankele who saw that the Friediker Rebbe’s slippers were torn.”³⁰

third parties; they would deliver them to Reb Yaakov, who would bring them to the Friediker Rebbe. Many of the Friediker Rebbe’s responses were also signed by Reb Yaakov.

The Painful Departure

In Elul 5687, the Friediker Rebbe traveled from Malachovka to visit the Ohel of the Rebbe Rashab in Rostov. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, he arrived in Leningrad, where he stayed until leaving Russia on Isru Chag Sukkos.

During the entire time until the Friediker Rebbe left Russia, Reb Yaakov remained with him¹². On that last Simchas Torah, a bitterness that could be felt in the hearts of the Chassidim. Times were challenging, the persecutions were increasing, and now that the Friediker Rebbe’s departure was imminent, many Chassidim were left with a feeling of uncertainty.

Reb Folleh Kahn related memories from that Simchas Torah:

“On Simchas Torah 5688, before the Friediker Rebbe left Russia, Chassidim came from far and wide, knowing that this was the last opportunity for the Chassidim in Russia to be together with the Friediker Rebbe.

“While everyone was gathered in the shul waiting for the Friediker Rebbe to come from his room for *hakafos*, Reb Yaakov had a brilliant idea. He gathered all the children and told them to hold hands as they danced around the *bima*. Since the Friediker Rebbe had not yet entered the shul, Reb Yaakov told them not to sing out loud, but to repetitively say the words: “*Kinder halt zich, halt zich—children hold on, hold on.*”

“Reb Yaakov continued to dance with them for a while, and it strongly impacted everyone present. Everyone who remembers that time in general, especially the Friediker Rebbe leaving Russia, knows how great the need was to strengthen each other, and everyone who was there understood what Reb Yaakov’s intentions were with this dance.”¹³

Undercover Efforts

On his visits to cities across the country, Reb Yaakov would dress in tattered clothing and appear in the local shuls saying that he was a Maggid coming to deliver

“He asked them about their shopping, and asked as an aside if they have young children, and where they go to school...”

drashos and collect money for his livelihood.

In this disguise, people would not know that he was on the Friediker Rebbe’s shlichus, which could lead to discovery by the authorities, especially since there were spies in every community.

Only to a select few he knew he could trust did Reb Yaakov reveal his true identity and ask for help in fulfilling the shlichus. In many cases, even the Rabbonim in the city were unaware of the true purpose of his visit.

Upon arriving in a city where establishing a cheder seemed unfeasible, Reb Yaakov would engage Torah-observant parents, assuring them that he was not an undercover Communist agent, and convincing them to send their children to an underground cheder located in a neighboring town. He would send the older children and yeshiva-aged students to underground yeshivas further away.¹⁴

Reb Yehoshua Zelig Diskin compiled an elaborate account of Reb Yaakov’s visit to the region of Vohlin:

“In 5688 I visited the town of Horitzov in the region of Vohlin. I arrived at the train stop in Shepetivka in the evening, from where I traveled by wagon to Horitzov. I stayed overnight in a hotel, and the next day I went to find a Shul to daven. I found four shuls, but they had all finished davening already. There was one shul that had a Minyan starting at noon. I arrived there and found about ten Yidden preparing to daven. Before davening, I heard people saying that a very pleasant Maggid had come to visit, his words as sweet as honey. I asked who the Maggid was and was told that he was a Litvak dressed in torn clothing, uninterested in the money people gave him.

“After davening I visited the home of the local Rov. There, I encountered a man of dignified countenance, a noble and soft look, a joyful individual who enjoys engaging with others, despite wearing tattered clothing. I realized that this was the revered “Maggid” to whom the townsmen had been referring.

“The fellow inquired as to who I was, and upon learning of my lineage, he revealed a connection to my father. With a hint of nostalgia, he said: ‘I learned in Babruysk, and I listened to your father speak. I wrote down his speech, and that is the speech that I used when I became the Rov of Zuravitch. Perhaps you have heard my name? I am Yankel Zuravitcher,’ he confessed humbly. ‘I don’t have a livelihood, so I travel as a Maggid delivering lectures.’

“When I left the Rov’s home, Reb Yaakov accompanied me. We entered the empty Shul, where he revealed to me that he was a Shliach of the [Friediker] Rebbe. He also showed me pictures of the [Friediker] Rebbe, and told me that he travels around the country organizing classes on Ein Yaakov and Mishnayos between Mincha and Maariv. In the Vohlin tradition, they don’t have a break between Mincha and Maariv, so he was having a hard time with that.

“He finds people who he can trust and recruits them to join underground efforts to save the youth. For example, he sent one child from this city to Kremenchuk, in which there is an underground cheder. He also delivers speeches to inspire Yidden to come closer to their Father in Heaven. He isn’t interested in donations; they only serve as a cover-up of his identity for the Soviet authorities.

“I stayed in that town for about a week, and on my way home, I stopped at the train station in Shepetivka. Waiting for the train, I wanted to find a home where I could find shelter for a bit. I saw a slaughterhouse, so I went inside, and here again, I encountered Reb Yaakov. This time he was wearing clean clothing that were not torn. He told me that it was the forty-second city he was visiting upon the [Friediker] Rebbe’s instructions. We went for a walk together, and he spoke to a few women that we met on the way. He asked them about their shopping, and asked as an aside if they had young children, and where they go to school.

“In Shepetivka he encountered two children in my

“He told me that it was the forty-second city he was visiting upon the Friediker Rebbe’s instructions...”

A SPECIAL PROMISE

During a *yechidus*, the Friediker Rebbe asked Reb Yaakov about the welfare and situation of his son Menachem Mendel. Reb Yaakov, who was fully occupied with his communal work in the shlichus of the Friediker Rebbe, responded that he did not know exactly what his son’s situation was. (His son was staying with Reb Chaim Eliezer Gorelick at the time.)

The Friediker Rebbe said to him: “Because you are dedicated to my children, I am responsible for looking after your son.” The Friediker Rebbe then gave specific instructions about where his son should learn.

presence who he directed to Nevel to join the underground Lubavitcher cheder, and he provided them with funds to cover the travel costs. During that time he went to visit the gravesite of Reb Pinchos Koritzer. Before doing so, he went to the Mikvah. Though I wished to join him, he discouraged me because there were government detectives nearby. Reb Yaakov was already questioned by them, but since I was new there, the risk wasn’t worth it.

“In the afternoon, I went to the train station. I met Reb Yaakov surrounded by a large crowd since Shepetivka is a major junction near the Polish border. In the third section of the station, between the vast crowd of Ukrainian peasants, I see a Jew in his forties together with his son. I engaged him in conversation, and it turned out that his name was Rav Bonfeld from Mezhibuzh. He was heading to Novograd-Volynsky, which has a Lubavitcher underground yeshiva and cheder led by Reb Shaul Brook.

“Rav Bonfeld shared that his son recently turned ten years old. In Mezhibuzh, there was no one for him to study with, and the dire financial situation left them with no food at home, as there are two Rabbonim in Mezhibuzh and no source of income. With his wife about to give birth, Rav Bonfeld managed to save four kilograms of white flour and a ten-ruble coin. However, the government’s demand for their son’s enrollment in a Soviet school prompted him to hurry and take his son from Mezhibuzh to Novograd-Volynsky. To pay for the trip, Rav Bonfeld used the ten-ruble coin, and his wife utilized the saved flour to bake bread for their son’s voyage.

“Reb Yaakov told Rav Bonfeld that he too was traveling to Novograd-Volynsky to visit Reb Shaul Brook and the yeshiva there. They traveled together, and I traveled in the other direction towards Kiev.

“In Kiev, I stayed at the home of Rabbi Gorodetsky, and again met Reb Yaakov. He told me that when he arrived in Novograd-Volynsky he went to the Shul in which Reb Shaul Brook teaches. During his conversation with Reb Shaul, a sudden commotion arose as several officers approached the building. In a swift maneuver, Reb Shaul concealed himself within the bookshelf. When the officers questioned the children about who was teaching them, they said that they didn’t have a teacher and they learn on their own. The officers suspected Reb Yaakov of teaching them and arrested him. When he came to the police station, he showed the officers his train tickets proving that he had only arrived that day, and the officers released him. Shaken by the ordeal, Reb Yaakov rushed to make his way to Kiev.

“Reb Yaakov told Rabbi Gorodetsky that while he was in the towns in the Vohlin region, he organized tens of *shiurei Torah*, and sent about fifteen children to learn in *chadorim* in Nevel, Vitebsk, and Kremenchuk.¹⁵”

One of Reb Yaakov’s relatives related:

“With huge miracles, Reb Yaakov managed to dodge the Soviet authorities time after time. When asked if he was Yaakov Maskalik, he said no, my name is Yankel Zuravitcher, and vice versa. On multiple occasions, he went into hiding until he knew that enough time had passed for them to quit looking for him. Sometimes he had to flee from one city to another in the middle of the night, but nothing could stop him from being committed to his mission. He would not leave a city before he understood the community’s spiritual welfare and what was needed there.¹⁶”

In the Heart of Moscow

At the end of 5689, Reb Yaakov took his children, who had been in Rogatchov with Reb Chaim Eliezer Gorelick, and settled in Moscow.

Although he resided in Moscow and tended to his children, Reb Yaakov diligently pursued the mission entrusted to him by the Friediker Rebbe, safeguarding the flame of Yiddishkeit in Soviet Russia. Despite being continuously updated via mail about the goings on in many communities, including the status of *chadorim* and *mikvaos*, he willingly endangered himself by visiting these locales in person. He displayed a remarkable dedication, even going so far as to use his own resources to compensate teachers, ensuring uninterrupted Torah study.

Reb Avrohom Drizin Related:

“In Moscow, to make ends meet, I ran a business that depended on the black market. I partnered with Reb Yaakov because he was honest and had good judgment. Once, we earned a big profit of a few thousand rubles. I split the money equally with Reb Yaakov, thinking it would last us each a few months. By the end of the week, Reb Yaakov asked me if he could borrow three rubles for his Shabbos needs.

“I was surprised and asked him what happened to the several thousand rubles I had given him at the beginning of the week. He answered sincerely that three teachers had not been paid for three months, and there was a possibility

that the *chadorim* would shut down. In another city, the construction of the mikvah was postponed due to lack of funds. So, he used the money to pay the teachers, sent the necessary funds to complete the mikvah and found himself with nothing remaining for Shabbos.¹⁷”

In his genuine, caring manner, Reb Yaakov attended not only to the community’s collective needs but also to the individual concerns of each person. This was especially crucial during a time when many faced dire financial straits. With conventional employment requiring the desecration of Shabbos, and working any job that the government did not officially recognize meant risking imprisonment or worse, numerous Chassidim found themselves in desperate situations. Families were left without means of support, as many individuals were incarcerated, leaving entire households with no source of income.

PART OF A LETTER SENT BY REB YANKEL TO A FELLOW CHOSSID WHO WAS WITH THE FRIEDIKER REBBE. REB YANKEL ENTREATS HIS FRIEND TO MENTION HIM TO THE FRIEDIKER REBBE FOR A BRACHA.



TESHURA ZIBERSTROM - KATAN 5777

KOL BAYAAR

At the farbrengen on Purim 5711, the Rebbe shared the following story:

“On Purim 5687, after the [Friediker] Rebbe concluded the farbrengen and went into his room, a few people remained, one of them being the chossid Reb Yaakov Zuravitcher. He sat on the floor and sang the niggun *Kol Bazaar*.” The Rebbe then instructed that this niggun be sung³¹.

* 5689-1929, 5711-1951, 5687-1927

The Friediker Rebbe said to him: “Because you are dedicated to my children, I am responsible for looking after your son.”

Reb Yaakov gave everything he could to help families survive and continuously raised funds to help those in need. He would send letters to his friends who had made it to America and plead with them to send financial aid to the Chassidim remaining in Russia.

Cracks of Light

In each of the many letters that Reb Yaakov sent to the Friediker Rebbe reporting after each trip—which he signed with the disguised name of Riza—he expresses profound anguish over the Soviet persecution that was determined to completely eradicate the learning of Torah and practice of Yiddishkeit from within Russia. In these letters, Reb Yaakov also asks for any support possible to help pay teachers, mikvah attendants, etc. The letters were written in code to prevent his ‘illegal’ activities from being uncovered by government censors.

In one such letter, Reb Yaakov expresses painfully: “The store of the children was destroyed, and there is no one to take care of this.” In another letter, he writes: “The mikvah was destroyed, and the building sold to an uncircumcised [man] who sealed it up.” In another letter, he writes: “There is no order for the holy sheep of Hashem’s flock [i.e. the Jewish children], who get captured like birds in the traps of the latest fads and various platforms.” Regarding another city, he writes: “There is a big commotion since they want to steal the large Shul. I spoke to the Rov and I told him that they should make a meeting and they should gather signatures to send to Moscow.” In another report, he writes: “The poverty here is great since there is no livelihood, and now there is a worry that the mikvah might fall into the hands of foreigners Heaven forbid, since 300 rubel is needed to finish the repairs.”

Although these letters are filled with painful occurrences, they also showcase his trust in Hashem, optimistic solutions, and positive accomplishments. The cracks of light within the darkness expressed in Reb Yaakov’s letters received frequent attention in the Friediker Rebbe’s responses to him.¹⁸

Towering Ahavas Yisroel

Throughout his life, wherever he went and in every situation, Reb Yaakov carried with him deep and genuine concern for the physical and spiritual needs of the people around him, identifying what people needed and going to great lengths to fill it. He would never let anything stand in his way of helping another Jew. Presented here are a few of the stories and anecdotes illustrating this special trait:

His grandson, Reb Shlomo Galperin relates:

“My mother once told how she often found my grandfather sitting late into the night near candlelight, jotting down notes on small scraps of paper. Intrigued by his behavior, she couldn’t help but wonder what was bothering him at this hour so much as to disturb his sleep. One night, her curiosity got the better of her, and she peered over his shoulder to see what he was busy doing.

“To her surprise, she observed him meticulously recording various short notes. One note had the address and information of a mikvah; another detailed where to locate a children’s teacher; a third listed sources for kosher meat, tzitzis, mezuzos, or a chuppah.

“It turned out that whenever he walked through the streets and overheard a conversation of one woman telling another how their daughter gave birth to a boy but they did not have a mohel to do the bris or other such predicaments, Reb Yaakov would discreetly pass one of these notes to them. He made it his daily mission to assist in any way he could.”¹⁹

When Reb Yaakov was newly married and living in Schedrin, he would go every night to the local weddings, and try convincing the *chossan* and *kallah* to have a wedding in accordance with Halacha. First, he would find the grandmother and speak to her about the importance of a Jewish wedding. Then he said *l’chaim* with the guests, and by the time he finished the grandmother hopefully agreed to have

him officiate a proper Jewish wedding.²⁰

Reb Berke Chein once told a fascinating story that he witnessed of Reb Yaakov:

“I was once in Moscow for Shabbos, and on my way to shul, I saw Reb Yaakov standing in a grocery store near the checkout counter alongside a woman dressed in ripped clothing.

“At first I was utterly surprised at the sight, but as I observed further I understood what was happening. The store owner was slicing bread for his customers, adding a little extra to each bag in order to reach the full measurement. Reb Yaakov seized the opportunity to request these extra pieces from each shopper to give to the needy woman. By the time the line dwindled, Reb Yaakov had gathered enough bread to fill two bags. He handed them to the woman and continued on his way to shul.

“Later, I learned that Reb Yankel had encountered this woman on his way to shul, where she stood sobbing with tears. Upon investigation, he discovered she was a Jewish widow, and she and her children had been fasting for days.”²¹

Reb Mendel Futeras shared that when Reb Yaakov would encounter a *bochur* who was down during the month of Elul because they did not have sufficient funds to travel to the Frierdiker Rebbe, he would go and raise the amount of money that they needed to cover the trip.

Reb Folleh Kahn spoke of the uniquely caring persona of Reb Yaakov, sharing the following stories:

“During one of my business trips away from home, I returned to Moscow at five in the morning and was taken aback to find Reb Yaakov strolling through Kalanchyovskaya Square, a neighborhood known to be unsafe for Jews. ‘Reb Yaakov,’ I asked, ‘where are you headed at this hour?’

“At first, he avoided my question, but eventually he confided that during a train ride a few weeks earlier, he struck up a conversation with a young man hailing from a small village in White Russia. This man, now working at a local factory and staying with a non-Jewish family, lamented that he couldn’t observe Shabbos due to his work, and that he didn’t even have enough time to daven because of his early shift. He also shared how he really wanted to mark his father’s upcoming *yahrtzeit* by davening, possibly even with a minyan, but wasn’t sure if he would manage. Reb Yaakov made a note of the *yahrtzeit* date, and now that date had arrived and he was heading out to wake the young man in time for davening.

“During the winter of 5691, I was sent into exile, leaving my wife and our four children behind in Moscow. As Pesach approached, my wife found herself grappling with how she

would make the Seder without having me there to lead it. The evening of the Seder arrived and she sat at home feeling down. Suddenly a knock was heard at the door. With trepidation, she opened the door to find Reb Yaakov standing there, his face radiant with joy as he warmly greeted the family with a resounding ‘*gut yom tov*.’

“Reb Yaakov wasted no time and sprang into action, swiftly setting the table and leading a beautiful seder for my family. His presence brought a sense of comfort and joy, alleviating some of the pain of my absence.

“After finishing the entire Seder, Reb Yaakov bid farewell and returned to his own family, who had eagerly awaited his return all night. He then started the Seder with his family, little did they know that it was actually his second round of conducting it that night.”

Reb Avrohom Drizin shared another incident that he witnessed with Reb Yaakov:

“Once, I was walking with Reb Zalman Kurnitzer and Reb Yaakov when we came upon a young couple. Reb Yaakov sensed they were Jewish and struck up a conversation. As they talked, he learned that they were living together without having had a proper Jewish wedding. So, Reb Yaakov gave them his address and invited them over.

“The next day, I needed Reb Yaakov urgently, but he was nowhere to be found. I finally saw him the next day, and he told me what had happened. The couple that we met had taken him up on his invitation and visited him. When they

HE IS NOT MISSING ANYTHING

When Reb Simcha Gorodetsky, a close friend of Reb Yaakov’s, traveled to the Rebbe for the first time, Reb Yaakov’s family requested that he ask the Rebbe when to commemorate their father’s *yahrtzeit* since there wasn’t any information about when he had passed away.

Reb Simcha conveyed the message in his first *yechidus*, and the Rebbe responded: “He is not missing anything, he is already long in the high realms. If the family would like, they can set [the date of the *yahrtzeit* to be] Chof-Daled Teves.”³²

arrived, he quickly sorted out all the wedding details, officiated their wedding, and even convinced the woman to keep *taharas hamishpacha*. He covered all the expenses, including purchasing mezuzos for their home.

“Another time, Reb Yaakov heard about a very poor person who couldn’t afford a bris for his son. Without hesitation, Reb Yaakov arranged for a mohel and prepared a beautiful meal, covering all the costs as usual.”²²

Much of Reb Yaakov’s behavior described in these stories and many more resemble practices that only became common in our generation. Reb Nissan Nemanov once expressed about Reb Yaakov that he fulfilled the Rebbe’s mitzvot before they were instituted similar to the *avos* who fulfilled the mitzvos before they were commanded.²³

Even in Exile

On 12 Elul 5695, close to midnight, following a tip-off to the government about their activities, a group of Chassidim in Moscow and Malachovka, including Reb Yaakov, were arrested and sent to Kazakhstan²⁴.

One of the proofs of this is in a letter sent to the United States from Moscow six days later:

“Please tell our father (referring to the Friediker Rebbe) and Anash, that they have started to engage in the things which are referred to in Parshas Vayeshev, *aliyah six, possuk chof* (which says: “And they took him to the prison...”) and included in our brothers is also the ‘father of the orphans’ Reb Yaakov ben Yehudis M’Zuravitch, and this is sufficient for the one who understands.”²⁵

Reb Abba Levin related his memories from his time



THESE PHOTOS OF REB YANKEL WERE TAKEN DURING HIS TIME IN SOVIET PRISON.

in Kazakhstan with Reb Yaakov:

“I lived in Moscow and worked independently in the heart of the city near the K.G.B.’s office.

“For strange reasons which I will not enumerate here, I was accused of being a counter-revolutionist against the government. For committing this crime, one would be exiled to Siberia for ten years or more. At the same time, Reb Yaakov Zuravitcher and Reb Shlomo Matusof were also accused, with no connection between us three. With Hashem’s kindness, we were given an ‘easy’ sentence of three years in Kazakhstan, and Boruch Hashem they did not separate the three of us.

“We were taken to a far-off place in the south of Kazakhstan, far from any civilization, about thirty-five kilometers from Shymkent.

“The town where they brought us to had only non-Jewish families, and there were no Jews other than us three. Our personal situations were quite distressing. I had been married for just a year, with a newborn daughter; Reb Shlomo Matusof was seventeen years old, and Reb Yaakov’s health condition was fragile. Yet astonishingly, Reb Yaakov kept a smile on his face the entire time. He always had words of encouragement and hope to share. Truthfully, throughout his time with us, he uplifted our spirits with his words, stories, and just with his presence.

IN THE MERIT OF CARING

During a Simchas Torah farbrengen in the year 5681 the Friediker Rebbe remarked:

“In Lubavitch there were students who weren’t dedicated [as much] to learning, but were dedicated to assisting other students with all of their needs, and eventually they excelled not only in *avodah* but also in understanding the revealed parts of Torah, and they served as teachers of the Jewish people, for example Reb Yaakov Maskalik from Zuravitch³³.”

“When Reb Yaakov Maskalik was still in the yeshiva of Lubavitch, he was already known for his generous heart, and would often be referred to as: “Der mame.”

He made our time there much more bearable.”²⁶

During his exile, Reb Yaakov not only uplifted his friends who were with him but also provided comfort and instilled hope in his relatives from afar. Reading the few letters he managed to send to them before he perished, we encounter the same unwavering optimism that defined him.

Presented here are excerpts from two such letters:

“Also when I sleep at night, I imagine as if am standing in front of the *baal hashmua* who is showing us smiling faces, and shining faces, and promises us that soon we will merit to be in the place about which it is written ‘the life of *neshamos*, the atmosphere of your land.’

“Life teaches the person, and a person learns by extracting a lesson from everything that he witnesses in the world. From everything that was created, there is a lesson to learn from. The nature of a deer is to turn his head back while he runs, surveying the lengthy trail he has covered in his desperate escape. This is because he is extremely tired from all of the running, escaping his predator, while ahead he sees tall mountains and deciduous forests which he still has yet to cross through. Therefore

Hashem gave him the nature to turn his head back. Seeing how many tall mountains he has already passed gives him the strength and courage to continue running to safety, where he can rest from his difficulties and tiredness...”²⁷


Unfortunately, Reb Yaakov did not finish the three years in Kazakhstan.

Reb Abba Levin recounts when Reb Yaakov was taken away, and almost certainly executed:

“More than two years after we were taken to Kazakhstan, the ‘angels of destruction’ came on a Shabbos morning and took Reb Yaakov from us.

“We knew that we could not ask any questions. After a few days, I saw how he was taken in an open vehicle to Shymkent. This was the last time that I saw Reb Yaakov.

“A few days later, a non-Jew told us that she has an acquaintance who works in the K.G.B. in Shymkent, and he told her that Reb Yaakov was shot to death. At first, we did not want to believe it, but after a few days and years went by and we had not heard from him, we started to believe that the story this lady told us might be true.

ד”ה.”²⁸ 

1. Otzar Hachassidim - USSR & Poland (Ashkenazi) p. 253.

2. Bitoon Chabad 1-10 p. 320.

3. Bitoon Chabad 1-10 p. 320.

4. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 160.

5. Zikaron L’Bnei Yisroel p. 30.

6. Zikaron L’Bnei Yisroel p. 30.

7. Beis Chayeinu #115 (5-12 Kislev 5752) p. 41.

8. Kfar Chabad issue 602.

9. Otzar Hachassidim p. 253.

10. Toldos Chabad B’Rusia HaSovietis p. 154.

11. Otzar Hachassidim p. 253.

12. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 160.

13. Bitoon Chabad 1-10 p. 321.

14. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 161.

15. Toldos Chabad B’Rusia HaSovietis p. 154.

16. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 161.

17. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 161.

18. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 162.

19. Teshurah Chein-Greenberg p. 19.

20. Otzar Hachassidim p. 256.

21. Otzar Hachassidim p. 254.

22. Kfar Chabad issue 602.

23. Otzar Hachassidim p. 265.

24. Anoshim Chassidim Hoyu p. 111.

25. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 163.

26. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 164.

27. Beis Chayeinu issue 115 p. 44 (Kislev 5752).

28. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 164

29. Kfar Chabad issue 603.

30. Otzar Hachassidim p. 265.

31. Toras Menachem vol. 2. p. 325.

32. B’ohr Hachassidus - year 3 p. 163.

33. Sefer Hasichos 5681 p. 10.

לעילוי נשמת
הת' השליח ברוך ניסן ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א הרה"ת ר' טוביה שליט"א
נלב"ע ה' תמוז ה'תשנ"א
ת"נצ"ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' טוביה וזוגתו
מרת ח' ליבא ומשפחתם שיחיו
טעלדאן

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

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

TRAVEL SAFETY THE REBBE'S HORA'OS FOR SAFE JOURNEYS

Compiled By: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Written By: RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

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much of the source material for this article.

PREPARING TO SET OUT

In 5733, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Leibel Kaplan that when getting ready to go on a journey, one should pack the *Tallis* and *Tefillin* first, even if they will be removed for davening as necessary.¹

At the *farbrengen* on Yud-Beis Tammuz, 5725, the Rebbe said regarding someone who was going to travel during the Three Weeks (*Bein Hametzarim*) that the preparations should be before the Three Weeks—to pack a suitcase or even some handkerchiefs before the Three Weeks.²

Similarly, at the *farbrengen* on Yud Beis Tammuz, 5740, Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Goldwicht, the Rosh Yeshiva of Kerem B'Yavneh, told the Rebbe that he noticed that his ticket back to Eretz Yisroel is set for Shiv'ah Asar B'Tammuz, and asked if he should change it. The Rebbe responded that he should pack his suitcases a day earlier; thus it's considered that he began his journey beforehand. When he asked again if making an earlier ticket would be better, the Rebbe shrugged and said, "As you wish."³ The Rebbe gave this *hora'ah* other times as well.⁴

The Rebbe quoted the Frierdiker Rebbe a number of times that it is customary not to say goodbye twice.⁵

From a *yechidus* with a family in 5741:

"It is customary among us that when we meet a *Yid* who is departing on a journey, we give him *'shlichus mitzvah'* to be given at the place to which he is traveling so that he have a successful journey."⁶

Similar words were told to many people in *yechidus* over the years.

TEFILLAS HADERECH

"Among the practices of my revered father, the Rebbe [Rashab]: When traveling from home, he would recite *Tefillas Haderech* every day after *davening* — albeit without *Sheim umalchus* [i.e. mentioning Hashem's name at the end of the *bracha*] — even though he might remain in a single place for several months."⁷

When the Rebbe traveled to visit Camp Gan Yisroel in Swan Lake, NY, in 5717 and 5720, the Rebbe's car stopped for *Tefillas Haderech*. The Rebbe exited the car, washed his hands, and said *Tefillas Haderech* from the Siddur, standing [and facing east]. Only then did they continue traveling.⁸

ROAD TRIPPING AT NIGHT? SWITCH DRIVERS EVERY HOUR

Rabbi Chaim Ciment and his wife Esther were once in a *yechidus* that went on until late in the night. As the *yechidus* was concluding, Rabbi Ciment mentioned that they would now be driving back home to Boston. The Rebbe replied, "Certainly, you will switch drivers every hour," and blessed them with a good trip.⁹



THE REBBE ARRIVES AT CAMP GAN YISROEL, 5717.

During the summer of 5731, there were a number of car accidents and disturbing incidents, some of which involved *bochurim* not driving safely. Rabbi Zalman Posner was deeply bothered by this (he had undergone a major accident of his own in 5718), and he wrote to the Rebbe, expressing his concern about the prevalent driving behaviors. In the Rebbe's response, the Rebbe validated his concerns and gave a general instruction that, if possible, inter-city driving should not be done at night; if it's necessary to drive at night, drivers should be switched every hour; if that is not possible, a stop should be made every hour.¹⁰

There are multiple accounts from various sources that have similar descriptions (see sidebar).

CHITAS AND A PUSHKA

In a letter dated 23 Menachem Av, 5716, the Rebbe wrote to someone who had been through an accident:

“It would be appropriate that in the future, you should have in your car a Siddur, a Tehillim, and also a Tanya, and it would be best if you also had booklets about Yiddishkeit printed in the local language. While traveling, you should seek an opportunity to gratify the people you meet by sharing with them the contents of these booklets, or even the booklets themselves, by way of which they will have an addition in matters of *Yiddishkeit*. And when you are going to stop your journey to rest, you should say a *kapitel Tehillim* or learn a few

lines from the above-mentioned *seforim*. Through all of this, your trips will become a *shlichus of mitzvah*—and the Torah tells us that a *shliach mitzvah* is protected on the way [both] to and from [their destination].”¹¹

In a letter dated 5735, the Rebbe wrote to an individual that it is worthwhile that he should have in his car (in the appropriate place), a Siddur, Tehillim, Tanya, and also a Tzedakah *pushka*. The Rebbe concluded, “It is worthwhile to publicize this.”¹²

To an individual who had entered *yechidus* after having gone through an accident that day, and had mentioned to the Rebbe that he had a Chitas in the car, the Rebbe instructed that he should learn a few lines of Tanya in the car daily before traveling.¹³

A *shliach* from the United States brought his family to visit the Rebbe for Yud Shevat, 5750. On 16 Shevat, the *shliach* and his family set out to return home after receiving dollars. Before the family set out, the Rebbe's car passed by their car (on the way to the *mikvah*), in front of 770. The Rebbe gazed at the car and the family quite intensely for some time.

Several hours later, the *shliach* and his family were in a terrible accident when a truck collided with their car. Miraculously, every member of the family was unharmed. The *shliach* notified *mazkirus* about what happened and added that they had a Chitas and a Tzedakah *pushka* in the car. The Rebbe underlined the words “Chitas and Tzedakah *pushka*”

INTER-CITY DRIVING

Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Lipszyc relates:

In my first year of *shlichus*, I was living in Michigan, and I traveled by car to NY to be by the Rebbe for Yud Beis Tammuz, 5731.

When I was to return to Michigan, a newly Torah-observant student asked if he could join me on the drive. I agreed. Then close friends of ours, Rabbi and Mrs. Shmerel Katzen, who were *shluchim* in Pittsburgh, PA at the time, asked if I could make a detour and drop them off in Pittsburgh as well. I agreed to take all of them.

As we were nearing Pittsburgh, on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, a double tractor-trailer truck passed us at high speed, and the back trailer swayed into our lane and knocked our car right off the road. Our car rolled over and over and was totally demolished. *Baruch Hashem*, although we all had to go to the hospital to get checked out, the Katzens were only slightly hurt, but were treated and released, I almost wasn't hurt at all, and Friedlander, the student, stayed over in the hospital for the weekend.

I had immediately called the Rebbe's office to inform the Rebbe what had happened, and it seems that the Rebbe told the secretariat to call Rabbi Sholom Posner to meet us at the hospital and help with whatever we needed. Rabbi Posner and Rabbi Kehos Weiss came to the hospital, and by that time, the Katzens and I had been released, so they offered us to stay with them for Shabbos. When we got to Rabbi Posner's house, Rabbi Posner called the Rebbe's office and informed the Rebbe that we were fine.

After Shabbos the Rebbe gave out a directive to the entire community that we should cease driving inter-city at night. We then found out that what brought the directive about was that on that same night as our accident there were two other serious accidents as well. One was a vanload of campers from Gan Yisroel of Montreal who were in a serious accident, and the other was a car of Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel who were also in a very serious accident. Three major accidents in one night!

This directive made for a major issue for Rabbi Meir Roness and his Tanya project. Once a week, Reb Meir would send out several cars of *bochurim* to different towns and *yeshivos* to give *shiurim* in Tanya. In the summertime, Rabbi Roness would arrange dozens of cars throughout the week to go up to the various summer camps in the Catskills. The three accidents that brought on the Rebbe's directive happened at the beginning of the summer. Reb Meir's successful project could only continue with nighttime inter-city driving. Thus Rabbi Roness wrote to the Rebbe, explaining the problem and asking for directions on how to proceed.

The Rebbe then modified the directive and added that if it was absolutely necessary to drive long distances at night, there should either be two drivers who switched every hour, or if there was just one driver, he should stop every hour for a 5-10 minute stretch. This became the operative rule in Chabad for nighttime long distance driving. (Bus companies were not under this ban.)²⁰



KEHOT

in the secretary's letter and wrote:

“And he emerged whole. I will mention it at the Ohel.”¹⁴

A woman asked the Rebbe (at dollars) for a *bracha* not to have more accidents, and the Rebbe responded:

“You probably know, about the cars, that it is advisable to have in every car a few holy *seforim*, and also a charity box. From now on, you [should] do so, and [may] G-d A-lmighty bless you to have no need of *brachos* about such things.”¹⁵

TEHILLIM, TANYA AND TALLIS KOTON ON THE PLANE

The *mazkir* Rabbi Binyomin Klein once wrote to the Rebbe on behalf of a member of *Anash* that frequently had to travel by airplane, and was afraid of flying. He asked for the Rebbe's advice and *brachos*. The Rebbe replied:

“A Tehillim and Tanya (whose letters are the same as איתן [- strong, enduring]) should be with him, and of course, a kosher *tallis koton*.”¹⁶

NEVER TRAVEL IN A SINGLE-ENGINE AIRPLANE

Rabbi Lipa Brennan related this story to a member of the Derher editorial team. It took place in the summer of 5736, when he and Rabbi Nechemya Kessler traveled to Alaska on Merkos Shlichus.

“When we arrived in Alaska, we heard about the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, which was then under construction and would allow oil to be transported south from Prudhoe Bay in Northern Alaska. There were camps every 20 miles or so for the workers who were building the pipeline. Many of the workers were students from the West Coast who had come for a summer job. The only way to get to parts of the pipeline was by air—a small plane or helicopter.

“We wanted to visit these workers—some of whom were Jewish—but we knew that the Rebbe had reservations about traveling by plane in some cases. We asked Rabbi Hodakov, and he told us that, on the one hand, we needed to try and reach as many Yidden as we could, but on the other hand flying on a single-engine plane was not allowed. As a result, we couldn't get to the more remote parts of the pipeline. We did, however, reach a number of Jewish workers in the camps closer to cities, and were able to put tefillin on with them.”¹⁷

KIDDUSH LEVANA IS GOOD BEFORE A JOURNEY

Reb Zalmon Jaffe writes:

“I had just heard that the Rebbe would be coming outside within a few minutes to be Mekadesh the Levono (the new moon). This decision was so unexpected that there were just about twelve of us to make up the Minyan, instead of the many hundreds who are normally present. The Rebbe walked sprightly towards us, a real mischievous smile on his face, as if to say - ‘What? Are you still here?’ He came up to me and said that Kiddush Levono was good before a journey. After the short service at which we exchanged the customary Sholom Aleichem and Aleichem Sholom greetings, the Rebbe repeated, ‘Kiddush Levono is good before a journey.’”¹⁸

WOMEN AND TAXIS

“Caution should be taken when Jewish women and girls travel in a taxi or a car when the driver is a male (where it is possible for there to be an issue of *yichud* etc.) ... Especially considering that in our time (especially in a big city like New York and the like), it is possible for a woman to find (or order) a taxi with a female driver. In such a case, the various laws and details about this should be clarified with a practicing *rov*.”¹⁹ **T**

1. Kiryas Chabad Tzfas p. 19.

2. Sichos Kodesh 5725 vol. 2 p. 230.

3. jemtv.page.link/tr1d.

4. See Heichal Menachem vol. 2 p. 214.

5. Toras Menachem vol. 38 p. 338. Heichal Menachem vol. 3 p. 66.

6. Kfar Chabad issue 15 p. 4.

7. Hayom Yom 19 Tammuz.

8. Bin'os Deshe p. 47, 84. In brackets is from 5717.

9. Kfar Chabad issue 657 p. 18.

10. As told to Derher by Rabbi Yisrael and

Vivi Deren, son-in-law and daughter of Rabbi Posner.

11. Igros Kodesh vol. 13 p. 394.

12. Likkutei Sichos vol. 23 p. 402. Igros Kodesh vol. 30 p. 89.

13. Kfar Chabad issue 635 p. 32.

14. Yoman Fax-a-Sicha 5750 #37.

15. jemtv.page.link/puyP.

16. Kfar Chabad issue 723 p. 13. Shulchan Menachem vol. 1 p. 358.

17. “We Will Think of You,” Derher Teves 5781.

18. My Encounter With the Rebbe, 6th

installment (Shavous 5734) p. 17 (can be found at zalmonjaffeencounters.com). This encounter took place Monday night, 13 Sivan, 5734. In his yoman, Reb Yitzchok Meir Sosover records the Rebbe's words as follows: “It says in seforim that it's a segulah to say Kiddush Levana before a journey.” The Rebbe then wished him, “May you have a good journey.” (Teshura Feldman-Sosover 5766 p. 32.)

19. Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol. 1 p. 87 fn. 116 and margin-note.

20. Rabbi Lipszyc's Story of the Week #52 with some additional details he related to Derher staff.

Language of the Soul

The Rebbe's Maamarim

Approaching Gimmel Tammuz, we present the following in-depth look at the Rebbe's maamarim. The first installment of this series appeared in our Nissan issue, covering the history of the Rebbe's maamarim and their publication. With the preparation of this article, we were greatly assisted by Rabbi Sholom Charitonov, Rabbi Yosef Gourarie, Rabbi Osher Farkash, and Rabbi Moshele Gourarie, וזכות הרבים תלוי בהם.

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg





לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
ולזכות הילדה שייגדל תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ג תמוז
נתרם ע"י ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא
שיחיו
שוחאט

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 308453 (13 TISHREI 5736)

What Ahavah? What Yir'ah?

It was an ordinary Shabbos Mevorchim, several weeks after Yud Shevat 5712. The visiting crowds had long gone, and the farbrengen was held in its regular, smaller format.

A special guest was present. Reb Moshe Gourarie was a famed *maskil* from Tel Aviv, and was one of the heads of Agudas Chassidei Chabad of Eretz Yisroel. It was his first visit since *Kabolas HaNesius* a year earlier. He was joined by Reb Efraim Wolff, *menahel* of Tomchei Temimim of Lod, as well as Reb Moshe Ashkenazi.¹

Twelve months had passed since the Rebbe had formally assumed the *Nesius*, but vestiges remained of the Rebbe's previous refusal. In Cheshvan that year, the Rebbe had told Reb Shmuel Zalmanov that he would not assume the *Nesius* over Chabad institutions in Eretz Yisroel until a full year had elapsed, on Yud Shevat 5712.²

Of course, the Rebbe responded to letters from Eretz Yisroel with *brachos* and advice, but throughout that initial

year, he refrained from sending specific directives to the institutions. The Rebbe was to revolutionize the landscape of *hafotzas hamaayanos* in the Holy Land, but that all began after Yud Shevat.

The farbrengen began with a maamar.

It was a very *avoda'diker* maamar, beginning with the words *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*.³ Drawing on a maamar of the Mittlerer Rebbe in Toras Chaim, the Rebbe spoke about the necessity of *hisbonenus*, how it was critical to ensure that it birthed true *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah*, and how this *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah* needed to be protected and preserved. These are topics discussed throughout Toras HaChassidus, from the Alter Rebbe until the present day. But then the Rebbe pivoted with a question.

How does one avoid complacency? With such high levels of *avodah*, how does one ensure that he continues to grow?

To answer the question, the Rebbe invoked the saintly leader of our people, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai. Before his passing, he shocked his talmidim by saying, "איני יודע, באיזה דרך מוליכין אותי, I don't know down which path I am going to be led."⁴

Was he really unsure whether he was worthy of Gan Eden? Did he really suspect that his life might have not been lived correctly?

As he answered the question, the Rebbe grew emotional.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai was so devoted to his shlichus at every moment that he never had the opportunity to



THE REBBE DELIVERS A MAAMAR, 19 KISLEV 5714.



"CHAZARA" OF THE REBBE'S MAAMAR WITH REB YOEL KAHAN.

LEIFREIDMAN/JEWJEW999 (GETTY IMAGES)

pause and evaluate his *avodah*—let alone be satisfied with it. A true *Oved Hashem* understands that the moment he pauses his *shlichus*, he is—at that moment—not serving the *Melechi Malchei Hamelachim*.

The Rebbe began to sob. Leaning his holy head on his right hand, he paused, unable to continue for several moments.

Such a person can never be satisfied. “When such a person is asked if he is satisfied with his *avodah*, he cries out bitterly: “וואס מיר רצון? וואס מיר תענוג? וואס מיר אהבה? וואס מיר יראה?”

What Ratzon? What Taanug? What Ahavah? What Yir'ah? How can I think about *madreigos* when I need to stand at the ready for my *shlichus* in every moment?”

In a powerful letter to Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Moshe Gourarie described the scene.

“The Rebbe’s cries could move even a heart of stone... Tears streamed down onto the table... I never understood the meaning of a *hazazas hanefesh* (deep shuddering of the soul) until that moment... Truth be told, the Rebbe’s cries were so intense and so deeply personal—we were so overwhelmed and moved that I don’t remember his exact wording. But the *kavanah* is absolutely clear to me—that every moment, hour, and day is precious.”⁵

A New Language

In previous generations, a *sicha* from a Rebbe was a rare event. The Frierdiker Rebbe *farbrenge*d with some regularity, but the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbe Maharash did so only

three or four times a year, and the Tzemach Tzedek and his predecessors perhaps even less. The primary medium with which the Rebbe communicated his Torah was the *maamar*.

With the Rebbe’s *Nesius*, this changed drastically. The Rebbe blessed us with an incredible wealth of *sichos*. At every *farbrengen*, *sicha* after *sicha* poured forth, the *chozrim* and *manichim* scrambling to keep up.

What, therefore, is unique about the *maamarim*? As a *chossid* who wants to learn the Rebbe’s Torah, why can’t I suffice with the study of *sichos*?

“I often learn Chassidus with individuals who are well versed in *Sifrei Machshavah*,” says Rabbi Osher Farkash, *mashpia* of Yeshivas Lubavitch in Buenos Aires, “and there is one noticeable reaction that I get time and again. While many *seforim* delve into the world of *Mussar* and *Machshavah*, Chassidus is unique. Chassidus gives a window into *Elokus*. One fellow told me, ‘I learned Kabbalah and I learned *Mussar*, but *Elokus*...that I found only in Chassidus.’

“It’s true that learning *sichos* can be far easier than *maamarim*. The subject material in *sichos* is generally familiar and easy to understand. *Maamarim*, on the other hand, employ a distinctive terminology. Chassidus Chabad is a unique universe introduced by the Alter Rebbe—based on *Zohar*, the Kabbalah of the Arizal, and so on—which delves into the esoteric worlds of *Seder Hishtalshelus*. Engaging with that world necessitates serious background knowledge and an understanding of the core concepts.

“However, to learn *sichos* alone would be a fundamental misunderstanding of the Rebbe’s role.

“The Rebbe is *nossi* of Chassidus Chabad. The goal of



PURIM 5721

Chassidus is—as the Rebbe explained—to bring Moshiach, through fulfilling the dictum received by the Baal Shem Tov from Moshiach, to bring the *maayanos* of *prinius hatorah* to the ultimate *chutzah*. Chassidus is the medium of that flow.

“We often focus on the ‘*chutzah*’ of space, i.e., bringing *Elokus* to the farthest corners of the world, but in our own internal selves, the *mind* is the place farthest from *Elokus*. Our minds are cold and cynical and Toras HaChassidus gives us the tools to transform that space into a warm home for *Elokus*. That is, itself, a primary goal of *hafotzas hamaayanos*.”

“What the Alter Rebbe gave us was a *neshama* language. The essential connection between our *neshamah* and the Aibershter is something that transcends logic and understanding, and yet the Alter Rebbe gave us the terminology with which we can engage with it.

“Learning the Rebbe’s *sichos*, therefore, cannot replace learning the Rebbe’s *maamarim*.”

“Likkutei Sichos does include explanations of Chassidus. In fact, certain concepts of Chassidus are illuminated primarily through explanations in Likkutei Sichos. However, that is not its primary focus. Likkutei Sichos is primarily in the realm of *nigleh*; Chassidus is always included, because—as the Rebbe often pointed out—one cannot properly understand *nigleh* without understanding the corresponding ideas in *prinius haTorah*. Likkutei Sichos is a world in which *nigleh* is *illuminated* by Chassidus—it is not Chassidus itself.

“Chassidus explains the difference between *oros* and *keilim*, the ‘light’ or ‘energy’ contained in any given matter,

and the ‘vessel’ or ‘medium’ which gives structure to the *ohr* and helps it be expressed further. I think this is a good *mashal*. In Likkutei Sichos, the *ohr*, the Rebbe’s ideas of *prinius haTorah* are en clothed in a *keili*; they are dressed and covered in a concept of *Nigleh*. But the pure light of Chassidus is found in the *maamarim*.”

What’s Going On In Lubavitch

When the Rebbe issued the call that every Jew should put on tefillin, new scenes began to unfold throughout the world: Lubavitchers with their personal 4x4 *battim*, putting tefillin on secular-looking Jews, who often knew next-to-nothing about Tefillin, or Yiddishkeit altogether.

Many prominent rabbanim publicized their support for the *mitvza*, but many others did not. Often, they were simply baffled. It was a strange idea—*bochurim* and Torah learners, who could otherwise be occupied with their own *avodas Hashem*, go out to do a single mitzvah with an uneducated Jew, who might immediately proceed to eat a *treife* sandwich in the next kiosk. What could possibly be the point?

Among Chassidim too, the Rebbe’s approach to *hafotzas hamaayanos* was new. All the Rabbeim were involved in strengthening Yiddishkeit in their generations, but the

sense that it was the personal obligation of every chossid, and an overriding concern that could divert time from one's personal *avodas Hashem*, became far more accentuated in recent generations.

But for Chassidim, it wasn't baffling.

With access to '*neshamah*' language, a chossid has a different appreciation for the power of a mitzvah and the preciousness of a *neshamah*. With an understanding of Chassidus, one immediately realizes the value of the Rebbe's approach. Although novel and revolutionary, it was also here all along. The window to this awareness lies in the Rebbe's maamarim.

The Rebbe's *chozer* Reb Yoel Kahan loved to repeat how a *bochur* once told him, "I learn the Rebbe Rashab's maamarim for *haskalah*, the Frierdiker Rebbe's maamarim for *avodah*, and the Rebbe's maamarim for *hiskashrus*."

There were many amusing aspects to this statement, but Reb Yoel would often make the point that a chossid's objective is not just to *do* what the Rebbe says, but to *think* like the Rebbe *thinks*. If the Rebbe's maamar isn't for *haskalah* or *avodah*, what exactly does one's *hiskashrus* consist of? The maamarim of each generation give a chossid the ability to adopt and internalize the *avodah* he is supposed to carry out; to be a chossid of the Rebbe means to live with the Rebbe's maamarim.

The Singular Focus

When Reb Meilach Zweibel *a"h* arrived in New York to learn at 770, he was already well-versed in Chassidus, having spent several years learning from the famed Mashpia, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman in Lod. But listening to the Rebbe's maamarim, he was surprised to hear a recurring focus on a theme he hadn't heard before: *Atzmus*.⁶

The world of Chassidus Chabad expanded continuously over its seven generations, each Rebbe elucidating different aspects in greater detail or focus. In the Rebbe's maamarim, one such aspect is the focus on the core of the universe, of Torah, and of a Jew: the essence of Hashem, *Atzmus*.

In one's journey of *avodas Hashem*, one can strive for a long list of spiritual *madreigos*; a person might contemplate the greatness of Hashem and cultivate a desire to cleave to Him; a higher level is where he uncovers the latent *Ahavah Hashem* hidden within which will draw him to Torah and Mitzvos on a deeper level. One could strive for the *bittul* of the *Eved Ne'eman* or the *Eved Poshut*. But in the Rebbe's maamarim, as in the maamar described above, *Lo Sihiyeh*

Mishakeilah, there is often a desire to transcend *all* of these *madreigos*.

In *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*, the Rebbe doesn't specifically spell out the underlying meaning of that approach, but in another maamar, the Rebbe points out that all the 'rungs' of *avodas Hashem* are actually preparations for the true moment of connection—the mitzvah itself. *Ahavah* and *yir'ah*, or *kabolas ol* and *bitul*, are ways in which we prepare ourselves to be worthy of reaching the ultimate connection. The connection *itself*, however, is when a mortal in this lowly world has the opportunity to fulfill the sublime desire of the Most High by fulfilling a physical mitzvah in a physical way.⁷

This could sound revolutionary to the ears of someone who never learned Chassidus. If one's goal is to be a *frumme* Yid who serves Hashem, Torah and mitzvos are meaningful because they are the means which make that possible. If a person will observe one single mitzvah without adopting a fully *frum* lifestyle, what would be the point? Following the Rebbe's approach, a mitzvah is not a means to an end; it is, inherently, the purpose itself. In simple terms, some might see the ultimate goal as "being a *frumme* Yid," with Torah and mitzvos making that possible. A chossid will say the opposite: the ultimate goal is for Torah and mitzvos to be observed, and "being a *frumme* Yid" makes that possible, giving the opportunity to do ever more Torah and mitzvos.

This is expressed not only in the Rebbe's general approach to *hafotzas hamaayanos*, but also as an approach to *avodah pnimis*—working on oneself. In the maamar *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*, the Rebbe described a person who is so consumed by devotion to his shlichus, that it encompasses his entire personality. "*Vos mir Ahavah, vos mir Yir'ah*" — not because *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah* are unworthy goals, of course, but because his *avodah* consumes him to the extent that he has no time to evaluate whether or not he has achieved them.

"This reflects a theme in *avodah* which recurs throughout the Rebbe's Torah," says Rabbi Yosef Gourarie of Yeshivas Lubavitch in Detroit, "from the very beginning of the *Nesius* until the final maamar of *V'atah Tetzaveh*. It's not an approach that ignores one's *pnimius* and negates the importance of *avodah*. Rather, the Rebbe approaches the same goal from an opposite direction. The *avodah* begins by revealing one's *etzem* (the innermost point of the *neshamah*)—and that revelation is what permeates one's *kochos hagluyim* (everyday faculties) and inhabits his entire being.

"In previous generations, the general focus was on *avodah pnimis*—learning Chassidus, internalizing *Elokus*, leading to *ahavah* and *yir'ah*. Separately, there were moments of *mesiras nefesh*—such as under Communism—when one's *etzem hane-shamah* was revealed. But the Rebbe's perspective combined the two.

"One interesting example is the Rebbe's approach to



LEV FREIDIN VIA JEM 125456 (11/15/2011 5744)

davening. Chassidus explains that davening is a ladder; it begins with *hoda'ah* and *Pesukei Dezimra*, goes a level higher in *Birchos Krias Shema*, and reaches a pinnacle in the moments of *Shmoneh Esreh*.

“The Rebbe, however, focused on a moment which comes before all of those levels—saying *Modeh Ani*.⁸ This simple declaration is a moment of true connection for the *neshamah*, and that *giluy* can be channeled into the rest of our davening, elevating the entire *tefilah* from the outset. The Rebbe once explained that the most important moment of davening, in a certain sense, is the *'shteln-zich'* — when a person dons his *gartel*, leaves all his material concerns behind, and positions himself for davening. That’s a moment of *giluy etzem haneshama*.⁹

“In the terminology of Chassidus, the Rebbe constantly focuses on the fact that an *Atzmus*-connection is achieved specifically in the lowest spiritual levels. An oft-repeated phrase is *'kol hagavoah gavoah biyoser, yored limatah matah yoser'* (the higher something is in its spiritual source, the lower it will descend when reaching down here in this world) and *'na'utz techilasan bisofan'* (the beginning/highest levels manifest in the end/lowest).

“This is a concept that reappears throughout the Rebbe’s *sichos* and *maamarim*, with greater frequency in the

later years. *Vatah Tetzaveh* makes this exact point. As the Rebbe explains there, previous generations achieved high levels of *mesiras nefesh*, but there was one thing they lacked: it didn’t permeate their *kochos hanefesh*, their regular day-to-day selves. Reaching this goal is the highest expression of *giluy Elokus*.”

In the Heavenly Realms

“When speaking of the *maamarim* versus the *sichos*,” says Rabbi Gourarie, “there is definitely an element of mystery. The world of *maamarim* is something that can’t quite be defined in a purely logical sense.

“Much of the Rebbe’s teachings in Chassidus were actually delivered in *sichos*; in fact, the Rebbe’s *sichos* on Chassidus—topics in *Likkutei Sichos* are often far more spelled out and down-to-earth. The ideas which might be regarded as the fundamental concepts of *dor hashvi'i* are often more accessible in the *sichos*, while the *maamarim* are more esoteric.

“If *maamarim* are simply the exposition of the ideas of

Chassidus, we would be hard-pressed to explain why the Rebbe chose to sometimes deliver them through maamarim, and sometimes through sichos.

“However, it would be a mistake to learn a maamar purely as an intellectual exercise. Reb Hillel Paricher once famously argued with the Tzemach Tzedek over the meaning of his own maamar, because—he explained—the maamar is a moment when *Shechinah midaberes mitoch grono*, it’s a revelation of *Elokus*; afterward, Reb Hillel maintained, he was learning his own *pshat*.

“The Rebbe once pointed out that the Frierdiker Rebbe would say a maamar about Amalek every Parshas Zachor, despite the fact that he didn’t necessarily offer a new insight into the matter—because destroying Amalek is a critical point of every person’s *avodah*, so it needed to be emphasized repeatedly. A maamar is not just the Rebbe explaining something—it is a moment of *giluy Elokus* which is directed at that specific time and place.¹⁰

“The difference between a sicha and a maamar seems analogous to the difference between the Bavli and Yerushalmi. We primarily follow the Bavli because of how thorough each *sugya* is; the Yerushalmi does not include nearly as much discussion. However, the Rebbe would often point out that this very factor also indicates that the Yerushalmi exists on a higher spiritual level; the Bavli includes far more arguments because it was written in the darkness of golus, *‘bimachashakim hoshivani.’* (‘He made me dwell in darkness’ — which refers to Talmud Bavli). Similarly, the Rebbe’s perspective in Likkutei Sichos is spelled out far more clearly, but the maamar is where it is expressed in a more *ruchniusdiker* way.”

In the Rebbe’s presence, a maamar was a *ruchniusdiker* moment.

“I vividly recall my anticipation to hearing my very first maamar,” says Rabbi Farkash. “It was 5742. I was ten years old, and my father had brought me for Tishrei for the very first time.

“For a long time, I had learned about those special moments, when the Chassidim sing a solemn niggun, everyone rises to their feet, and the Rebbe says the maamar in a special tune. It was impressed upon me that *shechinah midaberes mitoch grono*, the maamar is a new revelation of *Elokus*; the Rebbe would even wrap his hand in a handkerchief to bind himself to *Olam Hazeh* during those moments.

“Naturally, I paid close attention. I was far too young to understand the Rebbe’s words, but the entire setting made a very deep impression on me. I made sure to know every *dibbur hamaschil*. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, it was *Zeh Hayom Techilas Maasecha*. On Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe said *Bayom Hahu Yitaka*, and on Shabbos Shuvah,

THE NIGGUN AND THE DIBBUR HAMASCHIL

The Rebbe once noted that he was bothered by the fact that the Rabbeim would begin the maamar without any preface, despite the Gemara’s teaching—cited in Tanya—that Rabbah would always begin on a lighter note with a *milsa dibedichusa* (a humorous anecdote) before teaching Torah.

The answer, the Rebbe said, lies in the niggun. The singing of a niggun can take many forms, but when it is sung in a manner that elevates one’s emotional state and inspires a *pesichas hamochin* (opening the mind), it serves the function of the *milsa dibedichusa*.¹¹

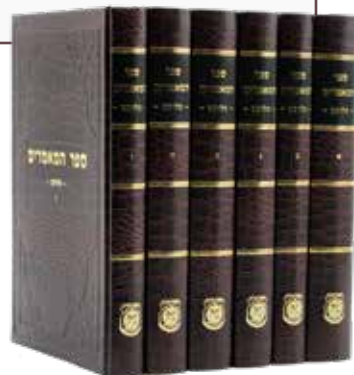
On a different occasion, the Rebbe recounted—in the name of the Frierdiker Rebbe—that the Mittlerer Rebbe was once asked why every maamar starts with a *dibbur hamaschil*, instead of simply proceeding to explain the idea in Chassidus, which is the focus of the maamar (such as *‘lehavin inyan...’*). He responded that the *possuk* is the maamar’s ‘passport’.

The Rebbe commented that the Frierdiker Rebbe did not explain further, and suggested his own explanation:

“Torah transcends time and space,” the Rebbe said. “That’s why one can learn the halachos of *korbanos* while in *chutz laaretz* (a place where a *korban* is forbidden to be brought) and at night-time (a time when a *korban* is not sacrificed), and yet it is ‘as if he brought a *korban*.’ So, in order to bring the maamar down into time and place, the maamar begins with something that is associated with the time and space.”¹²

ORIGINAL 6 VOLUME SET OF ‘MELUKAT’,
THE REBBE’S MUGADIKE MAAMORIM.

VOL. 1 CONTAINS THE MAAMORIM
EDITED BY THE REBBE BEFORE 5746.
VOL. 2, THE MAAMORIM OF 5747 - 5748.
VOL. 3 THE MAAMORIM OF 5749.
VOL. 4, THE MAAMORIM OF 5750.
VOL. 5, THE MAAMORIM OF 5751.
VOL. 6, THE MAAMORIM OF 5752.



* 5742-1982, 5746-1985/1986, 5747-1986/1987, 5748-1987/1988, 5749-1988/1989, 5750-1989/1990, 5751-1990/1991, 5752-1991/1992

a maamar *kein sicha*—*K'neshet Ya'ir Kino*.

“All the maamarim of that Tishrei are ingrained in my memory.”

Certain maamarim during the year carried extra symbolism. The Rebbe would conclude the moments of Rosh Hashanah with a maamar—often timed to coincide with *tzeis hakochavim*—in which every one of the Rabbeim was mentioned, channeling their presence into the new year. These mentions would also be present in the *Basi Lgani* maamarim every Yud Shevat. Another special moment in the early years was the ‘Maamar Matan Torah’ on Shavuot night, which the Rebbe would deliver in the wee hours of the morning, corresponding to the time of Matan Torah on Har Sinai.

There were also extraordinary occasions that remain engraved in Chassidim’s memories.

There was the time, on Purim 5713, when the Rebbe told a story, followed immediately by a maamar, that was later connected to the death of Stalin *ym”sh*. On the 150th Yom Hilula of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe held a special farbrengen and delivered a maamar timed specifically to the moment of the Alter Rebbe’s *histalkus*. There was a maamar (Mayim Rabim) connected to the Sinai campaign in 5717, and a maamar (Hallelu Es Hashem) during the very moments of an important United Nations resolution about Eretz Yisroel in 5731.

In such moments, there was a palpable feeling among Chassidim that the Rebbe was not just teaching Torah; with his holy words, he was rearranging matters in the heavenly spheres.

The ‘Voice’ In the Maamar

Maamarim, in general, follow a specific format, established by the Alter Rebbe. The maamar begins with a *dibbur hamas’chil*, which is followed by questions. The *dibbur hamas’chil* itself is usually one that was introduced by the Alter Rebbe. A new *dibbur hamas’chil* in later generations was a rare occurrence.

The commonality goes even deeper. In the maamarim of the Rabbeim, you will rarely find a citation attributed to a previous Rebbe; it is a given that the entire maamar is closely associated with the teachings of the previous Rabbeim, and follows their language and *tochen*.

The Mittlerer Rebbe’s maamarim, for example, draw on the maamarim of the Alter Rebbe and expand upon them, but no distinction is made between the *lashon* of the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe’s additions. The Rebbe Rashab’s

maamarim are often based on a maamar of the Mittlerer Rebbe, but his citations are likewise not clearly identified. The Frierdiker Rebbe’s maamarim frequently cite the Rebbe Rashab’s maamarim at length, but without clarifying what comes from the Rebbe Rashab and what is an added *biur*.

In a sense, the maamarim of all previous generations speak in one voice—that of the Alter Rebbe. The entire Chassidus Chabad is one organism, one unified *giluy ohr*, from the Alter Rebbe until the present generation.

In this aspect, however, the Rebbe’s maamarim are often different. The Rebbe draws on all the chassidus of previous generations but does not do so in their voice. Instead, the Rebbe cites them explicitly, telling you what is from the Alter Rebbe and what is from other Rabbeim, delving into their words and weaving them into an entirely new structure.

The Rebbe also instructed that Chassidim learn in a similar fashion; instead of focusing on one specific maamar and its unique *giluy Elokus*, the Rebbe asked that maamarim be compared to one another in a *pilpul*-like style, on an intellectual level, just as one would approach *nigleh*. Until our generation, this was almost unheard of.

Despite this unique characteristic, the Rebbe’s maamar is usually based on one specific maamar of the previous Rabbeim. These are usually noted in the footnotes of the published Sifrei Maamarim, and were often written by the Rebbe himself in the margins of *hanachos*.

Rabbi Sholom Charitonov, Mashpia in Oholei Torah, shared this fascinating anecdote about those maamarim:

“If you follow the Rebbe’s *sichos* and maamarim throughout the years, you could notice a pattern that seems to go through all of *Rabboseinu Nesieinu*.

“For the first fifteen years, from 5711 until 5724, the Rebbe’s maamarim are usually based on the Chassidus of the Rebbe Rashab. A significant amount is based on *Hemshech Ayin-Beis*, which was not available in print at the time. When the Frierdiker Rebbe had made his first visit to America, he entrusted the *kisvei yad* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe had made photocopies of them.¹³

“During those same years, the Rebbe would often dwell on a *sicha* of the Frierdiker Rebbe during the farbrengens.

“During the year 5725, there was a break of sorts, with a specific focus on Likkutei Torah, which was republished that year. The Rebbe gave a directive to learn the entire Chassidus Parsha every week, and at the weekly farbrengen, he would ask anyone who would finish it before *Havdalah* to say *l’chaim*. That year, it was common to see *bochurim* making *Havdalah* in the wee hours of the morning. Before the end of the year, the Rebbe also instructed that the section on Shir Hashirim be learned before Simchas Torah¹⁴. The maamarim of that year are primarily based on those *seforim*.

“The year 5726 marked one hundred years from the



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM125061 (19 KISLEV 5745)

beginning of the Rebbe Maharash’s *Nesius* [which began on 13 Nissan 5626], and for the next four years, until 5730, the Rebbe’s maamarim were closely aligned with the maamarim from those same dates 100 years earlier. This was also the period when the Rebbe began Rashi sichos, and perhaps there is a connection, as the Rebbe Maharash was known to have many Chassidim who were simple Jews, Chumash-Rashi Yidden.

“Beginning in 5731, the Rebbe began to focus on Ohr Hatorah of the Tzemach Tzedek. These were the same years the Rebbe began the sichos on his father’s Torah on Kabbalah; again, perhaps there is a connection because the Tzemach Tzedek’s maamarim similarly contain many citations from Kabbalah.

“From 5738 through 5748, the Rebbe focused on the Chasidus of the Alter Rebbe and Mittlerer Rebbe—that’s also when the Rebbe asked to print the *Mahadura Kama* of the Tanya.

“After the Rebbetzin’s *histalkus* on *Chof Beis Shevat*, the orderly style at farbrengens slowly changed and eventually the Rebbe ceased saying maamarim altogether. But, in a certain sense, I think one can compare those years to a ‘*Balshemskeh hanhaga*’ (wondrous conduct).

“The Rebbe had a special focus on the miracles of *Shnas*

Nissim and the years that followed, and the Rebbe spent long periods of time in dollars distributions and giving out *kuntreisim*. During special farbrengens, such as at the end of Yom Tov, the Rebbe no longer asked for the Alter Rebbe’s niggun to be sung—the last time was on Shabbos Erev 24 Teves 5749. Instead, the Rebbe asked to sing the niggunim of all the Rabbeim—beginning with the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid. Perhaps, in those years, the Rebbe was bringing things back to the Baal Shem Tov.”

Which Maamarim Should I Learn?

“An important distinction,” says Rabbi Farkash, “is the edited (*mugadike*) maamarim versus the non-edited maamarim.

“In the later years, when Reb Yoel prepared the maamarim

for the Rebbe to edit, the Rebbe wanted every maamar properly constructed and presented as a *davar shalem*, bringing in ideas from other maamarim and clarifying matters which were perhaps left unsaid during the maamar's delivery. The Rebbe also himself invested countless hours in adding, clarifying, and perfecting the ideas.

“As a result, the *mugadike* maamarim are far more structured. The *hanachah* of a regular maamar is often lighter and easier to understand, especially for a beginner—they reflect the *ohr*, the *geshmak* and warmth of the Rebbe's delivery style. I often recommend to beginners to learn the non-*mugadike* maamarim from the beginning of the *Nesius*, 5711-12; each maamar is a fundamental concept in *avodas Hashem*, and they are not too complex or *kabbalah'dik* for beginners.

“For someone that is a bit more learned, I often recommend Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat 2 (in the series printed according to the years of their release). When one seeks to understand the *pshat* of the maamar on a deeper level, the *mugadike* maamarim are phenomenal in their clarity; every question is answered, every concept is elucidated. I would argue that if someone is well-versed in Melukat, he will have clarity in all the fundamental concepts of Toras Hachassidus.

“*Chelek Beis* is the first full volume of the *mugadike* maamarim as they were prepared by Reb Yoel in the later years [Volume 1 includes the regular maamarim which the Rebbe edited earlier, on special occasions throughout the years of the *Nesius*], and are in my experience, the most accessible volume of Melukat for beginners.

“In general, something unique about the Rebbe's maamarim is that he presents everything clearly and concisely.

“The world of Chassidus is endless. From the Alter Rebbe, every Rebbe expanded the horizons, leading to an endless expanse of ideas—the Mittlerer Rebbe in Toras Chaim, the Hemshechim of later generations, and on and on—yet, in a wondrous way, the Rebbe's maamarim elucidate these ideas and sum them up with incredible clarity.

“In previous generations, an idea in Chassidus could be elaborated in many maamarim, often without a real final resolution, but in our generation, we received the same ideas—with the full depth and profundity—in just a single maamar or two.

“There is another aspect of the Rebbe's maamarim—which is perhaps more technical—in that they are very structured. Every maamar has a theme, a start and a finish, questions and answers, and so on, making it much easier to ‘own’ and connect with a single maamar. There are almost no *hemshechim*.

“Reb Yoel once shared with us that on Motzei Rosh Hashanah 5725, he saw Reb Elye Simpson arriving from Boro Park—where he was the Rov of a Shul—for Kos Shel

Bracha. As he walked into 770, he was met by Reb Berel Rivkin, who was exiting the farbrengen. ‘You missed the maamar!’ Reb Berel exclaimed. ‘It's been fifty years since we've had such a maamar!’

“The maamar during the fabrengen was on the topic of *ohr* and *koach*. Reb Berel had learned together with Reb Elye in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, and they had both heard the Rebbe Rashab's *hemshechim* on this same topic. For an entire winter in תרע"ה, the Rebbe Rashab had delivered the *hemshech* (as part of *Hemshech Ayin-Beis*), yet, there were still elements that were left unclarified. But when the Rebbe had delivered the maamar, ‘in forty-five minutes the Rebbe clarified the entire matter.’



In the Maamar V'Atah Tetzaveh, the last maamar we were *zoche* to receive from the Rebbe to date, the Rebbe speaks about the role of Moshe Rabbeinu and the *Nesi'im* of later generations, and their role in revealing the inherent *emunah* within every Yid:

“The same is true of the Moshe in our generation, *der Rebbe der shver*. His role is to inspire and uncover the *emunah* in the *etzem haneshama* of every Jew—so that *afterward* they will perform their *avodah* with their own strength.”

We find ourselves in a moment of *afterward*, a moment of *golus*. However, as the Rebbe said after Yud Shevat, “*Der Rebbe hot altz bavorent*.” There is no doubt that by learning and internalizing (*derher'n*) the Rebbe's maamarim, we will be able to carry out the *avodah* ourselves. “And through this,” as the Rebbe concludes, “we will merit very soon to the *Geulah Ha'amitis V'Hashleima*.” **T**

1. See “I Have Planted A Cedar in Eretz Yisroel,” *Derher Cheshvan* 5784.

2. *Yimei Melech* vol. 3 pg. 1225.

3. *Toras Menachem* vol. 4 pg. 323.

4. *Brachos* 28b.

5. *Yimei Melech* vol. 3 pg. 1229.

6. As heard from family members.

7. *Margelah Bepumei* 5740.

8. *Kuntres Inyanah Shel Toras Hachassidus* ois 11.

9. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 2 pg. 349.

10. *Ki Sisa* 5742. *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 2 pg. 1003.

11. 11 Shevat 5724. *Toras Menachem* vol. 39 pg. 50

12. *Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos* 5721. *Toras Menachem* vol. 29 pg. 45.

13. It should be noted that in 5723, marking 150 years since the Alter Rebbe's histalkus, the Rebbe delivered several maamarim based on the Alter Rebbe as well.

14. For the complete story of the Rebbe's koch in learning the Chassidische Parsha, see “Living With the Times,” *Derher Adar II* 5784.



Check Your Mezuzos

As told by:
Rabbi Motti Drizin

By: Rabbi Mottel Slonim

My wife and I got married in the winter of 5751, and my wife soon became pregnant. In the eighth month of pregnancy, my wife went to the doctor for a checkup. After an examination, the doctor told my wife that there was no heart-beat heard from the infant.

The doctor said to come back one week later to check the baby again. Upon hearing this update, we wrote a letter to the Rebbe, asking for a *bracha* for our baby. The Rebbe answered that we should check the Tefillin and Mezuzos. I immediately sent my Tefillin and the Mezuzos of our house to the Sofer to be checked, waiting to hear back from him. Some time later, the Tefillin and Mezuzos were returned, and the Sofer said they were kosher.

The next week, we went back to the doctor and received devastating news: My wife had miscarried.

Not long after, my wife became pregnant again. Immediately we wrote a letter to the Rebbe, asking for a *bracha* that she give birth to a healthy child. Once again, the Rebbe answered that we should check the Tefillin and Mezuzos; yet again! We had them checked again, this time by a different Sofer. Soon after, the Sofer returned the Tefillin and Mezuzos, saying that they were all kosher. Unfortunately, one week later, my wife had another miscarriage, *rachmana litzlan*. At this point, we were confused and devastated.

At this time I was studying at the Kollel of the Rebbe's Mazkirus, so I sought the advice of the Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Yosef Heller. I explained the whole situation to him, including

the fact that we received an answer from the Rebbe about Tefillin and Mezuzos, but they all seemed kosher. Rabbi Heller asked me to bring a Mezuzah from the house for him to have a look at and I brought him the Mezuzah from my bedroom.

Rabbi Heller checked the Mezuzah, and said to me, "I can see that you paid a lot of money for these Mezuzos, however, whoever wrote these Mezuzos apparently doesn't know the difference between the Arizal's Ksav and the Alter Rebbe's. The Ksav of the Mezuzah is a mixture of both..." He also found that the two letters of "ב" in the word "לבבך" were connected. This seemed very strange, as we had already sent this Mezuzah to two Sofrim, yet he still found a mistake.

But we knew that if the Rebbe answered us two times to check the Mezuzos, there must have been something wrong. Rabbi Heller advised that we get new Mezuzos for the whole house, and that he check them afterward.

A while passed, and my wife had not yet gotten pregnant. About a year later, around Lag B'Omer 5753, a friend of mine advised me to write a letter to the Rebbe to ask for a *bracha* for children, as Lag B'Omer is an especially auspicious time for this request.

Indeed, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe. As this was already after the Rebbe had a stroke, the Rebbe would not give written or oral answers, so the Rebbe nodded with his holy head to the contents of my letter. During that exact month, my wife became pregnant with our first healthy child. **1**

LUMINARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

לע"נ
ר' מנחם נחום
בן הרב משה יצחק ע"ה
פראגער
גלב"ע כ"א תמוז ה'תשמ"א
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י
משפחתו שיחיו

Or Hachaim

The Or Hachaim Hakadosh, Rabbeinu Chaim Ben Atar, is most famously known for his Kabbalistically infused *pirush* on Chumash and the miraculous life he led. He was one of the Gedolei Yisroel at the time of the Baal Shem Tov, starting life in Morocco and later settling in Eretz Yisroel. The Or Hachaim “Hakadosh”, as he became known, had and continues to have an incredible impact both in the Sefardi community and in the world of Chassidus.

Morocco

Rebbi Chaim Ben Atar was born, in the year 5456 (1696), in the city of Sala (Sali), in Morocco. His father, Rabbi Moshe Atar, came from a long line of Moroccan Rabbanim who had their origins in Spain. Rebbi Chaim studied under his grandfather, Rebbi Chaim Ben Atar, spending his younger years between Sala and Meknes, and, after marrying, settled down in Sala.

In his hometown, the Or Hachaim taught hundreds of students in his Yeshiva, while working on his writings. During this period, he compiled his *sefer* *Chefetz Hashem* – *pirushim* and *biurim* on several *Masechtos* in Shas. In addition to his Yeshiva, the Or Hachaim was known as a *darshan* and *gabbai tzedakah*, a person dedicated to caring for his community.

For the first four decades of his life, the Or Hachaim



SALE, MOROCCO, WHERE THE OHR HA'CHAIM WAS BORN AND SERVED AS ROV.

remained in Morocco. Due to internal community challenges as well as uprisings and insurrections in the Moroccan kingdom, he moved often, spending the last years of his Moroccan period in the city of Fez. During this time the Or Hachaim corresponded and worked with the Moroccan Gedolei Yisroel, the Mashbi"r and the Yaavet"z, and some of his *seforim* were printed internationally.

It was also during this time that the Or Hachaim came up with a plan to relocate himself and his yeshiva to Eretz Hakodesh.

In 5499 (1739), following a devastating famine, and after relocating to Tatan, a city on the coast, the Or Hachaim departed Morocco and traveled to Algeria, and from there to the free city of Livorno in Italy.

For several years, the Or Hachaim worked tirelessly to bring the plan to fruition. He traveled all through southern Italy, making connections, raising funds, and trying to convince Talmidei Chachomim to join him. A sizable group of Talmidim gathered to join him on his voyage and become the nucleus of the yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel.

During his time in Livorno, the Or Hachaim became a cherished member of the community, delivering *shiurim* to

both men and women, forming close ties with community leaders, and utilizing the local printing press to publish his seminal works, "Or Hachaim" and "Pri Toar."

Eretz Yisroel

In the summer of 5501 (1741), with 30 students and their families, the Or Hachaim began the long trip to Eretz Yisroel. Due to a plague in Yerushalayim and political unrest in parts of Eretz Yisroel, the group first settled in Akko, the northernmost port in Eretz Yisroel.

The following summer, in Tammuz of 5502 (1742), after a stop in Peki'in, they moved to Yerushalayim, where they were warmly received by the community. The Or Hachaim formally opened his "Yeshivas Knesses Yisroel" in the holy city.

The Yeshiva was split into two parts, one focused on the study of *nigleh*, the other on *nistar*. The Or Hachaim stood at the helm of both, teaching the secret as well as the revealed parts of the Torah.

While the number of original *talmidim* was limited, the *chachomim* of Yerushalayim happily took advantage of the new Torah knowledge in their midst, and *talmidei chachomim*

streamed to the yeshiva. Many of the great leaders and Rabbanim of the next generation were his *talmidim*, most notably Rabbeinu Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai—the holy Chid”a.

During this time, the Or Hachaim did not shy away from communal responsibilities. He continued to arrange livelihoods for *talmidei chachomim* and worked with the Ottoman authorities when necessary.

In Yerushalayim, the Or Hachaim met the Baal Shem Tov’s brother-in-law, Reb Gershon Kitover.

In the summer of 5503 (1743), on the 15th of Tammuz, after only one year in Yerushalayim, the Or Hachaim passed away at the age of 47. His Yeshiva continued to function, and his legacy lived on through his *talmidim* and his *seforim*.

The Pirush Or Hachaim

The Or Hachaim wrote several *seforim* on many different areas of Torah. Chefetz Hashem was a *pirush* on several Masechtos. Pri Toar (also known as Peiros Ginosar) was a commentary on the Shulchan Aruch, largely in the form of *hasgaos* (challenges) on the Pri Chodosh by Rebbe Chizkiah De Silvah. Rishon Letzion, contained *chiddushim* on various *sugyos* in Shas, while Or Hachaim was a *pirush* on Chumash.

The latter became his most famous work. Heavily influenced by Kabbalah, it quickly became a classic in the Chassidic world. The Rebbe pointed out that works of Chassidus, especially the Tzemach Tzedek’s Maamorim, contain

numerous *diyukim* and *biurim* based on this *pirush*.¹

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe revealed how the sefer was written. On 15 Tammuz – the Or Hachaim’s Yahrzeit, the Rebbe visited Camp Emunah. The Rebbe shared with the girls something that the Frierdiker Rebbe had said in the name of the Rebbe Maharash – that there was a holy Yid whose name was Rebbe Chaim Ben Atar, who only had daughters. He learned Torah with them, and wrote down what they had studied. This became the *pirush* Or Hachaim called “Hakadosh” – the holy.²

The Or Hachaim and the Baal Shem Tov

The Chid”a, a *talmid* of the Or Hachaim described his Rebbe’s work in his Shem Hagedolim: “We have heard that in Poland they hold this sefer in high regard, and it has been printed there twice. This has been inspired by what the great Chossid and *Kadosh*, Rebbe Yisroel Baal Shem Tov said about the greatness of the aforementioned Rabbeinu Chaim’s *neshama*...”³

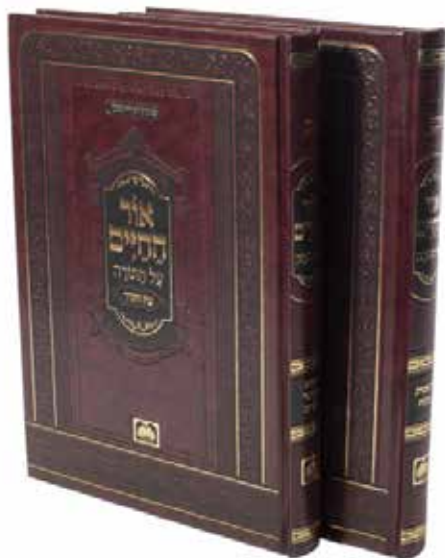
In addition to the popularity of the *sefer*, its author was known as a great *talmid chochom*, a *tzaddik*, and a “Kadosh”; numerous stories circulated about his wonders and miracles.

Various early Chassidic sources share stories and traditions regarding the special relationship between the Baal Shem Tov and the Or Hachaim, describing their meetings and interactions in the higher worlds.

The Rebbe mentioned their special relationship several times and quoted various *seforim* that tell these stories.⁴ At one time, the Rebbe said he would not share the exact details because he hadn’t heard them from the Frierdiker Rebbe, but they were known and shared by Chassidim from a reliable source.⁵

One of the things the Rebbe said clearly was an idea contained in the letters of Reb Gershon Kitover: The Baal Shem Tov and the Or Hachaim were the *Nefesh* and *Ruach* of Dovid Hamelech. The Rebbe connects them to Moshiach – *Dovid Malka Meshicha*.⁶

In the sources referenced by the Rebbe, we find several marvelous quotes that shed light on the greatness of the Or Hachaim as well as his relationship with the Baal Shem Tov. The Nesiv Mitzvosecha⁷ (by the Tzaddik Reb Yitzchok Aizik of Komarna), quotes the Baal Shem Tov as saying that the Or Hachaim possessed the *Ruach* of Dovid and that at night he



RECENT EDITION OF THE PIRUSH OHR HA'CHAIM.

would learn Torah from Hakadosh Baruch Hu; his qualities are indescribable and he merited unbelievable *giluy Elokus* and *ruach hakodesh*. He explains that since the Baal Shem Tov possessed the *Nefesh* of Dovid, he very much wanted to meet “his counterpart” the Or Hachaim; together they would bring Moshiach.

The Sdei Chemed cites a similar story, adding a quote from a *psak din*: Anyone who says that the Or Hachaim didn't have *ruach hakodesh* would be considered as someone who goes against a *tzaddik*.⁸

In Otzar Sippurei Chabad, the story is told that Reb Gershon Kitover traveled to Eretz Yisroel and met the Or Hachaim. When Reb Gershon mentioned the “Baal Shem”, the Or Hachaim said that he had no idea who he was talking about. The Or Hachaim asked if he had any other names or titles, to which Reb Gershon responded that he was known as “Rebbi Yisroel Baal Shem Tov”, at which point the Or Hachaim exclaimed that he certainly knew who he was and that he would often see him in the higher worlds. He went on to speak of his greatness.⁹ Another source tells us that the Baal Shem Tov sent Reb Gershon to study under the Or Hachaim after his *pirush* arrived in Poland.

Interestingly, we also find a letter from Reb Gershon Kitover, relating how the Baal Shem Tov described the Or Hachaim: A great Chochom from the west is in Eretz Yisroel; he is the *nitzotz*, the spark of Moshiach, though he himself is unaware of it. He is a great scholar in both *nigleh* and *nistar* and a *baal bechi* (a man of tears). Reb Gershon continues that he found this great man in Yerushalayim, and shared the Baal Shem Tov's words...¹⁰

The Baal Shem Tov said that in the *olamos haelyonim* (the spiritual realms), he meets many *tzaddikim*; the only one that is there before him is the *Chochom Hamaaravi*, (the western *Chochom*) - referring to the Or Hachaim - not because he is greater, but because he is quicker.¹¹

Another tale found in Chassidic literature describes the scene at the Baal Shem Tov's court when the Or Hachaim, thousand of miles away, was *nistalek*. The Baal Shem Tov was about to wash his hands for *Seudah Shlishis* when he turned to his *talmidim* and said that the *Ner Hamaaravi* (the western candle) had been extinguished...

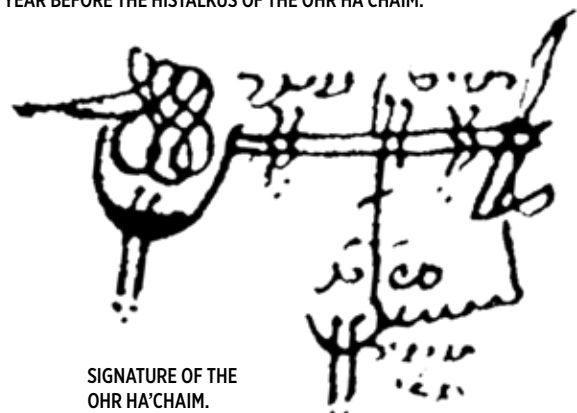
He later explained that there is a special *sod* (Kabbalistic meditation) in *netilas yodayim* that is revealed to only one person at a time. Now that it came to him, he realized that the one who had previously possessed it — the Or Hachaim

— had passed away.¹²

The Rebbe mentioned this special bond a number of times, explaining the special role that the Or Hachaim and his Torah play in the formation and world of Chassidus.



FIRST EDITION OF THE PIRUSH OHR HA'CHAIM PRINTED IN 5542, A YEAR BEFORE THE HISTALKUS OF THE OHR HA'CHAIM.



SIGNATURE OF THE OHR HA'CHAIM.

Miracles

The Or Hachaim was known throughout the world for his great piety and holiness. Many miracles and wonders are attributed to him, both during his lifetime and after. One of these was shared by the Rebbe himself.

On Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5710, the Rebbe related a story he had heard from¹³ the Frierdiker Rebbe in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, who had heard it in *yechidus* from his father, the Rebbe Maharash.¹⁴ The Or Hachaim was once traveling in a caravan. When Shabbos came, the Or Hachaim was not willing to continue traveling, and the caravan leaders left the Or Hachaim alone in the perilous desert. He was soon approached by a full-grown lion. As it came closer, the Or Hachaim showed the lion a sign that he was *nizhar* (extremely meticulous) in *Shmiras Habris*, and the lion immediately lay down in submission. All Shabbos, the animal stayed with the *tzaddik*, protecting him from other predators. After Shabbos the Or Hachaim rode on the lion's back as it swiftly ran through the desert and returned him to his caravan.

The Rebbe learned from the story that in essence, everything, including a wild beast, is naturally subservient to Yidden. It is only through our sins that they wield any power over us. Once the lion was shown the purity of the Or Hachaim it began to serve him—the way it was meant to be.

Impact

Though the Or Hachaim was a relatively recent *Gadol b'Yisroel* and not officially part of the dynasties of Chassidus, he looms large in the works of Chassidus. As the Rebbe noted more than once, the Or Hachaim is among the select few, and the most recent, whose work, and by extension, whose person, were honored with the title “*Hakadosh*.”

Chassidus Chabad quotes the Or Hachaim Hakadosh with immense respect, and his *pirush* on Chumash—filled with explanations based on *pnimiyus haTorah*—has been used by Chassidim throughout the generations.

The Rebbe frequently cited the Or Hachaim in his Torah, often highlighting his connections to the Baal Shem Tov and Chassidus. On several occasions, on the Or Hachaim's yahrtzeit on the 15th of Tammuz, the Rebbe would make special mention of him and share insights into his life and works, depicting him as a central figure in Moroccan Jewry



TZIYUN OF THE OHR HACHAIM.

and the broader Sefardi world.

In a *sicha* to the Talmidim Hashluchim traveling to Casablanca, Morocco in 5741 (1981), the Rebbe noted the special connection of the Baal Shem Tov with the Moroccan-born Or Hachaim. The Rebbe spoke of great Torah that emerged from Morocco and how the Talmidim Hashluchim should live up to it and reawaken Torah study.¹⁵

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe responded to a suggestion that

work be done to create *Achdus* between Sfardim and Ashkenazim. Among Chassidim, the Rebbe said, this external *hisorerus* is not necessary. In truth, everyone, both Chassidim and non (not yet) Chassidim, know and have great respect for the Rambam who was a “*Sfardi Tahor*.” With Chassidim, it goes beyond this, as we can see in the enormous reverence shown for the Or Hachaim, who was a Sefardi, referring to him as *Hakadosh*.¹⁶

IN HIS TORAH

צו אֶת־אֶהְרֶן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תֹּרַת הָעֹלָה הוּא הָעֹלָה עַל מוֹקְדָה עַל־
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה עַד־הַבֶּקֶר וְאִשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תִּוְקַד בּוֹ: (ויקרא ו,ב)

“Command Aharon and his sons thus: This is the ritual of the Olah - burnt offering: The burnt offering itself shall remain where it is burned upon the Mizbeach all night until morning, while the fire burns on the Mizbeach.”

אור החיים:

ובדרך רמז תרמוז כל הפרשה על גלות האחרון שאנו בו לנחמנו מעצבון
נפשנו...זאת תורת העולה...ואמר הוא העולה כבר דכתיב “מי זאת עולה מן
המדבר”

...על מוקדה על המזבח הם ב' פרטים שאנו בהם, הא' שאנו בני תורה מה שאין
בכל האומות, והב' שאנו מיוסרים בגלות ויסורין ודלות, כנגד התורה אמר על
מוקדה שנמשלה התורה לאש, וכן תמצא שאמרו ז"ל “האי צורבא מרבנן דרתח
אורייתא וכו'”, וכנגד הגלות וענפיו אמר על המזבח כי היסורין מתיחס להם שם
מזבח להיותם כפרה, וכן הוא בלשון חכמים. והודיע הכתוב כי באמצעות ב'
דברים תהי' עלייתנו מיועדת בהפלגות המעולות משונות לשבח שבחים אשר
לא הי' ולא יהי'.

...וביאר עד מתי יהיו ישראל בגדר ב' דברים אלו, כל הלילה שהוא זמן הגלות
 הנמשל ללילה...עד הבוקר שהוא זמן שיריק עלינו כבודו ואתא בוקר, והזמן
 הוא אחר עבור ת"ק לאלף הששי, לפי מה שקדם לנו מדבריהם ז"ל.

The Or Hachaim explains that this *parshah* alludes to the current and final *galus*. The *Olah* (ascending one) refers to the Jewish people who “ascended from the desert”. “*Al Mokdah*” – on the fire – refers to the Torah which is compared to fire. “*Al Hamizbeach*” – refers to the sacrifices and suffering in *galus*. The *posuk* tells us that due to these two – the Torah on the one hand, and the travails of *galus* on the other, we will be redeemed. “*Kol halailah*” refers to the period of *galus*. “*Ad Haboker*” to the ‘morning’ of *geulah*. And that time will be after 500 years into the sixth millennium.

The Rebbe discussed this beautiful *biur* on the Or Hachaim’s yahrtzeit – 15 Tammuz 5736.

The Rebbe explained that the “*Al Mokdah*” – the fire of Torah includes not just learning Torah, but also fulfilling Mitzvos, as they are done with the fire and passion of Torah – “*Al Mokdah*.”

The Rebbe further explained that this has the power to transform the *Mizbeach*, that it shouldn’t just mean the suffering of *galus* but sustain and support the Jewish people.

The *Boker–Moshiach* that the Or Hachaim tied to the year 5500, the Rebbe explained, must refer to the revelation of the Baal Shem Tov. Though his *hisgalus* had been a few years earlier, in the year 5500, he was *fully* revealed.

The Rebbe concluded by saying that the transformation of the “*Mizbeach*” — *galus*, through “*Al Mokdah*” – passion and *chayus* in Torah and Mitzvos, brings the *brachos* of Hashem – “*B’or Pnei Melech Chaim*,” and transforms the three weeks (which were to begin two days later) into days of joy with the coming of Moshiach.

1. Sicha Yud Shevat 5739, Sichos Kodesh pg. 52.

2. Sicha 15 Tammuz 5717, Camp Emunah, Toras Menachem pg. 177.

3. Shem Hagdolim, Erech Or Hachaim.

4. Igros Kodesh Vol. 19, pg. 421.

5. Sicha 15 Tammuz 5739, Sichos Kodesh pg. 10.

6. Sicha 15 Tammuz 5736, Sichos Kodesh pg. 9.

7. Pg. 4, referenced in the aforementioned letter.

8. Sdei Chemed, Shyarei Hape’ah, 3:7 (vol. 8, 1719, 4.) Referenced in the He’aros to Sicha 7 Teves 5741 (Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 515).

9. Vol. 14, pg. 233. From Likkutei Sippurim.

10. Quoted in the journal “Karov Eilecha,” Tammuz edition.

11. In Ginzei Nistaros (Seif 70) referencing a Maamar of the Mitteler Rebbe. The Ginzei Nistaros is mentioned by the Rebbe in the aforementioned letter.

12. Sippurei Chassidim, Moadim 179. Cited in Otzar Sippurei Chabad.

13. Toras Menachem vol. 1, pg. 110.

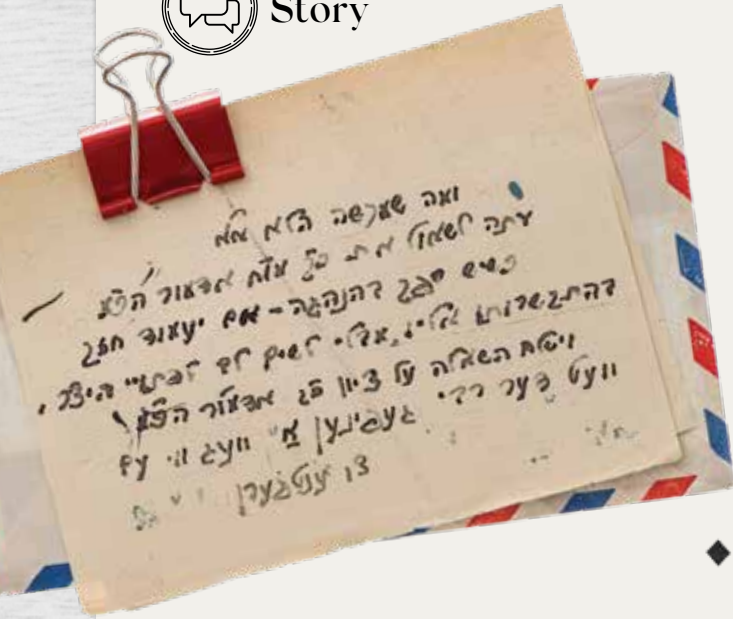
14. Reshimas Hayoman, pg. 395.

15. Likkutei Sichos Vol. 20, pg. 515.

16. Sicha 10 Shevat 5739, Sichos Kodesh pg. 51.



Story



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
 לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
 הרה"ת ר' אלחנן משה
 וזוגתו מרת חנה זלאטא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 טענענבוים

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בשליחותם הק'
 בנאפה וואלי, קאליפורניא

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

I Am A Living Miracle



AS TOLD BY
GREG DAVIS
 (Scottsdale, AZ)

One evening in May of 2021, while driving home from work at my law firm, I stopped to buy gas. While standing at the gas pump, I suddenly felt an extreme and unfamiliar pain shoot down the right side of my body. It was so disturbing that I immediately drove to the nearest hospital. The ER doctor ordered a CT scan and, after my wife joined me, delivered the terrifying results to us: I had stage 4 multiple organ metastatic cancer. There were tumors in my liver, lungs, abdominal wall, rib cage, and hip.

Thus began a harrowing medical journey for myself and

my family. The first oncologist I consulted confirmed it was a very aggressive cancer and referred me to the Mayo Clinic where the top oncologist told me I had two options: Chemotherapy was a possibility, but 85% of such patients do not even respond to the chemo. My other alternative was to enjoy whatever time I had left - approximately four to six months.

Another expert we consulted agreed with the first doctor's prognosis but suggested we should treat it aggressively for as many years as it took. My wife liked his attitude and

encouraged me to try the treatment, which made me feel so horrible I needed to take pills to deal with the side effects. Eventually, the tests revealed the tumors were shrinking, so at least we knew I was in the 15% of patients who responded to the chemo, but the future was still very uncertain.

Immediately after being diagnosed, I stopped working and transferred all my clients to the other attorneys in my firm. My wife handled the firm's closure. We put our home up for sale and sold my valuable pinball machine collection, so my wife would not need to deal with it. I was getting ready for what the doctors said was inevitable.

One day in July, Larry, a friend and client, called me and said his daughter had stage 4 cancer and he wanted to fly together with me and Rabbi Mendy Lipskier (from Chabad of Fountain Hills, AZ) to pray at the graveside of a rabbi in New York. I was flabbergasted at the idea and categorically rejected his offer. I was not raised Orthodox and had no context to understand what he was even suggesting.

"Just come have lunch with us," Larry insisted, and I agreed.

Over lunch, Rabbi Lipskier introduced me to the idea of the Rebbe and the concept of praying at the graveside of such a holy person to ask G-d for a miracle. Despite myself, I laughed and told him I thought it was a ridiculous idea. Firstly, I was in the middle of chemotherapy and did not feel up to making the trip. My main resistance to the idea was the fact that I considered myself an atheist and do not believe in miracles, let alone the idea that someone who had already passed away could somehow help me. "I would be committing fraud," I protested.

"I don't think we believe differently," Rabbi Lipskier replied. "We just use different words to describe our beliefs." We continued speaking about it for a while, and he simply insisted I would not be committing fraud by joining him and Larry on the trip. "At the very least, how could it possibly hurt?" he said.

I had to admit that praying at the Ohel could not hurt, and when I mentioned the meeting to my wife she emphatically said, "Go! It certainly can't hurt!"

In preparation for the trip I was advised to write a letter to be placed at the Ohel and my wife, two children and a non-Jewish friend named Pierre wrote letters, as

well. In my letter, I asked for a miracle but included the fact that I already felt like I had experienced a miracle. I saw the world and life differently and was in a place of acceptance and gratitude for every day. I had let go of my attachment to material things, and all I asked for was time.

The three of us took a red-eye flight from Phoenix to JFK and drove straight to the Ohel early in the morning. Rabbi Lipskier explained that when asking the Rebbe to intercede on your behalf it is appropriate to commit to adding in Mitzvot and I committed to mounting a Mezuzah on the door of my home. He helped me wrap Tefillin and after watching him pray the morning services, we were ready.

As we entered the antechamber of the Ohel, Rabbi Lipskier handed me a prayerbook, showed me the paragraphs I should read while standing in front of the Rebbe, and then told me to tear up all the letters I had with me and place them there. We spent a few more minutes there and, although I still felt a certain strangeness, it was a spiritually uplifting experience.

We drove to Crown Heights where Rabbi Lipskier's mother hosted us for a delicious lunch, took a tour of 770 and other neighborhood attractions, including the Mitzvah Tank, and purchased a Mezuzah for my home. After resting up a bit and grabbing dinner, it was time to head to the airport to catch our return flight home.

For a while after I returned home, I felt physically terrible. By then I had finished chemotherapy and started a new treatment called immunotherapy which made me feel even worse. The next six weeks were a real rollercoaster of ups and downs, culminating in waking up one morning unable to turn over or lift my hands above my head. We rushed to MD Anderson and took a bunch of tests. That night I lost my ability to breathe, and when the ambulance brought me to the hospital, I begged them to intubate me because I was suffering so badly from air hunger.

I was in the ICU for over two weeks, was diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis, which was a result of the immunotherapy, not cancer, and was eventually released to a rehab center. My wife insisted I could be brought back to baseline, but the doctors would just say "We'll get you to as close as possible." I was miserable and did not want to continue living.

Thankfully I have many friends and acquaintances



who worried for me and, after receiving non-stop phone calls, my wife started posting my condition on a website called caringbridge.com so that anyone interested in my situation could read it there. One day a friend who is a judge called my wife and shared that she suffered from the same illness and recommended we consult with her doctor, a neuromuscular specialist “who is a genius.”

By now it was close to the end of November, and the doctor recommended I continue with the treatments I was doing and explained that if the drug was wreaking such havoc on my body, it must be doing the same to the cancer. I kept at it and felt terrible, but by now I decided I wanted to be better and live my best life.

After some time I was back to baseline and was feeling much better; we started traveling to all the destinations on my bucket list which included a trip to Israel. Rabbi Lipskier requested that when I went to the Kotel I should send regards to his friend Shmuly standing at the Tefillin booth there. I did, and Shmuly helped me wrap Tefillin at the Kotel.

In February my oncologist recommended I take two PET scans, the most sensitive tests available, to determine what was going on with the cancer and to tailor the treatment accordingly.

The first scan was to determine whether there were any slow-growing tumors in my body. On the way back from the hospital after taking the first test, we stopped for

lunch and while we were eating my phone buzzed. It was a text message with the results of the test. NO EVIDENCE.

While I was grateful for this, I already knew this was not my problem, since the tumors discovered in May were fast-growing ones and the next day’s test was meant to determine whether there were any fast-growing tumors still in my body.

After taking the second test the next day, we went to the same place for lunch and at almost the same time as the day before my phone buzzed and I froze. This was it.

I opened the message and was shocked and elated to read the words NO EVIDENCE!

Three different oncologists had told me remission was not possible with this type of cancer, and now I was given a clean bill of health! Multiple doctors confirmed to me that I was cured of the cancer. The only plausible explanation for this is a miracle from G-d as a result of my trip to the Ohel with Rabbi Lipskier.

YOUR STORY

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







LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 185007

לזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
ומשפחותיהם שיחיו בכל רחבי תבל
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בעבודת
השליחות מתוך בריאות נכונה, פרנסה
בהרחה ונחת חסידותי מכל יו"ח

נדפס ע"י הרוצה בעילום שמו



Yechidus Klolis

Tammuz 5751

One of the seven scheduled times throughout the year that the Rebbe would hold a *Yechidus Klolis*¹ was after Yud-Beis Tammuz, with the guests who had come to mark the occasion in the Rebbe's presence.



Compiled By:
Rabbi Shabi Soffer

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



The Rebbe recites a special Sicha to three groups: guests, *chassanim* and *kallos*, and bar mitzvah boys.





GERSHON SHUSTERMAN VIA JEW 305198

After the sicha to each group, participants pass by the Rebbe to receive a dollar for Tzedakah, and hand the Rebbe a *pan*.





LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 185032



At the end of the yechidus, the Rebbe carries out the large bag of panim, to bring up to his room.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM188105



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM188105

The Rebbe looks up at the clock on the wall.

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

A Full Cup For Learning Likkutei Torah And It's Long-Reaching Effect

In the Derher magazine of Adar II, an extensive article was published about the Rebbe's *hora'ah* for Chassidim to learn Likkutei Torah or Torah Ohr every week. On page 34, you mentioned a story that took place at the farbrengen of Purim 5726 without the name of whom it happened with. So I would like to share the story with the name of the *baal hamaaseh*, my grandfather, Reb Leibel Mochkin.

Towards the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe started pouring *mashke* to a few individuals. Seeing this, my grandfather, Reb Leibel Mochkin, went over to the Rebbe and asked for *mashke*. The Rebbe asked him, "Will you finish the Chassidische Parsha of this week?" My grandfather was unsure and didn't answer straight away, and the Rebbe said, "This is a business deal; it's either yes or no"... My grandfather then told the Rebbe that he was committing to learn it, and the Rebbe poured him a full cup and said, "This is a full cup, and the learning should also be full (מלא)".

(The story is brought in Toras Menachem vol. 46 pg. 197 fn. 379 without the name of the recipient).

This was before the Rebbe's famous announcement during this farbrengen that כל הפושט יד ונתנים לו — when the Rebbe distributed *mashke* to everyone who requested it.

Following this special incident my grandfather had a special *koch* in learning Likkutei Torah or Torah Ohr and proceeded to complete it weekly for the next fifty-four years until his passing on Shabbos Nachamu 5779.

Following his passing, my father, Reb Mendel Mochkin, sponsored the beautiful set of seforim Torah Ohr\Likkutei Torah Hamevuar published by Maaynosecha which explains one Maamar from each week's Likkutei Torah/Torah Ohr in his memory. Now I am in Mesivta in Westchester and every Leil Shishi my father comes to Yeshiva, and we learn together a Ma'amer of that week's Torah Ohr\Likkutei Torah in memory of my Zaidy z"l.

Moshe Mochkin
WESTCHESTER, NY

How To Teach The Chassidische Parshah

I just read the Derher issue of Adar II, which includes the article about learning the Chassidische Parsha, the Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah. I found it very informative and interesting.

I would like to share a response that I merited to receive from the Rebbe during the winter of 5739 (1979) in regards to how to teach Likkutei Torah - Torah Ohr.

During that year, the Rebbe urged very strongly to study the weekly Maamorim of Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, and I was

delivering a weekly shiur in Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah for Anash in Monsey, NY.

Since it was one shiur a week, the question came up about what the shiur format should be; should we continue with the same Maamor until its conclusion or every week begin the Maamar which related to that week's Parsha?

I asked the Rebbe and the Rebbe responded the following:

”קדימה שמכל שיעור יצאו בענין שלם בפ”ע. העיקר לסיים ענין” (ב' אדר תשל"ט)

Translated to English: It is preferable that the participants leave every shiur with [grasp of] a complete topic. The main objective is to complete a topic.

This was understood to mean that although the Maamor is not concluded, nevertheless, one should *complete a topic* in its entirety.

Hatzlacha Rabo

Michael A Seligson

CROWN HEIGHTS

The Rebbe's Haggadah

Dear Editor:

I read with pleasure the recent Yud Aleph Nissan - Pesach edition of your wonderful publication. There are, however, some points to be clarified. In the article about Pesach with the Rabbeim, there is a piece about 5738 (1978). It should be pointed out that the Rebbe indeed came to the big shul for Maariv on the 1st night of Pesach! This was to the great delight, merit, and happiness of the Chassidim, as this was only a few months after the Rebbe recovered from a heart attack on Shemini Atzeres. (Although it doesn't say that this did not happen, it might be inferred...)

Additionally, in the “Derher for Kids Corner,” in the section titled “Did you know?” there is an item about the Rebbe's Haggadah. It says that the commentary on the Haggadah that the Rebbe wrote is the first sefer of the Rebbe that was published

and that it was first printed in 5706 (1946). This is accurate. But the following phrase—“as an appendix to the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch”—is incorrect. In fact, it was published as a standalone sefer—booklet. The Rebbe composed it as a standalone *chibur*—compilation. The inaccuracy may stem from the fact that in 5725 (1965), the Rebbe's Haggada was added to the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch as a *hosofa*, an addendum. Additionally, *minhagim* that the Rebbe compiled (which had originally been published as an addendum to the *Kuntresim* of Chassidus) were also added.

It is interesting to note that this was the first American print of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch and it was dated 6th of Elul 5725. That year, something was published by Kehos on the 6th of every month, subsequent to the passing of, and *lezecher nishmas*, the Rebbe's holy mother, Rebbetzin Chana (who was *nistalek* on the 6th of Tishrei).

It is also interesting that the way the Haggadah was published in the back of the Shulchan Aruch was identical to the order of the 5723 edition of the Haggada, to which the Rebbe added many pieces about the Alter Rebbe on the occasion of 150 years since the Alter Rebbe's histalkus. The *biurim* that the Rebbe added were printed at the end (together with the earlier *hosofos* the Rebbe added in 5717 and 5720) following the original 5706 Haggadah text and Rebbe's commentary.

(In 5733 the Haggadah was redone with these *biurim* being printed in their proper place under the text of the part of the Haggadah they were elaborating on.)

Thank you very much for this wonderful publication enhancing the knowledge, cognizance and awareness of the Rebbe and Chassidus and bolstering our *hiskashrus*.

Menachem Mendel Feller

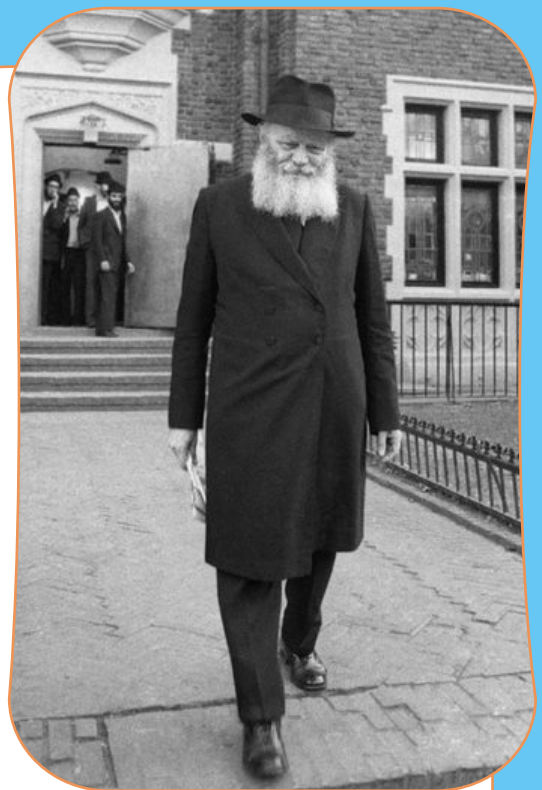
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