

Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער

The Rebbe's
Guidance for
Emotional
Wellness

EXPORTING GOODNESS AND KINDNESS

THE REBBE'S VISION
FOR AMERICA



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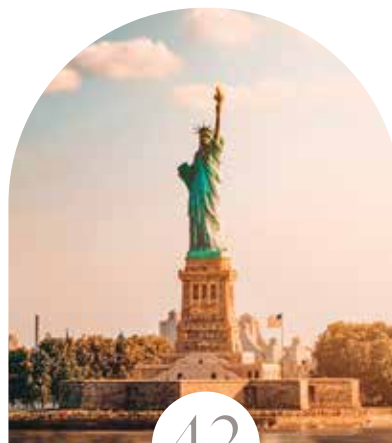


In This Issue

Cheshvan 5785 / Issue 149 (226)



The Rebbe's Guidance for Emotional Wellness



Exporting Goodness and Kindness The Rebbe's Vision for America

<p>4 The Building Project Dvar Malchus</p> <p>6 Avraham and His Children Ksav Yad Kodesh</p> <p>8 Cheshvan 5750 Leben Mitten Rebbe'n</p>	<p>34 Part 2: Morale Let's Talk About Eretz Yisroel</p> <p>36 Moving the Ohel In the Footsteps of Chassidim</p> <p>40 Cheshvan N'shei U'bnos Chabad</p>	<p>53 Treasures from Above Der Rebbe Vet Gefinen a Veg</p> <p>56 Uruguay Pinpoints</p> <p>61 Derher Letters</p>
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Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim

Rabbi Tzvi Altein

Publisher

Rabbi Yossi Kamman

Editor in Chief

Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

Director of Operations

Rabbi Levi Kesselman

Managing Editor

Rabbi Yankel Bergstein

Administrator

Rabbi Levi Weg

Derher for Kids

Mrs. Chanie Kamman

Circulation and Marketing

Rabbi Mendy Shishler

Photo Research/Editing

Rabbi Avremi Browd

Editors

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

Rabbi Dovid Olidort

Copy Editor

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

Design

Rabbi Mendel Bergstein

Contributors

Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet • Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Avrohom Moshe Dyce • Rabbi Tzemach Feller
 Rabbi Mendy Goldberg • Rabbi Levi Gourarie • Rabbi Levi Greenberg • Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg
 Rabbi Mendy Greenberg • Rabbi Levi Katz • Rabbi Yossi Katz • Rabbi Zelig Katzman • Rabbi Menachem Lazaroff
 Rabbi Mendel Misholovin • Rabbi Levi Shemtov • Rabbi Mendy Shemtov • Rabbi Bentzion Schtroks
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This magazine
has been made possible

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

Thirty five years ago, the Rebbe spoke continually about the need to reinstate the practice first started by Moshe Rabbeinu, to gather Yidden together for public Torah study every Shabbos. “*L'hakhil kehillos*”—to gather the people together, is how it is referred to in the Midrash. The theme of gathering and bringing people together comes up time and again in these *sichos*.

As we’ve been featuring a section about the year 5750 in each month’s magazine, it’s fascinating to learn how much the Rebbe spoke on the subject, starting with Rosh Hashanah and continuing through almost every farbrengen. “Even if a person finds themselves alone in a desert,” the Rebbe said, “has the ability to create a ‘gathering’ by bringing together all the ten faculties of his own *neshama*. In a sense, one is able to attain the great advantage of a larger gathering in this manner as well.”

The Rebbe continued on this subject throughout the month of Cheshvan, culminating in his address to the Kinus Hashluchim Ha’olami—which is also an expression of the theme of gathering. “On the one hand it is a ‘*kinus*’, which means ‘to gather,’” the Rebbe explained. “At the same time, it is ‘*olami*’—the world over; a world that encompasses and includes so many disparate parts. The function of the ‘*kinus*’ is to bring out the underlying unity in every part of the world, by revealing its true nature as an expression of *Elokus*.”

The lesson was always, in addition to increasing public Torah study, to strengthen *ahavas* and *achdus Yisroel* in every way possible.

Reflecting on these *sichos* thirty five years later, it is an opportune time to strengthen ourselves in these areas and to recommit ourselves to the Rebbe’s *shlichus* in general, especially the most important *shlichus*—to prepare ourselves and the entire world for the coming of Moshiach, now!

The Editors
י"ג תשרי ה'תשפ"ה



לזכות ולרפ"ש
הרה"ת ר' יוסף שלמה בן רישה לאיוש"ט

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אברהם צמח הלוי
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה ומשפחתם
שיחי'ן
ראזענפעלד

The Building Project

IN HONOR OF 60 YEARS SINCE THE REBBE INTRODUCING HIS REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING RASHI, 5725—5785, THIS MONTHLY COLUMN WILL FEATURE AN ADAPTATION OF ONE OF THE REBBE'S "RASHI SICHOS."

COMPILED BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

עשה לך תבת עצי גפר (י, ט)

עשה לך תבת: הרבה רוח והצלחה לפניו, ולמה הטריחו בבנין זה? פדי שיראהו אנשי דור המבול עוסק בה ק"כ שנה, ושואלין אותו מה זאת לה, והוא אומר להם עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להביא מבול לעולם, אולי ישובו: (רש"י)

Make for yourself an ark

"Make for yourself an ark: [Question:] Many ways to bring relief and salvation are available to Hashem; why, then, did He burden Noach with this construction? [Answer:] In order that the people of the Generation of the Flood should see him occupying himself with it for one hundred twenty years, and ask him, 'For what do you need this?' And he would say to them, 'The Holy One, blessed be He, is destined to bring a flood upon the world: Perhaps [upon hearing this] they would repent.'" (Rashi)

Why did Noach spend such a long time—120 years(!)—building the *Teiva*? If it was in order to arouse the people in his generation to do teshuva—just seeing the finished product alone would have been enough to accomplish that! Definitely an unusual sight, it surely would have prompted the people to ask Noach about its purpose, and Noach would then inform

them of the impending *mabul*, encouraging them to do teshuva. Why the need to drag out the construction for so long?

The reason it took Noach such a long time is that when Hashem instructed Noach to build the *Teiva*, He said, "עשה לך—Make for **yourself**"; which means—as the Abarbanel explains—that the *Teiva* was to be built by Noach *alone*. Since Noach was not allowed to involve anyone else in the work, it makes sense that it took him this long. (Actually, it is astonishing that it took him *only* 120 years to complete such an enormous task by himself!)

With this explanation in hand, we gain new insight into Rashi's opening question: "למה הטריחו בבנין זה?": The simple understanding of Rashi's question is: How come Hashem put Noach through the whole hassle of building a *Teiva*, and didn't employ an easier method of saving him?

But, actually, this isn't a question at all—a *Teiva* is the most natural means to save oneself from a flood.

Rather, what is bothering Rashi is this: How come Hashem instructed Noach to build the *Teiva* specifically by *himself*, allowing no one to help him? After all, if the point of the *Teiva* was to save Noach and his family from the flood, what difference does it make who built it?

It is in response to this question that Rashi gives his answer: The command given to Noach to build the *Teiva* was not only as a means to an end—so that he and his family



could be saved from the flood—but also an end unto itself. The act of *building* the *Teiva* was a mitzvah in and of itself, whose purpose was to warn the people of the generation about the impending flood, and inspire them to do teshuva.

If others had assisted Noach with the building, then the anticipated positive impact it would have had on the people would not have been a direct result of Noach's actions (aside from the fact that the construction would have been completed much sooner, which would have detracted from the impact that a slower construction project would have had).

This interpretation is also supported by the order of the *pesukim* which, at first glance, seem puzzling:

1. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים לְנוֹחַ קֶזֶץ כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר בָּא לְפָנַי כִּי-מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מַשְׁחִיתֶם אֶת-הָאָרֶץ.

And Hashem said to Noach, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth has become full of robbery because of them, and behold I am destroying them from the earth.”

2. עֲשֵׂה לְךָ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי-גֹפֶר...

Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood...

3. וְאֵנִי הֹנֵנִי מִבֵּיא אֶת-הַמָּבּוּל...

And I, behold I am bringing the flood...

According to the order of these three *pesukim*, Hashem instructed Noach to build a *Teiva* even before telling him about the flood (from which the *Teiva* was meant to save him)?!

We see here that the intent in Hashem's command to build a *Teiva* was (not only in order for Noach to save himself, but also) the very act of building—in order to awaken the people of his generation and inspire them to do teshuva.



We find a similarity between the *mitzvos* of building a sukka and building the *Teiva*: The Torah writes “עשה לך” about the *Teiva*, and “תעשה לך” about a sukka.

Practically, though, we find a difference between the two mitzvos:

From the words “עשה לך” said by the *Teiva* we learn two things: 1. The interpretation of Abarbanel—that Noach had to build the *Teiva* by himself. 2. The Rogatchover's interpretation—that “לך” means “משלך”; Noach had to build the *Teiva* using his own assets.

Whereas by the mitzvah of sukka, the halacha is different in both of these aspects: 1. One is not obligated to build their

own sukka—someone else can build it. 2. One is able to fulfill the mitzvah by using another person's sukka—it does not have to be your own.

The difference between the two mitzvos stems from a general difference in conduct between Noach and the tzaddikim that followed him:

The Zohar writes that Noach did not *daven* to Hashem to spare his generation from the *mabul*, and that therefore, the waters of the flood are named after him—“*Mei Noach*—The Waters of Noach”—since they came about (in a sense) because of him.

The tzaddikim who came later, on the other hand, displayed *mesirus nefesh* for their flocks; like Moshe Rabbeinu, for example, who said, “ואם אין מחני נא מספרך”—If you won't [forgive the Jewish people] erase me from your book...”

Since Noach was concerned only for himself, not *davening* for the rest of his generation, he was told by Hashem to build the *Teiva* by himself; without help from others, and with his own resources.

After Matan Torah, however, when Yidden had become one, single entity (similar to the conduct of the tzaddikim following Noach, who—seeing themselves as being one with their flocks—cared and *davened* for them), the sukka of one Yid can be built by another Yid, and one can fulfill their obligation using the sukka of another—because we are all really one.

Takeaway:

1. When given a *shlichus* from Hashem to save people *b'ruchniyus* or *b'gashmiyus*, don't delegate the responsibility to others. Do it yourself—no matter how important you are.
2. If Hashem gives a person two missions (or more), it is impossible that they conflict with each other; one can surely fulfill both.
3. Fulfill the mission Hashem has given you with the utmost alacrity (just like Noach, who—although working alone—was able to fulfill everything that Hashem asked of him in just 120 years!).

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 39)



Compiled By: Rabbi Levi Greenberg (OH)

Written By: Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

Avraham and His Children

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Toldos 5741, the Rebbe quoted the Zohar¹ on the *possuk*² “*Vayigdelu hane’arim*” (and the boys—Yaakov and Esav—grew up):

סטרא דאברהם גרים לון לאתגדלא, וזכותי סייע לון, הוא הוה מחנך לון במצות, דכתיב כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו וגו', לאסגאה יעקב ועשו...

“The side of Avraham caused them to grow up [lit. grow big], and the merit of his [good deeds] assisted them. He educated them in the ways of mitzvos, as it says: “For I [Hashem] know him [Avraham], because he commands his children [and his household to guard the ways of Hashem] etc.”—to include Yaakov and Esav.”

The Rebbe pointed out that Avraham’s effect on his offspring was not only that they grew up and matured physically, but also became great spiritually, as is understood from the words of the Zohar. However, Avraham’s influence lasted only as long as he was actively educating them; once he passed away, Esav went his own way. (See lengthy explanation in the *sicha* there.³)

After the farbrengen, an individual wrote to the Rebbe asking the following question:

We know that Avraham’s life was cut short by five years so that he wouldn’t see Esav turn to bad behavior. But considering the Zohar’s words cited at the farbrengen, why did Hashem do this? If Avraham would have lived longer, his *zechus* could have protected Esav for longer!

The Rebbe responded in his holy handwriting:⁴

ה”ז זכותי דבו”ד [=דבשר ודם] - מוגבל - ובפרט כשצריך להתגבר על בחירת המקבל.

ועפ”ז מתורץ קלאץ קושיא (שכמובן איש לא הקשה) דישמעאל משך זמן לא התנהג כדבעי ורק אח”כ עשה **תשובה** (רש”י כה, ט).

This merit [of Avraham] is one of [a human of] flesh and blood—which is [by definition] limited [in its capacity]—especially when it needs to override the **free choice** of the one he is trying to influence.

[I.e. the merit of Avraham was enough to allow Esav to grow spiritually, but only to a certain extent, especially when factoring in that this merit would have to counteract and reign in on Esav’s choices—for which Hashem accords him free will.]

This also provides an answer to a **basic question** (which, obviously, **no one asked**):

[How is it that] Yishmael didn’t act appropriately for a while, only doing *teshuva* afterwards [later in life]. (**Rashi** [Bereishis] 25:9.)

[I.e. we see elsewhere that Avraham’s *zechus* did not stop Yishmael from going astray for most of his life.] **T**

1. Vol. 1, 138b.

2. Toldos 25, 27.

3. Sichos Kodesh 5741, vol. 1, pp. 458–62, 475–7, edited by the Rebbe and published in Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, pp. 108–15.

4. Published in Teshura Sperlin-Ceitlin 5775.



THE REBBE DEPARTS FOR THE MIKVAH, 7 CHESHVAN 5750



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 187891

A YEAR OF MIRACLES

Cheshvan 5750

We continue with some of the special occurrences of the year 5750 – Shnas Nissim, this time focusing on the month of Cheshvan.

One thing that stood out conspicuously in Cheshvan was the fact that the Rebbe had begun wearing a silk kapota every day, something previously reserved for Shabbos, Yom Tov, and special occasions. The Rebbe had actually made this change earlier, from the beginning of the new year, but it was mostly noticed at the beginning of Cheshvan, once the month of Tishrei and its Yomim Tovim came to a close.

COMPILED BY: **RABBI YANKY BELL**

WRITTEN BY: **RABBI MENDEL JACOBS**

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבי'ן הוקדש לזכרון
ולעילוי נשמת
ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
ת"נצ"ב'ה'



ע"י בנם
ר' יקותיאל יהודה
וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רוהר





CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 32929

HATOMIM MORDECHAI FARKASH PRESENTS HIS FATHER'S SEFER TO THE REBBE.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 32931

BROTHERS VELVEL AND MORDECHAI FARKASH WITH THE REBBE.

Sunday Dollars

As he would every month, the Rebbe spent hours every Sunday greeting thousands of people and giving each one a dollar for tzedakah and a *bracha*. This was also an opportunity for people to approach the Rebbe with questions and requests, and interesting conversations often ensued. Below are some excerpts from these interactions:

SUNDAY, 7 CHESHVAN

Two brothers, Velvel and Mordechai Farkash, passed by the Rebbe and presented the most recent *sefer* of their father's, Rabbi Yekusiel Farkash, a translation of *Machasheves HaTahara* into English.

The Rebbe opened the *sefer* and said (confirming), "Rabbi Farkash from Yerushalayim." Rabbi Groner pointed out that it was an English edition, and the Rebbe repeated after him, "In English!" (indicating his satisfaction). The Rebbe asked if it was already available in stores, and when he was told that it was, the Rebbe responded, "*Oib azoi is duch gut...*" (Very well then). The Rebbe handed them another dollar, and Velvel asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that their father should not have to worry about *parnassa*. The Rebbe replied: "Worries? They only disrupt [from his work]."

A Lubavitcher woman passed by with her nephew who was strengthening his commitment to Yiddishkeit, saying "He used to be not so good, but now he is doing good. He davens three times a day." The Rebbe responded: "He was always good. Now he is even better!"

The Mayor of Bnei Brak, Rabbi Moshe Orenstein, approached the Rebbe, and discussed various matters pertaining to his city. His son, who was with him, had recently been in an accident and had trouble putting Tefillin on his arm. The Rebbe asked the father, "What does he do about Tefillin?" The father did not know the answer. The son explained that he only puts Tefillin on his head. The Rebbe turned to the father and said, "Even when your son is 119 years old, you should always know which hand he puts Tefillin on!"

SUNDAY, 14 CHESHVAN

Israeli Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Elyakim Rubinstein, approached the Rebbe and said that he had come to the States to arrange a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Shamir and President Bush, and was asking for the Rebbe's *bracha*. The Rebbe told him to instruct Mr.

Shamir to stand firm on the integrity of Eretz Yisroel. After all, he was the only one who stood up against the land concessions of the Camp David Accords; he must stand strong now as well. He need not do so out of mere stubbornness; he can explain to them that this is crucial for our very survival. Remind them, said the Rebbe, that the United States at its founding also stood up to other nations like England and France, because she understood that it was crucial for her survival.

SUNDAY, 21 CHESHVAN

A woman from France passed by and told the Rebbe: "I came in special all the way from France. My son is sick..."

The Rebbe: "The Torah is concerned about Jewish people's money."

Woman: "But my son is sick!"

The Rebbe: "Your son is healthy!"

(The woman didn't understand what the Rebbe said, and she repeated that her son is sick.)

The Rebbe: "Nu, may there be good news."

(Soon afterwards, the woman called home in France and found out that her son had miraculously begun recovering).

SUNDAY, 28 CHESHVAN

An individual publishing a *sefer* about Rashi on Chumash asked the Rebbe if he would mention an idea from his new *sefer* at a farbrengen, and the Rebbe responded, "I have already mentioned you at the *Tziyun...*"

The Scharf Children

An interesting occurrence in the Rebbe's presence this year, beginning in the month of Tishrei, was the Rebbe's care of, and attention to, the Scharf children, whose father had passed away right before Yom Kippur on 8 Tishrei. Each day when the Rebbe came in for davening, he had the children stand right near his place, often looking at them during davening and encouraging them on his way in and out of shul.

On Sunday, 14 Cheshvan, Mrs. Scharf brought her children to the Rebbe for dollars, celebrating the youngest child's *upshernish*. The Rebbe asked if today was his actual birthday, and proceeded to cut his hair, saying, "We need to make sure he won't be afraid of me." The Rebbe blessed Mrs. Scharf with much Chassidische *nachas* from all the



THE REBBE CUTS THE HAIR OF SHOLOM SCHARF ON THE OCCASION OF HIS UPSHERNISH.



children, and waved his hand in encouragement when the oldest boy passed by.

The next day, the youngest boy joined his brothers for Maariv with the Rebbe for the first time after his haircut. The Rebbe gazed deeply at the child a few times throughout the davening, and upon leaving the shul, the Rebbe waited until the child looked back at him, and then waved his hand towards the boy.

On Thursday, 18 Cheshvan, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and came into the shul for Mincha and Maariv. While saying Ashrei, the Rebbe looked towards the Scharf boys and waited until the oldest boy turned around to notice that the Rebbe was looking, then the Rebbe gave

him a small nod, as if greeting him.

On Shabbos Parshas Vayera, Chof Cheshvan, when the *Aron Kodesh* was opened for *Krias HaTorah*, the Scharf boys were looking at the Rebbe, but the Rebbe pointed in the direction of the *Aron*, indicating that they should look there instead.

Shabbos Farbrengens

As is his custom over the past years, the Rebbe farbrenged every Shabbos, with many beautiful *sichos* and interesting occurrences each time.

On Shabbos Parshas Noach, the Rebbe began by stating that this is the first ordinary Shabbos of the year, and he therefore would like to remind everyone once again about the importance of gathering together each Shabbos to study Torah—a practice instituted by Moshe Rabbeinu. (The Rebbe had spoken about this at the surprise farbrengen of Rosh Hashanah, the first Shabbos of the year.)

Almost the entire farbrengen was dedicated to this subject. In the second *sicha*, the Rebbe took this a step further saying that even if one spends Shabbos alone, or in the presence of non-Jews, he should take time on Shabbos to do a “gathering” within himself, bringing together the “*esser Kochos Hanefesh*” (the 10 intellectual and emotional faculties of the soul).

The next Shabbos, Parshas Lech Lecha, the Rebbe spoke about this again.

It was a very special farbrengen in many ways: The Rebbe spoke much louder than he has been in recent months, and the presence of a large group of French-Canadian guests from Montreal made things very lively. During the second *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about this group, concluding that, “The guests should create a storm (“*mach’n ah tumel*”); give them *l’chaim!*” The group sang the *niggun* of *Ha’aders V’ha’emuna* (to the tune of the French anthem), and the Rebbe vigorously encouraged their singing.

The Rebbe also added more detailed instructions as to what to study at the weekly Shabbos gatherings he’s been speaking about, explaining that it should be something on the weekly Parsha. The Rebbe said that because the objective of the gathering is to bring people together, the best thing to study is *Pnimiyus haTorah*, the soul of the Torah, that unites us all. *Maamarim* should be chosen for each Parsha, for example the *maamarim* of the Tzemach Tzedek in Ohr HaTorah, which cover every Parsha of the year.

The Rebbe concluded the farbrengen with a very interesting new *hora’ah*:

In addition to increasing Torah study as stated, there should also be an increase in giving tzedakah. Every educational institution and every organization in general should get together once a week and give each of their students or employees a coin for tzedakah. Best would be to have this done on Friday, before everyone leaves for Shabbos, this way the students and employees will bring the coins home and encourage family members to give tzedakah as well.

Interestingly, the Rebbe added that this should be done in non-Jewish organizations too. According to many opinions, the mitzvah of tzedakah is included in the *Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach*, and it is the bedrock of a healthy society in general. In this country especially, we have seen how tzedakah is practiced by the non-Jews as a most important value.

Kinus Hashluchim

Towards the end of the month, the International Kinus Hashluchim took place, bringing a festive mood to 770.

On Tuesday, 23 Cheshvan, the Rebbe went home for the first time in a while (the Rebbe had been staying at 770 most of the time in those years), and stayed there till Friday afternoon.

When the Rebbe davened Shacharis at his home on Friday morning, only the Shluchim were allowed in.

Later that day, the Rebbe came down for Mincha in his house wearing new shoes for the first time in over 20 years!

After Mincha, the Rebbe left for 770, where he would spend Shabbos.

On Shabbos afternoon, the Rebbe held a farbrengen as usual, dedicating much of the *sichos* to the subject of the Kinus Hashluchim and *shlichus* in general.

The Rebbe also spoke about the Siyum HaRambam taking place this week (the conclusion of the sixth cycle of *Shloscha Perokim* and the second cycle of *Perek E Chad*) encouraging everyone to join and not to think that their presence there is not needed.

In the last *sicha*, the Rebbe gave a special instruction about the Kinus Hashluchim: An album should be published with photographs of all the Shluchim and their families, as well as *divrei Torah* shared during the Kinus. In this manner, when they return to their posts, they’ll remind themselves about the time they were together with everyone in unity at the Kinus. Even the children, who may not understand what is written in the book, will be able to enjoy the photographs and gain inspiration from them.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed bottles of *mashke* to people making events in the coming week. Due to the Kinus Hashluchim, the Rebbe distributed a total of 35 bottles, for events that included: the Rosh Chodesh Kislev *seuda* at 770; the Siyum HaRambam taking place on Sunday in Manhattan;



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 227080

RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY DISTRIBUTES MASHKE FROM THE REBBE TO THE SHLUCHIM.



MR. DAVID CHASE ADDRESSES THE KINUS.



THE SHLUCHIM GATHER FOR THE ANNUAL GROUP PHOTO.

THE KINUS
HASHLUCHIM 5750
BANQUET IN THE
OHOLEI TORAH
BALLROOM.



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the Siyum HaRambam taking place in Morocco, and more. For the Siyum in Morocco, Reb Leibel Raskin approached to take the bottle, and when he announced the purpose of the bottle, the Rebbe said that he should add that this bottle would also be distributed at the Siyum HaRambam in the house in Morocco where the Rambam had lived! The Rebbe also gave a small bottle of *mashke* to Hatomim Yossi Hodakov, to give to his grandfather, the Rebbe's *mazkir*.

At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe gave the plate of Mezonos to Rabbi Shmuel Butman to be distributed at Sunday's Siyum HaRambam.

On Sunday afternoon, while Rabbi Krinsky was driving the Rebbe to the Ohel, the Rebbe asked him, "*Al mi natashta hamelucha?*" (With whom did you leave the rulership—i.e. the responsibility for the Kinus Hashluchim). Rabbi Krinsky responded that all the shluchim had gone to Manhattan to participate in the grand Siyum HaRambam, and the Rebbe said that he had already heard an initial report that the distinguished rabbis and guests have already arrived. Rabbi Krinsky said that it seems like the venue is too small; people are lining up outside awaiting their turn to enter.

That night, the Rebbe spoke a beautiful *sicha* about the Kinus Hashluchim Ha'Olam, beginning with the fact that he considered it a personal "*zechus*" to be able to participate in the Kinus. The Rebbe spoke about the tremendous influence of the shluchim all over the world, as the name

of the conference suggests "*Olam*"—international (lit.: the world-over), including influence over the non-Jewish world to live a more divine life, with justice and charity.

Following the *sicha*, the Rebbe distributed dollars. Although the distributions after Maariv are generally very quick and not a time for conversations, this time the Rebbe spoke to a few individuals:

Harav Pinchas Hirschprung of Montreal, who had spoken at the Siyum HaRambam in Manhattan approached the Rebbe, and reported about how successful the event had been, and what a Kiddush Hashem and Kiddush Lubavitch it was. The Rebbe said [that although he already heard reports] it was something else to hear it from one of the "*baalei simcha*" themselves.

Mr. David Chase, who was scheduled to address the Kinus Hashluchim later that evening, approached the Rebbe. The Rebbe held his hand warmly and spoke with him for a while, wishing him success with his speech. Mr. Chase told the Rebbe that he thinks about the Rebbe every day, and that when he does, it reminds him to always strive to do more and better.

When Rabbi Shlomo Cunin approached, the Rebbe waved his hand in encouragement; then after he walked a few steps away the Rebbe looked back at him and waved his hand several more times.

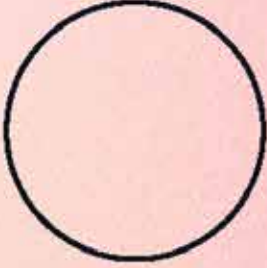
Thus concluded a special month in the Rebbe's presence in the year of "Shnas Nissim." **1**

לעילוי נשמת
שיינא גאלדא ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א ר' מיכאל
הלוי שיח' גוטלייזער
גלב"ע כ"ח אלול ה'תשע"ו
תנ"צ'בה

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

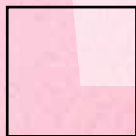
The Rebbe's Guidance for Emotional Wellness

BASED ON THE FIRST CHAPTERS
OF *LETTERS FOR LIFE*, BY
LEVI SHMOTKIN



Some possible advice
for your moods:
Reflect on the fact that
every person is a shliach
of Hashem to do good
and increase good in
His world . . . through
living daily life based on
Shulchan Aruch; gradual
self-education; and
working to help those
in your surroundings .
. . . May Hashem grant
you and your husband
success in bringing the
potential given to you to
actuality, and to serve
Hashem with joy.

— *Excerpt of a letter from the Rebbe to
a woman experiencing dejection*



Preventive Medicine

There are two methods of healing. The first is to wait until a person becomes ill, G-d forbid, and then look for ways to cure them. This involves significant financial expenses and emotional pain for the patient, their family, and those who care for them, who are now struggling with an illness, G-d forbid.

But there is another way, as the Possuk states: “All the diseases I put on Egypt I will not put on you [to begin with], for I am Hashem your healer.”¹ He is a healer who ensures that from the outset, “I will put no [illness] on you...”

Chazal teach us that the “Torah brings healing to the world.”² And the way the Torah heals is that from the outset, “I will put no [illness] on you...” creating a world where there is no illness, only health.

– 12 Tammuz 5733; Toras Menachem vol. 73, p. 38.

In light of the above *sicha*, two important introductory notes.

The Rebbe consistently emphasized the importance—and advantage—of preventive medicine. He critiqued approaches that focus exclusively on treating illness instead of pouring equal resources into fortifying stable health, preventing suffering to begin with. Therefore, an exploration of the Rebbe’s guidance for emotional wellness must begin not with problems, but with the mindsets and habits that keep us strong in the first place. These are the core concepts we will discuss.

However, this article *does not* address how to approach mental and emotional *illnesses*. For the treatment of physical illness, the Rebbe would usually invoke the Torah’s instruction *v’rapo yerapei*, explaining that the Torah empowers a doctor to heal. Similarly, in the realm of emotional health. In many letters the Rebbe would advise individuals struggling with a mental illness to get psychological or psychiatric care (often adding that it is vital for the professional to be a *Yarei Shamaim*³).

When a licensed psychologist asked the Rebbe “if a

therapist carries the status of a physician according to the Shulchan Aruch” the Rebbe responded (5747 English letter, Mindel Archive): “Anyone who is trained (and formally attested) to bring therapeutic relief to a human being has the status of a physician in that area of his training and expertise. Furthermore, since medical science has become so specialized, the area of therapy, and also dietetics, have in recent years been researched and systematized, etc., much in the same way as an eye doctor and an ear doctor have become specialists in their particular field...”

Thus, this article is focused on *preventive medicine*, the pillars of health that create a human being on whom “I will put no [illness to begin with], for I am Hashem your healer.”

“The Torah brings healing to the world.” Far from seeing a tension between Torah and mental health, the Rebbe taught that within the treasuries of *emuna* and Chassidus lie the strongest, most stable foundations for a healthy psyche. In various letters the Rebbe showed where the Torah teaches us these pillars of emotional stability, and how implementing its lessons in daily life make for a happy, healthy existence.

With this in mind, let’s begin.

Menachem Eini, a young Israeli fighter pilot, was taken captive in 5730 after his plane was downed by an Egyptian anti-aircraft missile. For three long years, he languished in Egypt in horrific conditions with nine other Israeli POWs. Finally, after the Yom Kippur War in 5734, a prisoner exchange was arranged, and he was able to return to his family in Eretz Yisroel.

Despite Eini's joy in reuniting with his wife and children, he found it increasingly difficult to return to normal life. He later recalled:

"Outwardly, I was productive and energetic. In fact, I was held up as a model of recovery and resilience. Inside, however, I was hiding a terrible inner fatigue. I would look around and see people at ease with themselves while I felt profoundly restless. Any noise would irritate me. Even music became an intolerable clamor. I could find no peace." A friend of his recognized that he was suffering and advised him to seek a *yechidus* with the Rebbe.

In the Rebbe's room, for the first time since his release a few months earlier, Eini unburdened himself. "The memories

were very painful," he recounted, "and I think people who've gone through a traumatic experience often prefer to suppress the trauma as much as possible. Yet here I was recounting these memories, without feeling a drop of pain or shame, if there was even anything to be ashamed of."

As Eini shared his months and years of trauma—the loss of his co-pilot, his fear of imminent death, the never-ending interrogations, the years in captivity, the shock of freedom, the anxious anticipation, the surreal reunion, the visits with families of friends who didn't survive—the Rebbe gently encouraged him to share more.

At the end of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe advised Eini to write a memoir of his time in captivity. "Unfortunately," the Rebbe explained, "you will probably not be Israel's last prisoner of war, and others who will be taken captive will benefit from reading about your experience."

"He was absolutely and totally present," Eini reflected, "sharing my burden with me. I was speaking to him, but also to myself; I was bringing things to the surface from deep inside me that I would otherwise never tell anyone, not even myself. His listening the way he did helped me heal from the experiences of captivity. I even had my first healthy laugh. I discovered that a person can be addressed fully through silence and listening alone. I needed this meeting like oxygen.



MENACHEM EINI (3RD FROM LEFT) IS GREETED UPON HIS RETURN TO ISRAEL AFTER THREE YEARS AS A PRISONER OF WAR

When I left, I felt more reflective, more connected to myself. I was able to revisit my time in captivity, and begin to relate to it without fear. I felt like a stone had rolled off my chest.”

Eini later recounted a special moment in this fateful *yechidus*: “I told the Rebbe that one of my challenges while in captivity was the pressure from the incessant togetherness. Even as I engaged in personal work, like drawing, writing poetry, or journaling, I knew I wasn’t alone, and others could always look at what I was doing. ‘It was always crowded in the room,’ I said, ‘being together all the time, without even

a minute to yourself...’

“After a moment of silence, the Rebbe remarked: ‘And yet, despite the togetherness, everyone was left with their own loneliness.’

“I looked at him for a moment and thought: How does he know that?! But I knew he was right. And I also realized that he had insight into how a person could overcome this universal loneliness. Today, many years later, I sometimes think that the Rebbe would want me to find this path, too...”⁴



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM10862 (11YAR 5749)

Know You Are Not Alone

RootsⁱⁿTorah⁵

“Hashem is my shepherd; I shall lack nothing... Even when I walk in the valley of darkness, I will fear no evil for You are with me... Only goodness and kindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of Hashem for the length of days.”

Tehillim Perek 23

“*Dovid Hamelech*, finding himself in a dismal situation, said, ‘I will fear no evil—for You are with me,’ and because of this [attitude], Dovid triumphed over all adverse circumstances.

“This story was included in the Torah—the word ‘Torah’ coming from the word *horaah*—because it serves as a lesson for every Jew, wherever they may find themselves, that if only they hold steadfast onto the awareness that ‘You are with me,’ it will lead to the conclusion of the *pasuk* that ‘only goodness and kindness will follow me all the days of my life.’”

Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 133

“What is happening in our home now? I thought. This question overwhelmed me. Knowing thoroughly the character, nature, and behavior of each individual, I was able to imagine the general picture—

“The tears of my honorable mother. The pale, apprehensive face and deep inner anguish of my wife, and her silent cry. The broken hearts and terror of my bewildered daughters... And who knows what is happening with all of our friends, the Chassidim. How are they doing? This image swept over me, and a stream broke from my eyes. Hot tears rolled down my face. My whole body shivered...”

“Halt those ruminations! These words flashed in my mind and lit up my thoughts like a bolt of lightning—What about Hashem? True, I am a son, I am a husband,

I am a father, I am a father-in-law, I love, and I am loved; they are all dependent upon me, but I and they in turn are dependent upon G-d Who spoke and created the world... At this moment, I was liberated from the mire and dread of my situation. I ascended to the starry heavens with thoughts beyond the confines of finite, physical existence. I was bolstered by pure faith and absolute trust in the living G-d...

“These thoughts revitalized my spirit and strengthened me immensely. I forgot my present state, and sat in complete calm. My thoughts began to settle... I came to the firm resolve to be strong and courageous, without fear. To speak with a clear voice and disregard my surroundings. This determined resolution raised my spirits and self-respect. I sat like I was in a garden, or strolling in the breeze. The sunlight lit up the white wall across me...”

The Frierdiker Rebbe in Reshimas Hamaasar (diary of his imprisonment), Sefer Hasichos 5687 p. 194

“I want to respond to what you wrote that you are alone. We would often hear from my saintly father-in-law, of blessed memory (whose fiftieth anniversary of liberation we celebrated this week...), that a Jew is never alone; the Almighty G-d oversees each and every person individually, even over the smallest details of their life...

“In the journal he wrote about his imprisonment, my father-in-law describes how this idea—that the Creator and Conductor of the universe watches over everyone individually—gave him the strength and courage to rise above despair even while being in an awful prison, in a terrible situation... And this fortified him to endure all the interrogations and suffering with his head held high and with pride.

“His intention in committing these memories to writing, which he requested to be published, was that every individual [who reads] these records learn from them and act similarly in their own lives. And although who can compare themselves to his exalted persona... nevertheless, after he granted us a living example and paved the way for us, this is now accessible to every individual in their own personal situation. Especially since the difficulties we face in our lives do not compare to the type of adversity he overcame.”

Igros Kodesh vol. 32 p. 257

“Once, at some time in the years 5544-5547 (1784-1787), a group of early Chassidim farbrenging together spoke of how their Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe, had done away with loneliness. In previous eras, a Rebbe — a rosh yeshiva or a gaon — was alone, and his disciples were alone. The path of Chassidus blazed by the Alter Rebbe brought about an awesome G-dly innovation: the Rebbe is not alone and the Chassidim are not alone.”

Hayom Yom 22 Iyar

On an elementary level, when we think of loneliness, we think of the absence of human interaction, the craving we feel to be with others when we're alone. However, as Eini experienced, feeling lonely can mean something deeper than simply wanting to be with other humans. Even when surrounded by many friends, it is possible to feel alone on life's journey—to feel that no one is really with us, that there's no one who truly knows and pays attention to what's going on inside our hearts. Despite the best intentions of the people we spend time with, we might still feel like we carry the burden of life entirely on our own.

The Rebbe believed that filling this void was critical to being a healthy human being. As he wrote to a 17 year old bochur:

To feel not alone in life (with only you on one side and the entire world on the other) is the most important thing of all. A person's entire sense of fulfillment and contentment is dependent on it...

However, despite living in an age of round-the-clock connection, people feel increasingly isolated and alone. It appears that, ultimately, “despite the togetherness, everyone is left with their own loneliness.”

So what can help us fill this gnawing void?

The letter continues:

For those who think deeply into their personal world, the only way to truly counter the sense of being alone in life [“with only you on one side and the entire world on the other”], is with an awareness of the Creator and Conductor of the world, who is ever-present in the world, even today—in the expression of Chazal, “within ten tefachim of the ground” [i.e., within our own lived reality].⁶

In a letter to a woman who struggled with loneliness (she was apparently a teacher in her twenties), the Rebbe explained:

Surely you know the saying that “Chasidut accomplished that a person not be lonely.” If this was said even regarding the relationship between a Chasid and his Rebbe, all the more so is this true regarding the relationship between one person and another. And certainly regarding the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people.

This is better understood in light of the foundational teaching of our Torah, the Torah of life, about Hashem's individual providence—which means, quite literally, that Hashem closely oversees every detail of a person's life with individual attention. And His providence and His blessings and His nurture are one and the same, because they are sourced in He Who is simple Oneness.

From these ideas emerge—and these ideas inform—a person's practical, emotional, and intellectual approach to life: Every individual finds themselves in a world (composed of human, animal, plant, and inanimate kingdoms, each consisting of multitudes of beings) that he or she influences, and is simultaneously influenced by them as well... Thus, every being is full of meaning, at least potentially, and it is up to the individual person to activate this meaning so that it moves from potential to actuality...

Especially in your case, where divine providence has put you in the field of educating Jewish children, Hashem's children. Every good step you take with your students creates an eternal closeness between you and them, a



LEV/FREDIN VIA JEM165668 (5 CHESHVAN 5752)

spiritual and sacred bond that is also tangibly positive and meaningful. When it comes to such a bond, the distance of space does not and cannot create a barrier, and no severance of this bond is possible (which is why it remains eternal).

In other words, when you sit in your room and find yourself overcome with loneliness, and at the very same time one of your students reviews a lesson they heard from you, or makes a bracha as you taught them, [physical distance notwithstanding.] this increases the vitality and light in your bond with each other; and it is impossible that your neshama not feel this increase, because it is part of your neshama's very essence; and the neshama, in turn, is the deepest, innermost part of a person...⁷

Irving Block was a philosophy student at Harvard University in the mid-1950s when he was drawn to the Rebbe and came to learn in 770 for a period. Throughout Block's time in New York, the Rebbe would ask him about his mother, who had been widowed at a young age and lived in Nashville, Tennessee.

One day, Block's mother traveled to New York and told her son that she wanted to meet the Rebbe he had told her so much about. Block was able to arrange a *yechidus*, but she told him not to accompany her; she wanted to go in alone. After the *yechidus*, she told him what she had discussed with the Rebbe: that she had two sisters, both married, but she was very much alone. "On Friday nights when I light Shabbos candles, I'm all by myself, and I feel very lonely."

Block was embarrassed by his mother's words, feeling that it was inappropriate to approach the Rebbe that way, particularly at a first *yechidus*. But the Rebbe, it turned out, didn't feel that way at all. He simply told her, "You don't have to feel lonely. *Der Aibershter is alle mol mit dir*—Hashem is with you at all times."

Block recalls: "My mother came out and she was calm." After that day, whenever he asked his mother how she was feeling, she would answer, "Come on now, Hashem is always with me." Indeed, she told her son that from the time that the Rebbe told her those words, she was not lonely in the same way anymore.

See Others

Roots *in* Torah

“More than the giver does for the poor man, the poor man does for the giver.”

Midrash Rabbah, Rus 5:9

“When you do a favor for another person, whatever type of favor it may be, our Chachamim say about this that ‘More than the giver does for the poor man, the poor man does for the giver.’”

Igros Kodesh vol. 9 p. 47

“Hashem created the world in a way that every creation is both a receiver and a giver.”⁸

“A brief reflection will clearly reveal that the universe we live in is ordered in a system of give and take, and the personal universe of the individual (the microcosm) must likewise conform to this system of reciprocal relationship. Consequently, when one disrupts or distorts this system [by thinking only of their own needs], it must necessarily bring about a distortion in one’s immediate surroundings, and especially in one’s inner life.”

English Letter 5721

Recognizing that “*der Aibershter is alle mol mit dir*” helps us feel less alone on the winding journey of life. But that is not enough. We must see that other people are along for the ride as well.

The importance of turning one’s mind and heart toward others was a central theme in the Rebbe’s counseling. In addition to fulfilling the Torah’s foundational principle of “*V’ahavta l’reiacha kamocha*,”⁹ he believed it could have a transformative effect on one’s personal well-being. A *maaneh* to a woman who had been through a lot in her life reads as follows:

Many people whose life experiences are similar to yours (with regard to suffering, etc.) have found relief through regularly and consistently devoting their energy, time, and emotional attention to assisting others who find themselves in distress or in a state of confusion. This has helped them perceive and value their lives in an entirely new way (their joy of living increased, their self-confidence increased, they found new meaning in life, etc.).¹⁰

One of the important ways helping others can improve our well-being is by freeing our minds. As the Rebbe writes in an English letter to a young man who wrote of his dark ruminations:

You are much too wrapped up with yourself, with your own emotions and feelings and aspirations. . . . You must get away from yourself, and begin to think of others. It is time to begin an active participation in society; to give, and give generously. The opportunities are many, and the need is great.¹¹

Taibel Lipskier was born to a family of Chassidim in the tumultuous first years of Communist Russia. Her mother died at a young age, leaving her to care for her younger siblings. Eventually, she married, and after years of hardship, the couple and their children escaped the Soviet Union. After spending time in various displaced persons camps, they finally made it to the United States.

Life wasn’t easy for new immigrants. After a failed attempt at farming in New Jersey, they relocated to Brooklyn. Making a living sufficient to sustain a family was a constant challenge—by then there were ten children. Naturally, the upheavals of her life took their toll on Lipskier, and she suffered from anxiety and depression. She decided to consult the Rebbe for guidance on how to improve her psychological and emotional state.

The Rebbe gave her unexpected advice: “Go to as many weddings as possible and dance, and inspire other people

to dance too.”

As it happens, Lipskier was an exceptionally skilled dancer. She followed the Rebbe’s advice, and for decades she would go to every possible wedding and dance the night away.

“She lived in Brooklyn,” her grandson explained, “where at the time, there were many young women getting married who had little or no family in attendance. My grandmother would show up and dance, sometimes for hours, with the bride and her friends, bringing immense joy to the wedding.”

“It wasn’t like she was outgoing by nature,” her grandson observed. “It was actually quite contrary to her nature. But she constantly did it, and she did it with every fiber of her being. And ultimately, we saw how the joy she brought to

hundreds and thousands of people over long decades came back to her; we saw how it gave her so much joy and strength and fortitude and resilience.”

Thinking about it all these years later, he reflected: “Many of us are dealing with anxiety or unresolved wounds. We want to extricate all that darkness from our system, from our psyche, from our environment and home. But sometimes, the most effective solution is not to fight the darkness but to kindle a flame of joy—by dancing and inspiring other people to dance. In that dance, with the pure intent of bringing joy to others, a passion of fire and warmth is created in us and around us, causing the darkness to dissipate and be banished.”



18 CHESHVAN 5725

Recognize Your Unique Role

RootsⁱⁿTorah

“I place Hashem before me always; this is a major principle in the Torah... For a person’s way of sitting, his movements, and his dealings while he is alone in his house are not like his way of sitting, his movements, and his dealings when he is before a great king... All the more so when one takes to heart that the Great King, the Holy One, Blessed Is He, Whose glory fills the earth, is standing over him and watching his actions... And one should not be ashamed because of people who mock him in his service of Hashem... And as soon as he wakes up, he will rise eagerly to the service of Hashem...”

Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 1:1

“Needless to say, the *Shulchan Aruch*, being a codex of laws, does not engage in nice phrases and euphemisms for their own sake, but every word is chosen and significant and of practical importance. So too, in regard to the above quotation... It calls for a few moments of reflection when getting up in the morning, and from time to time during the day, that one is always in the

presence of G-d, and this is a very effective method of being able to control one’s daily behavior in every good way.

“The above is also the answer to the matter of *atzvut* [‘dejection’], which you mention in your letter. Such a feeling is often the result of thinking oneself unimportant, and therefore it is of no consequence how one acts or behaves, leading one to become apathetic and discouraged. But realizing that one is in the presence and company of the King of kings, whom the King has honored and privileged with very important tasks, this emphasizes the importance of every individual.

“In your case, the emphasis is even greater, inasmuch as you have the ability and opportunity to influence many other persons directly as well as indirectly by showing a living example, which also gives you a special *zechut* [merit] if you will realize all your potentials in this way...”

English letter dated 6 Teves, 5737

The Rebbe taught that a critical pillar of a healthy psyche is the knowledge that we each have a unique *shlichus* and purpose on earth.¹²

In a letter to a couple working in the Israeli army, who wrote of their despondent moods and how their lives felt gray and insignificant, the Rebbe writes:

Some possible advice for your [dejected] moods: Reflect on the fact that every person is a shliach of Hashem to do good and increase good in His world. This is typically not accomplished through revolutions or roaring self-sacrifice, but rather through living daily life based on Shulchan Aruch; gradual self-education; and activism

*to help those in your surroundings, even if most of these activities are labeled by the world as “gray” and “insignificant.” All of this is possible on the “gray” days in the army as well. May Hashem grant you and your husband success in bringing the potential given to you to actuality, and to serve Hashem with joy.*¹³

Ruth Benjamin grew up in South Africa to Christian parents. In her twenties, she converted to Judaism and later developed a relationship with the Rebbe. A clinical psychologist by profession, she consulted with the Rebbe in person on how to counsel patients who questioned the value of their lives.

Benjamin recalled: “Regarding my Jewish patients, he said that I should tell them that following the Holocaust, with so many millions of our people murdered, those alive today have a double duty. They must live not only for themselves, but also for those who are not here. When they realize this, they will find that their own turmoil will be eased.

“Regarding my patients who aren’t Jewish, the Rebbe said I must explain to them that they have obligations in this world. All human beings are mandated by the Torah to fulfill the

Seven Laws of Noah.

“I cited a suicidal patient of mine (who wasn’t Jewish), whom I managed to get to the hospital in time, saving his life. Afterward, he came to me and said, ‘You are responsible for my being alive. Now give me something to live for.’ I had not known how to answer him, and I asked the Rebbe what I should say to a patient like this.

“‘Tell him that he is part of Hashem’s world,’ the Rebbe responded. ‘And that means he has to answer to Hashem.’”

Build Healthy Habits

In order to fulfill our unique *shlichus* in life and “answer to Hashem,” we need to be functioning well on the most basic of levels.

Intuitively we might assume that toxic thoughts or feelings result from the emotional aspects of our lives. Family dynamics, childhood trauma, or social rejection are some of the factors we might consider, and for good reason. However, in our search for deeper insight, we may overlook the practical details of our daily lives.

A recurring theme in the Rebbe’s counseling is that every person has mundane needs upon which their mental health depends, and when deprived of these necessities, their psyche suffers. Therefore, disturbing thoughts and emotions, even when they take a seemingly alarming turn, can actually be symptoms of neglecting those simple needs that are the basis for stable mental health. Some of these needs are: physical self-care, an occupation, a schedule, and social engagement.

The Need for Physical Care

Roots in Torah

“A person does not have the authority to hurt their body...”

Shulchan Aruch Harav Hilchot Nizkei Guf Venefesh, seif 4

“It is certainly superfluous to elaborate on the necessity of listening to the directives of the doctor... The central idea here is, in the words of *Chazal*, that a person does not have the ownership to hurt their body, because the body belongs to Hashem—an amazing expression which, with even brief reflection, is absolutely mind-boggling. And may it be that this profound teaching of *Chazal* should have its desired effect on you to be more careful with your health...”

Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 203

“A small hole in the *guf* is a big hole in the *neschama*”

Letter from the Maggid to Reb Avrohom HaMalach

In a letter to a middle-aged man, the Rebbe writes the following:

It appears that you are not properly taking care of your bodily health. Naturally, it is impossible that this won’t also affect your emotional health, as explained in the well-known teaching of the Maggid to his son, that “a

small hole in the body causes a big hole in the soul.” Therefore, if you will take my advice, you should watch your health in the most literal sense—eating, drinking, sleeping, and so on—and this will be good for you spiritually as well.¹⁴

The Need to Work

Roots*in*Torah

“Man is born to toil.”

Iyov 5:7

“When the porters of *mechuza* wouldn’t work—they would become ill.”

Bava Metzia 77a

“The *possuk* in Iyov teaches us that ‘man is born to toil.’ For a person to remain mentally and emotionally healthy, he must labor and feel the sense of work and accomplishment. The Gemara tells us about the porters of Mechoza that when they were unable to do their work of carrying loads, they became ill. The same is true of all of us: Hashem created us in such a way that to be emotionally well, we must be engaged in productive activity.”

Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2, p. 316

Productive activity—be it a job, learning Torah, or raising a family—should not be viewed as capitulation to the practical demands of life. It is not an obstacle to inner peace to discard as soon as circumstances allow, but rather a significant component of our mental health. Sometimes the solution to emotional problems might, in fact, lie in shoring up the occupational areas of life.

In a letter to a Californian father and businessman, the Rebbe writes:

Following the pleasure of our meeting, I wish to add here in writing some thoughts which, for obvious reasons, I did not wish to express in the presence of others, namely, in regard to your son.... I believe that the best help that can be given your son, in general, is to get him to work. I should only add that in view of the fact that this would entail a change in your son’s way of life for a period of

time, it would be well if his job would, in the first stage at any rate. . . not impose on him too much responsibility, so that he will not be frightened or discouraged by it.

If it is the kind of work which he might consider beneath him, it might be explained to him that it is only a start, and temporary, and, indeed, the first step to advancement. It is well known that here in the U.S.A., people at the top often take pride in the fact that they worked their way up from the bottom of the ladder. After he adjusts himself to a part-time occupation of several hours a day, he could probably be induced to work half a day and in due course a full-time job. Needless to say, the above is in addition to what we spoke about—the importance of his feeling that his parents and friends have the fullest confidence in him.¹⁵

The Need for Structure

Roots*in*Torah

“The *shoresh* of Yaakov is *Tikkun*, and the *shoresh* of Eisav is *Tohu*. The *oros* of *tohu* were very strong, and they were unable to be confined to *keilim*, and thus they left the *keilim*, and the *keilim* broke and fell down, which is why Eisav was a *Rasha*.”

Torah Ohr, Vayishlach 24:1



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 101691 (2 AV 5737)

“Generally speaking, a person’s life needs to be specifically in an orderly fashion. And specifically such is the way of *kedusha*, in contrast to *sitra achra* which functions in a chaotic manner. And I mean order in all areas—waking up, studying Torah, eating and drinking, etc. and, certainly and importantly, with regards to your relationship at home, for ‘great is the peace between husband and wife for then Hashem’s presence rests amongst them.’”¹⁶

Igros Kodesh vol. 20, p. 315

“Internal harmony is dependent on living an ordered life externally too,” the Rebbe explains in a handwritten *maaneh*. If we improvise every day—waking up, working, studying, or socializing with no rhythm at all—our thoughts and emotions will be similarly disjointed.

In a *maaneh* to a man who bemoaned his confused state of mind, the Rebbe writes:

Naturally (and this can’t be changed), for a person to be successful in what they do—and in general, to act

*correctly, to know what they truly want, to make good decisions, etc.—one must have as much peace of mind and body as possible. This requires living a properly organized life in the literal sense of the word. For a Jew, this means living day to day as detailed in Shulchan Aruch, and having a proper schedule also for mundane activities (eating, drinking, learning, etc.).*¹⁷

Living with structure is also vital for inner satisfaction. When we create a schedule, we dedicate time to what’s really

important and commit ourselves to systematically pursuing it, no matter our frame of mind. Otherwise, it's hard to escape the hollow feeling that much of what we do is motivated by fleeting impulses. In the Rebbe's words:

For a person to feel that they are truly doing objective good (and not only satisfying their momentary desire)—self-discipline and a structured lifestyle are a necessity.

In a letter to a young woman, the Rebbe writes:

As to your request for actionable advice, based on how you described [your present habits], you should begin organizing your life in a manner that accustoms you to having a structured daily routine. Doing so will make it easier for you to embark on a stable course, practice self-discipline, and have your mind govern your emotions effectively.

It appears that a primary contributor to your present

mental state is the disarray and instability in your life's external facets—which then mirror themselves internally, [unsettling] your inner self, your emotions, and so on. Since it is difficult to adjust to an orderly lifestyle after a long period of scatteredness, one strategy to ease this transition is to create an external motivator—by this I mean to take a job (or a similar commitment) where you know that you're accountable to others to accomplish consistent work during established hours.

Reading between the lines of your letter, it appears that you assume your state of mind is the symptom of serious subconscious issues. However, in my opinion, the primary causes are the above-mentioned two points—conduct in accordance with the Torah, and living a structured life. When you mend the above (little by little, at least), your disposition will significantly improve, perhaps even becoming completely restored.¹⁸

The Need for Social Engagement

Roots*in*Torah

“It is not good for man to be alone.”

Bereishis 2:18

“Human beings are not isolationist by nature, and ‘it is not good for man to be alone.’ People naturally search for a social life in which, and through which, and with the help of which, they can actualize their own completion.”

Igros Kodesh vol. 23, p. 264

“Man is innately a social being. Unlike [some] other animals for whom banding together is not a necessity, it is human nature to seek out society.”

Moreh Nevuchim 2:40

“Rav Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rav Yohanan: The Possuk says, ‘I will be sanctified [specifically] among the children of Israel.’ Every act of *Kedusha* should not be done with less than ten.”

Megillah 23b

In a 5719 letter to a young woman, the Rebbe writes:

I have received your letter where you describe your [negative] state of mind, etc. I believe I have already written to you several times that in my opinion—which I have also seen borne out in reality—every person, without exception, is “innately a social being,” though of course not everyone to the same degree. When one tries to behave contrary to this nature, it understandably leads to [emotional] complications, etc.

For those who, for one reason or another, have a difficult time mixing with other people—ultimately, there is no way other than the process of metaphorically “learning how to swim.” It is impossible for a person to begin developing swimming skills before they enter the water. Even if they stand on the river's edge—it is insufficient. They must jump into the water, and then they'll naturally begin learning how to swim. And in the end, they'll



finally master it. However, all the lengthy ruminations while still standing on the riverbank—about how they’ll learn, and what it will entail, and in which particular manner—are futile. For it’s impossible to learn how to swim anywhere else but in the water.

After requesting your apology, it is precisely the same in your situation. You articulate in your letters your arguments for and against taking on an occupation that would involve being in the presence and company of others. However, this entire thought process takes place while you’re sitting in your own room or in your own personal space. Of course, my intention is not to rebuke you; I am only trying again, with the hope that perhaps this time my words will finally have an effect, and you will “jump” into an endeavor that will force you (at least for the first few days) to be among other people outside your home.

I hope that within a short period of time, you will not need to force yourself, and you will see for yourself how much meaning and how much benefit there is to being in other people’s company, [not only for you, but] also for them—for it is not to no purpose that human beings were created with a social nature.

Indeed, how wondrous are the words of Chazal, which are also intended as a practical lesson in our daily lives, that everything sacred must be done in a communal setting. [Similarly,] there is a well-known Chasidic saying,

attributed to several of the great Chasidic Rebbes, that “it is worse to be alone in Gan Eden than in... [Gehinnom] together with others.”¹⁹

Of course, this move toward healthy social engagement might sometimes need to be undertaken in gradual steps. As another letter explains to the teacher of a student going through an emotionally challenging period:

It appears that an important component in his recovery is that he begin re-engaging with others... It is self-understood that my intent is not that he should change suddenly from one extreme to another and begin interacting with others for many hours a day. Rather, he should do this step by step, and with the people with whom he finds it easiest to connect.

However, he should do so with the intent and goal of progressing steadily until he is able to speak and mingle with others naturally and without strain. Together with the above, and this is of paramount importance, he should be strong in the knowledge (which is, in fact, true) that his current situation can be improved one hundred percent, though, as mentioned, it will require a step-by-step approach... Since you took care to communicate his predicament, certainly you will not neglect him [throughout this process], and, ultimately, he too will thank you for your efforts—even if he won’t appreciate them initially.²⁰

Stay in Touch with Your Inner Self

Roots *in* Torah

“Every Jew wants to be part of the Jewish people, and he wants to perform all the mitzvot and eschew all the transgressions; it is only his evil inclination that presses him”

Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Gerushin 2:20.

“And here comes the essential point of the Rambam’s explanation: Every Jew, regardless of his status and station, is essentially willing to do all that he is commanded to do by our Torah. However, sometimes the Yetzer (Hara) prevails over his better judgment and prevents him from doing what he has to do in accordance with the Torah. When, therefore, Beth Din compels a Jew to do something, it is not with a view to creating in him a new desire, but rather to release him from the compulsion which had paralyzed his desire, thus enabling him to express his true self. Under these circumstances, when he declares ‘I am willing,’ it is an authentic declaration.

“To put the above in contemporary terminology: The conscious state of a Jew can be affected by external factors to the extent of including states of mind and even behavior which are contrary to his subconscious, which is the Jew’s essential nature. When the external pressures are removed, it does not constitute a change or transformation of his essential nature, but, on the contrary, merely the reassertion of his innate and true character.

English letter 21 Sivan 5725

“Rabbi Alexandri says: Anyone who engages in the study of Torah for its own sake introduces peace into the heavenly entourage above and into the earthly entourage below.”

Sanhedrin 99b

“The meaning of making peace in the entourage below is that the ‘left side’ becomes included in the ‘right side’—that the *middos* of the *nefesh habehamis* become subservient (*bateil*) to the *middos* of the *Nefesh Haelokis*...”

Likutei Torah Mattos 86d

“True peace is like the Gemoro in Sanhedrin teaches, that ‘Torah makes peace in the world.’ And, as the Gemoro continues to explain, the Torah brings ‘peace into the heavenly entourage above and into the earthly entourage below.’

“The explanation of this Gemoro, according to Chasidus and Musar, is that every person has a *nefesh haelokis* and a *nefesh habehamis*, a *yetzer tov*, and a *yetzer hara*, and they are always in conflict... However, the *yetzer tov* can never concede to the *yetzer hara* because it is a *cheleek elokah mimaal mamash*... it is therefore understood that peace in the ‘lower entourage’ of a person’s inner world, between the *yetzer tov* and the *yetzer hara*, is only possible in one way—when the *yetzer tov* overcomes the *yetzer hara*.”

Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 450

Building healthy habits as described above creates the external framework for a happy, resilient life. But without a strong connection with your innermost self, the structure can easily collapse.

Beyond cultural affiliation and suffering discrimination, the Rebbe taught that Jewish identity is deeply rooted in the subconscious. Therefore, giving expression to this most essential part of you by practicing Judaism has profound

mental health benefits. Suppressing it, wittingly or unwittingly—leaving it hidden somewhere deep inside—leads to inner tension and undesirable outcomes.

One letter²¹ draws a comparison to a person with an intellectual bent whose time is spent entirely in hands-on occupations (say, in the construction industry). He or she might find their daily routine to be stress-free and even enjoyable. However, it is likely that something would be nagging at them. An essential part of them—their intellectual capacity—finds no expression in their conscious existence.

Similarly, when a Jewish person gives no expression to their Jewishness, it creates internal strain. Conversely, when they cultivate it by actively practicing Judaism, it fosters a sense of harmony between their innermost self and their everyday lives. The following letter explains this to a Jewish man who wrote that he lacks inner peace:

It has been explained in our Torah—and this has also been confirmed by modern science—that a surface layer may cover up an essential trait or quality, or, to use modern terminology, the subconscious may be overlaid by the conscious mind.

In such a case, conflicts are inevitable, for man's essence is linked to the deep internal layers and not the surface "cover," which itself is subject to change and under the influence of external forces.

For a Jew to eliminate conflict, it is necessary for him to bring to the fore his inner essence, which is his deep-rooted faith in Hashem. Failing this, he is bound to feel perturbed, even though the cause may be concealed from him. In other words, a Jew must live his daily life in accordance with the Torah and mitzvot—the Jewish way of life—for it is only in this way that he can attain true harmony and peace of mind.

It does, however, require an effort, oftentimes a strenuous effort, and much determination, including at times the sacrifice of certain conveniences, whatever they may be. But considering what is at stake—nothing less than the attainment of peace of mind and inner harmony, and even simple physical health (inasmuch as the physical and the spiritual are interrelated), every effort made in this direction is surely worthwhile and most rewarding. I would suggest that as a start you begin putting on tefillin every weekday morning and that in addition you say at least a short prayer.²²

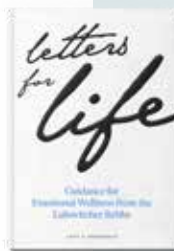
In a letter to the wife of an Israeli writer, the Rebbe writes:

I was delighted to see that your husband has found inner peace through connecting—even deeper—to a worldview

that emanates from our Torah, the Torah of Truth and the Torah of Life; an inner peace that borders on and brings with it also an inner joy, a soulful joy.

It would be superfluous to explain how for a person's life to truly be called "life," inner peace and harmony are a necessity. This is especially true in our times, an era full of upheaval both in the communal life of the public, and the inner life of the private individual...

May you have good news to report about all the above.²³



This article was excerpted and abbreviated from the first section of *Letters for Life*, a new book that examines the Rebbe's *igros* and *yechidus'n* to glean lessons for our own mental and emotional health. The later sections of *Letters for Life* explore the Rebbe's approach to common emotional challenges, such as discontent, anxiety, self-criticism, mood swings, and so on. To learn more, visit chabad.org/lettersforlife.

1. Shemos 15:26.
2. See Eruvin 54a.
3. See, for example, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 22, p. 227; *Ibid.*, vol. 31, p. 338; English letter dated 24 Tammuz, 5726; Here's My Story (JEM) from 27 February 2014, "Do What Your Zeide Says To Do"; Here's My Story (JEM) from 14 March, 2018, "Health Psychiatry."
4. he.chabad.org/395252.
5. The "Roots in Torah" sections contain Torah sources the Rebbe cited as foundations for given emotional health ideas. The section generally includes a quotation of the Torah source as well as a letter from the Rebbe on the subject (unless there is already a letter quoted on the given topic).
6. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 19, p. 439.
7. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 23, p. 359.
8. See *Hisvaaduyos* 5746 vol. 2, p. 612, where the Rebbe articulates many Torah sources for this idea.
9. *Vayikra*, 19:18.
10. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 26, p. 497.
11. English letter, dated Elul 5721.
12. See, for example, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 14, p. 400.
13. *Heichal Menachem* vol. 3, p. 44.
14. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 7, p. 194.
15. English letter dated 12 Nissan, 5734.
16. *Vayikra Rabbah* 9:9, *Sotah* 17a.
17. *Petakim M'shulchan HaRebbe*, vol. 1, p. 123.
18. *Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 24, p. 179.
19. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 18, p. 534.
20. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 19, p. 371.
21. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 17, p. 32.
22. English letter from 5725, published in *Healthy in Body, Mind, and Spirit (SIE)*, Vol. 3, chapter 3, accessible at chabad.org/2308532.
23. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 26, p. 155.

Let's Talk About Eretz Yisroel

THROUGH THE LENS OF THE REBBE'S TORAH

PART 2:
Morale

COMPILED BY:
RABBI MENDEL MISHOLOVIN

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

Special thanks to the Enduring Peace think-tank, JEM and Sichos in English.

Last month we explored the various factors that justify Jewish sovereignty in the territory between Egypt, Jordan and Syria. We concluded that our most logically valid and enduring claim is that this swath of land, known as Eretz Yisroel, was given to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov as an inheritance for their descendants—for eternity. While this is true, we need to appreciate why the knowledge of this claim is crucial for all Yidden to know and live with.

Many Yidden living in Eretz Yisroel wonder why they are living there. It is a tiny country surrounded by over a dozen nations with hundreds of millions of people who seek its destruction. For close to eighty years its neighbors have attacked it repeatedly with deadly force and the worst of intentions, and have failed due to Hashem's kindness and tremendous miracles.

Why bother investing the effort and resources to develop a country so threatened, they wonder. Why should we put our children through the difficulties of serving in an army constantly engaged in battles on multiple fronts? Even if one can make a good living and raise a healthy family here, life without peace is no life. It would be better to live anywhere else in the world without the threat of violence and death so close to home.

The Crux of the Issue

The problem runs deeper than issues of security. Some wonder whether living in Eretz Yisroel is justified in the first place. If our grandparents came to this land as pioneers in the 1800s and eventually displaced some locals, was that just? Rashi, the eternal Torah teacher of every Jewish child, addresses this dilemma at the beginning of his commentary on Chumash, banishing the basis for self-doubt.

On the first possuk of Bereishis, Rashi asks why the Torah, a guide to how we should act, begins with the story of creation and not with the first Mitzvah, *Kiddush Hachodesh*. The answer:

משום כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים (תהילים קיא). שאם יאמרו אמות העולם לישראל לסטים אתם, שכבשתם ארצות שבעה גוים, הם אומרים להם כל הארץ של הקדוש ברוך הוא היא, הוא בראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, ברצונו נתנה להם, וברצונו נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו:

"Because [as it states in Tehillim 111:6] 'The strength of His works He related to His people, to give them the inheritance of the nations.' For if the nations of the world should say to the Jews, 'You are robbers, for you conquered by force the lands of the seven nations of Canaan,' they will reply, 'The entire Earth

belongs to the Hashem; He created it and gave it to whomever He deemed proper. When He wished, He gave it to them, and when He wished, He took it from them and gave it to us.”

Considering that Rashi’s commentary is geared toward the “five-year-old chumash student” (as Rashi declares early in his commentary) and every question, answer and interpretation must be relevant to the child’s life experience, why is the justification for Jewish ownership of Eretz Yisroel such a priority?

Five-year-olds in medieval France were probably not engaged in geopolitical debates with non-Jews about a distant land over which Jews had lost sovereignty a thousand years earlier. But they all knew about Eretz Yisroel, and that despite the lengthy exile we still considered it our land, which presents the child with a moral dilemma. Other people currently live there, and other people certainly lived there before Avraham Avinu appeared. What justification did we have to take it from the Kenaanim in the year 2488 and what claim do we have to it today?

No one wants to be a crook, and especially descendants of Avraham Avinu—renowned for his dedication to justice—want to do what’s right. Perhaps we can be Jews without constantly laying claim to this land with all of the moral baggage such a claim entails. Let’s develop a homeland somewhere else without bothering the current residents.

Rashi therefore sets the record straight on this foundational issue that every Jew must understand from the first day he or she learns Torah. Eretz Yisroel is not just our homeland. Our connection to it is not defined just by our current presence there and not just by our 3,000 years of being there. Eretz Yisroel is a vital component of the everlasting covenant between Hashem and the Jewish nation.

The land originally called Eretz Kenaan was transferred to the Jewish nation by the will of the Creator and became Eretz Yisroel.

Acknowledging that others were there before us and that our claim to the land is by divine mandate and covenant is the true way to appreciate that Eretz Yisroel was never stolen from anyone; we should never apologize for having it.

Eretz Yisroel or Medinat Yisroel

Names matter. By calling the land its traditional age-old name “Eretz Yisroel” we proclaim that our connection to it is by virtue of Hashem’s gift and not due to a UN vote or a document signed by Lord Balfour in 1917. In fact, other claims *weaken* our connection to the land!

Without this awareness the struggle for the land becomes meaningless and we lose morale. Even after winning wars, the guilty conscience of well-meaning people dedicated to “justice” compelled them to rush to return conquered land to our mortal enemies as soon as a ceasefire commenced—even though such an offer endangered millions of Jews.

This does not only impact the Jews living in Eretz Yisroel but also the Jews living throughout the world, especially university students who are constantly being attacked for their affiliation with so-called “occupiers.” Instead of being demoralized and disenchanted with Israel, knowing our eternally true claim to the land protects them from this venomous hatred and its inevitable results.

And if you wonder whether this resonates with the majority of Jews currently living in Eretz Yisroel, consider this story told by Israeli journalist Shlomo Shamir. As a foreign correspondent for the Israeli newspaper Ha’aretz he merited to be in *yechidus* with the Rebbe. Once, after a two-hour *yechidus*, he published a lengthy article with the following quotes.

“Every single Jew living in Israel today is a great believer,” [the Rebbe] said, “sometimes without even knowing it. The Land of Israel is a ‘barrel overflowing with faith,’ just waiting for the spark to ignite it into a great flame.

“Take, for instance, a Jewish man who lives in Eretz Yisrael and is a member of the Communist party. He’s a Communist, right? I believe that he is a great believer. There he is, living with his wife and children in a country surrounded by enemies who wish to annihilate him and his children. What’s keeping this Jew in Eretz Yisrael? Faith in Marxism? No, I don’t think so. He lives in Eretz Yisrael, and every once in a while rises up to defend it, because — perhaps unbeknownst to him — he believes in G-d and in the fact that Eretz Yisrael was given to the People of Israel. We only have to awaken inside of him the awareness of his faith, then guide him into keeping the commandments. We must teach him that observing Shabbat, Kashrus and putting on Tefillin are the natural extension of the faith which is alive inside him.” **T**

NEXT MONTH:

Can we seriously use our biblical claim to Eretz Yisroel when engaging with the non-Jewish world?

Primary Sources: *1 Iyar* 5735; *Toras Menachem* vol. 80, p. 137, *Lag B’Omer* 5738; *Sichos Kodesh* vol. 2, p. 339, *20 Av* 5738; *Sichos Kodesh* vol. 3, p. 276, *Letter to Israeli Journalist Geulah Cohen*, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 26, p. 143, *Letter to Israeli President Zalman Shazar*, *ibid.* p. 166, *chabad.org/66878*.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS
OF CHASSIDIM

MOVING THE OHEL

THE STORY OF THE REBBE
RASHAB'S RESTING PLACE

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

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

The News

It was the winter of 5699, the worst days of Soviet Russia. Stalin's purge was at its height; nightly arrests were made, and millions of people were sent to the Gulag. Countless Chassidim had already disappeared. People were terrified; informers were everywhere, and the slightest slip of tongue could be a death sentence.

One day, shocking news reached the Chassidim in Rostov: the authorities had decided to erect a new complex of buildings and they had found the "perfect" location: the old Jewish cemetery. The gravestones would be removed, and buildings would be erected in their place.

The plan sent a shiver down every chossid's spine. The old cemetery contained the Ohel, the holy ground under which the Rebbe Rashab was interred. The Rebbe's resting place was going to be plowed over.

What to do?

There was no point in approaching the authorities. The Rebbe Rashab was the father of the Frierdiker Rebbe, considered a "mortal threat" to the Soviet cause. There would be no sympathy from the government; the mere thought of bringing up the issue was terrifying.

There was only one solution: to move the Ohel to the "new cemetery," at a different location, which wasn't under

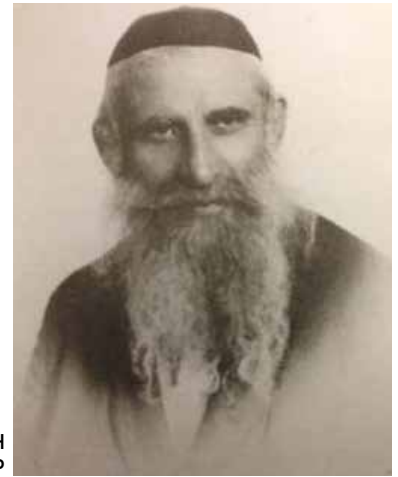
threat—and to do so under a thick veil of secrecy.

The Chassidim were concerned about the potential reaction from the government, but they were even more concerned about the prospect of digging up the Ohel and moving the Rebbe's holy *guf*. Disturbing those who have passed on to eternal rest is something that Halacha does not take lightly, and now they were forced to do so to the Rebbe himself!

There were countless questions. How should they open the *kever*? How should they transport—and re-interr—the Rebbe's holy remains? A secret letter was dispatched to the Frierdiker Rebbe, who was living across the border in Otwock, Poland.

The reply soon arrived to the Chassidim in Charkov, who quickly passed it on to Rostov. The Frierdiker Rebbe approved of the move. For the specifics, the Frierdiker Rebbe instructed them to consult with his *mehutan*, Harav Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, the Rebbe's father, who was still serving as the Rav of Yekaterinoslav; he would be arrested only a few months later.

A Chossid named Reb Moshe Volf Labok—who had served as the Rebbe Rashab's personal shochet—was dispatched to Yekaterinoslav to consult with Harav Levi Yitzchok. He soon returned with instructions and the Chassidim got to work.



REB YONAH
EIDELKOP

The Day Arrived

A minyan of Chassidim gathered secretly. Reb Tzemach Kutman, Reb Mendel Kantor, Reb Moshe Volf, Reb Nachman Lokshin, Reb Avraham Katzenelson, Reb Yonah Eidlkop, and four others. They fasted the entire day, and—with no available *mikvah*—poured *tisha kabin* of water on themselves. A large, sturdy stretcher was procured from the son of a local Jew, and late that night they set out for the cemetery.

It was an especially dark night, and the rain came down in unusually heavy torrents. The ground was covered in snow and ice.

The Chassidim approached the *tziyun* and asked *mechila*, then started digging around the *kever*. After several minutes, they were awestruck; the Rebbe's holy *guf* was complete and unchanged; there was only a small crack that seemed to appear near his heel, which was also slightly askew; Reb Tzemach gently straightened it out. Even the tallis was intact.

Together with three *tefachim* of dirt, they carefully brought up the Rebbe Rashab's *guf* and laid it on the stretcher, which was then covered with a cloth.

At first, the Chassidim planned to carry the stretcher on their shoulders to the new cemetery, but they quickly realized that it was impossible. With three *tefachim* of dirt, the *aron* was incredibly heavy; moreover, the weather was terrible

and the Chassidim were weak from fasting. They needed to find a car.

Reb Yonah Eidelkop decided to go to the government. The official responsible for a fleet of cars was Jewish, the son of an acquaintance, who had become an avowed communist. Of course, it was impossible for Reb Yonah to reveal the true reason for his request; he simply asked for a vehicle to transport a newly deceased person to the cemetery.

At first, the communist official categorically refused. But Reb Yonah persisted; he begged, cajoled, cried, and finally declared that he would not leave the house until the man agreed. Ultimately, he agreed to send a van and a driver.

Reb Yonah quickly directed the driver to the old cemetery where everyone was waiting. They set up a divider between the driver and the rest of the vehicle, and loaded the *aron*, with the Chassidim sitting around it.

The vehicle couldn't fit through the gate of the new cemetery, so the *aron* was placed on their shoulders and carried a considerable distance to the new *kever* that had been dug in advance. The torrential rain did not abate, and they were forced to take several breaks just to catch their breath.

When they finally arrived, they placed the *aron* in the new site, following all of the instructions of Harav Levi Yitzchok carefully. Later, they returned to remove the bodies of Reb Shmuel Gurary and eight other Chassidim, who were each

laid to rest in the same order as they were near the previous Ohel. An intact silk handkerchief was found inside Reb Shmuel's grave; the Chassidim realized that it was the handkerchief the Rebbe Rashab held during *maamarim*, which he had given to Reb Shmuel as a gift.¹ Soon, an Ohel was erected over the site, sponsored by the more well-to-do Lubavitcher Chassidim in Leningrad.²

All seemed to end well, until the truth was discovered by the Communist official and his wife. They were furious; if the scheme was discovered, the man was sure to lose his job or worse. To placate them, Reb Yonah paid their home another visit. He explained the incredible merit they had in protecting the Rebbe Rashab's Ohel, and promised that no harm would befall them.³

The Source

This entire account was related by Reb Yonah Eidelkop, the only participant who managed to leave the Soviet Union. After emigrating, he described the events in a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe which was published at the end of *Ashkavta D'Rebbi*. The names were only printed as initials; several of the participants remain anonymous.⁴

Reb Yonah would later relate that even the Rebbe Rashab's tallis remained complete, covering his holy face and beard. Whenever he would recount the story, he would be overcome with emotion.⁵

However, it seemed that there was another story—of which Reb Yonah himself was unaware.

Rabbi Elyashiv Kaploun served as the Rebbe's shlichus to Rostov for many years. Over the course of his *shlichus*, he published a book called "*BeSoch Hagolah*," chronicling the history of Rostov's Jewish community. In the process of compiling material, he interviewed many of the city's elders.⁶

One interviewee was Reb Eliyahu Friedman, whose childhood years had been spent in Rostov. He was the son of a Tomim from Lubavitch, Reb Mordechai Aharon Friedman.

"One day, some time before my father's imprisonment," he related to Rabbi Kaploun, "my father, along with a few other Chassidim, was involved in transferring the holy body of the Rebbe Rashab to a new burial site nearby.

"I remember that when he came home that evening, my mother offered him some food, but he was too overwhelmed to eat. He told my mother the details of the transfer; he said that the Rebbe Rashab looked as if he was alive, '*a lebediger!*' Even the tallis hadn't moved; it was as if the *kevura* had taken

place that day!

"It was a laborious task to move the many stones from the old site to the new location, which was in the same cemetery, about a hundred meters from the original site. At the new site, there was no longer a stone structure and a *matzeiva*; there was just plain earth."

To Rabbi Kaploun, this was a dramatic discovery. Reb Elyeh Freidman was clearly not speaking of the same event described by Reb Yonah Eidelkop. Reb Elyah's account was about a move within the same cemetery, while Reb Yonah's described a move to a different one. Reb Elyah's father Reb Mordechai Aharon was arrested and sent to Siberia in 5695, five years before the events described by Reb Yonah Eidelkop, and his initials are not included in the letter. Reb Elyeh insisted on his version of the story, and claimed never to have heard the other one.

The History

According to Rabbi Kaploun, there is good reason to believe that Reb Elyah's account is correct, and that prior to the move to the new cemetery, the Ohel was moved within the old cemetery.

In the Frierdiker Rebbe's Igros, there are two letters from 5693-5694 which speak about renovations at the Ohel.⁷ The details of the renovations are unclear, but they might be connected to an earlier incident.

In the early years after the Rebbe Rashab's passing, the home adjacent to the Ohel was occupied by the *shamash* of the cemetery, but he and his family behaved in a manner inappropriate for the holy site. One day, the Frierdiker Rebbe called Reb Shmuel Gurary and said "My father complains that he cannot bear the behavior of the neighbors." Reb Shmuel spoke with the *shamash* and asked him to move to a different location, but he refused.

He soon fell ill. During the Frierdiker Rebbe's next visit to the Ohel, the *shamash* came out to speak to him, and the Frierdiker Rebbe promised him that if moved homes, he would enjoy a complete recovery. However, he remained adamant in his refusal, and soon passed away.

About a year later, a Lithuanian Rav moved in with his family. Their behavior was again unbecoming; his family would also laugh at the Chassidim coming to the Ohel and belittle them. Again, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent warning messages and offered to cover the cost of the move. "Do everything you can to convince them," the Frierdiker Rebbe told

the messenger; “*a rachmonus oif a Yid!*”

The new resident said that he was a *misnaged*, and not afraid of Rebbes. Within a short time, he unfortunately passed away as well.⁸ (Later, the Frierdiker Rebbe allowed a chossid to take up residence in the same location, instructing him to keep certain windows closed and not use the two rooms closest to the *tziyun*⁹).

This story was recorded in full detail by Reb Folleh Kahn in *Shmuos V’Sipurim*. A short version is also extant in the Rebbe’s Reshimos, in a collection of letters he copied directly from the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Igros. The Rebbe repeated the story in his painful *sicha* on Tu Bishvat 5737, after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Ohel was desecrated by vandals.¹⁰

Another incident took place shortly after leaving Russia. In an extremely sharp letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes a rebuke to the Jewish community of Rostov “for raising their hands to take revenge on the Chassidim, for coming close to the Ohel of the Rebbe.”¹¹ The letter doesn’t spell out what happened, but it seems to refer to other people being buried very close to the Ohel, in a manner which was unacceptable.

“It’s not clear, ultimately, why the Ohel was moved,” says Rabbi Kaploun. “Perhaps there were other incidents as well; Rostov didn’t have a large Jewish population, and the Chassidim may have feared that the Ohel would be desecrated.”

A final clue, Rabbi Kaploun says, was discovered in the *tzava’ah* of Reb Alter Simchovitch, who passed away in תרצ”ו. In keeping with the chassidisher minhag, he asks that his family inform the Rebbe Rashab of his passing; he asks them to do so at the Ohel, “both at the old address and the new.”¹² **1**

1. Kovetz Atarah L’Yoshnah pg. 56.

2. Estalek Yekarah pg. 208.

3. Oseh Yiddishkeit pg. 13.

4. The author of Ashkavtei D’Rebbi dates the events to Adar 5700, but that seems to be incorrect because Harav Levi Yitzchok was arrested a year earlier, in Nissan 5699.

5. Kfar Chabad Magazine issue 1074.

6. BiToch Hagolah pg. 272.

7. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 11 pg. 213, 229.

8. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 14 pg. 444. Shemuos V’Sipurim vol. 3 pg. 201.

9. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 14 pg. 291

10. Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 1 pg. 466.

11. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz volume 14 pg. 293

12. Tichayenu issue 10 pg. 91.



1. AFTER THE CHASSIDIM SECRETLY MOVED THE KEVER OF THE REBBE RASHAB IN 5700, THEY DID NOT PLACE A TZIYUN OVER THE SITE. THE ONLY MARKING WAS THAT REBBE RASHAB’S HEAD LAY RIGHT BEFORE A DISTINCT TREE.

IN THIS PHOTO, REB DOVID NACHSHON STANDS BY THE BURIAL SITE AS HE PREPARES TO PLACE A MATZEVA (WITH THE REBBE’S APPROVAL) ALMOST 50 YEARS AFTER THE KEVER WAS MOVED TO THIS LOCATION.

2. IN 5732, THE REBBE SENT MONEY TO THE HEADS OF THE ROSTOV JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO BUILD WALLS AROUND THE TZIYUN. THIS PHOTO OF THE SURROUNDING WALLS WAS TAKEN IN THE MID 5740S.

3. THESE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN AFTER THE MATZEVA WAS PLACED AND A SMALL SHUL WAS BUILT ADJACENT TO THE OHEL. MOST RECENTLY, THE OHEL WAS RENOVATED COMPLETELY.

נשי
ובנות
חב"ד

C H E S H V A N

N'SHEI
U'BNOS
CHABAD

COMPILED BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (OH)

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI BORUCH ALTEIN

After a packed Tishrei filled with Yomim Tovim, meals, guests, and family, Cheshvan is when life seems to return to normal. What message does Cheshvan have for women and girls?

On Motzei Shabbos Bereishis at the end of Tishrei 5714, something remarkable happened: that year, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah led directly into Shabbos (like this year), and at the end of Shabbos, the Rebbe farbrenged for the second time that day as a continuation of Simchas Torah. At the conclusion of the lengthy farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed Kos Shel Bracha to all present, after which the Rebbe went out onto the balcony, and addressed N'shei U'bnos Chabad. At the time, such a thing was revolutionary, and the language the Rebbe used to address them was new and innovative at the time, though it has since become accepted. Adapted here for our readers:¹

As we experience it, the new year begins in Cheshvan. Rosh Hashanah may take place in Tishrei, but the experiences of Tishrei's special *Yomim Tovim* place it on its own playing field—it is only after Shabbos Bereishis that we begin our regular, daily life.

The Rabbeim would often describe this with a well-known saying: “*V’Yaakov Holach Lidarko*,” (and Yaakov, meaning every Jew, went on his way), referring to the reality that *every single Jew*, man or woman, now heads off to fulfill the mission from Hashem with which they were entrusted, in their day to day life.

It follows that Jewish women and girls, particularly women and girls of Chabad, (an acronym for the three stages of intellect of *Chachma-Bina-Daas*, Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge, as they are used to further the service of Hashem), ought to consider and reflect on their Divine mission at this time, and what message to take at this start of a new year.

In general, the special assignment and mission of

women is to fill their homes with warmth, light, and joy—all in the most genuine form.

To explain:

A truly Jewish home will necessarily be one that is warm, radiant, and joyful.

Creating such a home hinges more on the woman of the home than on the man. Typically, the man is preoccupied with the family's *parnassa* for much of the day and removed from the home setting, while the conduct of the home and the children's upbringing will be in the hands of the mother and wife. Indeed, this is why women are described as *akeres habayis*, the most fundamental and central figure of the home.

This overarching mission of Jewish women is reflected in the three special mitzvos that are entrusted to women:

1. *Neiros Shabbos Kodesh v'Yom Tov* (Lighting of Shabbos and Yom Tov candles) — *Neshek*.
2. *Hafrashas Challah* (Separating the *challah* part of dough for Hashem, and in general *kashrus*).
3. *Taharas Hamishpacha* (Family Purity).

Lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov Candles: Here women add to their home's light in the physical sense too. Having more light makes the home more peaceful, and filling it with light by doing a mitzvah brings Hashem's light too; true, this mitzvah is only on Shabbos and Yom Tov, yet Shabbos and Yom Tov are the source of our strength all week long.

This mitzvah expresses the mission of a woman — to bring peace and illumination from the light and lamp of Torah and mitzvos into her home, upon which Hashem's light can dwell as well.

Separating Challah: This is the mitzvah to take the first part of one's dough and give it to Hashem. In other words, a Jew can transform a portion of his or her dough and bread, the primary human food source, into a dedicated holy item for Hashem.

This demonstrates that women, who are entrusted with this mitzvah, have the charge of taking a portion of the best part of the home's income, best in both quantity and quality, and using it for tzedakah specifically, and in general for matters of Torah and mitzvos.

Elevating this portion of the income causes the rest of the food and income to be used in the right way, for matters that are healthy and good, not for doctors' bills, medications, and other undesirable uses, *chas v'shalom*.

Taharas Hamishpacha (Family Purity): By observing the



THE REBBE DELIVERS A SICHA FROM THE BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE SHALASH.

laws of *nidda*, purity, and *tevila*, a woman brings purity and holiness into her family life. Through this mitzvah one merits to have healthy and good children, healthy in both body and soul; children who continue their lives in the path of Torah and mitzvos and bring true *nachas* and joy to their parents.

This happens when the woman fulfills her mission, the mission of a Jewish mother: to ensure that her children, both sons and daughters, have a truly Jewish upbringing, including that their education be *al taharas hakodesh*, a kosher education in the purest, holy sense, causing the whole family to be one of purity and holiness.

Turning directly toward the gathered women, the Rebbe said:

Women and daughters of Chabad, and all Jewish women! As we begin this new year, remember the important and *geshmake* (pleasant) mission and responsibility you have with regard to the way your homes operate:

You have the ability to make your house a Jewish home, a warm home, a radiant home.

You can bring Hashem's blessing into your home, so that you and your whole family have a healthy, happy, and fortunate year, both physically and spiritually.

My father-in-law the [Friediker] Rebbe would wish people a 'healthy winter'. I wish you using the same language: that you, your husbands, and your children, have a healthy, happy and fortunate winter, and a good *tamid* (always). T

1. Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, pp. 578–80.

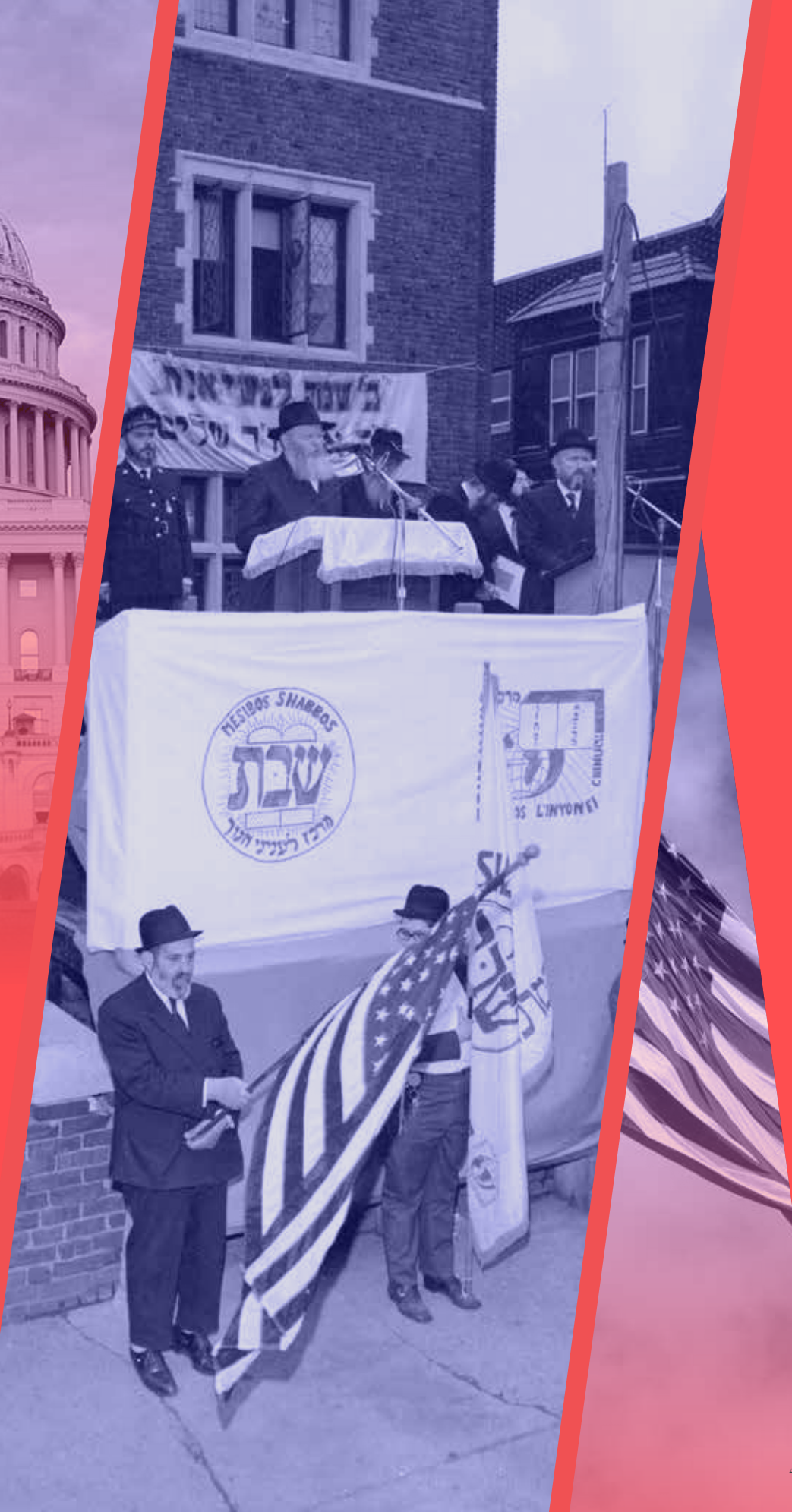
לזכות
הרה"ת שלום דוב בער שיח' שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתו י"ז מרחשון
לשנת הצלחה בגור"ר



EXPORTING GOODNESS AND KINDNESS

THE REBBE'S VISION
FOR AMERICA

BY: RABBI MENDY GREENBERG



It was 1905. Violent pogroms broke out in Russia. The infamous Black Hundreds rampaged throughout Jewish neighborhoods, killing and pillaging at will while the authorities turned a blind eye. The Czar thought it a useful outlet for revolutionaries itching for change.

In Nikolayev, Rebbetzin Chana and her children hid silently in the cellar of a pharmacy with a group of women and children. The terrified children were crying aloud, and the pharmacist realized that the sound would soon jeopardize their safety. Something needed to be done.

Suddenly, he noticed a young child, just three years old, going from child to child, calming them down. Without making a sound, this child—the Rebbe—gestured with his small hands and somehow managed to comfort the children. Soon, the danger passed.¹

The dangers of living under the Czar’s regime were obvious to everyone in Russia at that troubled time. Even before the Rebbe turned three, his grandfather Reb Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, Rov of Nikolayev, noticed him walking around the house calling out, “*Daloi samaderzhavye*, End the dictatorship!” Rebbetzin Chana writes that the Rebbe had heard people chanting this slogan and seemed to understand, even at that tender age, that Yidden were suffering terribly as a result of the Czar’s tyranny. Fearing that the Rebbe would be heard outdoors ‘spreading dangerous propaganda,’ Reb Meir Shlomo quickly instructed him to stop.



FARBRENGEN, 10 SHEVAT 5735.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD

During those very moments, in a faraway place, a very different atmosphere reigned. A superpower too, but this one was not autocratic, not antisemitic, and not oppressive. Its government's power was given "by the people, for the people," a nation whose most cherished value was freedom. And at that very moment, the United States was countermanning the efforts of Czarist Russia.

When the pogroms broke out, the Rebbe Rashab sent the Frieddiker Rebbe to Germany to find ways to pressure the Czarist government to end them. One method, used a generation earlier by the Rebbe Maharash, was to convince European bankers to stop loans to the Russian government until it acted.

At the time of these pogroms, Russia was involved in a brutal war with the Japanese and was in desperate need of funds, so the tactic was just as relevant. Pressure was put on major banks and government officials to stop cooperating with the Russians until the pogroms came to an end.

America was at the helm of the efforts. Her leading bankers refused to extend loans to the Russian government, and stipulated with all of their borrowers that their loans were not allowed to benefit Czarist Russia in any form. One famous Jewish banker in New York even chose to finance half of the Japanese war effort, in the colossal amount of two hundred million dollars, to punish Russia for its antisemitism and persecution. Over time, the pogroms abated.

At a Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen some seventy years later, the Rebbe reflected on the fact that America had the merit to be involved in securing the release of the Frieddiker Rebbe from prison, and, in general, of being a positive force in the world. The Rebbe mentioned the pogroms and the efforts back when the Rebbe was himself only three years old; even then, the Rebbe said, their kindness towards the Jewish people was evident.²

A common saying heard from the Rebbe was that America was a *Malchus shel Chesed*, a kingdom of kindness that gave the Jewish people safety

and security. America not only did not hinder our observance of Torah and mitzvos, it also found opportunities to aid it.

But viewing America specifically for its benefits to the Jewish people is only half the story.

THE FIRST ARRIVALS

In the early 1600s, a group of families in England faced persecution for their refusal to conform to the ruling religion in England. Desperate for a place of freedom, they set sail on a ship called the Mayflower, enduring a treacherous two-month voyage across the Atlantic.

The first winter in the new world was devastating. Nearly half of the settlers perished. Yet they persevered, and soon learned to cultivate the land and secure their future. That fall, after their first successful harvest, they held a feast of thanksgiving.

These people became known as the Pilgrims—the group that laid the foundations of a new society in America.

The Rebbe often pointed to the story of the Pilgrims when speaking about the United States. Unlike the other superpower of the time, founded on Communist ideals that rejected the existence of a Supreme Being, American society was founded with a deep belief in Hashem, and was born out of a desire to serve Him freely according to each person's conscience.

The Rebbe spoke highly of the fact that one of the country's most cherished traditions was for families to gather each year to give thanks to Hashem. Some societies profess belief in a Creator, but ignore the fact that Hashem pays close attention to every detail of their lives. Thanksgiving, however, as the Rebbe pointed out, is a holiday that recognizes Hashem's active presence in world events; it celebrates the *Hashgacha Elyona* in America's success.³

Another common theme in the Rebbe's *sichos* about America is the words etched onto the currency, "In G-d We Trust." Instead of saying, "In G-d We Believe," which would imply a more distant recognition of Hashem, it uses the word "trust," which means that we feel Hashem's presence in our

“QUIET DIPLOMACY” WITH THE SOVIET UNION

Jacob Hecht was elected to the United States Senate in the early 5740s, and his brother Martin and nephew Dr. Chaim Hecht soon brought him to a farbrengen. Between *sichos*, he was introduced to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe told him that his top priority should be to get the Jews out of Russia. “The key,” the Rebbe said, was “quiet diplomacy.”

About three years later, a vote came to the U.S. Senate. When Reagan needed his vote to break a tie, Senator Hecht decided to use the opportunity. He met with the President and reminded him that thousands of Jews were imprisoned behind the Iron Curtain. He said that he would vote for the President’s proposal, but asked him to pressure the Russians at the next summit with the Soviets.

Right before Reagan left for Reykjavik, Iceland, to meet with Gorbachev, Senator Hecht gave him a list of names of 1200 Soviet Jews who had applied to emigrate from Russia. Reagan gave the list of 1200 names to Gorbachev and emphasized how important this would be to him. Within weeks, a trickle of Jews began to leave Russia. Soon the trickle grew to tens of thousands.

Years later, Senator Hecht met with Reagan at an event, and thanked him for his efforts. He asked him why he never mentioned the act in public, and Mrs. Reagan said that the answer was quiet diplomacy. Mr. Gorbachev had told them that there were many around him that did not want the Jews to leave Russia. “If we made it public, the exodus would stop.”¹⁶

lives in a tangible way. On several occasions, the Rebbe derived lessons in our *avodas Hashem* from those words, as well as from the other phrase on the currency, “E Pluribus Unum,” which means, “Out of Many, One.”⁴

America’s founding ideals, firmly rooted in a belief and trust in Hashem, are central to understanding the Rebbe’s view of America, and its role in the world.

This was expressed for the first time in a major way at a special and historic farbrengen.

THE FIRST GLOBAL ADDRESS

Yud Shevat 5735 marked twenty-five years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, and the farbrengen was an exciting event.

“At 7:15 p.m.,” writes Reb Zalmon Jaffe, “around 1,000 people had arrived to reserve their seats or places for standing. The entire area of the hall was prepared for this Farbrengen, making it four times the original size. By 9:00 p.m., about 6,000 people were present....”

“Herman Wouk, the author, was present, as was Jan Peerce, the opera singer. Abraham Beame, the Mayor of New York, had arrived in person, together with the comptroller of the City of New York. A message was brought from the Senate that a unanimous resolution had been passed, extending greetings to the Rebbe on this eventful occasion. President Gerald Ford had also thought fit to send a personal representative with a special message. The world press, TV, and radio were all represented, and the Farbrengen was being broadcast live to all parts of the world.

“It was a real royal occasion.”

After the second *sicha*, a prominent Washington lobbyist



SENATOR CHAIM HECHT GIVES PRESIDENT REAGAN A LIST OF 1200 RUSSIAN JEWS, SHORTLY BEFORE THE PRESIDENT’S TRIP TO REYKJAVIK, ICELAND TO MEET THE SOVIET PRESIDENT.



A PUBLIC MENORAH GRACES THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

named Mr. Ken Davis approached the Rebbe to present the President's letter. "On your twenty-fifth anniversary as Lubavitcher Rebbe, I want to join with those who applaud the dedication and wisdom that have characterized your leadership of this inspiring religious movement," Ford had written.⁵

In the following *sicha*, for the first time, the Rebbe spoke at length about the United States and its role in the world.

In America's earlier generations, isolationism was a common sentiment. Problems existed elsewhere in the world, but Americans were comfortable saying, "It's not my problem." This was a mistake, the Rebbe said. If, by *Hashgacha Pratis*, America had been granted the ability to influence other countries, it had a responsibility from Hashem to use that opportunity.

By this time, America was deeply involved in world affairs. Isolationism came to the fore once in a while, but America was sending aid and assistance to many different locations around the globe. America was even providing aid to its arch-enemy, the Soviet Union, which had experienced a series of disastrous harvests; despite being a world superpower, they were unable to feed their own people, and millions of tons of American wheat were shipped across the globe.

Returning to this theme on numerous occasions,

the Rebbe pointed out that America's widespread assistance meant that it was uniquely positioned to demand something in return. In the words of the Gemara, "*Ein adam me'iz panav b'fnei bal chovo*, a person isn't brazen with his debtor." If this is true for even a small debt, how much more so for the vast resources streaming across the world.⁶

Given America's history as a country founded upon faith in Hashem and its pride in upholding values of *tzedek v'yosher*, it was obvious that it needed to use every opportunity to spread its message. In that light, the Rebbe used the opportunity at that farbrengen to make three proposals.

THE FIRST PROPOSAL

The first suggestion was that the government provide financial aid for religious private schools.

What about the separation of church and state?

The Rebbe pointed out on many occasions that it was a fallacy to understand the principle of "Separation of Church and State" to mean that the government cannot fund anything related in any way to religion.

The entire foundation of the United States is belief in Hashem; the First Amendment was intended to ensure freedom of religion, not to free schools from religion. In America's earliest days, religious ideas were so commonplace that it

never occurred to anyone that they might contradict the Constitution.

This was a theme which the Rebbe repeated whenever speaking about school funding, Moment of Silence, or anything that inserted some sort of religious presence into the public sphere. After one Jewish leader wrote several letters to the Rebbe in protest of public menorahs, the Rebbe responded as follows:

“I am fully certain that none of all those who participated in, or witnessed, the kindling of a Chanukah Lamp in a public place... felt that his or her loyalty to the Constitution of the USA had been weakened or compromised thereby... The U.S. Congress opens with a religious invocation by a representative of ‘one of the major religions’ in this country; and, surely, the U.S. Congress, comprising each and every State of the Union, is the place where the Constitution of the USA should be most rigidly upheld.”⁷⁷

In later years, in response to opposition to the Moment of Silence, the Rebbe added a further point.

The Constitution is not a Divine document. “When I was becoming a citizen,” the Rebbe shared, “I was told to review this point: that the constitution was made ‘by the people, for the people.’” Built into its rules is the ability to change it, and many amendments were indeed made. So, if the Constitution seemed to forbid prayer in public school (which, the Rebbe argued, it did not), there is a simple solution—change it!⁸

THE OTHER PROPOSALS

The Rebbe’s second proposal at that Yud Shevat far-brenge concerned Russian Jewry. The Rebbe asked the U.S. government to intervene quietly with the Soviet authorities to help Jews emigrate. The Rebbe explained that public protests and loud pressure would not be effective and might even be harmful, arguing instead that discreet, behind-the-scenes diplomacy was the most effective way to secure freedom for the Jews trapped in the Soviet Union.

WHO TO VOTE FOR?

A king once arrived in a town with his entire entourage. The townspeople excitedly ran for the opportunity to host members of the delegation; there were connections to be made, power to be gained, and money to be earned. A royal entourage was a lucrative place.

One person waited on the side, watching as all the ministers were quickly settled. He wasn’t looking for them. “I want to host the king himself,” he said. In the famous words of the Midrash, “*Ana nasiv malka.*”

A simple question could be posed to the townspeople, the Rebbe pointed out when he cited this famous *mashal* from the Midrash. Why didn’t they all jump at the opportunity to host the king? Why go for the “small potatoes” if they could have the real deal?

The answer is that standing before the king requires *bittul*. Ministers and servants of the king can be sources of money and prestige. When a townsman hosts one of them, he sees him as a source of benefit to himself. But when you are

standing before the king, you don’t get to ask what benefit the king will be to you; on the contrary, the question is, “How will you benefit the king?”

Nonetheless, there was one man, the *pikeach*, who chose the king. *Pikeach* doesn’t just mean wise, like a philosopher or historian. A *pikeach* is someone who is shrewd in the ways of the world. He makes a choice that, in the short term, doesn’t seem to offer as many benefits, but in the long term will result in many benefits indeed.

When elections come, the Rebbe said, we need to remind ourselves to be that *pikeach*. As Yidden, we choose the *Aibershter*. Every question that arises in our lives, elections included, should raise the question: What is better for Shulchan Aruch? What is better for Yiddishkeit? What is better for Torah and Mitzvos?

When choosing between candidates, we cannot ask whether they will give us more money, more honor, or more benefits. There is one question, and one question alone: What does Hashem want?

Chof Cheshvan 5735 (Toras Menachem 5735 vol. 1 pg. 261)



THE REBBE RECEIVES
PRIME MINISTER
MENACHEM BEGIN
UPON HIS VISIT
ON 2 AV 5737.

Finally, the Rebbe spoke about the need for America to support Eretz Yisroel, especially in light of the recent Yom Kippur War. The U.S. had reduced its arms shipments to the Middle East, making it difficult for Israel to acquire necessary weapons. The Rebbe emphasized that the best way to ensure peace was not by limiting Israel's access to arms but by providing them with a sufficient supply. A well-armed Israel would serve as a deterrent to potential aggressors and help maintain peace in the region.

The *sicha* of Yud Shevat 5735 seems to be a blueprint for the Rebbe's vision for America. As the years progressed, the Rebbe returned to these themes often; on Yud Alef Nissan—which the government declared “Education Day,” at the Yud Shevat farbrengens, which fell out close to Inauguration day, and during many televised farbrengens.

The point was very straightforward: America exports arms, aid, technology, and so much else to the world. It was time to export *tzedek v'yosher* as well.

When speaking of Education Day in the United

States, the Rebbe would add that we should demand that it be adopted by countries receiving our aid. Instead of receiving just American goods, they should receive American goods and ideals.

If countries were receiving weaponry, for example, it should also be impressed upon them that weapons must be used only in self-defense. The Rebbe said that every arms shipment should come with a silver dollar coin, upon which is etched the words, “In G-d We Trust,” to remind the recipients that the true purpose of the armaments was to further the cause of peace in the world. The Rebbe recommended specifically a coin, even though those words are printed on the dollar bill too, because the words are *etched* into the coin, a far greater level of connection, as explained in Chassidus.⁹

WHAT POLITICAL PARTY DID THE REBBE SUPPORT?

Many Americans are very partisan. They identify strongly with the political party of their choice, and see everything that takes place in the political



sphere through that lense. If their party does something, it must be good, if the other party does it, it must be wrong.

This is just as common within the Jewish community, which often sees politics in the context of a party's support for Eretz Yisroel. A political party or candidate which is supportive of Eretz Yisroel is wildly popular, while others are rejected.

This was not the Rebbe's approach.

The Rebbe's *sichos* about America were mostly delivered during the administrations of Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. During those same years, the Rebbe spoke countless times about Eretz Yisroel and its relationship with the United States, often with strong criticism regarding the state of affairs. The criticism was directed, however, at the Israeli government.

When the Rebbe opposed the Camp David Accords, the *sichos* were not directed at President Jimmy Carter for brokering them, but toward Prime Minister Menachem Begin for agreeing to them. When the Rebbe opposed the constant cease-fires during the Lebanon War, the criticism was not directed at President Ronald Reagan, who facilitated them, but at the Israeli leaders who accepted them. The responsibility to protect Eretz Yisroel was the sole responsibility of the elected government in Eretz Yisroel, regardless of American pressure.

The Rebbe spoke about America and its government in a very different tone. Even as an American president

would be in the midst of pressuring the Israeli government to make one concession or another, the Rebbe would speak in the most respectful terms about America's role as a safe haven for the Jewish people and the Lubavitch movement, and speak about the positive role it could play in the world. Whether the sitting president was Democrat or Republican, the Rebbe would promote issues that were likely to be accepted by the administration.

THE TWO ADMINISTRATIONS

President Jimmy Carter, for example, had a special passion for education. He spoke about it during his major addresses and made it a big focus of his administration.

It was during this period that the Rebbe pushed for the establishment of an independent Department of Education. Until then, the federal government's education-related responsibilities were handled by an assortment of federal entities and departments, but the Rebbe said that a U.S. Department of Education would bring a new sense of prestige and importance to issues relating to education.¹⁰

The Rebbe wrote letters to congressmen pushing them to support the endeavor, and sent Rabbi Avraham Shemtov to lobby on its behalf. Ultimately, the endeavor was successful, and Rabbi Shemtov was actually appointed to the "Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education"

in recognition of the Rebbe's efforts. At an event marking Gimmel Tammuz many years later, the sitting U.S. Secretary of Education made note of the fact that the Rebbe was instrumental in making it happen, "so I owe my job to him."

Carter was the president who established Education Day USA, and the *sichos* about America during those years—at the very time America was pushing the Camp David Accords—spoke highly about the President's devotion to education.

An especially fascinating window into the Rebbe's approach is evident from the time after President Carter was voted out of office.

Carter was notoriously unpopular and widely derided as a failure. Yet, on Yud Shevat 5741, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of *hakoras hatov*—in contrast to the common approach in politics, which is to ignore or even denigrate the outgoing president—and thanked him for his focus on education and on maintaining world peace, despite the tense situation with the Soviet Union.¹¹

The incoming president was Ronald Reagan. He was a strong proponent of prayer in public schools and private school funding, and believed in the importance of religion in the public sphere. He frequently spoke about the Founding Fathers' belief in the Creator, and saw this idea as central to keeping America strong.

It was during his presidency that the Rebbe pushed strongly to establish a Moment of Silence in public schools and to bring the knowledge of "An Eye that Sees and Ear that Hears" into the consciousness of American children.

Those were also the years when the Rebbe emphasized the importance of bringing the messages of Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach to the world, and directly mentioned the President's support on several occasions.

In a letter to Elie Weisel after he won the Nobel Peace Prize, the Rebbe asked him to focus his address on Sheva Mitzvos. The Rebbe pointed out that this was something that was already on the President's mind, and could be a useful opportunity to draw him in that direction: "President Reagan already mentioned this (briefly). Knowing his attitude, I am almost certain that he will join your call

and demand on this topic, publicly and strongly."¹²

Another aspect of the Reagan presidency was his belief in American power. Outspoken against America's enemies, he believed that the correct approach to foreign policy was "peace through strength."

In the months after his inauguration, the Rebbe spoke about energy independence.

America's reliance on foreign oil had become a major challenge. When the United States supported Eretz Yisroel during the Yom Kippur War, the Arab nations retaliated by imposing an oil embargo on the U.S, leading to severe shortages and an economic crisis that culminated in a major stock market crash. As a result, America pressured Israel into making dangerous concessions.

The Rebbe saw this as more than just an economic problem—it was a spiritual issue. For America to spread *tzedeq v'yosher* to the rest of the world, it needed to free itself from the influence of dictatorships that held power through their control of oil.

The Rebbe explained that the solution lay in tapping into the abundant resources within America itself. Beneath American soil lies a wealth of natural resources—oil, coal, and more—that, if developed, could free the country from foreign pressure. The Rebbe also advocated the use of solar energy. The sun-rich southern United States could provide abundant, renewable energy that would not only meet its own needs but allow America to become a global energy leader. By embracing these resources, America would be able to break free from foreign manipulation and focus on spreading justice, morality, and the Sheva Mitzvos worldwide.¹³

A SIGN OF REDEMPTION

At the end of Nissan 5751, a revolt took place in northern Iraq. Thousands of Kurds protested the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

Iraqi forces had brutally suppressed earlier Kurdish revolts, even using chemical weapons in doing so. When Iraqi forces subdued this uprising, more than one million Kurdish refugees fled to Iran

and Turkey. Hundreds of thousands of additional Kurds remained along the border of Iraq and Turkey, where thousands died due to a lack of food, water, clothing, blankets, shelter, and medical supplies.

In response, the United States organized a task force and launched Operation Provide Comfort, delivering as many as 600 pallets of supplies per day. In addition to the air drops, US Air Force planes flew thousands of tons of cargo from the United States to Turkey.

In a *sicha*, the Rebbe explained the uniqueness of the occurrence:

“It is well known that this country has recently used its might to help and save people in a distant place, sending vast amounts of soldiers from its army, together with food, clothing, and medication. Instead of using the food and clothing for the citizens of this country, they are using it to save unfortunate people, especially small children, from the cold, and even from the opposite of life.

“When they heard that people are suffering—although they are not their relatives, and they never had a connection to them—they immediately rushed to help them.

“We see how the nations are performing acts of goodness and kindness, which reveals furthermore that ‘there is a Master to this palace.’ It is a preparation for the time when “*vehaysa laHashem Hamelucha*,” with the true and complete redemption.”¹⁴

In the later years, the Rebbe often pointed out how America (as well as many other nations) were doing acts of kindness that had been unfathomable just a few generations earlier. In earlier times, war was considered inevitable, but suddenly countries were downsizing their armies, signing treaties to have fewer nuclear weapons, and using their military might to come to the aid of others. It was clearly a sign of Moshiach’s times.

The fact that the President had spoken about the Sheva Mitzvos was evidence of the same. During a *sicha* about Sheva Mitzvos, the Rebbe pointed out that “The President of the country has spoken publicly about the importance of the Sheva Mitzvos for every individual, and he has repeated this idea several times. It has indeed been accepted, not only in this country, but in many others as well.”

The Rebbe pointed out that, ultimately, *lev melachim v’sarim b’yad Hashem*, the hearts of kings and ministers are in the hands of Hashem. So, the fact that the President was promoting Sheva Mitzvos was actually a sign from



PRESIDENT REAGAN PROCLAIMS THE REBBE'S 80TH BIRTHDAY "NATIONAL DAY OF REFLECTION" AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, CALLS UPON THE NATION TO HEED THE SHEVA MITZVOS, "A MORAL CODE FOR ALL OF US REGARDLESS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH."

Hashem to us.

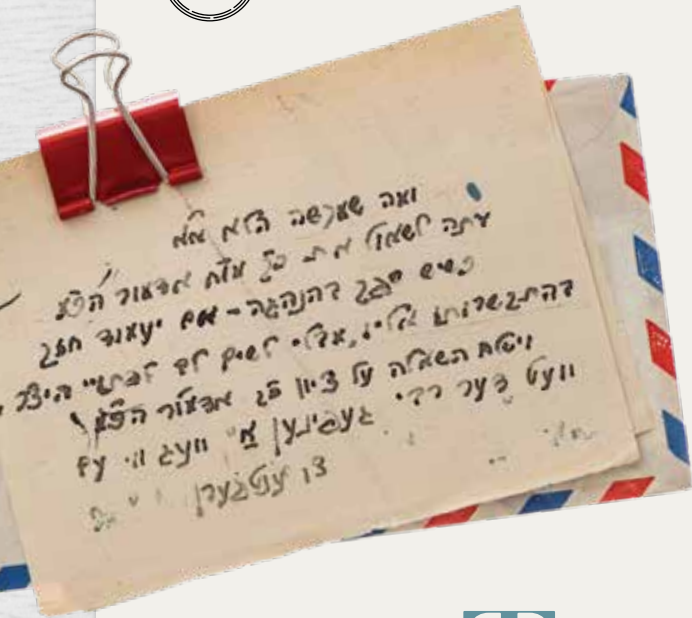
What was the sign?

As we get closer to the *geulah*, the Rebbe explained, we need to prepare the world to serve Hashem—together—with Moshiach’s arrival, and one key way is through spreading the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach. If Hashem showed us that the President himself is promoting the Sheva Mitzvos—it is a sign that there is more work to do.¹⁵ **T**

1. Early Years pg. 27.
2. 12 Tammuz 5736. Sichos Kodesh vol. 1 pg. 430
3. See Yud Tes Kislev 5747. Toras Menachem vol. 2 pg. 54.
4. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2. Pg. 58. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2 pg. 130. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 pg. 176.
5. See Derher Shevat 5775 pg. 10.
6. Yud Shevat 5739, Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2 pg. 17
7. Sarna and Dalin, *Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience*, pp. 288–300.
8. Yud Shevat 5743; Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 2 pg. 902.
9. 11 Nissan 5738. Sichos Kodesh vol. 2 pg. 130.
10. Yud Shevat 5739, Sichos Kodesh vol. 2 pg. 11.
11. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 pg. 169.
12. See Derher Shevat 5777 pg. 24.
13. See Derher Nissan 5777 pg. 30.
14. Hisvaaduyos 5751 Vol. 3 pg. 187.
15. Shabbos Hagadol 5747. Toras Menachem 5747 vol. 3 pg. 67.
16. Chabad.org/523711.



Story



לזכות
 השלוחה חי' מושקא בת פערל גאלדא תחי'
 לרגל יום הולדתה ד' מר חשון
 ולזכות
 השלוחה מינא עטל בת פערל גאלדא תחי'
 לרגל יום הולדתה י"ב מר חשון
 נדפס ע"י
 הוריהם הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת פערל
 גאלדא שיחיו טייכטל
 שמפיין אילינוי

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

Treasures From Above



AS TOLD BY
RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK CEITLIN
 (Haifa, Eretz Yisroel)

Chanukah 5750 was the first time my father Rabbi Aharon Eliezer Ceitlin ע"ה organized an official group trip to the Rebbe from Eretz Yisroel, with 85 participants.

The "Kvutza" was so successful that 115 people joined the next one, for Lag B'Omer 5750. They participated in the Lag B'Omer parade, and, as they walked by, the Rebbe clapped his hands enthusiastically for a significant amount of time. These group trips continued each year, even after Gimmel Tammuz.

In 5762, several educators suggested that my father gear these annual trips to Lubavitch girls who had never had the opportunity to see the Rebbe or be in the Rebbe's presence. He appreciated the impact such an organized

trip would have on the hiskashrus of the next generation and, from then on, he organized the "Kvutza" for them to coincide with Chof-Beis Shevat and the International Kinus Hashluchos.

In addition to a full week program, the highlight being their visit to the Ohel, he felt that their participation in the banquet of the Kinus Hashluchos would inspire them to dedicate themselves to the Rebbe's shlichus. After some persuasion, the organizers agreed to the plan and my father raised considerable funds every year to cover the cost of their participation in the banquet. He was so passionate about this, that his happiest day of the year was when he secured the funds necessary for the girls to



REB AHARON LEIZER CEITLIN LEADS A GROUP OF GIRLS ON THEIR VISIT TO 770.

participate in the Kinus banquet.

On 2 Cheshvan 5776 my father passed away and I inherited the merit of organizing and leading the annual Kvutza of Lubavitch girls to the Rebbe for Chof-Beis Shevat.

In the year 5780, I arrived in New York a day before the Kvutza to make some last-minute preparations; my main problem was that I still needed to raise the necessary funds for the girls to participate in the banquet. Due to jet lag, I woke up in the middle of the night and found a ride to the Ohel. In my short note, I asked the Rebbe for only one bracha: to succeed in raising the money needed for the girls to experience the banquet of the Kinus Hashluchos.

After spending a significant amount of time davening at the Ohel, I entered the main tent and met Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Leibovitch, who is renowned for his generosity. I shared with him what was on my mind and after asking several questions he took out his checkbook and wrote out a check for an amount I had never before received from one benefactor. As he handed me the check he commented that he had pledged to donate to my father several years back and now he was following through. Although it was not the entire amount I needed I was overwhelmed at how swiftly the Rebbe's bracha was materializing.

Later that morning Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky asked me how the trip was coming along and he was very moved to hear what had transpired at the Ohel that day. His interest in our trip gave me a big boost and he recommended some people to fundraise from. By the end of the day the girls' participation in the banquet was confirmed.

A few weeks later the world shut down due to Covid and the annual Kvutza did not happen in its regular format for the next three years. In anticipation of the Kvutza of 5784 we decided to again arrange for the girls to participate in the banquet and I started fundraising for this purpose.

When the war broke out on Simchas Torah, our plans for the Kvutza were put on hold, but when it was decided to go ahead with the program we introduced a new incentive. The minhag is that every year we learn another chapter of Basi Legani 5710 and the maamarim from the years in which the Rebbe expounded on that chapter. The year 5784 corresponded to chapter 14 of Basi Legani 5710 and the maamarim of Yud Shevat 5724 and 5744. We arranged a unique program for seminary girls to study the maamar Basi Legani 5744 and every girl who excelled was granted a scholarship toward their trip. Fifty more girls registered for the trip as a result of this and the money I had fundraised thus far went to covering these

scholarships. When I arrived in New York on Thursday of Chof Beis Shevat, I had no idea where the rest of the money would come from.

Early Friday morning, I went to 770 and learned the maamar Basi Legani 5724. Yud Shevat 5724 was on Shabbos and the Rebbe said this maamar three times. The first time was on Friday night after Kabbalas Shabbos, then during the Shabbos farbrengen with a different dibbur hamaschil, and once again on Motzei Shabbos at the main farbrengen in honor of Yud Shevat. Although all three maamarim were largely the same ideas, the main transcript of the maamar we have on record is the one from Motzei Shabbos. Reb Yoel Kahn wrote some notes with specific details from the Friday night maamar that were not included in the Motzei Shabbos maamar. These notes were included in 19 footnotes throughout the maamar printed in the set of Toras Menachem - Basi Legani published by Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak.

Towards the end of the maamar the Rebbe discusses the tremendous treasures given from Above to win the war to bring Moshiach. On this, there is a note which begins with the following statement:

יש להוסיף, שבענין האוצרות דלמעלה נכלל גם כללות הענין
דהתגלות אלקות ע"י צדיקים, ובפרט ע"י נשיא הדור...

The concept of the "treasures from Above" includes the general idea of divine revelation through Tzaddikim, especially through the Nossi Hador...

Such a definition for the Heavenly treasures we learn about in the Basi Legani maamarim was new to me and quite refreshing in my present situation, as I needed special miracles. A few minutes later I found a ride to the Ohel. In my note to the Rebbe I asked for success in fundraising the money necessary for the girls to participate in the banquet and I quoted this line from the maamar I had just learned, asking the Rebbe for a special miracle and made a commitment to publicize the miracles that would surely happen.

The program continued with tremendous success and, although a significant sum was still missing, the Kinus organizers graciously allowed the girls to participate, trusting that I would pull through with my commitment. After the banquet, I accompanied a small group of girls who needed to leave earlier than the rest of the group to JFK Airport. I was on such a spiritual high from

the success of the Kvutza and especially since once again they were able to participate in the banquet, so instead of returning to Crown Heights, I decided to come to the Ohel where I ended up learning and talking with Rabbi Sholom Ber Kesselman from England. I shared with him my personal feelings about the trip and the fact that I still needed to fundraise several thousand dollars before my return to Eretz Yisroel the next day. "But I am sure it will all work out tomorrow. If you meet me before my flight, ask me how it went," I said with complete sincerity.


Early in the morning, I returned to Crown Heights and as I approached the corner of Kingston and Eastern Parkway on my way to 770 I met Rabbi Mendel Kotlarsky and the tzedakah agent of a generous chossid who donates annually to our cause, who I was unable to reach until then.

All three of us greeted each other and Rabbi Mendel Kotlarsky asked me if I was ready to pay my bill. We entered his office and I suggested that since this tzedakah agent would surely arrange a generous donation for our cause, he should discuss it directly with Rabbi Kotlarsky. They agreed and a short while later I was notified that half my bill was covered.

An hour later a friend of mine gave me the address of another wealthy chossid in Crown Heights whom I had never met before to fundraise from. The first time I rang the doorbell no one was home, but after taking care of last-minute errands I tried one last time, was greeted with a smile, and after several minutes left with a generous donation that covered the rest of our bill, plus extra!

Rushing to my final errand before heading out to the airport I met Rabbi Kesselman on the street.

"Nu? How did it all work out?" he asked me with a smile.

"Even better than I expected!" 

YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher
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לזכות הילד
ישראל שלום נ"י
לרגל יום הולדתו י"ז חשוון

יה"ר שיגדל לתורה לחופה ולמעשים
טובים מתוך בריאות נכונה ושפע בגו"ר
לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר והוריו הי"ו

COMPILED BY: RABBI YOSHI KATZ
WRITTEN BY: RABBI ZELIG KATZMAN

P I N P O I N T S

STORIES OF THE REBBE'S
REACH AND IMPACT AROUND THE GLOBE

URUGUAY



URUGUAY HAS HAD A JEWISH PRESENCE EVER SINCE THE 16TH CENTURY, WHEN MANY JEWS FLED THE SPANISH INQUISITION TO SAFER SHORES. THE JEWISH POPULATION PEAKED IN THE 1960S AT ABOUT 50,000, MOST OF THEM LIVING IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF MONTEVIDEO. AS WE WILL SEE, THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AND THE REBBE TOOK GREAT INTEREST IN URUGUAY'S JEWISH COMMUNITY, ASSISTING WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

THE RABBEIM AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF URUGUAY

In the month of Adar 5703 (1943), the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to a young man named Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Feigelstock, whose parents lived in Uruguay. The Frierdiker Rebbe asked him to notify his father that he was interested in hearing about the state of the Jewish community and the school, and the spiritual state of the war refugees there.¹

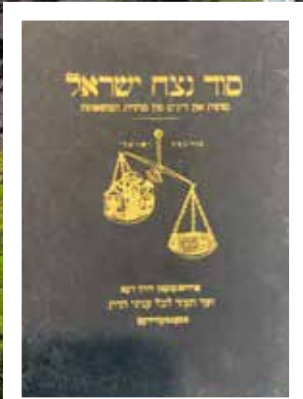
An interesting anecdote is found regarding the construction of a new community mikvah in 5710:

In a booklet of halachos compiled by one of the local rabbonim in Montevideo, published by the the “*Vaad Ha'ir L'chol Inyonei Hadas*” (city's committee for religious matters), the publishers discuss the state of the fundraiser for the local mikvah building. Bemoaning the fact that most non-local organizations ignored their appeals for help, they single out several individuals, including, “the holy tzaddik, the [Frierdiker] Lubavitcher Rebbe o.b.m., who offered us much encouragement with his heartfelt letter and contribution of \$200...”

Over the years, the Rebbe sent several shlichim to assist the Jewish community, including Rabbi Hershel Chitrik, Rabbi Mordechai Zajac, Rabbi Berel Baumgarten, and bochorim on Merkos Shlichus.

In an issue of *Kovetz Lubavitch* published in 5716,² a report appeared about the visit of the Rebbe's shliach, Rabbi Mordechai Zajac, over Rosh Hashanah in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, to strengthen the Jewish community there. He met with Rabbi Katz, one of the local Rabbis, and disseminated various publications from Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. With the help of “our friend, Reb Dovid Dovid Shalmyuk” he succeeded in founding several shiurim in Chassidus for local youth in Uruguay.

Additionally, in the early 5720s, Rabbi Yona and Rochel Slapochnik were sent by the Rebbe to Uruguay to teach in the local Jewish school; a post they held for 11 years.



BOOKLET PUBLISHED BY THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF URUGUAY ACKNOWLEDGING THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THEIR MIKVAH CAMPAIGN.

¹ 5710-1950, 5716-1956, 5720s-1960s



THE REBBE SENDS SHLUCHIM

In the 5740s, the Jewish community in Montevideo requested that the Rebbe send a shliach to help strengthen their community. After sending Merkos Shlichus *bochurim*, a permanent position was offered to one of the Merkos Shluchim—Rabbi Eliezer Shemtov, who was getting married at the time, in the winter of 5745. When the Shemtovs wrote to the Rebbe, asking whether they should begin their shlichus right away or first spend time in Crown Heights, where Rabbi Shemtov would study at the Kollel, as is the norm, the Rebbe responded by circling, “לנסוע מיד” (leave immediately). And so, on 7 Adar 5745, Rabbi and Mrs. Shemtov set out to establish the first permanent presence of Chabad in Uruguay, building an array of programs and institutions that continue as the beating heart of the Jewish community of Uruguay till today.

“WHAT DOES SEVEN MEAN?”

An interesting story that occurred with the Rebbe and one of Uruguay’s important political leaders:

In 5749, Rabbi Shemtov was visiting a friend in the hospital when he met Senator Luis Alberto Lacalle de Herrera of Uruguay, who was visiting the same friend. A short while later, Rabbi Shemtov received a phone call from the senator, saying that he would like to meet with him, and explaining that he would be running in the upcoming presidential elections and he would like for Rabbi Shemtov to arrange a meeting between him and the Rebbe, in the hopes of garnering local Jewish support.

Rabbi Shemtov explained to the senator that while a photo with the Rebbe might not be the best political investment, if he



THREE GENERATIONS OF SHLICHUS IN URUGUAY. RABBI ELIEZER SHEMTOV (CENTER) LOOKS ON WITH HIS SON AND LOCAL SHLIACH, RABBI MENDEL SHEMTOV, AS HIS GRANDSON SHNEUR SHEMTOV PRESENTS THE PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY MR. LUIS LACALLE POU, WITH A MENORAH ON CHANUKAH.

wished to receive important spiritual guidance in his personal and public life, the Rebbe was certainly the best address. With that, Rabbi Shemtov gave the senator two books about Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach, and the meeting concluded.

Several weeks later, the senator indeed traveled to New York and met the Rebbe at dollars, along with Rabbi Shemtov's father-in-law, Rabbi Hirshel Chitrik.

Rabbi Chitrik: This is Senator Herrera. He's running for president of Uruguay. He's a strong supporter of Chabad in Montivideo.

The Rebbe: May G-d A-lmighty bless you to have good news, and to use your influence for the benefit of many. *Besuros tovos.*

Senator Herrera: I was reading this book [about Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach], to help me understand...

The Rebbe: What is this all about?

Senator Herrera: "The Path of the Righteous Gentile."

Rabbi Groner: Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach.

The Rebbe: *Besuros Tovos. Hatzlacha rabba.* Give this [dollar] to charity, a mitzvah accepted by all the people of the world. May G-d A-lmighty bless you... Thank you for giving me the opportunity to meet you and wish all good things. I hope you will cash it in [i.e. the blessings].

The senator returned to Uruguay to continue his campaign, and although previously it didn't seem like he had a chance to win the election, he suddenly got a big boost in the polls.

The day of the election was during the Kinus Hashluchim, 5750. When Rabbi Shemtov passed by the Rebbe for dollars, the Rebbe wished him "*Hatzlacha rabba*," as opposed to "*Bra-*

cha v'hatzlacha," as he usually would, and Rabbi Shemtov felt that this was an added *bracha* intended for Senator Herrera. He called the senator and relayed what had happened, and Senator Herrera asked that the Rebbe pray on his behalf. The Rebbe was at the Ohel at that moment, but Rabbi Shemtov called Rabbi Krinsky's car phone and asked him to relay the message to the Rebbe.

At 7:00 in the evening, polling stations closed across Uruguay, and it soon came to light that Senator Herrera had won the election by 7%. After the Rebbe returned to 770 and davened Mincha and Maariv, the Rebbe distributed dollars, and Rabbi Shemtov passed by once again to notify the Rebbe of the good news. The Rebbe smiled and asked, "The one that was here?" Rabbi Shemtov affirmed, and mentioned that the senator won by 7%, and the Rebbe said, "*M'darf im masbir zein vos meint shiva*" (you need to explain to him the meaning of 'seven').

The Rebbe then gave Rabbi Shemtov an additional dollar,

saying, "This is for commission, for bringing the president."

Afterwards, Rabbi Shemtov wrote to the Rebbe asking whether he could publish a press release about the new president's connection to the Rebbe, and if he could give a copy of the press release to each of the shluchim at the Kinus. The Rebbe replied: "שייך להוראות אגודת חסידים או מרכז השלוחים ש' שהרי צ"ל" (This [decision] belongs to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, or the Shluchim Committee, for it must be consistent [on both fronts]).



Today, the shluchim in Uruguay continue implementing the Rebbe's vision for the world, paving the way for the coming of Moshiach.

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1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz, vol. p. 198.
 2. Year 4, issue 2; p. 319 in the new edition.



LUIS ALBERTO LACALLE, THEN CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN URUGUAY, IS INTRODUCED TO THE REBBE BY RABBI HIRSHEL CHITRIK.

Letters

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

Stay Away From Politics

In the Menachem-Av issue of Derher (Issue 146), in the article about the Frieddiker Rebbe's visit, I noticed something which I felt was meaningful to draw attention to, especially at this time.

As mentioned in the article, when the Frieddiker Rebbe made his visit, there was a heated political situation in Eretz Yisroel and people of different interests were spreading a claim that the Frieddiker Rebbe's visit was a support for their side of whatever issue.

The Frieddiker Rebbe was very displeased about these reports. When the Tel Aviv city council visited the Frieddiker Rebbe, he expressed his disappointment and explained that Chabad was apolitical. "My political party," the Rebbe said, "is *Chizuk HaTorah V'HaMitzvah*."

I thought to share that these words of the Frieddiker Rebbe are quite similar to something that the Rebbetzin and her sister had said a year earlier when the KGB came to arrest the Frieddiker Rebbe.

In "Reshimas Hamaasar" (Likkutei Dibburim v. 4 p. 613) the Frieddiker Rebbe describes the events of 15 Sivan, 5687, when GPU agents came to his apartment after midnight to arrest him.

"They began their search in the room of

my daughters, Chaya Mussia and Sheina, and asked them: 'What party do you belong to?' 'We belong to our father's party,' they replied; 'we are nonpartisan daughters of Israel. We are fond of the old ways of our Patriarch Israel, and detest the new aspirations.'"

The Derher issue of Iyar 5784 (issue 143) featured a full article on this topic in the "Practical Horaos" section entitled "Lubavitch is Apolitical."

This is an important reminder for us all to follow the Rebbe's example and clear instructions to stay above all politics. We are in the Rebbe's party, which is *Chizuk HaTorah V'HaMitzvah*.

Levi Greenberg

EL PASO, TX

The Rebbe's Approach to Mental Health

Dear Editors,

As always, I love your magazine. However, I believe it's imperative that you write a clarification for the caption and translation of the *sicha* that appeared on page 19 of the recent Tammuz issue, which I feel was inadequate.

This concerns a *sicha* that the Rebbe delivered at the first International Kinus

Hashluchim of 5748, in which the Rebbe said that there are people who—because they suffer from depression and constant worries—don't have the time or energy to receive the great *brachos* that the Rebbe brings down for them. The person worries so much that this becomes his second nature and he can't learn Chitas and certainly, he can't learn Rambam...

The Rebbe continues that the answer to the person's worrying is what our Rabbeim taught us, "*Tracht gut vet zain gut*—think good, and it will be good!"

The Rebbe then said: "He argues that this is not his nature. If this is not your nature, go to a doctor and get pills, to calm you down.

"If your nose was running 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 to remedy yourself!"

As can be seen from the context of the *sicha* the Rebbe was talking about someone who has *mara shechora*, which indicates depression.

The Rebbe was very forward thinking in his approach to mental illness. The Rebbe suggested going to a doctor and taking pills, unlike the norm in those days which was to

suffer through depression and hide your true state of mind.

Over the years I have read how the Rebbe would respond extensively in *yechidus* and in letters to people about mental health. Many of these have been published in the book "Healthy in Body, Mind & Spirit - Mental Health".

All the best,

Michael Druin

CROWNS HEIGHTS, NY

Thank you!

I want to thank you for publicizing the article "In the Lion's Den" (Derher Issue 144 - Sivan 5784) recounting the arrest and liberation of the Friediker Rebbe from prison in 5687, which was very well researched and nicely written. Although I have long been familiar with most of the details brought here, I found it very moving and inspiring. Yasher koach gadol!

Daniel Goldberg

CROWN HEIGHTS, NY

