

A Chassidisher **Derher**

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הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק וזוגתו מרת נחמה, ולזכות בנם ובנותיהם חי'
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ולע"נ זקנם
הרה"ת ר' מאיר יהודה ישראל בן הרב מרדכי ע"ה
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The month of Nissan is a time of joy, celebrating both our *geulah* from Mitzrayim and the ultimate *geulah*. On the 11th of the month, we celebrate the birthday of the *Nossi Hador*, the day when the Rebbe's bright light began illuminating the world, preparing it for the radiance of Moshiaich.

The Rebbe's new *kapitel*—קֶדֶר—begins with the word “*Shir*—A song,” further indicating joyous song. Taking a look at the meaning of the *kapitel*, however, joyous song may not seem to be the theme...

The Midrash relates that this section of Tehillim, and this chapter more specifically, were recited by Yaakov Avinu during a difficult period of his life:

“When Yaakov was watching over the sheep of Lavan, what was he saying? Reb Yehoshua ben Levi says, he was saying the 15 chapters of Shir Hamaalos in Tehillim. How do we know this? Because it says: ‘שִׁיר הָאֲסָלוֹת, לְדָוִד, יְהוָה, שֶׁהֵינָה לָנוּ–יֵאמֹר–נָא, יִשְׂרָאֵל–A song of ascents by Dovid; had it not been for Hashem Who was with us, let Yisroel declare.’ [Who is Yisroel?] The elder Yisroel [Yaakov Avinu].”¹

How is it possible, the Rebbe asks, that in the midst of such a dark and difficult *galus*, Yaakov Avinu was able to sing with open joy?

The answer is that Yaakov knew and appreciated that the challenges he faced in Lavan's house existed in order to bring about a great ascent in their wake, elevating him to a much higher level than before. The Torah attests that when Yaakov concluded his time in Lavan's house, he reached a period of "*Vayifrotz ha'ish me'od me'od*—he [broke through the boundaries from one level to the next, and] became very, very prosperous [both materially and spiritually]." By seeing the incredible ascent that would result from his challenges, Yaakov was able to sing with joy— "a song of *ascents*."

The lesson for us is clear: We may find ourselves in the midst of a dark *galus*, but we must not get disheartened. By keeping our eyes on the goal, on the incredible light of *geulah* at the end of the tunnel, we can rise above all the challenges and begin rejoicing now!²

May we indeed merit that in this month of *geulah* we experience the ultimate *geulah*, and celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan together with the Rebbe, with the coming of Moshjach now.

בברכת חג הפסח כשר ושמח,

The Editors
פורים ה'תשפ"ה

1. Bereishis Rabba 68.

2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, Vayeitzei (1).

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(ממכתב יום ד’ י’ לחדש מנ”א תשנ”ה)

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(THE REBBE'S LETTER, 10 MENACHEM-AV 5703)

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Light in the Dark

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COMPILED BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

וּפָשַׁט אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וְלָבַשׁ בְּגָדִים אֲחֵרִים וְהוֹצִיא אֶת-

הַדָּשָׁן אֶל-מַחוּץ לַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֶל-מָקוֹם טָהוֹר (צו, ו, ד)

"וּפָשַׁט אֶת-בְּגָדָיו: אֵין זֶה חֻכָּה אֲלָא דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, שְׁלֹא
יִלְכְּדוּ בְּהוֹצֵאת הַדָּשָׁן בְּגָדִים שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בָּהֶן תָּמִיד—
בְּגָדִים שֶׁבִּשְׁלֵב בָּהֶן קֹדֶרֶת לְרַבּוֹ, אֵל יִמְזַג בָּהֶן כּוֹס לְרַבּוֹ,
לְכָד 'וְלָבַשׁ בְּגָדִים אֲחֵרִים' פְּחוּתֵינִי מֵהֶם." (רש"י)

He shall then take off his garments
and put on other garments, and he
shall take out the ashes to a clean
place outside the camp. (Tzav 6, 4)

"He shall then take off his garments: This is not an obligation, but proper practice, that, by taking out the ashes, he should not soil the garments in which he constantly officiates. [By analogy:] The clothes worn [by a servant] while cooking a pot [of food] for his master, he should not wear when he mixes a glass [of wine] for his master. Hence, [the *possuk* continues,] 'and put on other garments,' inferior to those [garments of the *kehuma* he had been wearing till now]." (Rashi)

It seems that Rashi gives two separate reasons explaining why the *kohen* must change his clothing before performing *hotzo'as hadeshen* (an occasional requirement, wherein the *kohen* removes the ashes from the *mizbe'ach* whenever there is a significant accumulation, and deposits them in a spot beyond the boundaries of the Mishkan): 1. Because his clothes may become dirty from the ashes and it is not befitting for "the garments in which he constantly officiates" to be soiled. 2. Because it is not appropriate to perform menial labor in the same clothes that one wears while engaging in a more dignified task.

But why does Rashi need to provide a second reason? Why is the first one not sufficient?

The answer is, that contrary to our initial understanding, these are *not* two unrelated reasons. Rather, the second reason resolves a difficulty that arises as a result of the first: If the whole reason for changing clothes is so that the regular clothes don't get dirty, why does the *kohen* change his clothes before *hotzo'as hadeshen*? He should change them earlier, before *terumas hadeshen* (a daily requirement, performed immediately prior to *hotzo'as hadeshen*, wherein the *kohen* removes some ashes from the *mizbe'ach* with a shovel and places them in a heap on the side of the *mizbe'ach*), since this *avoda* also has the potential to soil the *kohen's* garments?



In order to resolve this difficulty, Rashi offers the second reason: “*the clothes worn [by a servant] while cooking a pot [of food] for his master, he should not wear when he mixes a glass [of wine] for his master*”: One of the differences between a servant who cooks food and one who serves a drink is that the latter takes place in the master’s presence, while the former one does not.

Also, the second servant is performing an *actual* service for his master, whereas the first one is only *preparing*—laying the ground, so to speak—for his master to be served (once the food is ready).

The same is true with regards to the two *avodos* of *terumas hadeshen* and *hotzo’as hadeshen*:

Terumas hadeshen happens entirely within the Mishkan, in the home of the Master—Hashem.

Furthermore, it is considered an actual part of the daily sacrificial procedure (*avodas hakorbanos*). Therefore, the possibility of the *kohen*’s garments getting dirty in the process is regarded as a natural consequence of the *avoda*, and not something which must be avoided (just like we don’t expect the *kohen* who *shechts* a *korban* not to get dirty, for example). In other words, it is not defined as “dirt.”

Hotzo’as hadeshen, on the other hand, is an *avoda* that is (mainly) performed outside the boundaries of the Mishkan. Also, it is not considered a part of the *avodas hakorbanos* itself, but only a *preparation* for it (i.e. the *mizbe’ach* needs to be cleared of ashes in order to make room for new fire-wood). Hence, any mess it causes cannot be regarded as a necessary component of an *avoda*, and since it is not befitting for “the garments in which he constantly officiates” to be soiled, the *kohen* must don a different (and inferior) set of clothes.



But if *terumas hadeshen* and *hotzo’as hadeshen* are, indeed, so different from one another that they require separate sets of clothes, why are they performed by the same *kohen*? Wouldn’t it make more sense if, to begin with, they were done by two

different *kohanim* (similar to the *moshol* of the two servants wherein the cook and the butler are distinct individuals)?

The explanation is as follows: When someone serves Hashem from a place of total selflessness and subservience (*bittul*) to the will of Hashem, he does not differentiate between *mitzvos*, granting a higher degree of importance to some over others. Rather, all of his actions are for one purpose and one purpose only—to fulfill Hashem’s will. So, to him, it doesn’t make a difference whether he is performing an actual *mitzva* (“serving the food”), or “only” laying the groundwork for a *mitzva* (“cooking the food”); in both instances, he is doing Hashem’s will, and so he performs them with an equal amount of *chayus*.

Therefore, the same *kohen* can perform *both avodos*; from a “*bittul* point-of-view,” they are *both* of the utmost importance.

Takeaway:

1. Regarding oneself: If the objective is to do Hashem’s will, then it should make no difference whether one is engaged in a *mitzva* or in the preparations thereof—both ought to be performed with the same zeal and devotion.

2. Regarding those around you: One can mistakenly think: “True, there are Yidden out there who need assistance in matters of *Yiddishkeit*; but who said that I need to be the one to help them? Let me remain where I am, in the “*daled amos*” of my Rebbe, and I’ll be an influence on the Yidden around me...” The lesson is that a “*kohen*” doesn’t avoid a job—even if it is “only” a “preparatory task,” it forces him to “put on inferior clothes,” or because it requires him to “leave the Mishkan.”

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 37, p. 1)



Compiled By: Rabbi Levi Greenberg (OH)
Written By: Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
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The Mitzvah of Emptying Mitzrayim



RABBI MORDECHAI SAVITSKY

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5734, the Rebbe discussed the story of *Krias Yam Suf*, how the Yidden were busy gathering spoils of the Mitzrim to the point that they did not want to leave and continue on their journey. Rashi points out that Moshe Rabbeinu had to force them on their way. The Rebbe explained that the Yidden weren't simply craving monetary gain; they were actually fulfilling a mitzvah given by Hashem to take as much as they could from Mitzrayim. Moreover, they were busy with the *avoda* of refining and elevating the sparks of holiness within the physical objects.¹

Shortly after the farbrengen, the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Rabbi Leibel Groner, wrote a note to the Rebbe, saying:

"My son Menachem Mendel *sheyichye*, a student at Tomchei Tmimim of Morristown, asked about what was spoken in the *sicha* regarding the spoils of the sea, that it was a mitzvah from Hashem... The Gemara in Sota 13a states that [at the time that they left Mitzrayim] Moshe was busy with a mitzvah (gathering the remains of Yosef), whereas the Jewish people (were busy with gathering spoils)."

The Gemara seems to imply that only what Moshe Rabbeinu did was a mitzvah, and what the rest of the nation was doing was for their own benefit. How does this fit with what was explained in the *sicha*, that gathering the spoils from Mitzrayim was actually a great mitzvah?

The Rebbe replied²:

אינו שייך להשיחה, כ"א לפשוטו ש"מ שמפורש:
דבר נא ובפרש"י: הזהירם ע"כ (יא, ב). ובתו"ש
(שמות ג ס"ק רמא) ממכ [ילתא] דרשב"י עשה
ול"ת.

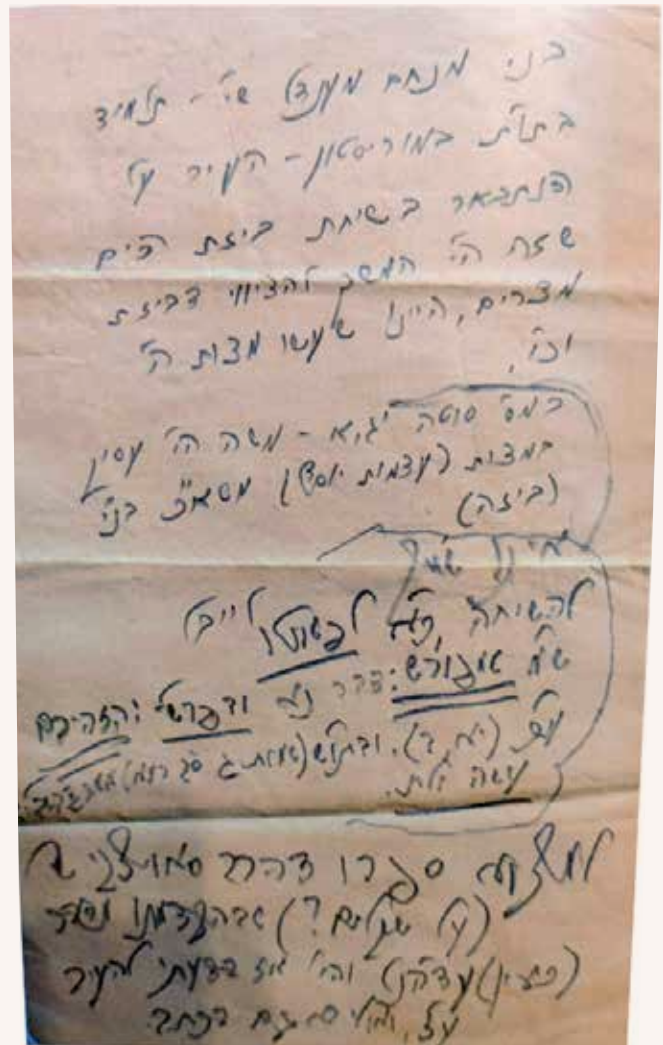
למצוא ספרו דהרב סאויצקי שי' (על שקלים?)
שבהקדמתו מדבר (כעין) עדהנ"ל והי' אז בדעתי
להעיר ע"ז, ואולי בא גם בכתב.

[This question] is not specifically
on [what was explained in] the *sicha*,
but actually on the **basic meaning** of
the *possuk*, where it states **explicitly**:
[Hashem told Moshe:] please speak [to
the Jewish people about taking spoils
from Mitzrayim]. **And Rashi** [who
always offers the simple meaning]
explains [these words to mean]
warn them about this [i.e. this is an
obligation that they **must** do] (11:2).

[In that case, the words of the
Gemara seem to contradict the simple
meaning of the Chumash; not just the
explanation from the *sicha*.]

In Torah Shleima (Shemos chapter
3, subsection 241) [the author cites]
Mechilta D'Rashbi [that gathering the
spoils from Mitzrayim constituted
both] a **positive** and **negative mitzvah**.

Find the sefer by Rabbi [Mordechai]
Savitsky *sheyichye* (on [Maseches]
Shekalim?).³ In the introduction [to
the *sefer*] he discusses a (somewhat)
similar idea to the one mentioned
above.⁴ At the time [when I received
the *sefer*], I had in mind to comment
on this [to the author], and it's possible
that [I indeed] wrote [to him about it].⁵



1. Sichos Kodesh 5734, vol. 2, p. 70. Likkutei Sichos vol. 21, Beshalach (1).
2. Published in B'chadrei Torasecha—preview (Teshura Yarchei Kallah Kfar Chabad 5784), p. 5.
3. Mayim Adirim on Bavli, Yerushalmi, and Rambam, Boston 5711.
4. Rabbi Savitsky asks the same question: Why does the Gemara imply that only Moshe was doing a mitzvah when all the Jews had a mitzvah to take spoils as well? He answers that a mitzvah done purely for its own sake is greater and more important than a mitzvah which brings physical benefit to the person.
5. As of now, a letter from the Rebbe has not been found on the subject.



THE REBBE BURNS THE CHAMETZ
ON EREV PESACH 5750.



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"צ'ב'ה'

~

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



A YEAR OF MIRACLES

The Month of Redemption

The month of Nissan—the month of *Geulah*—
is a very special time in the Rebbe's presence,
where the light of *Geulah* shines throughout the
whole year. We turn to the month of Nissan—in
the year of Nissim—with the Rebbe—5750.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL

WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM, A. JEW 44263

The Apple of His Eye

On the first Shabbos of the month, Shabbos Parshas Vayikra, the Rebbe held a memorable farbrengen. Just a few days earlier, a well-known rabbi in Eretz Yisroel had given a widely publicized address in which he spoke ill of many Jewish people in our generation. The Rebbe responded fiercely, decrying the fact that a person could speak so freely about Hashem's precious children. The Haftarah of the week begins with the words "*Am zu yatzarti lee, tehilasee yesapeiru*—I have formed this nation for Me, they shall speak My praises..." No matter their standing in Torah observance, the Rebbe explained, Hashem still refers to them as "My nation."

Furthermore: Every Jew, by mere existence, speaks the praises of Hashem. "Especially in this generation," the Rebbe continued, "after so many of our people were wiped out [in the Holocaust], every Jew that is left in the world, carrying on as the Jewish progeny, is a living miracle. Just by being alive in the world, they automatically speak the praises of Hashem..."

The Rebbe pointed out that it makes no difference what the speaker had in mind with his address. The only thing that matters is how his listeners hear and

understand it. Instead of speaking ill of huge sections of the Jewish people, this person should spend time bringing them closer to Yiddishkeit. But he doesn't have time; he spends his days eating, drinking, and sleeping, and the remainder of his hours are spent spreading the opposite of *ahavas Yisroel*.

This person is so busy establishing his authority and ensuring that everyone follows only him, that he forgot to look inside the Shulchan Aruch and inside the Siddur and see what a person is supposed to say every day before davening: That we accept upon ourselves the mitzvah to love your fellow as yourself.

In fact, this idea goes back all the way to *Torah Shebiksav*: Zecharya Hanavi says that "whoever lays a hand on you [the Jewish people] is touching the apple of His eye."

Yeshayahu, one of the greatest of all the *nevi'im*, spoke in a derogatory manner about the Jewish people, and he was punished for it. After that, the vast majority of his words speak only positively about the Jewish people. In this way he shows us that even if someone accidentally speaks inappropriately about the Jews, he can always do *teshuva*.

The Rebbe continued on this subject for more than an hour, speaking with fire and passion, even lifting himself slightly from his chair every so often. Upon the



ROSH CHODESH NISSAN 5750.



conclusion of this *sicha*, a joyous *niggun* was sung, and the Rebbe stood up and danced at his place, clapping and waving his hands in all directions for a long while.

Several hours after Shabbos ended, the Rebbe edited a short synopsis of what he spoke about at the farbrengen, to be disseminated around the world, including in the Israeli newspapers.¹

Preparations

This month is unique; its first half is filled with preparation for the Rebbe's birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and the Yom Tov of Pesach that follows closely afterward.

On the evening following Rosh Chodesh, the Rebbe came outside to the front of 770 to draw water for matzah baking—“*mayim shelanu*.” The Rebbe filled a small glass cup with water from the designated faucet and poured it into a large glass jug, while Chassidim sang *Keili Ata* in the background.

Soon after, the Rebbe returned to his room. He then re-emerged and began distributing dollars for a while, at the place where he usually gives out dollars on Sundays.

On the night following Beis Nissan, *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe Rashab, a farbrengen took place at 770 led by the *mashpi'im* of Tomchei Tmimim. The refreshments at this farbrengen included a special treat: Oranges sent by the Rebbe as his personal participation.

Matzah Distribution

On Thursday, 3 Nissan, the Rebbe distributed boxes of matzah to various representatives who would bring them to locations around the world in time for Pesach.

Seven cases of matzos arrived near the Rebbe's room. First, the Rebbe separated “*challah*,” breaking off some matzah from the cases. Then the Rebbe gave packets of matzah to each of the representatives, including those traveling to Australia, London, Manchester, Brazil, Nepal,





THE REBBE DELIVERS A SURPRISE SICHA BEFORE THE DOLLARS DISTRIBUTION, 13 NISSAN 5750.



THE REBBE DISTRIBUTING THE KUNTRES ON 11 NISSAN 5750.

France, and Russia. To the one going to Manchester, the Rebbe gave an additional packet specifically for Reb Zalmon Jaffe. Each packet was accompanied by a copy of the Rebbe's recent *michtav kloli* and a dollar for tzedakah.

Reb Yosef Aharonov took 6 boxes of matzah for Eretz Yisroel, and the Rebbe gave him six *michtavim kloliyim*, instructing him to give them to the members of the committee who would deal with the matzah distribution. "Most probably they will give you one of the copies," the Rebbe said. But then the Rebbe took another copy and said, "I'll give you one on my own. *Hatzlacha rabba* with the trip for Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, and a *kosher un freilichen Pesach* for Tzeirei Agudas Chabad. *Besuros tovos*."

On his way out to the Ohel, the Rebbe saw Reb Yekusiel ("Kuty") Rapp, who arranges the shipment of the matzos with the El-Al airline. The Rebbe gave him a coin for tzedakah and said, "You probably took care of all the necessary arrangements."

After Maariv on Monday, 7 Nissan, the Rebbe went to his home on President Street and remained there until Shabbos.

Yud-Aleph Nissan

On Thursday, 10 Nissan, there was an event in Washington D.C. in honor of the Rebbe's birthday, hosted by American Friends of Lubavitch and attended by members of Congress and shluchim from around the world. After the event, many of the shluchim traveled to New

York to be with the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

In the morning, the Rebbe notified that he would distribute the most recently published *maamar*—Kuntres Yud-Aleph Nissan 5750—that evening, and requested that a special run of this booklet be printed for that purpose. The Rebbe spent the day at the Ohel, and upon his return, he came out to Mincha and Maariv on the first floor of his home.

After Maariv, Reb Zalman Gurary offered the Rebbe a bracha on behalf of all Chassidim in honor the Rebbe's 88th birthday. At the conclusion of his words, Reb Zalman mentioned that if the Rebbe would answer "*Amen, kein yehi ratzon*" to the *bracha*, it would certainly be fulfilled.

The Rebbe began his *sicha* in response to the *bracha* with a big smile, saying, "First of all: *Amen kein yehi ratzon...*" and continued speaking for about 7 minutes.

A long line formed outside the Rebbe's home, as he distributed the blue-covered booklet to thousands of men, women, and children. While the Rebbe distributed the *kuntreisim*, many people gave the Rebbe gifts in honor of his birthday; mostly *seforim* and *kovtzim* published for the occasion. Reb Dovid Nachshon gave the Rebbe keys to the recently rebuilt Ohalim in the town of Lubavitch.

At around 11:50 pm, the Rebbe concluded the distribution, but not before ensuring that everyone had already received their copy of the *maamar*.

The Rebbe spent most of the day on Friday, Yud-Aleph Nissan, at the Ohel.



KOS SHEL BRACHA, MOTZEI ACHARON SHEL PESACH 5750.

Shabbos Hagadol

On Shabbos Hagadol, 12 Nissan, the Rebbe held a farbrengen as usual. After the second sicha, Reb Yosef Neymotin approached the Rebbe and asked for a piece of cake. Then he pointed at the crowd and said, “Rebbe, your children are asking you to say a *maamar Chassidus* tomorrow night.” (One year earlier, on the night of Erev Pesach, the Rebbe had delivered a *maamar* for the first time in more than three years.) The Rebbe smiled and said ‘Lchaim’ to Reb Yosef.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe gave a bottle of *mashke* to Wisconsin shluchim Rabbi Yisroel Shmotkin and Rabbi Yosef Samuels, for the dedication of a new Chabad house in Milwaukee. Rabbi Samuels announced that the celebration would take place at 8:00 in the morning on Erev Pesach, and the Rebbe asked, “Will there be enough time to finish the meal before it’s time to get rid of the *chametz*?” Rabbi Samuels answered that yes, the celebration will begin early and finish in time. The Rebbe responded, “So announce that it will be a *chametz* meal, this way people won’t think that they have to bring fruits or the like!” Rabbi Samuels announced that the celebration will have a *chametz* meal, and the Rebbe interjected, “With all the special qualities that *chametz* has...”

When Rabbi Samuels finished his announcement, the Rebbe delivered a short *sicha* about the *korban toda*, which included some breads that were specifically made of *chametz*.

Right before concluding the farbrengen, the Rebbe mentioned that tonight, 13 Nissan, is the *yahrtzeit* of the Tzemach Tzedek, and everyone should study selections of his Torah at least three times over the 24-hour period.

The farbrengen concluded at 3:55, followed by Mincha. After Mincha, the Rebbe sat down to recite selections of the Haggadah, as is customary, from large copies printed specially for the occasion.

On Sunday morning, 13 Nissan, the Rebbe approached the table in the lobby of 770 ready to distribute dollars, as he would on every Sunday. But instead of beginning with the distribution right away, he delivered a *sicha*. The Rebbe thanked everyone for all the good wishes they sent in honor of his birthday, and spoke for about 20 minutes, then went on to distribute dollars.

Erev Pesach

On the night of Erev Pesach, the Rebbe came out to the front of 770 again to draw water for *mayim shelanu*.

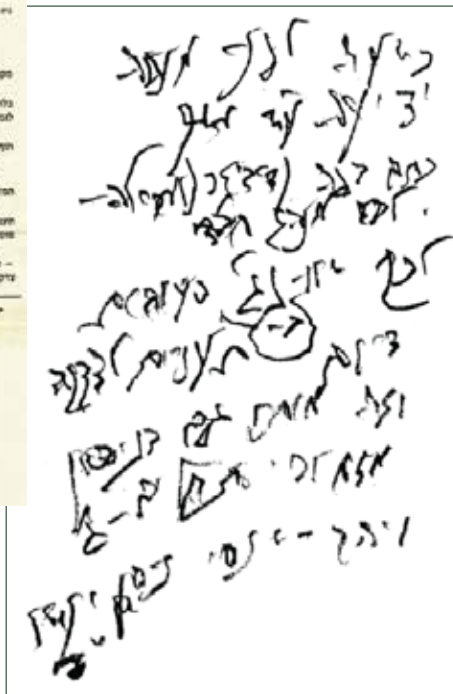
After Shacharis, the Rebbe went down to the boiler room to burn the *chametz* with a paper bag in hand.

In the late afternoon, the Rebbe distributed matzos for public *sedarim* in the United States and Canada, and then to members of the Kollel, who would distribute the matzos to *anash* in Crown Heights.

That night, the Rebbe conducted his seder alone in his room. At around 12:15 a.m., the Rebbe came out from the side door to recite *Shefoch Chamascha*.



THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE "KOL KOREH" THAT WAS RELEASED AFTER THE SICHA.



THE REBBE'S NOTES OF THE SICHA ON 28 NISSAN 5750, ABOUT SPIRITUAL STEPS TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY:

כשעה לפני מנחה
ידיעה ע"ד אש"ף
כחם בפה (דיבור) (ואכילה) -
לבד מנהג חב"ד
לכך שווי ב-ג' סעודות
דיום תענית לצדקה
וזה מותר גם בניסן
מזמורי תהילים - ג'
ויה"ר - ששני ניסים יעשו

ABOUT AN HOUR BEFORE MINCHA [WE RECEIVED] NOTIFICATION ABOUT THE PLO [THE JEWISH] STRENGTH IS IN THEIR MOUTHS (SPEECH [I.E. DAVENING] (AND EATING [I.E. FASTING]. [THIS IS] NOT IN LINE WITH CHABAD CUSTOM [WHICH DISCOURAGES FASTING]. THEREFORE [INSTEAD PEOPLE SHOULD GIVE] THE VALUE OF 2-3 MEALS OF [WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN] A FAST DAY TO TZEDAKAH. THIS IS PERMISSIBLE EVEN IN NISSAN [WHEN WE ARE NOT ALLOWED TO FAST]. CHAPTERS OF TEHILLIM—3. MAY THERE BE WONDROUS MIRACLES.

Shvi'i and Acharon Shel Pesach

Late afternoon on Shvi'i Shel Pesach, the Rebbe came out to the front of 770 to see off the Chassidim leaving for *Tahalucha*, to bring the joy of Yom Tov and speak in various shuls across the New York Metropolitan area. The Rebbe stood there for 20 minutes, slightly encouraging the singing. Late at night, after all the groups returned from *Tahalucha*, the Rebbe once again came out to greet them, encouraging the singing for about 2 minutes.

The next day, on Acharon Shel Pesach after Mussaf, Rabbi Hodakov went into the Rebbe's room to give a report about the *Tahalucha*. Some 120 shuls were visited, and copies of the Rebbe's most recent *nichtav kloli* were distributed. The Rebbe seemed satisfied, and responded, "May we hear good news."

Close to the end of Yom Tov, the Rebbe entered the shul for a farbrengen. After the third *sicha*, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Leibel Groner to ensure that the administration of Tomchei Tmimim distributes 4 cups of wine to all participants, as is customary. With that, the Rebbe motioned to Reb Berel Junik to refill his cup with wine, several times, until the Rebbe himself also had four cups.

Then the Rebbe instructed that the *niggunim* of all the Rabbeim should be sung, adding that the names of each Rebbe should be mentioned as well. While the *niggunim*

were sung, the Rebbe's face was extremely serious, even while encouraging the singing.

At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe bentched over a cup of wine, and after Havdalah the Rebbe distributed *kos shel bracha* till about 1:45 in the morning. One of the people who came by the Rebbe was Mr. Hans, the tailor who sews the Rebbe's *kapotas*, and the Rebbe smiled broadly at him, pointing at his *kapota*.

The Real Security

On 28 Nissan, the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Rabbi Binyomin Klein, received a phone call from the office of Israel's Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzchok Shamir. Intelligence had indicated that the terrorist organization, PLO, was planning several attacks on Jewish targets around the world, and Mr. Shamir was asking for the Rebbe's *bracha* that no harm should befall anyone, *chas v'shalom*. Rabbi Klein delivered the message to the Rebbe, and after Mincha, the Rebbe addressed the matter publicly.

"About an hour before Mincha," the Rebbe said, "we received word that the PLO is planning to attack the 'enemies of the Jews.'" The Rebbe went on to state that the most important thing to do is trust in Hashem that everything would be alright, as our Rabbeim taught us: "*Tracht gut vet zein gut*"—think good and it will be good. It's also of utmost importance not to use this opportunity to scare or frighten anyone. At the same time, however, we as Jews



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 44135 (13 NISSAN 5750)

ARTIST MICHEL SCHWARTZ PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A UNIQUELY DESIGNED KOS SHEL ELIYAHU. UNTIL GIMMEL TAMMUZ, THE CUP REMAINED IN THE REBBE'S ROOM ON THE ROUND TABLE BUILT BY THE REBBE MAHARASH.

know that our strength lies in prayer. The Rebbe suggested that everyone should increase in prayer by reciting at least three extra *kapitelach* of Tehillim, and by increasing in giving tzedakah. "In truth, this sort of situation would call for a fast day," the Rebbe explained. "But since the Chabad approach is not to go about fasting, we should all give money to tzedakah in at least the amount of the cost of three meals, thereby exchanging the need to fast."

Later in the evening, a "*Kol Koreh*" from the Rebbe was published, based on that afternoon's *sicha*, calling on everyone to increase in Torah, Tefillah, and Tzedakah, in order to thwart the plans of the enemies of the Jews.²

The Rebbe's words were widely publicized in the Israeli media. The Rebbe instructed that the *Kol Koreh* should also be translated into English and publicized.

Dollars

On each Sunday of this month, as he did every month, the Rebbe greeted thousands of people, giving out dollars for tzedakah along with *brachos* and advice.

The following is a small sampling of conversations the Rebbe had with visitors during dollars:

On Sunday, 6 Nissan, a man came to the Rebbe with his young daughter, saying that some time ago the girl had developed an internal growth, and the doctors had given up hope on her ever recovering. But the Rebbe gave her a *bracha* and now she was completely healed.

"The doctors don't know how to explain it," the man said with excitement.

"You don't need their explanations," the Rebbe replied, "You will have a Kosher and happy Pesach, and you will continue the joy throughout the whole year."

On Sunday, 13 Nissan, a father with his son of about eight years old came to the Rebbe. The boy kept calling out, "Rebbe, Rebbe!" and the Rebbe asked his father, "Will he ask the four questions?" The father replied that the boy was not well and could not speak.

The Rebbe said, "But he spoke just now!" The Rebbe turned to the boy and said, "You should ask the four questions," and then turned to the father and said, "And you must study and have a good answer for him!"

On Sunday, 27 Nissan, a woman who works at NPR (National Public Radio) came to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe told her:

"May G-d Al-mighty bless you to have a lot of *hatzla-cha*, and to go from strength to strength to spread only good news about Jews and all their activities, and to do so for long, happy years. When Moshiach will come, he will relieve you from your duties, but until then, you have it on your shoulders. May G-d Al-mighty bless you." ①

1. The synopsis was later published in Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2, p. 478.

2. Published in Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 3, p. 100.

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו ז' ניסן

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו
מרת ח' מושקא שיחי
גאלדשטיין

Let's Talk About Eretz Yisroel

THROUGH THE LENS
OF THE REBBE'S TORAH

PART 7

Consolidate the Victory

COMPILED BY:
RABBI MENDEL MISHOLOVIN

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

Achav, the seventh king of the Malchei Yisroel, and Ben-hadad, king of Aram, were mortal enemies. One day, Ben-hadad gathered a coalition of 32 nations to wage war against Achav. They laid siege to the capital city Shomron and, convinced of certain victory, offered humiliating surrender terms to Achav. Despite the overwhelming odds, with the encouragement of a *navi*, the Yidden of Shomron went to war against the mighty army and were victorious.

A few months later Ben-hadad returned and the two armies camped opposite each other for seven days. On the seventh day, as the battle raged, the Yidden wiped out the army of Aram. When the survivors fled to the city of Aphek, the city walls fell in on them, and Ben-hadad was forced to hide in fear for his life. His servants approached Achav and declared, "Your servant Ben-hadad said, 'Please let me live.'" Achav replied, "Is he still alive? He is my brother!"

When Ben-hadad left his hiding place, Achav received him with great honors, and they negotiated a peace treaty. A *navi* warned Achav that he would suffer greatly for sparing his enemy's life. Indeed, three years later, Ben-hadad returned to wage war on the Yidden, and Achav was killed in that battle. (Melachim 1 20-22:41)

Israel's borders before the Six-Day War, known as the 1949 Armistice Line (or the Green Line), were objectively indefensible. To Israel's east, Jordan controlled the West Bank, and at the narrowest point, barely nine miles separated the Jordanian forces from the Mediterranean Sea. This meant that in a war, Jordan could cut Israel in half in less than half an hour. To the north, the Syrians regularly bombed civilian towns and villages from the Golan Heights, making life unbearable. In the south, the vast Sinai desert provided ample opportunity for Egypt to attack Israel and disrupt all shipping coming from the port of Eilat. Ten years earlier Israel had conquered the entire Sinai but returned it to Egypt due to American security assurances, which never materialized.

As a result of the tremendous miracles in the Six-Day War, Israel received the divine gift of defensible borders. The entire West Bank was liberated, including the old city of Yerushalayim, Chevron, and the territories of Yehuda and Shomron, thus widening the borders and removing the vital threat of splitting the country in half within minutes. To the north, they now controlled the Golan Heights and were in a better strategic position if war ever commenced with the Syrians. Most importantly, Israel had reconquered the entire Sinai Desert, which provided a vital buffer zone between them and their strongest enemy, control of the Suez Canal, and possession of vast oil resources to fuel its economy and military.

Five days after the war, as Jews around the world celebrated the miraculous salvation, and with the world awestruck at the swift reversal of fortunes in the Middle East, Israel's government convened to discuss its official policy regarding these territories. In a secret memorandum, the Israeli government confirmed that it would propose peace treaties with Egypt, Jordan, and Syria based on the 1949 Armistice Line. Instead of acknowledging the fact that Hashem had just presented them with the greatest gift and consolidating their position of military strength in the region, Israel's leaders surrendered to what they thought would be the desire of the nations of the world. They offered to give up all the liberated territories for which hundreds of soldiers had sacrificed their lives, to achieve diplomatic relations and extract peace promises from their mortal enemies. Aware of how unpopular such a policy would be, even the military leaders were unaware of this decision.

When the message was communicated to the Arab nations through American channels, the Americans were stupefied at the outrageous offer. Miraculously, Israel's enemies rejected the offer, but the damage was done. Based on these hasty and misguided offers of land for peace, five months later, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 242, which called for achieving lasting peace in the region through the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict," and several other principles that would gravely undermine Israel's ability to defend itself in the future. Resolution 242 became the basis for all future negotiations between Israel and its enemies, resulting in, among others, the disastrous Camp David Accords and Oslo Accords.

Just as Achav had desperately sought the friendship of his arch-enemy thousands of years ago after a miraculous seven-day war instead of following Hashem's instructions, Israeli leaders rushed to undo the achievements of the miraculous Six-Day War by making misguided peace offers to their worst enemies, in the hope of extracting their approval and friendship. Instead of proclaiming these territories as our rightful birthright due to Hashem's promise to our ancestors, as well as vital to our security, they violated Halacha by using them as negotiating chips.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 is illegitimate and not binding. When Israel's leaders and representatives respond clearly and forcefully to all political and diplomatic pressures that these territories are rightfully ours, and vital for our security, the nations of the world will respect us and back down.



Even just speaking about giving away land gravely endangers Eretz Yisroel.

At the farbrengen of 13 Tishrei 5734, three days after the



UN SECURITY COUNCIL CHAMBER IN NEW YORK CITY.

Yom Kippur War began, the Rebbe explained why the war had started barely six years after Israel was victorious over their enemies.

"There are those who are enslaved to their *yetzer hara*, and after Hashem gifted so many territories to the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel during the last war, there were certain politicians who immediately started scheming how they would return them to the enemies, with many strange justifications...

"Based on the clear *psak din* of the Rambam in Hilchos Gerushin,¹ we know with perfect clarity that what these leaders said and did was not on behalf of Klal Yisroel, nor on behalf of several individuals and not even on their own behalf. Their *yetzer hara* forced them to do it!

"Therefore, when a congregation of Yidden is gathered... we must make a public announcement, and do so with a loud voice, that all of this talk [about giving back land]... was only the result of their *yetzer hara's* coercion!

"Especially now, after they themselves realize how foolish this idea was, seeing how terrible the situation would have been had they given up even half a kilometer of territory, they certainly realize that it was their *yetzer hara* talking, not themselves". ❗

NEXT MONTH:

Why is trading land for peace against Halacha?

Primary Sources: *Toras Menachem* vol. 57 p. 107, 150; *Toras Menachem* vol. 74, p. 78; *Sichos Kodesh* 5737 vol. 2, p. 216; *Berega HaEmet* p. 78.

1. 2, 20.

נשי
ובנות
חב"ד

N A S I N

N'SHEI
U'BNOS
CHABAD

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מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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

IT DEPENDS ON THE WOMEN

The Gemara in Sotah teaches: "In the merit of the righteous women of that generation, the Jewish people were redeemed from Mitzrayim." The Rebbe frequently emphasized this theme—the central role of women in Yetzias Mitzrayim—and derived many lessons for the women of our time, drawing a parallel: Just as their forebears enabled the first redemption, today's Jewish women will help bring about the ultimate redemption, may it come speedily in our days.

The extraordinary merit of the women during *Galus Mitzrayim* was most powerfully demonstrated through their commitment to bearing and raising children despite overwhelming hardships. Their unwavering strength continues to inspire us today as we face our own unique challenges.

Then, Jewish women faced unimaginable persecution. Pharaoh's decrees against the Jewish people grew increasingly cruel, and some of his most brutal edicts targeted the children. These culminated in the horrific decree that every newborn son be torn from his mother's arms and cast into the river.

Yet the women remained unwavering in their faith. Despite seeing no end to their suffering and no apparent way to protect their children from certain death, they continued building the next generation, placing their complete trust in Hashem.

Through this extraordinary *bitachon* that transcended all logic, the Jewish women raised a generation, hundreds of thousands of Jewish children. These children were the first to recognize Hashem at *Krias Yam Suf*, and later stood at *Har Sinai* to receive the Torah.

In our own times as well, a woman may face circumstances that appear insurmountable, and—by natural means—they may indeed be so. Yet we must maintain unwavering *bitachon* in Hashem, knowing with complete

certainty that He will help us through. This *bitachon* itself becomes a channel through which additional *brachos* flow, particularly in matters of childbearing.

Another remarkable aspect of the Jewish women in Mitzrayim was that, despite their enslavement, the Egyptians did not control their family life, which remained pure and steadfast, and to the contrary, they raised a generation who recognized Hashem even before the elders. Today, as we each navigate our own personal Mitzrayim, it is the women who possess the unique ability to transcend limitations, uplifting the entire family in the process.

What is the primary Mitzrayim—the greatest constraint on Yiddishkeit—of our times? Chassidus teaches that it is the relentless toil in matters of *parnassa*, the pursuit of livelihood. Society has conditioned us to believe that even a Yid who is fully committed to Torah and mitzvos can become entirely consumed by making a living, leaving little room for what truly matters.

One might assume that if the men were “enslaved,” the women must have been too. However, Hashem endowed women with *bina yeseira*—an extra measure of understanding—granting them the unique ability to rise above this challenge.

Not only can women transcend this challenge for *themselves*, they also have the ability—and the responsibility—to raise the next generation in this spirit. While children must, of course, respect their parents, if the father of the household is “enslaved” by his work, the mother must guide her children not to emulate him in that regard, teaching them to focus on what is really important.

By doing so, the mother not only influences the child’s education but also has an impact on the father. The child’s actions will inspire the father to Torah and mitzvos in his own life, affecting the entire household.

Another instance of women surpassing men during *Galus Mitzrayim* is seen in the story of Miriam.

When Pharaoh decreed that all newborn boys be thrown into the Nile, Miriam’s father, Amram, chose to divorce his wife rather than bring children into the world only for them to be killed. Amram, the *gadol hador*, might have been seen as wavering in his *bitachon*. Yet it was specifically Miriam—only five years old at the time—who demonstrated unwavering

POWER OF YOUTH

The Torah tells us that during Krias Yam Suf, it was the children raised by the righteous women in Mitzrayim who were the first to recognize Hashem’s presence. This story contains an enduring lesson: even today, women have the power to raise children who can perceive G-dliness as the primary reality in everything they encounter, before seeing the physical world.

One might wonder how it is possible to raise children to this level when even most adults haven’t reached this height of perception?

For this as well, we look to Yetzias Mitzrayim, where despite the presence of many adults and elders, it was specifically the children who achieved the most profound level of spiritual awareness. If they could attain such heights amid the crushing poverty and backbreaking labor of Egyptian slavery, surely it is possible in our time, living in lands of prosperity and freedom.

trust that everything would unfold according to Hashem’s will.


Miriam did not keep her *bitachon* to herself. She spoke up, even rebuking her father—an act that would normally be unthinkable—because the very future of *Klal Yisroel* was at stake.

Her unshakable *emunah* led to the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu and, ultimately, the *geulah* from Mitzrayim.

Our generation, standing on the cusp of the final *geulah*, is deeply connected to that generation; the *Arizal* writes that this generation is a *gilgul* of theirs. Again, it is the women who are the driving force.

They accomplish this by ensuring that their homes are permeated with Torah and *mitzvos*, supporting their husbands and parents in this mission. And even when those they seek to uplift show no interest, a woman has the power to awaken their desire—empowering them to embrace what is right, just as Miriam transformed Amram’s perspective. **1**

Sources: *Igros Kodesh* vol. 5, p. 318; *Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5723, *Toras Menachem* vol. 36, p. 334; *Sichas Yud Aleph Nissan* 5732, *Toras Menachem* vol. 68, p. 108; *Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5727, *Toras Menachem* vol. 49, p. 385.



BREAD OF FAITH

MATZAH

FROM THE

REBBE

לזכות
החיילות בצבאות ה'
אסתר מרים תחיל
לרגל יום הולדתה ט' ניסן
ואחותה חיל מושקא תחיל

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



B"ח

A TREASURED TRADITION OF PESACH WITH THE REBBE WAS RECEIVING MATZAH FROM HIS HOLY HAND. CHASSIDIM FROM AROUND THE WORLD WOULD BEGIN FULFILLING THE MITZVAH OF EATING MATZAH AT THE SEDER WITH A MORSEL THAT HAD COME FROM THE REBBE HIMSELF, CAREFULLY DIVIDING AND SHARING IT WITH FAMILY MEMBERS. EVERYONE WANTED A PIECE OF THE REBBE'S MICHLA D'MEHEIMNUSA—BREAD OF FAITH.¹

BY: RABBI MENDY GREENBERG
(TWINSBURG, OH)

The Early Years

Sefer Haminhagim states that on Erev Pesach, “The Rebbe’s custom is to distribute shmura matzah after Mincha, wearing his silk Shabbos *kapota* and a *gartel*.” A footnote mentions that “the Rebbe Rayatz did so as well, in his final years in this world.”²

The Frieddiker Rebbe distributed matzah only to a select few, but the Rebbe—beginning in the first year of the *nesius*—began to distribute matzah to everyone. On Erev Pesach 5711, the Rebbe stood at the door to his room and gave every individual one full matzah and one broken piece, saying, “*meichla d’mehemnusa, meichla d’asvasa*,” which means, “bread of faith” and “bread of healing”—as taught in Kabbalah about the matzah of the first two nights of Pesach (perhaps the full matzah was for the first night—*meichla d’mehemnusa*—and the broken piece was for the second night—*meichla d’asvasa*, but this point is not clearly stated in the *yomanim* of the day). To many, the Rebbe gave personal *brachos* as well.

This became an established custom. In the afternoon hours of Erev Pesach, every chossid was able to receive matzah from the Rebbe with a bracha of “*a kosher un freilichen Pesach*.” Until the Rebbe had a heart attack in 5738, the Rebbe would spend many hours each Erev

Pesach giving matzah to every individual. After Maariv, the Rebbe would distribute matzah to those who had not yet received, and to certain select individuals, such as the members of *Mazkirus*.

First to receive would be those traveling out of New York City, while locals would receive afterward. Most people would receive one broken piece of matzah, but on occasion the Rebbe would give a full matzah or a larger piece for specific individuals. Sometimes, when matzah was being brought to a distant location, the Rebbe would ask whether it would arrive in time for the first Seder. If not, the Rebbe would sometimes exchange it for a smaller piece.

The process changed in 5738. The Rebbe would no longer distribute directly. Instead, the Rebbe would give packages of matzah to the *Chavrei HaKolel*, and they would distribute it to the public. The Rebbe explained that since all *hashpa’os* come through Torah, this *hashpa’a* should likewise be carried out by those who learn Torah full-time. Their distribution took place downstairs in 770; and thousands would come to receive their treasured piece. The *Kolel yungeleit* were instructed to give each individual approximately a fifth of a matzah.

That first year, a few exceptions were designated by the Rebbe himself on a special list: the members of *Mazkirus*,



Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, who sold the Rebbe's *chametz*, Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky for being the *arev kablan* (guarantor of the sale), Reb Shea Korf as the owner of the matzah bakery, and the doctors treating the Rebbe for the heart attack. They received their matzah personally from the Rebbe. Similar *chalukos* were held in subsequent years.

The next year, the Rebbe's distribution to the *Kolel yungeleit* was opened to Shluchim hosting public sedorim in the New York area as well. They were able to come, receive a package of matzah, and rush off to their destination.

The Rebbe's Matzah

When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in America, his matzos were baked in the Sadener Rov's bakery on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, with Reb Elya Simpson managing the operation. This remained the case until Reb Shea Korf arrived in America in 5713 and purchased his own matzah bakery on the Lower East Side. From that year, the Rebbe's matzos were prepared in his bakery, which soon moved to its current location in Crown Heights. In 5739, the bakery was sold to Reb Yitzchok Tenenbaum and Reb Berel Dubravsky.

One year in the late 5710s, on the night of Erev Pesach, the Rebbe asked Reb Meir Harlig who would be taking responsibility for the matzah baking, and he responded that—as usual—Rabbi Simpson was in charge. The Rebbe commented that Rabbi Simpson was occupied with his responsibilities as a *rav*. Reb Meir didn't know what to say, but standing behind him was Reb Mordechai Mentlick; he stepped forward and said that he would take on-site responsibility.

During that conversation, the Rebbe said that the main issue that needed attention was the oven—to ensure that the matzos were not delayed for even a second. From then on, Rabbi Mentlick would always stand near the oven, ensuring that the matzos were never held up. If only some matzos were placed on the pole, he didn't allow them to wait for more, but would instruct that they be placed in the oven immediately.⁴ From then on, the Rebbe's matzos were baked under his supervision. After Rabbi Mentlick's passing in 5748, Rabbi Yisroel and Shneur Zalman Labkovsky took his place.

From the earliest years, the tradition was that the Rebbe's matzos officially came from the "*chaburah*" of



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GRADE.

MATZAH TO CHAIM GRADE

Every year on Erev Pesach, Reb Yisroel Duchman would receive matzah from the Rebbe to deliver to the secular Yiddish writer and poet, Chaim Grade. Without fail, Rabbi Duchman would make the trip to Grade's home in the Bronx, even though it was far and the timing was tight. He often barely made it home in time for Yom Tov. On the second night of Pesach, Rabbi Duchman would return with Grade's message to the Rebbe. Sometimes, he would also bring a gift—a poem or something similar.

In 5742, the year Chaim Grade passed away, Reb Yisroel Duchman didn't go to the *chaluka*, but the next night, he approached the Rebbe and shared a *chassidishe maaseh*. The Rebbe asked him why he was sharing it, and Rabbi Duchman explained, "Every year, I had the privilege of delivering the Rebbe's matzah to Chaim Grade and bringing back the message on Yom Tov. Is it my fault that he passed away?"

The Rebbe responded, "I indeed wondered yesterday why you didn't come to pick up the matzah like you always do," upon which the Rebbe took out matzah and gave it to him.

Many years later, a friend of Grade named Curt Leviant wrote a memorial article about his friend, and included the following:

"During the last decade of his life, I had the good fortune to translate three of his novels and a Holocaust memoir and, by so doing, developed a close friendship with him. I remember visiting him once before Pesach in the Bronx, and he showed me a box of shmura matzah.

"The Lubavitcher Rebbe sent his personal shliach to bring me these matzos," Grade said proudly, adding that this was an annual tradition."³



RABBIS YISROEL AND SHNEUR ZALMAN LABKOVSKY STAND CLOSE BY AS THE REBBE DRAWS WATER FOR MAYIM SHELANU.

bochurim in Tomchei Temimim. The *bochurim* would be involved in the baking process, led by one *bochur* who would serve as official *memunah*, the person responsible for running the operation. In the early years, the *memunah* would have the privilege of delivering the first box of matzah to the Rebbe's room, and receive a full matzah from the Rebbe.

"I was the *memunah* in 5750," relates Rabbi Zushe Greenberg, "along with my friend Rabbi Zalman Garelik.

"In those years, the *bochurim's chaburah* baked matzah on two days, Beis Nissan and Erev Pesach.

"The *memunah's* main responsibility was on Beis Nissan—that was when we baked the matzos for the *bochurim* and the matzos the Rebbe sent overseas—but on Erev Pesach, I was largely out-ranked. The Erev Pesach Matzos were the Rebbe's personal matzos, so they were handled on a whole different level. Rabbis Yisroel and Shneur Zalman Labkovsky were present and directly involved, and Rabbi Tenenbaum—the bakery owner—was always on hand. All the *machers* who had a hand in the Rebbe's *inyanim* made sure to be there. Baking the Rebbe's personal matzos was the highlight of the

FROM WHEAT TO MECHIRAS CHOMETZ

Each year, Rabbi Zalmon Shimon Dvorkin would accompany Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick on a special trip to the field, to cut the wheat for the Rebbe's *shmura* matzah.

After Reb Zalmon Shimon passed away in 5745, Rabbi Mentlick faced difficulties finding a replacement; the *rabbanim* he approached were occupied with other responsibilities and unable to participate. Not knowing what to do, he approached Reb Yisrael Yitzchak Piekarsky, the Rosh Yeshivah of Tomchei Temimim at 770. Rabbi Piekarsky wasn't officially a Lubavitcher *chossid*; he had a shul and responsibilities of his own, and he was already eighty years old. Still, when he heard that there was a need for the Rebbe's matzos, he immediately agreed to go.

When Pesach approached, and a *rav* was needed to prepare the Rebbe's *mechiras chametz* (usually done by Reb Zalman Shimon), the Rebbe said that because Rabbi Piekarsky "*hot ungehoiben*," he started the role of what the Rebbe needed for Pesach, he should be the one to oversee *mechiras chametz* as well.

year for the matzah bakery, so no one would ever miss it.

“In my years, the *memunah* also no longer brought the matzos into the Rebbe’s room; the matzos were brought into *Gan Eden Hatachton*—but I did have the opportunity to have a very close place during both instances of Mayim Shelanu that year, and to stand very close when the Rebbe did *hafrashas challah* for the matzah to Eretz Yisroel, and during the distribution on Erev Pesach.

“When the matzah was being sent to Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe gave a *michtav kloli* to everyone involved, like Reb Yekusiel (Kuty) Rapp and Rabbi Aharonov, who was the shliach that year. Seeing us standing in the corner, he asked if we were going as well, but Rabbi Groner said ‘no,’ and the Rebbe continued the distribution.

“At Mayim Shelanu, there was an interesting occurrence.

“In those years, one of the most important people in the *Vaad Hamesader* was Rabbi Yehudah Michoel Zirkind. A very strong person, he always made sure that the space near the Rebbe was clear, and that everything moved in an orderly fashion. Everyone in 770 respected his role.

“That year, he was not present during Mayim Shelanu on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, and his absence was clearly felt. After the Rebbe came out, there was a lot of pushing; the situation was very chaotic, nobody was able to see, and it didn’t seem appropriate at all.

“The next time, on Yud Gimmel Nissan, people began crowding around the walkway again when I

suddenly heard someone say, ‘Yehudah Michoel is here!’ Immediately, everyone dispersed. The *bochurim* stood much further away, and everything was much more orderly and respectful.”

A PIECE OF THE REBBE’S MATZAH

Rabbi Shlomo Reinitz served as an attendant during the Rebbe’s Pesach Sedarim in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment. He shared the following story:

“On the first night of Pesach, before the Seder began, the guests invited to the Rebbe’s Seder in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment were invited to go down to the Rebbe’s room, where stacks of the Rebbe’s matzah were placed on the table, and each person was able to select three matzos for their *kaarah*.

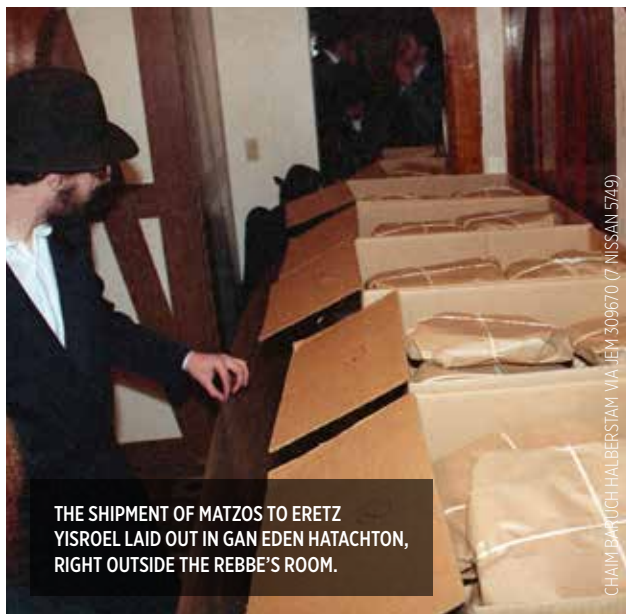
“Being the attendant, I wondered: Am I included? I had already received a piece of matzah in the afternoon along with everyone else—should I go down and take three more? I was unsure, so I decided to play it safe and not take any.

“During *Shulchan Oreich*, I brought a dish to the table. The Rebbe, as always, said ‘Thank you.’ Then he looked at me and asked, ‘Why didn’t you come down to take matzah?’

“I explained that I had already received a piece earlier that day. The Rebbe didn’t respond; instead, he broke off a piece of matzah from his own *kaarah* and handed it to me.

“This was very rare. Nobody received matzah directly from the Rebbe’s Seder plate. In fact, the Rebbe was careful to ensure no one took from his matzah. He would leave the leftover wine in his cup after the meal and others would drink some of it, but his matzah? He would always take the leftover pieces in a bag and bring them back to his room.

“As far as I know, this was one of the only instances that someone tasted from the Rebbe’s matzah.”



THE SHIPMENT OF MATZOS TO ERETZ YISROEL LAID OUT IN GAN EDEN HATACHTON, RIGHT OUTSIDE THE REBBE’S ROOM.

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309670 (© NISSAN 5749)



THE REBBE DRAWS WATER FOR MAYIM SHELANU ON THE FRONT STEPS OF 770.

The Rebbe's Involvement

In previous generations, the Rabbeim were involved in every step of the matzah baking. The Rebbe Rashab, for example, would visit the bakery and personally supervise the process while reciting Hallel. To our knowledge, however, the Rebbe never visited the bakery himself. The Rebbe's personal involvement was pouring the *mayim shelanu*, and most importantly, being *mafrish challah*.

On the evening before the matzah baking—usually Rosh Chodesh and Yud Gimmel Nissan—the Rebbe would come out of 770 to pour the *mayim shelanu* that would be used for the matzos.

In the early years, this was a rather informal event. The Rebbe would simply come out of his room, walk into the courtyard, take water from a faucet, and pour it into glass buckets. No to-do was made of the occasion, and nobody in particular would be present. Reb Meir Harlig related that he once tried to watch from the window of the small *zal* during *seder hayeshiva*, but the Rebbe noticed and reached over to shut the window.⁵

At the time, the Rebbe took the water from an ordinary tap. Its only unique feature was that it was not used during the rest

MATZOS TO RUSSIA

For many years, Rabbi Shmuel Lew was involved in sending *tashmishei kedusha* to the Soviet Union. Among other items, he would often send shmura matzah, which travelers would present at customs as special food for their diets. All year round, he would try to smuggle in small quantities of matzah.

In 5745, just twelve days before Pesach, Rabbi Groner called with a question: could he send matzah from the Rebbe into Russia before Pesach?

Rabbi Lew immediately agreed, and began calling his contacts to see who was traveling to Russia. To his consternation, he discovered that the Russians hadn't been approving visas for some time, and there were almost no Jewish travelers going. Then, the matzah arrived. Instead of the small package that he had envisioned, he was shocked to receive a full eight pounds!

After strenuous efforts, Rabbi Lew discovered a lawyer from Leeds who agreed to take two pounds. Days passed, and there didn't seem to be any way to send the remaining six, until Rabbi Lew discovered that two students from Yeshiva University



RABBI SHMUEL LEW (CENTER) DANCES WITH A GROUP OF JEWS ON ONE OF HIS VISITS TO SOVIET RUSSIA.

of the year. Later, when the Tashlich pond was dug in the courtyard, it was used for *mayim shelanu* as well. In the last few years, a pipe from the Tashlich pond was rerouted to the front walkway of 770, so the Rebbe wouldn't need to walk all the way around 770.

In later years, *mayim shelanu* became a much bigger affair. Hundreds of *bochurim* gathered around on the sidewalk surrounding the front yard, and *Keili Atah* was sung as the Rebbe poured the water. The Rebbe would often encourage the singing on his way back inside.

Still, even in those years *mayim shelanu* was still somewhat unofficial. There were times that the Rebbe did not participate, sometimes staying at the Ohel until a late hour.

Hafrashas Challah

After the matzos were baked and packaged, the boxes were brought to 770. On Erev Pesach, they would be brought directly into the Rebbe's room under the Rebbe's supervision, usually as the Rebbe recited *korbanos*. The Beis Nissan matzos would be brought to the library, and beginning in 5746, they were brought to *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

After the matzah arrived, the Rebbe would be *mafrish challah*. This was the main aspect of the Rebbe's involvement; the "Rebbe's



ON 5 NISSAN 5751, THE REBBE SEPARATES CHALLAH FROM THE MATZOS BEFORE THEY ARE SHIPPED TO ERETZ YISROEL.

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 69973

were traveling to Russia to host a secret seder with Refuseniks. This was the only chance. Rabbi Lew met with them during their early morning stopover in Heathrow airport, and begged them to take the matzah.

The boys refused. They had whatever matzah they needed, and they didn't appreciate the importance of the mission. But Rabbi Lew wouldn't let up. "The entire purpose of your trip to Russia," he told them, "is really only to bring the matzah. This mission of bringing matzah from the Rebbe to the Russian Yidden could be the most meaningful deed you will ever do in your entire life!"

Finally, they agreed. The matzos were sent to Russia, and Rabbi Lew returned home.

Upon their return after Pesach, Rabbi Lew hosted the boys and asked about their experience. They said that they had delivered five pounds of matzah to

Moscow as instructed, keeping one pound for their own seder—and that the matzah had electrified the participants.

Days later, when they were walking in the park with their yarmulkas, Jews came over to them quietly and said, "Matzah from the Rebbe arrived—from heaven!" They didn't realize that they were talking to the heavenly messengers themselves. On the plane back, they heard that Jews in Leningrad had received the matzah as well. Somehow, the matzah seemed to have grown wings and had been delivered to Yidden throughout the country.

The lawyer from Leeds had a similar experience. When Rabbi Lew began to tell him what a meaningful deed he had done, the lawyer stopped him. "You don't need to tell me," he said. "Seeing their eyes light up when they saw matzah from the Rebbe was reward enough."



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 69985 (5 NISSAN 5751)

RABBI ZUSHE GREENBERG RECEIVES A PACKET OF MATZOS ON BEHALF OF HIS BROTHER RABBI YOSEF GREENBERG, FOR A PUBLIC SEDER IN ALASKA.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 309674 (7 NISSAN 5749)

THE REBBE GIVES RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK AHARONOV A PACKET OF MICHTAVIM KLOLIM AND DOLLARS TO BE BROUGHT WITH THE MATZOS.

Matzah” meant not specifically that it was handed by the Rebbe to someone, but that it was part of the matzah upon which the Rebbe had personally done *hafrashas challah*.

A large sheet of paper was spread over all the boxes, symbolically joining them all as “one entity” for the *bracha*. The Rebbe would recite the *bracha* from a siddur, and then break off some matzah from the inside of the box. The Rebbe wouldn’t open the packaging of the matzah. Instead, he would reach inside the box, take hold of a package, and directly tear out a handful of matzah along with the packaging. It is quite a difficult task, and the videos of *hafrashas challah* in the later years show signs of significant strain on the Rebbe’s face.

After *hafrashas challah*, the doors would be opened for the distribution to begin.

Special Distributions

In 5735, the Rebbe launched Mivtza Neshek a short time before Pesach. That year, the Rebbe gave out matzah along with a package of matches for each man to bring home to his wife. When Reb Yisroel Duchman passed to take matzah for Chaim Grade (see sidebar), the Rebbe told him, “Tell him it’s for Yom Tov candles, not for smoking...”

In 5737, the last year the Rebbe distributed matzos to all, the Rebbe also gave a dollar bill alongside each matzah.

Matzah to the World

For the first few years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, the matzos were given out only on Erev Pesach to whoever was able to personally attend the distribution. Then, in 5717 (less than a year after the terrible terrorist attack on Beit Sefer L’Melachah in Kfar Chabad), the Rebbe gave a package of matzah to Reb Avrohom Drizin (Mayor) to bring to Kfar Chabad along with a special letter and *bracha* to each individual.

Every year thereafter, the Rebbe would send matzos to Eretz Yisroel, with the list of recipients slowly growing. In addition to Kfar Chabad residents, various *rabbanim* and dignitaries would receive matzah as well, and over time, matzah was distributed to all Chabad communities in Eretz Yisroel. Other select locations, such as England, would receive as well.

“Growing up in Bnei Brak,” says Rabbi Zushe Greenberg, “it was a special event in our home each year before Pesach. Reb Zushe Wilimovsky—the ‘Partisan’—would arrive with a special package for my father, Reb Moshe Greenberg: one pound of matzah from the Rebbe for all the Chassidim in the city.

“Before Pesach, my father would give a full matzah to some important *rabbanim* such as Reb Moshe Landau. Then, on the first night of Pesach, my father would bring the box to shul, and after Maariv, the distribution would begin.

“You need to understand that having matzah from the Rebbe at your Seder was extremely precious—*yakar*

mikol yikar. People would walk for hours just to get a piece. This was not something anyone was willing to miss. I remember people who missed the *chaluka* walking long distances to my apartment to see if there was anything left. It was very very special. Everyone wanted a piece, and they wanted it quickly too—after all, everyone was rushing to their Sedorim. As you can imagine, it was always a *balagan*. People would be pushing and grabbing from all sides, and within a few minutes, everyone would have gotten their piece and the ‘event’ was over.

“Later, my father developed a better system. We packaged small pieces of matzah in little bags, and Yud-Aleph Nissan was designated as the distribution date. For several hours that day, my father would sit in the Chabad shul and hand out the matzah, using the opportunity to farbreng with everyone who came and making sure they were involved in the latest *mitvza* the Rebbe had launched. Then, we would have the privilege of enjoying the last remaining pieces at our own seder.”

The Shliach to Eretz Yisroel

The matzos for Eretz Yisroel were usually baked and sent off on Beis Nissan. The Rebbe would do *hafrashas challah*, and see off several large boxes—wrapped carefully in plastic—to the airport accompanied by Reb Yekusiel (Kuty) Rapp, who utilized his connection with El Al to arrange for the transport. One year, the Rebbe even emerged from 770 and accompanied the matzos until the end of the driveway.

Every year, someone traveling on an El Al flight would be appointed to take the shipment. For many years, it was the same person—Reb Mendel Gorelik of Nachlas Har Chabad, who always made sure to “happen” to be traveling on that day.

One year, there was a *cherem* issued by the *rabbanim* of Eretz Yisroel against El Al for traveling (or perhaps planning to travel) on Shabbos. The Chabad Beis Din participated in the Cherem⁶ so Reb Mendel purchased a flight with Tower Air instead, but it was unclear whether the Rebbe approved; the Rebbe was very particular about sending the matzah on El Al, a Jewish company, to give *parnassa* to fellow Jews.

A few short days before the scheduled departure, El Al announced that they wouldn’t fly on Shabbos and the *cherem* was rescinded. The Rebbe didn’t agree that Reb

MATZAH IN THE SUMMER!

Rabbi Yisroel Shemtov relates:

On Monday, 16 Tammuz 5716, the Rebbe visited the grounds of Camp Gan Yisroel which was set to open for the first time several days later. After touring the campgrounds, the Rebbe washed his hands for a farbrengen and took a package of matzah out of his pocket for *Hamotzi*.

After partaking of a piece, the Rebbe began to distribute the rest of the matzah to everyone present. There was very little to go around, but the Rebbe said that the most important thing is that everyone gets a piece. “The size doesn’t matter.”

Partway through handing out the matzah, the Rebbe suddenly paused, took a few pieces, wrapped them in a napkin, and tucked them back into his pocket. Then he continued distributing the rest.

At the end of the farbrengen, a camp staff member approached the Rebbe, clearly shaken, and reported that a car filled with Chassidim from 770 had been in a serious accident. The car had overturned three times, but everyone had miraculously survived. The Rebbe listened and asked, “*Drei mol ibergedreit zach*—It turned over three times?” The Rebbe continued and said that everything would be alright. He reached into his pocket, took out the wrapped matzah, and gave it to the organizer, instructing him to distribute it to those involved in the accident.

Later, it was discovered that the accident had happened at the exact moment the Rebbe had paused to set aside the matzah.

Mendel should pay more money to change his flight, so a different shliach was found that year.

The Growing Distribution

Throughout those years, the regular distribution remained only on Erev Pesach. If shluchim and *anash* in communities around the United States wanted to receive



RABBI YEKUSIEL RAPP (3RD FROM LEFT) WITH THE SHIPMENT OF MATZOS TO ERETZ YISROEL, COURTESY OF EL AL.



CHILDREN COME TO LEARN ABOUT PESACH AND BAKE THEIR OWN MATZAH AT KFAR CHABAD. CIRCA 5730S.

the Rebbe's matzah, a representative would need to receive it from the Rebbe on Erev Pesach, and overnight it with expedited shipping for the second seder. Sometimes people would rush the matzah to the airport, and ask a random traveler to take the matzah to a destination where it would be picked up in the minutes before Yom Tov.

In 5748, the suggestion arose to hold a general *chaluka* when the matzos would be sent to Eretz Yisroel as well, allowing other locations to appoint messengers to receive matzos on their behalf and send them in time for Yom Tov. The Rebbe agreed to the proposal. That year, shluchim from Venezuela, Italy, London, Manchester, South Africa, and Sydney were able to receive matzah from the Rebbe and bring it to their places of shlichus.

This became the annual custom. Before seeing off the matzos to Eretz Yisroel, specially appointed representatives would approach the Rebbe, and after being told their destination, the Rebbe would hand them a paper-wrapped pound of matzah with a copy of that year's *michtav klali*, and give a bracha of a "*kosher un freilichen Pesach*."

Matzah of Hiskashrus

In the early years of Kfar Chabad's founding, the Rebbe encouraged the opening of a *mehudardike* matzah bakery. In those years—and even today—it was and is a centerpiece of *hafatzas hamaayanos*, a place where thousands and tens of thousands would come to learn about Pesach and receive shmura matzah for their Seder. The bakery was very dear to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe was involved in every detail.

Each year, the Chassidim in France would receive a large shipment of Kfar Chabad matzos via the Lishkah, the office of Lubavitch in Europe led by Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky. But one year, a group of *anash* decided to circumvent the Lishkah and purchase their matzos from a different bakery.

The Rebbe sent a long letter to Reb Nissan Nemanov expressing surprise at their choice.

Everything in the life of a chossid, the Rebbe wrote, comes through the *hashpa'os* of the Nossi Hador. How much more so, matters of Torah and Mitzvos, and how much more so, matters of *emunah*—which should come from the *Raya Meheimna*, the Shepherd of Faith—i.e., the Rebbe. And yet, the Rebbe expressed his amazement, with regard to *meichla d'meheimnusa*, bread of faith, a group of *anash* had chosen to disconnect themselves from a *mosad* of the Frieddiker Rebbe (i.e., the Lishkah) and had gone to purchase their matzos elsewhere!

"I'm sure there were good reasons," the Rebbe wrote. Perhaps the other matzos were tastier or cheaper or whatever. "But nevertheless, it is surprising to me: is it worth forgoing another opportunity to be connected to my father-in-law, the Rebbe?" ❶

1. All the information in the article is culled from *Miyado Hakedosha*, Vaad Hatemimim 5773, unless otherwise noted.

2. P. 38.

3. Jewish Action, Winter 2011.

4. *Ha'ish Mordechai* p. 51.

5. Derher Teves 5777 p. 43.

6. On Shabbos Parshas Noach 5742, the Rebbe personally spoke out against El Al's plan.



The REBBE'S KAPITEL



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



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

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




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

נדפס ע"י


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

INTERVIEWS:
RABBI YOSSE KATZ

WRITTEN BY:
MOTTI WILHELM



THE TORAH OF YUD ALEPH NISSAN



In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan—the Rebbe’s birthday—we were privileged to sit down with four Chassidim to study the four *kuntreisim* that the Rebbe edited and published for Yud-Aleph Nissan, discussing profound insights and highlighting practical lessons. We thank them for their time, זכות הרבים תלוי בהם.





KUNTRES YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5747

MAAMAR KIMEI TZEISCHA YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5742

RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK GOURARIE

The *maamar* opens with the *possuk*, “*Kimei tzeischa mei-Eretz Mitzrayim ar’enu niflaos*.” The simple meaning of this *possuk* is that at the time of the final *Geulah*, there will be miraculous wonders and extraordinary revelations of *Elokus*, just as there were during *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

This *possuk* naturally raises a question: The wording “*kimei—like the days*” (plural)—seems puzzling. *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the actual exodus from Egypt, occurred on a single day. This is evident from other *pessukim*, such as “*Zachor es hayom hazeh asher yetzasem mimitzrayim*—Remember this day that you left Egypt”—which refers to it in the singular. Why, then, does the *possuk* here use the plural form?

Another question raised by the *possuk* is its comparison between the miracles of the ultimate *Geulah* and those of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. This seems difficult to understand. The miracles of the future redemption will be on an entirely different level—far surpassing those of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. How, then, can they be equated?

The *maamar* addresses this by presenting a second explanation of the *possuk*. Not only will there be miracles in the future redemption, but they will be considered *niflaos*—wondrous—even compared to the miracles of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*! Despite the magnitude of the original *geulah*, the miracles



of the final *geulah* will be of such an extraordinary nature that they will stand out as wondrous, even in comparison.

These two seemingly contradictory explanations are both true. *Yetzias Mitzrayim* brought a revelation of the highest levels of *Elokus*, so in a general sense, it can indeed be compared to the ultimate *geulah*. However, when examining the details, the *giluyim* of the future *geulah* will be on an entirely higher plane, far surpassing those of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

The *maamar* then delves into the specific differences between these two redemptions, explaining how the revelations of the final *geulah* will transcend those of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

But if so, the *maamar* asks, why compare them at all? And why, according to some opinions, will we still recall *Yetzias Mitzrayim* even after experiencing the ultimate revelations of the *geulah*?

The answer is that *Yetzias Mitzrayim* “opened the channel” for all future *geulos*, including the final one. This parallels how *Yetzias Mitzrayim* paved the way for *Matan Torah*, when the barrier between *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus* was removed, allowing for the eventual *geulah* of the physical world itself.



FARBRENGEN, 11 NISSAN 5742.

Likewise, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* set the stage for the ultimate *geulah*.

In fact, *Matan Torah* already contained a revelation of the ultimate *geulah*, but it came from above and was, therefore, temporary. By contrast, the future *geulah* will also come from below—the world itself will become a *keli* for

this revelation—making it permanent and complete.

This point in the *maamar* can be best understood by exploring how this concept is explained elsewhere in *Chassidus*.

Prior to *Matan Torah*, the physical and spiritual existed on two separate planes, unable to truly connect. Even the

mitzvos performed by the *Avos* did not imbue the physical objects they used with lasting *kedusha*—once the *mitzvah* was completed, the object remained mundane.

This changed with *Matan Torah*. The barrier was broken, allowing *kedusha* to penetrate *gashmiyus*. From that moment on, physicality could become a vessel for holiness, and objects used for *mitzvos* would retain their sanctity.

But this transformation was still on *ruchniyus*' terms—the spiritual overpowered and elevated the *gashmiyus*. The physical itself did not yet become inherently holy but, rather, became a vehicle for *ruchniyus*.

Chassidus provides a *mashal* to illustrate this concept—the relationship between a *rav* and a *talmid*. When the *rav* is on an exceptionally high level, he can bring down profound ideas in a way that even a less capable *talmid* can grasp. However, this does not mean the abilities of the *talmid* have fundamentally changed or grown. Rather, it is the *rav*'s skill and depth that enable him to lower the concept to the *talmid*'s level.

It was only after *Matan Torah* that the true *avoda* of elevating *gashmiyus* began—transforming the physical world into a vessel for *Elokus* on its own terms. However, for this process to even be possible, there first had to be a *giluy* from above. The initial revelation at *Matan Torah* broke the barrier between *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*, creating the potential for the physical to become a *keli* for *Elokus*. Only after this breakthrough could the world itself begin to be refined and elevated through *avoda*, paving the way for the ultimate *geulah*, when this transformation will reach its fullest and most permanent expression.

In other words, *Matan Torah* was the beginning of a process that continues to unfold through our *avoda*, until reaching its ultimate completion in the final *geulah*.

This is what the *maamar* continues to explain: *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, which was the lead-up to *Matan Torah*, is not just a one-time event but an ongoing process—every day, we are supposed to transcend ever-higher limitations and boundaries. With each step in this continuous *avoda*, we ascend to a greater level of *Matan Torah*, as the world becomes an increasingly refined *keli* for *Elokus*. This ongoing elevation prepares us for the ultimate revelation—the direct *giluy* of *Atzmus* itself in the *geulah ha'amitis v'hashleimah*.

How does this idea translate into *avoda*?

A person is inherently a limited being, both by their own nature and by external forces, making it difficult to fully channel all their *kochos* toward *Elokus*. *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is the process of breaking free from these limitations, allowing a person to be as they truly should be—a *Yid* in every aspect, with their *sechel*, *middos*, and all their *kochos* aligned with *Elokus*.

However, this stage is not yet *Matan Torah*, where *gashmiyus* itself transcends the limitations of being a created being

to become unified with *Elokus*, a level far beyond anything a created being can naturally reach. At *Matan Torah*, this unity was revealed, but only temporarily; it will become permanent in the future *geulah*.

Before reaching that level, a person must first break free from their internal constraints—the boundaries of the *guf* and *nefesh habehamis*—so that the *nefesh Elohis* can be revealed. This is the essence of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*: stepping beyond these limitations and embracing what it means to be a *Yid* in every aspect of life. The person remains a *nivra*, a created being, yet through *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, they break free from their personal “*meitzarim*”—the barriers that confine them. This parallels the original *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, when the Yidden transitioned from being *avdei Pharaoh* to *avdei Hashem*.

However, at this stage, the connection remains within the framework of a *nivra*, still bound by the limitations of creation itself. The next step is *Matan Torah*, which accomplished something far greater—allowing a *nivra* to break beyond the limitations of creation entirely and become unified with *Elokus* in a way that transcends the very definition of a created being.

Translating this into our personal *avoda*, one does not need to immediately leap beyond the limits of creation. The process begins in a straightforward and practical manner—engaging all one's *kochos* in *Elokus*: learning and understanding *Chassidus*, refining *middos*, and ensuring that every aspect of oneself is aligned with *Elokus*.

Only through this foundation does a person open the stage for reaching far higher—levels that are entirely beyond the framework of a *nivra*. This is what allows one to ultimately connect to the reality of *Matan Torah*, in which a *nivra* can transcend its natural boundaries and become one with *Elokus* in the fullest and most complete sense.

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KUNTRES YUD ALEPH NISSAN - 5749

MAAMAR B'YOM ASHTAI ASAR YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5731

RABBI MOISHE NEW

A *maamar* is not merely a mystical *dvar Torah* that explains the nature of G-dliness or a profound explanation of a *possuk*. A *maamar* is a revelation of *Elokus* to the world. As the Rebbe himself explained, with each generation, the Rabbeim revealed progressively deeper levels of *Elokus*.

In our generation, the Rebbe also revealed what a Rebbe is, beyond what had been taught by any previous Rebbe. This is because as we draw closer to the coming of Moshiach, the deepest levels of *Elokus* are revealed, which means a deeper revelation of the *neshama klolis* of a Rebbe, which, in turn, means an ever-deepening revelation of the *neshama* of every individual Jew. Accordingly, we are seeing the Rebbe embracing and touching *Yiddishe neshamos* on a scale unprecedented in history, not simply due to advancements in technology but because the idea that “*Hanosi hu Hakol*—the leader of the generation is everyone” is revealed now in a greater way than ever before.

Similarly, in his *maamarim*, the Rebbe addressed *Atzmus* on a level beyond that of any Rebbe prior. And when a Rebbe discusses a level of *Elokus*, it is not merely a teaching—it is a revelation of that level. As we draw closer to the *Geulah*, the deepest, most essential levels of *Elokus* are revealed and drawn down.

One can watch the Rebbe say a *maamar* and immediately recognize—without needing to be a particularly spiritual person—that it is a great *avoda*.

Certain *maamarim* stand out in a unique way. One such example is the *maamar* of *B'yom Ashtei Asar* said on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5731. (Notably, this *farbrengen* also served as a *kabbalas ponim* for the *shluchim* who had just returned from Australia. It was a brief *farbrengen*, held between Mincha and Maariv, consisting of two *sichos* and the *maamar*.)

The *maamar* asks a question and answers on three levels.

The question is regarding the *korban* of *Shevet Asher*, which was offered on Yud-Aleph Nissan. The *Midrash* explains that although all the *shevatim* brought the same *korbanos*, each one had a different *kavana*. What was the theme of the *korbanos* of *Shevet Asher*? *Ge'ulasan shel Yisroel*—the redemption of the Jewish people, and the *bechira*—the choosing, of Yidden in Hashem, and that of Hashem in Yidden.





The *maamar* asks: what does it mean that Yidden choose Hashem and Hashem chooses Yidden? True choice exists only when the options are equal, so how can this apply to the choice between Yidden and other nations, or between Hashem and—*l'havdil*—false gods, *chas v'sholom*?!

[It's important to note that there is already a *chiddush* in the question itself. The Alter Rebbe in Tanya, *perek* 49, addresses the question of how there can be *bechira* in Yidden. He explains that the choice applies to the *guf* of Yidden, which, in its physical form, appears similar to the bodies of non-Jews.

However, the Rebbe is not satisfied with this answer. He points out that the similarity between a Yiddishe body and that of a *goy* exists only from our perspective. From Hashem's perspective, the body of a Yid is entirely different—even before the *bechira* takes place!]

To explain this *bechira*, the Rebbe brings a *mashal* from the Midrash, about a king who enters a country accompanied by dukes (*duchsin*), governors (*efarchin*), and military commanders (*istratilutin*). One person chooses the dukes, another the governors, and a third the military commanders.

There was one clever fellow, a “*pikeach*,” the *mashal* continues, who chose the king, “*ana nasiv Malka*” explaining that his choice is because “all the others can be replaced, but the king does not change.”

But this explanation only raises a new question—why does it take a “*pikeach*” to choose the king when the choice is obvious?

The Rebbe offers three answers.

To summarize:

First, that the nations of the world—represented by those who chose various officials—make a mistake. They believe that *teva*—the natural order—has a role in determining the flow of blessing and sustenance a person receives, similar to a waiter in a restaurant. True, the waiter is hired and paid by the owner, yet if one treats the waiter well, one receives better service. Their mistake is that the forces of nature have no autonomy and are only like an “axe in the hand of a woodchopper.”

The second explanation is that the nations of the world choose the *klipos*, because they receive greater *hashpa'a*, as it comes effortlessly, without requiring any *avoda*. However,



the Yidden forgo this in order to receive directly from the *Melech*, even if that means less *hashpa'a*, because only *kedusha* is eternal and enduring. The challenge with this answer is that it, too, does not express true *bechira*, which is beyond the rational—stemming from the *neshama's* core—as this choice is logically founded.

The Rebbe then presents the third explanation, which forms the heart of the *maamar*. He explains the various officials as representing different levels of Divine revelation. Yet, the Yid seeks none of them—he desires only the *Melech*. No *giluyim*, no intermediaries, even if they emanate from the *Melech*—he wants the King alone.

What does it mean to want the King alone? One can possibly connect this with a story the Rebbe told at the famous Purim farbrengen of 5718. The Rebbe recounted a story with the Mittler Rebbe, who established a *takana* that anyone traveling to Lubavitch must review and teach Chassidus in the towns along the way, both to and from their destination. One chossid requested an exemption, explaining that teaching Chassidus made him feel *yeshus*—a sense of self-importance. The Rebbe explained that his *yeshus* was that “he took pride

in fulfilling the Rebbe’s desire to spread Chassidus.” That’s *yeshus*?! We see from this that *Ana nasiv Malka*, at its core, means that one’s sole desire is for the *Melech* to have *nachas*—not even that he should be the one to bring it about. (The ironic truth is, of course, that the whole *taanug* of the *Melech* is indeed the chossid himself and his *avoda*...))

The Rebbe goes on to explain that Yidden choose *Atzmus* because they are rooted in *Atzmus*. The nations of the world, however, are *nivra'im*, created, like all creations, as a means to an end. Accordingly, any choice they make can only be driven by what brings benefit, i.e., it must be a means by which they stand to gain—consistent with their very identity.

Towards the end of the *maamar*, the Rebbe connects this to the request of Dovid HaMelech in Tehillim, “*Lamnatzeach l'Dovid lihazkir*,” explaining that the shepherd of the Yidden is an essential part of their connection to Hashem, for his *neshama* is the transparent embodiment of the *neshama's* root in *Atzmus*, where all *neshomos* are one.

Parenthetically, this also explains why Moshiach will remain the central focus forever, even after the *geulah* is fully in place. This is because *geulah* is the revelation of the *etzem haneshama*, which is uncompromisingly expressed in the *neshama klolis* of Moshiach.

The message of this *maamar* is relevant today more than ever. The world is telling us: You are fundamentally a foreigner. And they’re right! The *neshama* is rooted in *Atzmus*, beyond creation, even beyond the Divine emanations by which Hashem creates the world. They also hold us collectively responsible for one another—again, an immutable truth. For we are indeed all one—with each other and with *Atzmus*, the Essence of Hashem.

In 5727, following the Six-Day War, there was a great *hisorerus*. It was about pride in being a Yid—I’m proud to be Jewish. Today, it’s about the very essence of our identity. I am a Jew. The world itself is drawing that out of us.

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KUNTRES YUD ALEPH NISSAN - 5750

MAMER KI YISHALCHA YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5738

RABBI SHLOMO KAPLAN

This is a special and fundamental *maamar* that discusses the very core of a Yid and his connection with Hashem's essence. The Rebbe presents the ideas step-by-step, level-by-level, with each question revealing a deeper understanding of the great wonder of Torah and mitzvos.

The *maamar* opens with a question. The *posuk* "*Ki yish'alcha vincha machar leimor: mah ha'eidos v'hachukim v'hamishpatim asher tzivah Hashem Elokeinu eschem*" is identified in the *Haggadah* as the question of the *ben chacham*—the wise son. This means it is posed by someone whom the Torah itself describes as a *chacham*—a wise and knowledgeable individual, not someone lacking basic understanding.

If so, his question must be a legitimate one according to Torah. But this raises a difficulty: Why is he asking about something so fundamental—*eidos*, *chukim*, and *mishpatim*—the well-known categories of mitzvos?

The Rebbe offers multiple explanations of the *ben chacham*'s question, each uncovering a deeper dimension of its meaning, each reaching a higher level of understanding than the one before.

The first explanation is that the *ben chacham* is asking how mitzvos—physical actions performed in this world—have the power to draw down *Elokus*, even when performed without any *kavanah* merely as dry acts. How can it be that someone who simply wraps *tefillin* or eats *matzah* on *Pesach*, even without any intent, has still fulfilled a mitzvah and drawn down *Elokus*? This seems incomprehensible.

The answer is that *galus Mitzrayim* served as a preparation for *Matan Torah*, when the highest levels of *Elokus*—the very *etzem* of Hashem, from which Torah and mitzvos



originate—were revealed. At this level, *ruchniyus* is no closer to Hashem than *gashmiyus*; both are equally distant. The revelation of *etzem* comes not from the inherent value of the mitzvah's action but solely because it is Hashem's will. It is through fulfilling Hashem's desire, regardless of personal intent or understanding, that the essence of *Elokus* is drawn into the world.

But the Rebbe then challenges this explanation: If the *ben chacham*'s question is about the effectiveness of action, why does he specifically mention the three categories of mitzvos—*mishpatim*, *eidos*, and *chukim*—in his question? These distinctions pertain to the intent and understanding *behind* the mitzvos, not to the physical act itself.

Mishpatim are mitzvos that human logic alone would dictate, such as the prohibitions against theft and murder. *Eidos* are mitzvos that serve as testimony (*edus*) to significant events, like *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, which affirm the connection between Yidden and Hashem. *Chukim* are mitzvos that transcend human comprehension, such as *shaatnez*, which has no apparent logical reason. These categories define different intellectual approaches or *kavanos* to mitzvos, not the performance of the mitzvah itself.

If the *ben chacham* is asking about the power of action, why would he frame his question around distinctions that are unrelated to the physical performance of mitzvos?

The second explanation quotes the Frierdiker Rebbe's



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 23284 (11 NISSAN 5737)

maamar on the same *dibbur hamaschil* from 5700, and flips the question on its head. The *ben chacham* already understands that mitzvos are effective not because of their inherent logic or value, but simply because they are Hashem's will. If so, why are they divided into different categories? If all mitzvos are fundamentally expressions of Hashem's command, why differentiate between *eidos*, *chukim*, and *mishpatim*?

The answer to this question is not explicitly spelled out in

the *maamar*, but it can be understood from the context. The Rebbe goes on to offer a deeper perspective on the concept of *eidos*, *chukim*, and *mishpatim*. While these are typically seen as three distinct categories of mitzvos, each with its own characteristics, the Rebbe explains that, in reality, every mitzvah contains all three elements—*eidos*, *chukim*, and *mishpatim*. This is because the purpose of every mitzvah is to reveal *Elokus* in the world, and there are three ways this revelation

takes place—in a manner of *eidos*, *chukim*, and *mishpatim*:

Mishpatim represent the connection to Hashem that is achieved through a person's understanding and emotions. In this way, *Elokus* becomes the guiding force in one's life while still allowing for the person's individuality to remain. In *Chassidus*, this corresponds to *memaleh kol almin*, the level of *Elokus* that is revealed within the framework of creation, permeating existence in a way that gives space for its existence to remain.

Chukim, by contrast, are mitzvos that transcend understanding, requiring absolute submission to Hashem's will even when it defies logic. This corresponds to *sovev kol almin*, the level of *Elokus* that exists beyond creation, a revelation that nullifies any sense of independent existence.

Both of these levels—whether *Elokus* as it transcends understanding or *Elokus* as it permeates human comprehension—are still expressions of defined characteristics within *Elokus*. Either it is beyond intellect, or it is able to be grasped within intellect. However, Hashem Himself is beyond all definition, even the definition of being "higher than understanding."

How can a Yid tap into this deepest dimension of *Elokus*? By tapping into his essence as a Yid, whose very being is connected to *Atzmus*. This is expressed when a Yid does a mitzvah without any calculations at all, but simply because it is Hashem's will. A mitzvah is not done as a means to deepen his personal connection to *Elokus*, nor as an act of *bittul* to something higher, but purely because he is a Yid—this expresses his essence, which is one with *Atzmus*.

These three dimensions exist within every mitzvah. While some mitzvos highlight one aspect more than the others, each inherently contains all three. A Yid may do a mitzvah to connect to *Elokus*, to nullify himself before *Elokus*, or simply because he is a Yid—expressing his very essence through fulfilling Hashem's will.

In this explanation, the Rebbe implies a question without stating it explicitly: If the highest dimension of a mitzvah is the connection between the essence of a Yid and *Atzmus*, what is the need for the other two dimensions?

The Rebbe explains that Hashem's desire is not for this essence to remain abstract and removed but for it to permeate every part of the Yid, including his *sechel* and *middos*. Without the aspects of *chukim* and *mishpatim*, the deepest connection would remain distant, never fully expressed in the details of a person's life. Through *chukim* and *mishpatim*, this essence is drawn down, shaping not only the Yid's essence but also the way he thinks, feels, and experiences his connection to Hashem.

This brings us to the third explanation of the *ben chacham*'s question: It was explained that *chukim* and *mishpatim* are meant to draw down *Atzmus* and permeate the individual,

but how can they do so when, by definition, *Atzmus* and particulars seem inherently incompatible? How can *Atzmus* penetrate a person's very being and transform him as he is? The Rebbe explains that *Matan Torah* empowered even this—to reveal *Atzmus* within the very *existence* of the person.

The Rebbe takes this one step further and asks: Even such a deep question still reflects some lack of knowledge, which should be impossible for someone whom the Torah calls a *chacham*.

The Rebbe answers that since Torah must be viewed as new each day, there must be a completely new level in Torah and mitzvos. For the *chacham*, each day begins with the *avoda* of "before *Matan Torah*," albeit on a much higher level than the day before. At that stage, he must toil anew to grasp the accomplishment of *Matan Torah* on his elevated level.



In this *maamar*, the Rebbe powerfully articulates the *maalah* of a Yid—his intrinsic connection to *Atzmus* at the very core of his being. It's this intrinsic connection that lies at the core of every action he takes as a Yid. This is reflected in a Yid's unconditional devotion to Hashem, his willingness to give himself over without calculations.

At the same time, this connection must manifest in his life—through learning, *davening*, and all aspects of *avodas Hashem*. His inherent bond does not negate those efforts; on the contrary, it serves as an impetus for them. The purpose is to take that essential connection and allow it to permeate the person as he is.

Another key lesson from the *maamar* is that Torah and Mitzvos is infinite. As such, it is never something we can fully grasp. Rather the way we connect to Hashem is specifically through the question which leads us to a higher understanding, followed by a question from an even higher level, climbing endlessly from one level to the next. We see this sentiment even within the text of the *maamar* itself: the Rebbe continuously asks, explains, and then asks again from a higher vantage point, symbolizing the constant quest to reach higher and higher.

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SHIURIM



KUNTRES YUD ALEPH NISSAN - 5751

MAMER TEFILLAH L'MOSHE YUD GIMMEL TAMMUZ 5729

RABBI ASHER FARKASH

The *maamar Tefillah L'Moshe 5729* was edited by the Rebbe for Yud Aleph Nissan 5751. Before delving into the *maamar* itself, I'd like to share some memories from the time of its publication.

In 5751, I was on *shlichus* at Yeshiva Gedolah in Melbourne, Australia. We had arrived in Iyar 5750 and were set to remain for two years.

Back then, *shluchim* to Australia remained for the full duration without interruption, regardless of personal circumstances—even for a sibling's wedding. This was an understood condition of the *shlichus*.

However, during our time there, one of the *shluchim* had a father who was unwell. When his sibling was getting married, he wrote to the Rebbe requesting permission to travel for the wedding, and the Rebbe granted it. Around the same time, another *shliach* had a sibling getting married, and his parents asked if he could come. In that case, the Rebbe's response was: *kirtzon haben*—"according to the son's desire." While this was not a direct *hora'ah* to travel, it was a significant shift, as such requests had previously been met with a clear rejection.

Seeing this, our entire group of *shluchim* decided to take a bold step—we asked the Rebbe for permission to travel to New York for Yud Aleph Nissan, which marked the beginning of the Rebbe's 90th year.

We wrote a joint letter to the Rebbe, expressing our certainty that the trip would bring a "*hischadshus v'chayus*



chadasha”—renewed energy in our *shlichus*, and we undertook specific goals in *nigleh* and *Chassidus* as part of our request. We then faxed the letter to 770.

Honestly, we didn't expect a positive response. But just a few hours later, we received an answer from the Rebbe. The Rebbe circled "*hischadshus v'chayus chadasha*" and wrote "*V'al pi zeh kidai*—if that's the case, it is worthwhile," along with a brief *bracha*.

The joy this caused was tremendous. Such a request had been unheard of in previous years. Even more striking was that the Rebbe didn't add that it had to be with permission from the *hanhala*—he simply gave a clear *bracha* for us to go.

We appointed one of the *shluchim* to inform our *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rabbi Cohen. He was so shocked by the Rebbe's response that he was left speechless for several hours.

When Nissan arrived, we traveled to New York, arriving in time for *Shabbos Hagadol*, when there would be a *farbrengen*. Since there were no weekday *farbrengens* in those years, the *Shabbos Hagadol farbrengen* was considered the Yud Aleph Nissan *farbrengen*.

During that *farbrengen*, the Rebbe spoke about *Tefillah L'Moshe*, the opening *possuk* of *kapitel 90*, which the Rebbe would begin reciting that year. After *Shabbos*, the *maamar*



THE REBBE RESPONDS TO A BRACHA FROM THE ELDER CHASSIDIM, 11 NISSAN 5751.

was published, carrying the same *dibur hamaschil*.

What's unique about this *maamar* is that it was not delivered on a previous Yud Aleph Nissan. It was originally said on Yud Gimmel Tammuz, but was edited by the Rebbe for Yud Aleph Nissan because it corresponded to the *kapitel* of that year.

On Yud Aleph Nissan eve itself, after Maariv, the Rebbe descended from his *bima*, and Reb Zalman Gurary delivered the traditional *bracha* of Chassidim to the Rebbe. This was followed by a lengthy *sicha*, in which the Rebbe again addressed themes from the *kapitel*.

Afterward, Chassidim gathered for *farbrengens*, focusing especially on the concepts discussed in the *maamar* and *sicha*. These *farbrengens* continued through the night.

Reb Yoel spoke at length, emphasizing how the *maamar* elucidated the concept of "Yud Aleph" and its significance in Chassidus. The entire *maamar* builds up to the idea of "Yud-Aleph," the number 11, which represents a level beyond the 10 *sefiros*, reaching *pnimius hakesser*.

Reb Yoel went on to explain that in this *maamar*, the

Rebbe was essentially revealing to us the true meaning of Yud Aleph Nissan.

Turning to the *maamar* itself: It is written at great length, elaborating on the concepts in a broad and detailed manner. The Rebbe quotes a Zohar cited by the Rebbe Rashab in a *maamar* with the same *dibur hamaschil*—that Moshe's *tefillah* was a *tefillas ashir*, the prayer of a 'wealthy man.' The Rebbe explains the concepts of *ashir* and the *tefillas ashir* in a profound manner, unparalleled elsewhere in *Chassidus*.

One key insight from the *maamar* is that true *ashirus*—wealth—is attained specifically through *daas*. To be considered wealthy, one must fully "own" and connect with what is his. In *chachma* and *bina*, a person has not yet completely internalized the concept he is grasping, so he cannot truly be called an *ashir*. Only when he fully unites with the idea through *daas* does it become his in the deepest sense, making him a real *ashir*.

It's interesting to note that from that between Yud-Aleph Nissan and Chof-Zayin Adar 5752, there were four *maamarim* discussing the idea of *ashirus*: This *maamar*, the *maamar Zos*



REB ASHER FARKASH
(MIDDLE ROW, FIRST
ON THE RIGHT) AS A
BOCHUR ON SHLICHUS
IN AUSTRALIA.

Chukas edited for Yud-Beis Tammuz, then the *maamarim* of Yud-Tes Kislev and Chanukah. All four *maamarim* are lengthy and deep, and all four discuss the concept of *ashirus*.

In *ashirus*, these *maamarim* explain, there are two ideas: there is abundance in and of itself, and then there's a person's connection to it—a deep, personal acquisition that makes it truly his. Moshe Rabbeinu brings this abundance, this *ribui*, in a way that it becomes fully integrated into the receiver, making it theirs. This, in essence, is the concept of *Geulah* and *Moshiach*: internalizing and fully possessing the transformation, making it eternal.

The *maamar Tefillah L'Moshe* also delves into fundamental concepts in Chassidus, such as the levels of *b'chol levavcha*, *b'chol nafshecha* and *b'chol m'eodecha*—with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might, as explained in Chassidus; as well as *memaleh kol almin*, *sovev kol almin*, and *Atzmus*. These ideas are presented in a particularly profound manner within the *maamar's* context.

Another very rich section of the *maamar* is its explanation of Moshe Rabbeinu's *tefillah*. By definition, *tefillah* implies a lack—something is missing. But how can one have this while also being an *ashir*? The Rebbe explains that Moshe perceives how everything is already present, yet the Yidden themselves do not experience it. This awareness compels Moshe to *daven* on their behalf. This concept also reflects a deep insight into the relationship between a Rebbe and a chossid: the Rebbe sees how the chossid possesses everything and is truly an *ashir*, even if the chossid himself does not yet perceive it.

A second key point, elaborated further in the Yud-Beis Tammuz *maamar*, is that because Moshe Rabbeinu is a *ro'eh ne'eman*, a faithful shepherd, the spiritual state of the Yidden affects him on the deepest level. When the Yidden lack something, it creates a lack within Moshe himself—so profound is the bond between Moshe and the Yidden. This gives us an

incredible understanding of the bond between Rebbe and Chassidim.

The final point at the end of the *maamar*, is the concept of *Ish Elokim*. The *Midrash* explains that when Moshe ascended to *Shamayim*, he was called *Ish*, and when he descended, he was called *Elokim*. The Rebbe explains that when one is in a lofty state—immersed in *tefillah* and deep *hisbonenus*—it is crucial to remember that he is still an *Ish*, meaning he must refine and elevate his *middos*. Conversely, when one descends from that spiritual state, after *davening*, he must embody *Elokim*—strength and power—to translate his higher levels into practical action, ensuring he is acting in the proper manner.

One personal takeaway from this *maamar* is that the highest levels of our connection with the Rebbe and our understanding of *Chassidus* are not to remain lofty ideas but must be expressed in the minute details of daily life.

Additionally, the Rebbe expects Chassidim to embody the ideas of this *maamar*—to give of themselves to help another person, to feel another's spiritual lack as their own, and to dedicate themselves to uplifting others in *Yiddishkeit*. **T**

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IN THE **FOOTSTEPS**
OF **CHASSIDIM**

The Honorary Member of Beis Harav

Harav Avraham Chaim Na'eh

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg (Twinsburg, OH)

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' מרדכי ב"ר מרדכי ע"ה
רב קהילת חברת ש"ס -
קראון הייטס כאן צוה ה' את הברכה
גלב"ע ביום ש"ק פ' ויקרא
ג' ניסן ה'תש"פ

ולענ"ן
זוגתו מרת פעסא רחל לאה
בת ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה
גלב"ע ביום הש"ק כ"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ז
גורארי'
תנ"צ'בה'

הוקדש ע"י בני משפחתם שיחיו

You encounter his name almost every time you do a mitzvah.

Which haddasim should you buy? You can choose between “*Shiurei Reb Chaim Na'eh*” or “*Shiurei Chazon Ish*.” Is your kiddush cup large enough? It depends whether you follow Reb Chaim Na'eh or the Chazon Ish. Tzitzis, Matzah, or any mitzvah that is dependent on measurement of any sort, his name—Reb Chaim Na'eh—reappears. “*Er iz doch unzer posek acharon*—for us, he is the final arbiter,” the Rebbe once told a chossid.

Here is the story of the devoted chossid, brilliant *talmid chochom*, beloved *rav*, and famous polemicist: Harav Avraham Chaim Na'eh.

This article is based on Nodah Bashiurim, the comprehensive work chronicling the life of Reb Chaim Na'eh by Rabbi Shneur Zalman Berger.

The Rav with the Measuring Stick

It was a common sight in Yerushalayim in the *tofshins*: Reb Chaim Na'eh, respected Dayan and *rav*, walking around with a measuring tape, measuring people's fists, thumbs, and arms.

“So many people would come to our home,” explained Reb Chaim's daughter, “asking my father questions about the size

of a lulav, the amount one can eat on Yom Kippur, and other such topics. He realized that these complex issues needed to be simplified into terms everyone could understand.”

The Gemara gives us many measurements for mitzvot, such as the *tefach*, *amah*, and *revi'is*. These measurements are



THE SEFER 'SHIUREI
TORAH' PUBLISHED
BY REB AVRAHAM
CHAIM IN 5703.

key to understanding how to observe a mitzvah, and yet they are given in ‘natural’ terms—by the size of a fist, an arm, or a barley seed. This left people in the dark on many important issues; how much, exactly, may an ill person eat on Yom Kippur? What is the real minimum to fulfill the mitzvah of matzah? How much wine is needed for kiddush?

Many of the measurements observed among Ashkenazim simply reflect a strict approach. Some even assumed that the *kezayis* or *kibeitzah* was larger than the actual olive or egg because the food of our day was—perhaps—not the same size as it once was.

However, one cannot simply be *machmir* and follow larger *shiurim*, because it is a two-way street. An incorrectly enlarged *amah*, for example, might be a *chumrah* in the case of tzitzis while causing someone to carry *daled amos* on Shabbos or place his menorah too high above street level.

Seeing the confusion, Reb Chaim Na'eh set out to convert these *shiurim* into modern measurements.

As it turned out, the *shiurim* were already converted into modern measurements—over one thousand years earlier. The Rambam—basing his rulings on the Geonim who came before him—gives very specific measurements for various *shiurim*, primarily based on the weight of the ‘*dirham*,’ a common unit of measurement in his time.

Reb Chaim set out to obtain those original weights and measure them against the various details of the *shiurim*. Was the modern *dirham* the same as in the time of the Rambam? Did the measurements match the Gemara’s descriptions?

To work out the complex calculations for his sefer, Reb Chaim needed books on coins, weights, and mathematics, so he would send his son to the National Library at Hebrew University. It was quite a sight to see a *bochur* from the Old Yishuv, with *peyos* and a long coat, walking around the university library. Once, a professor asked, “What are you doing here?” The son answered, “My father is writing a *sefer*, and I need these books.” The professor looked at the list and, amazed, asked, “Where did your father learn mathematics?”

When the book *Shiurei Torah* was finally published in 5703, it was a huge hit, and flew off the shelves. Until then, halachic measurements had been an immense challenge; finally, a leading *rav* had established standards that everyone could understand. The *sefer* was warmly endorsed by the Raavad of Yerushalayim, the Chief Rabbinate, and the leading Sephardi Chachamim.

On The Other Hand

But, opposition arose.

First, several articles appeared in Torah journals claiming that Reb Chaim’s measurements were incorrect. There was nothing unusual about discussing matters of Halachah, so



REB AVRAHAM
CHAIM IN HIS
LATER YEARS.

Reb Chaim responded with articles of his own, defending his approach and showing that they were backed by the Gemara, Rambam, and Shulchan Aruch. The issue soon died down.

Then, when *Shiurei Torah* was being prepared for a second print, something more dramatic happened. The Chazon Ish publicized his own *Kuntres Shiurim*, arguing for larger measurements. This opposition was much more significant, and to defend his approach, Reb Chaim quickly added several pages to his new edition.

A short time later, a new pamphlet appeared. *Shiurin D'Oraysa*—published by a student of the Chazon Ish—claimed to disprove Reb Chaim’s approach. This *kuntres* cited Reb Chaim Na'eh directly, but strangely, many of the citations seemed to have been purposefully misconstrued. They appeared to paint Reb Chaim in a negative light, as someone who disrespected *Gedolei Yisrael* and the great *Poskim* of previous generations.

When the misrepresentations came to light, the author apologized to Reb Chaim with a shocking admission. “I learned your *sefer* during the summer *bein hazmanim*, and wrote my response at the beginning of the yeshiva *zman*, from memory, being occupied with the regular *shiurim* in the Yeshivah.”

Reb Chaim debated whether to let the matter rest, but many of his colleagues argued that if this was the final say on the matter, people would observe *shiurim* incorrectly. So, he published a pamphlet called *Shiurei Tziyon*, countering the claims. The student soon followed with *Eifas Tzedek*, and Reb Chaim countered with *Avnei Tzedek*.

Many people followed the debate, and matters became heated. Some followers of the Chazon Ish took it upon themselves to defend his honor with underhanded tactics. Some

of the *kuntreisim* were filled with misrepresentations of Reb Chaim's statements and often outright forgeries. Until that point, Chassidim and *misnagdim* usually got along in Eretz Yisroel, but now things started to go downhill.

Reb Chaim Na'eh was not the type to take these accusations lying down. A prolific writer and energetic debater, he published article after article and pamphlet after pamphlet, exposing the lies about him and showing the truth about his opinion. He demonstrated that it was the other side that was blatantly disrespectful of the great Poskim, most notably the Alter Rebbe. In some instances, he threatened to take them to Beis Din, and on several occasions, they were compelled to issue an apology.

Rabbi Tuvia Blau recalled how Reb Chaim would talk heatedly about the issue, making stingingly sharp comments in his characteristically humorous way.

Reb Chaim Na'eh had a lot of support from the practical *minhagim* widely observed throughout the Jewish world. The kiddush cup of the Chafetz Chaim was smaller than shiur Chazon Ish, the Chasam Sofer's challah measurement supported Reb Chaim Na'eh's calculation, and the common *minhag* of Eretz Yisroel (and the entire Sephardi world) was exactly as Reb Chaim had written.

When the dust settled, Reb Chaim Na'eh's *shiurim* were accepted throughout the Jewish world. Some chose to follow

the Chazon Ish, but doing so only in cases of *chumrah*, and never relying on it *l'kulah*.

Fighting With A Gematria

The *shiurim* saga, which took place in the final decade of Reb Chaim's life, was not a unique occurrence. Reb Chaim Na'eh was already famous for his sharp tongue and witty responses in Halachic arguments. For decades, he was involved in the work of the Edah Hachareidis and Agudas Yisrael, where he became well-known for his speeches against the secular Zionist establishment, always coming up with an interesting *vort* or *chiddush* to express his view.

On one occasion, Reb Chaim encountered Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the famous secular writer who reinvented the modern Hebrew language. Ben Yehuda had a complaint. The Raavad of Yerushalayim, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, would often respond to attacks by the secular community using *gematria*. To one person, he said their name equaled "*rasha*," and to another, he said that their name corresponded to "*ocher Yisrael*." Ben Yehuda said to Reb Chaim, "Is this really a way to respond? With *gematrias*?"

Reb Chaim replied with a proof from Avraham Avinu: "When going to battle, he took 318 men with him, but Rashi says that the number is just the *gematria* of one person's name—Eliezer. So you see," Reb Chaim concluded, "you



REB AVRAHAM CHAIM (CENTER) WEARING YERUSHALMI GARB.

can really fight with a *gematria*!”

But it wasn't always fire and brimstone.

One year on Hei Iyar, Reb Chaim was davening at the *amud* when the *mispa'elim* began to come over. Some whispered, “Say Hallel today,” while others told him, “Say Tachanun!”

Reb Chaim continued davening as he always did. When he reached *Sim Shalom*, he raised his voice and ended “*Bashalom*” with the familiar tune used for *Hallel*. The Zionist congregants beamed with satisfaction, but when Reb Chaim finished *Sim Shalom*, he began reciting *Ashamnu*, *Bagadnu* out loud. Soon, everyone in the minyan was smiling.

Stories abound about how Reb Chaim used his sharp wit to help resolve problems before they even developed.

In one of his official capacities, Reb Chaim was the *rav* of Shchunat Habucharim in Yerushalayim, and the *safra di-deina*, the secretary of the Beis Din of the Eidah Hachareidis, responsible for recording and issuing the *piskei dinim* of the *rabbanim*. Over time, he would sit on many of the *dinei Torah* himself, and he became very close with the Raavads of his time, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnefeld and Rav Zelig Reuven Bengis. Later, he served on the Beis Din of Agudas Yisrael. Naturally, he heard many cases of divorce.

“I remember one time,” his daughter related, “when a couple came to see my father, accompanied by the husband's mother. The couple stayed quiet while the mother-in-law did all the talking, insisting her son wanted a divorce because his wife didn't clean or cook for him. My father listened patiently, then asked her to step outside.

“Once alone, my father asked the wife if she wanted a divorce, and she quickly said no. He asked the husband the

same question, and he said he was very happy with his wife and had no interest in divorcing her.

“My father called the mother back in and suggested a solution: the couple would remain married, but she should refrain from visiting their home for one year... That was a story everyone enjoyed retelling.

“Another time, I saw my father enter the building across the courtyard, home to a few poor families who lived in run-down basements. After a few minutes, he came back, and I couldn't help but ask what he was doing there.

“He explained that a woman there had just given birth to a baby girl. Knowing her husband's temperament, my father was worried that he might be upset that she'd given birth to another girl, as they already had several daughters and no sons. My father decided to step in before any problems arose. He went down to wish her a warm *mazal tov* and to give her a *bracha* for much *nachas*. He knew that if the husband saw that the *rav* had taken the time to visit and congratulate them, he'd feel proud and appreciate his wife instead of getting angry. My father's visit wasn't just about offering blessings—it was about preventing a difficult situation before it even began.”

Who Was Reb Chaim Na'eh?

Reb Chaim Na'eh was born in Chevron on 13 Iyar 5650, several years after his parents immigrated to Eretz Yisroel. His father, Reb Mendel Na'eh, was one of the leading Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel, and his mother Musya was named after the Tzemach Tzedek's rebbetzin—her father Reb Berel Kalisker had been a *chozer* and *shadar* for the Tzemach Tzedek and Rebbe Maharash.

As a child in the small Chevron community, he quickly became known for his sharp mind. He began learning with his grandfather Reb Berel Kalisker and other notable Chassidim like his uncle Reb Shlomo Leib Eliezrov and Reb Shimon Menashe Chaikin, who had been a chossid of the Mittlerer Rebbe.

He soon began to attract the attention of the Sefardim and the Misnagdim as well.

The Ateres (a famous non-Chassidic *rav*) took notice when a young boy approached him during his visit to Chevron with questions on a *pilpul* he had published. He thought the young Chaim Na'eh was asking the questions on his father's behalf and tried to push him off with a simple answer, but he soon realized that the boy was speaking for himself. Impressed, he paid a special visit to the Na'eh home to discuss his answer with him.

The Sdei Chemed, Sephardi *rov* of Chevron, drew a liking to the boy, and invited him to use his famed library to prepare his bar mitzvah *drasha*. The Sdei Chemed attended the bar mitzvah and peppered the bar mitzvah boy with questions throughout his speech—all of which Reb Chaim answered



REB MENACHEM
MENDEL NA'EH.

satisfactorily, to the delight of the impressed crowd.

The Na'eh family soon moved to Yerushalayim, and Reb Chaim enrolled first in Yeshivas Toras Chaim and then Yeshivas Ohel Moshe, both yeshivos for excelling students. He quickly became known for his broad knowledge of Shas, Poskim, and Chassidus. He was sharp and analytical and very quick on his feet, responding to arguments immediately and often with a dash of humor. Despite his wide range of knowledge, his greatest passion was for *halachah l'maaseh*, with a special focus on the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch; he would devote much of his life to those pursuits.

The First Shlichus

When Reb Chaim was just twenty-one years old, a letter arrived from Russia. His uncle, Reb Shlomo Leib Eliezer, had been sent by the Rebbe Rashab to Uzbekistan to establish *chadorim* and yeshivos for the Bucharian Jewish communities. When the time came for him to leave Uzbekistan, he asked his nephew to take over. With the *bracha* of the Rebbe Rashab, Reb Chaim set out for Samarkand.

The Bucharian community couldn't have been more different than Chevron and Yerushalayim. The cities of Eretz Yisroel were populated mainly by members of the Old Yishuv, people who learned Torah all day and were supported with money from Europe. The Bucharian community, on the other hand, while very devout—was profoundly unlearned.

To overcome the language barrier, Reb Chaim took a

chumash with a Bucharian translation and began learning the local tongue. Within a month, he was able to converse fluently with the locals. He began wearing Bucharian garb and adopted a Bucharian-style last name, Mendilov.

The local community became very devoted to him, its members were soon convinced that he was a holy man.

Everything he did seemed to have a miraculous touch. His very presence in Samarkand was illegal, yet somehow, he always managed to escape the attention of the police. One day, Reb Chaim ended a shiur a bit early, and—as soon as he left—police showed up and asked for everyone's papers. He had escaped by a hair's breadth. In their eyes, he was definitely a miracle-worker.

Decades later, Bucharian Jews would come to him to receive his blessing. "One Friday night," his daughter related, "a Bucharian Jew came over to us in Yerushalayim with his son and said that he owes his son to my father's *bracha*. My father had no recollection of the event, but he had apparently blessed this man with children after several years of childlessness—and a short time later his son was born."

Dealing with the youth in Samarkand, Reb Chaim noticed that bar mitzvah boys weren't well-versed in the halachos of tefillin. So, he embarked on the first of his many publishing projects. He composed a practical work of Hilchos Tefillin called Chanoch Lanaar, and had it translated to Bucharian. He was already so well-versed in Bucharian that he did half the translation himself. There was no possibility to publish the work in Samarkand, so Reb Chaim undertook the long journey to Warsaw, Poland, to bring his first work to fruition.

At the time, it seemed that his role among Bucharian Jewry had come to an end—but decades later, when Reb Chaim moved his family of ten souls into a small two-room apartment in the Bukharan Quarter, his relationship with the community was rekindled.

There too, in the Bukharan Quarter of Yerushalayim, Reb Chaim worked hard to raise the level of mitzvah observance and developed a close connection with the youth. He established a youth minyan in one shul and a new shiur in another, always finding a way to assist and encourage the locals to strengthen their Yiddishkeit. Some of the youth grew to be major figures; Rav Mordechai Eliyahu, Rav Ben Zion Abba Shaul, and Rav Ovadia Yosef would all later recall Reb Chaim Na'eh, the venerable Chabad Chossid, as one of their beloved mentors. ❶

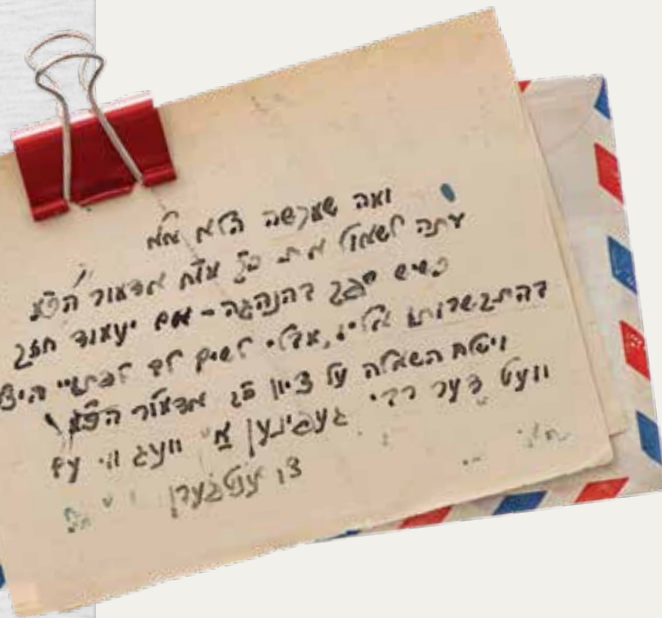
TO BE CONTINUED...



REB AVRAHAM CHAIM DRESSED IN BUCHARIAN GARB DURING HIS TIME IN SAMARKAND.



Story



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות

לכ"ק אדמו"ר

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

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

נדפס ע"י

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

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

When the Story Happens to Me



AS TOLD BY
RABBI YOSEF DOVID SHTROKS
(Olympia, WA)

Shortly after our marriage, my wife and I moved to Olympia, WA, to take over a shlichus that had been established about nine years earlier. Dr. and Mrs. K. of Sacramento, CA, were among the founding supporters of Chabad of Olympia because their daughter lives here with her family, and they continued their support after we moved in.

In the winter of 5782, we had the opportunity to purchase a beautiful campus in a prime location to serve as the

Chabad House, and we launched a campaign to raise funds for a down payment. However, we had trouble securing a mortgage and needed a guarantor to sign on the loan.

As the closing deadline neared, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe and asked for a *bracha*. I then convened a Zoom meeting with key supporters and shared the details of our circumstances. We discussed ideas, but when the meeting concluded with no concrete plan on how to proceed, I glanced at my phone and saw a message from Dr. K,

who graciously committed to being the guarantor. It was another in a string of miracles that brought us to the finish line, and we closed on the property just in time.

The home we were renting at the time was a one-hour walk from the new space. We knew we would need to move to the new area, but we decided to take things one step at a time.

However, days later, we discovered that the house next door to our new Chabad House was available for purchase. Although we were overwhelmed by the task of moving into the new space and handling the extra mortgage expenses, we knew the Rebbe encouraged purchasing homes as a sign of permanence on shlichus, so we decided to make an effort to seize the opportunity.

We negotiated a price and raised more money for a down payment, but securing a mortgage was our main challenge. Once again, Dr. and Mrs. K offered to be the guarantors for the house mortgage, and we were able to purchase and move into the new home, next door to our new Chabad House.

Thus began a new era in our shlichus. Together with the tremendous opportunity for growth came the increased financial burden of two mortgages; it was very challenging. Things were so tough that, as we prepared for Shavuot 5784, I was significantly behind in the mortgage payments. Shortly before Yom Tov, I received a message from the K's that they were visiting their daughter and her family in Olympia and wanted to meet with us. Having known them all these years, this was highly uncharacteristic of them, and considering the difficult and sensitive financial circumstances, this request left me very nervous. I had avoided discussing our financial difficulties with them until then, and I was extremely concerned that this could impact them and their tremendous support to our shlichus.

Not knowing what to expect, I wrote a long and emotional letter to the Rebbe shortly before the meeting, asking for a *bracha* that there should be no fallout between us and these wonderful supporters and that everything

should work out in the best possible way.

After the pleasantries, Dr. K got straight to the point.

"You Chabad rabbis always share miracle stories about the Rebbe," he said. "Typically, it's not my style. But when such stories happen to me, it's very different. Now I have a story to share with you."

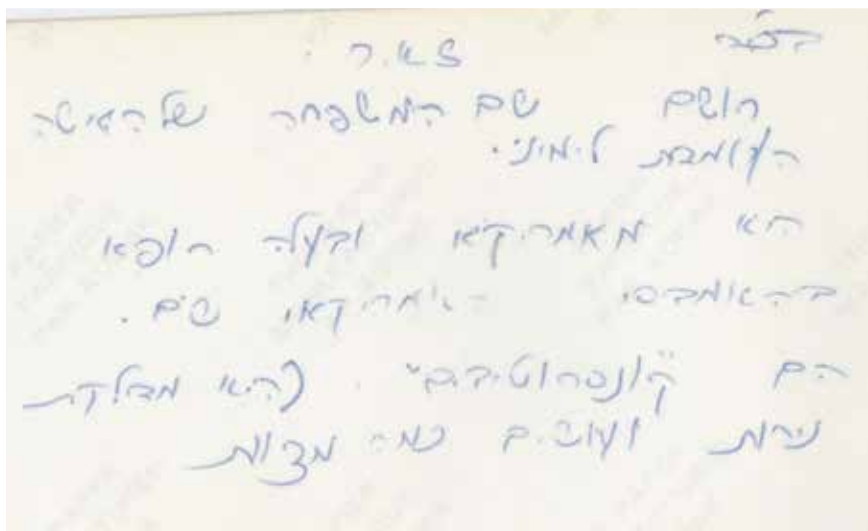
As far as I knew, he had never seen or met the Rebbe, and I was visibly astonished to hear this introduction from him.

"We married in the seventies and did not have children for many years. We tried every possible treatment available in the world, to no avail. Medicine could not even determine the reason my wife was not becoming pregnant. As a physician working for the State Department, I was dispatched to locations around the world to treat US embassy staff, and in the early 1980s, we were stationed in Zaire (a country in Central Africa currently called the Congo). After quite a few years of marriage, we gave up hope of having biological children and adopted two children whom we love very dearly."

"Although not Orthodox, we joined a Sefardic congregation, the only Jewish community in Kinshasa at the time. Then, mysteriously, my wife became pregnant and gave birth to our daughter, then we were blessed with the birth of our son. How it came to be that after so many years of waiting and trying every conceivable treatment, our children were born so unexpectedly has always remained a mystery to us."

"Eventually, I left the State Department and settled in Sacramento, California. When the Cohens moved there, we attended their first Shabbat service, and, until today, I have regular study sessions with Rabbi Cohen. Recently, when I arrived for our study session, Rabbi Cohen excitedly told me his friend Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila, the shliach in the Congo, found a photo of my wife from 1984."

For many decades Chassidim sent photos to the Rebbe, of their families, mitzvot, programs and the like, which were stored and archived in the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad. Several years ago, the library published a



website online, making this treasure of Lubavitch history available to the public. Rabbi Bentolila searched the archive for anything associated with Zaire and found a collection of photos from an event in Kinshasa in 5744. Rabbi Leibel Zajac from Brazil returned to Zaire for a follow-up event shortly after printing a Tanya there and reported it to the Rebbe with photos and captions. Rabbi Bentolila recognized Mrs. K in one of the photos and sent it to Rabbi Cohen.

On the back of the photo Rabbi Zajac wrote: *I am writing the name of the woman standing to my right. She is from America, and her husband is a doctor at the American embassy here. They are "conservative," she lights Shabbos candles and they observe some Mitzvos.*

"When I saw the photo and caught sight of the date on it (84 3 27), I exclaimed, 'Rabbi Cohen, I can't believe it! This photo was taken around one month before my wife became pregnant with our daughter! For years we were mystified as to how this miracle happened. But now I know the Rebbe saw the photo and blessed us to have biological children!'"

Dr. K then looked at me and said, "Who knows? Perhaps the Rebbe blessed us with a daughter so many years ago that she should one day live in Olympia, and we would have the opportunity to support the Chabad House here."

I was shaking from emotion. I had entered the meeting fearing the worst, and the Rebbe sent me a clear message that even before I was born, the Rebbe's *brachos* were already set in motion to ensure the success of our shlichus in Olympia today.

In the spirit of their gratitude for the Rebbe's *bracha*, the Ks reiterated their iron-clad support for Chabad of Olympia. Baruch Hashem we experienced a number of financial-related *brachos* shortly thereafter, providing us with greater peace of mind to dedicate ourselves to the Rebbe's shlichus with more vigor and inspiration. **T**

YOUR STORY

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

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
לכבוד יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' מרדכי
וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו
גראסבויס
סטאני ברוק, ניו יארק

COMPILED BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (OH)

WRITTEN BY: RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

SPECIAL THANKS TO RABBI SHMUEL KAPLAN, HEAD SHLIACH OF THE
STATE OF MARYLAND, FOR HIS ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING THIS ARTICLE.

P I N P O I N T S

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

BALTIMORE, MD



THE MOHEL OF BALTIMORE

Rabbi Avraham Nachman Abramowitz, originally from Rogatchov, Russia, later established himself in Baltimore where he served as the city's mohel. Throughout his lifetime, he performed over 8,000 *brissin*. As a graduate of Tomchei Temimim, Rabbi Abramowitz maintained a connection with the Frierdiker Rebbe. In 5682, the Frierdiker Rebbe addressed a letter to him with the warm salutation, "My friend, our precious and elevated student."

"*Boruch shehecheyanu v'higianu lizman hazeh*, that we can speak clearly, to reminisce about bygone days, when you and I were students in the house of Hashem, gathered at Har Sinai before the G-dly man [the Rebbe Rashab], to hear words of *kodesh hakodashim* ..."

"How is your community doing? Do they have Torah institutions, *chadorim*, *yeshivos*, *shiurim* ...?"

The Frierdiker Rebbe goes on to describe the painful situation of the *Temimim* in the Soviet Union who suffered cold and hunger just to study Torah. The Frierdiker Rebbe details the branches of Tomchei Temimim in locations across the Soviet Union including Roga-

tchov, Zhlobin, Homel, and Gruzia (Georgia), and includes a plea for support, "for help is very necessary for us."¹

THE LUBAVITCHER RAV IN BALTIMORE

Reb Avraham Elye Akselrod traveled to the United States—by direction of the Frierdiker Rebbe—at the start of 5684. His father, Reb Aharon Shlomo Akselrod, had traveled to the United States at an earlier time. Reb Aharon Shlomo was one of the first Chabad Chassidim in the United States with whom the Frierdiker Rebbe had much correspondence, from 5681 and onward, about the situation of *anash* in the U.S.

On 27 Marcheshvan, 5682, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to Reb Aharon Shlomo, "Regarding your son, Reb Avraham Elye, I already responded to him that it is the right thing that they should travel with success to you, but that this requires preparation."² This journey took place two years later, in 5684.

The Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to Reb Avraham Elye after the latter reported his arrival in the U.S.: "... Bless-



RABBI AVRAHAM NACHMAN
ABRAMOWITZ IN THE 5660S, SHORTLY
AFTER ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES.

ed is your successful arrival. May Hashem help you to have peace of mind and to fulfill the true *kavana* that our Rabbeim demanded: to make the Torah greater and more glorious ...”³

Reb Avraham Elye Akselrod was appointed to be a *rav* in Baltimore, serving in the Tzemach Tzedek Shul, where he had a very strong effect on the community, as the Frierdiker Rebbe wished.⁴

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S VISIT TO BALTIMORE⁵

During the Frierdiker Rebbe's visit to the United States in 5689–90, the Frierdiker Rebbe spent three weeks in Baltimore, from 12 Teves until 5 Shevat, 5690. In the weeks leading up to the visit, a delegation led by Rabbi Akselrod traveled to the Frierdiker Rebbe in Philadelphia. They returned with the news that the Frierdiker Rebbe would arrive on 5 Teves—his arrival was later postponed one week. Newspaper ads announced the Frierdiker Rebbe's imminent arrival to the city, and welcome posters were made available at the New York

Confectionery Store on Baltimore Street.

Thousands turned out at Mount Royal Station to welcome the Frierdiker Rebbe, and a parade of cars escorted him from the station to the home at 2343 Eutaw Place, where he would stay. The papers excitedly reported on the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrival; that he would be visiting City Hall, meeting with Mayor Broening, and receiving the Key to the City; and that he would be saying Chassidus at the Tzemach Tzedek Shul.

The Frierdiker Rebbe met with Maryland Governor Ritchie, U.S. Senator Goldsborough, and Baltimore Mayor Broening. On Shabbos Parshas Vayechi, 18 Teves, the Frierdiker Rebbe said the *maamar* “*Ani Yesheinah*.”

On 24 Teves, the Frierdiker Rebbe said the *maamar* “*Yehi Hashem Elokeinu Imanu*” at the Tzemach Tzedek Shul. More than 1,000 people crowded into the Shul for this momentous occasion. The Frierdiker Rebbe later described the excitement of the event in a letter: “Some 800–900 men were present, and 400 women in the *ezras nashim* ... all of the city's *frumme rabbanim* were present, even ‘*frye rabbis*’ were there... This was an unusually festive sight: the *shul* was lit up festively, with



NEWSPAPERS REPORT ON THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S ARRIVAL IN BALTIMORE AND HIS MEETING WITH THE MAYOR.

many people present, and most of them were dressed in their *yom tov* clothing.

“[The *maamar*] lasted an hour, and afterward there was special joy ... I descended from my place and sat on the side to rest for a few moments ... the *rabbanim* approached me, one after another, *bli ayin hara* there were 19 observant *rabbanim*, and they thanked me.”

Then, the Frierdiker Rebbe described, seven moderately observant *rabbanim* approached him, very grateful, saying how this opened wellsprings of good ideas to them (one was taking notes during the *maamar*), and they wished they could spend a few minutes with the Frierdiker Rebbe to hear various explanations. Then two reform rabbis approached, and said that they hadn’t imagined that Chassidus would so interest common folk—and more so, that Chassidim have such a representative who can show how Chassidus should be of interest to everyone.⁶

On Shabbos Parshas Shemos, the Frierdiker Rebbe said a third *maamar*, “*Al Yis’halel*.”

Two weeks after arriving in Baltimore, the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled to nearby Washington, D.C., where he met Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, later returning to Baltimore.

On 4 Shevat, a *tzeischem l’shalom* gathering took place, and the next day, the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled to New York, after having distributed his photo and a note of *brachos*.

REB DOVID PATASHNIK

Another important figure in the Chabad community of Baltimore was Reb Dovid Patashnik, a Chabad chosid born in Lukoml, White Russia who served as the *rav* of the Agudas Achim—Nusach Ari shul in the city. For many years, he worked tirelessly to collect funds for the Frierdiker Rebbe’s household and institutions, as well as for Colel Chabad in Eretz Yisroel. Testament to his success is an invitation that the Frierdiker Rebbe sent inviting him to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin’s wedding in 5689. The invitation was originally addressed to Reb Dovid, but he, in turn, readdressed it to the members of the shul, impressing upon them to send a sizable donation to the Frierdiker Rebbe in honor of the wedding.⁷

In the Rebbe’s Igros Kodesh, there is a letter that the Rebbe wrote to Reb Yisroel Jacobson in his holy handwriting, where he mentions a check sent to the Frierdiker Rebbe by Reb Dovid and his congregation.⁸

Likewise, there are several letters from the Rebbe to Reb Dovid in subsequent years, acknowledging his reports of activities in Baltimore and encouraging him in his holy work.⁹

REB ITCHE SPRINGER

In the 5720s, Rabbi Yitzchok (known as Reb Itche) Springer was sent by the Rebbe as a *shliach* to Baltimore.





RABBI SHMUEL AND ROCHEL KAPLAN
DURING THEIR EARLY YEARS ON
SHLICHUS IN BALTIMORE.

There was an old Talmud Torah in Baltimore called She'etir Hapleita, which was affiliated with Hungarian Jews. Needing a teacher, they turned to Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. Rabbi Hodakov called Reb Itche into his office, and when the latter agreed, he submitted a letter to the Rebbe, which was responded to with "go and make a contract."¹⁰

The school ultimately didn't appreciate some of Reb Itche's *chassidische hanhagos*, including his insistence on going to the Rebbe for every *chassidisher yom tov* and not always attending the *tefillos* in the school on time, because he was busy teaching *shiurim* for the local community and the college students.

Reb Itche later related:

"It reached a point where in the annual contract they wrote, 'שם תהא תפילה - ובמקום רינה'—where there is singing, one should pray,' referencing the Gemara¹¹ that a person should always daven in shul. The hint was obvious. When I showed this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe told me to add one word, 'try,' that I would *try* and make the minyan. Well, they did not grasp the subtlety of that particular qualification, and so they didn't say anything, but I continued coming late, because it was very important for me to continue the Torah classes that I taught. The following year, they did not agree to my 'trying.' This time, the Rebbe did not tell me to renew the contract."¹²

Reb Itche opened a Beis Lubavitch, distributing

Merkos publications and books from Kehot, and influencing many college students, many of whom are *frum* today. He once asked the Rebbe about opening a yeshiva in Baltimore, and the Rebbe said not to, for the time being (*le'eis ata*). He later said that he realized already then that one day there would be a Lubavitcher yeshiva in Baltimore.¹³

In 5732, the Rebbe directed him to return to Crown Heights.

RABBI SHMUEL KAPLAN

In 5734, Rabbi Shmuel ש"ר and Mrs. Rochel ר"ה Kaplan were sent by the Rebbe on *shlichus* to Baltimore. Rabbi Hodakov presented Rabbi Kaplan with a choice of various locations, and, when he sent them to the Rebbe, the Rebbe chose this one. The Rebbe also made it clear that Rabbi Kaplan should be based in Baltimore, and not live in another area (although the Rebbe did allow him to bring *shluchim* to other places).

Before they left, they received a number of *hora'os* through Rabbi Hodakov. Among these directives was that they should sell *seforim* and promote the monthly *Talks and Tales* publication. Rabbi Kaplan didn't stop at just that, he immediately began looking into what projects he could start, and became very active.

There were plenty of *shuls*, schools, and *mikvaos* in Baltimore, so in 5744, Rabbi Kaplan wrote to the Rebbe



A RECENT GROUP PHOTO OF THE SHLUCHIM IN MARYLAND

that he wanted to open a summer camp for the state's Jewish children. He had met someone who was willing to help find a suitable location and fundraise, and this was a *mossad* the city didn't already have.

The Rebbe wrote not to do so, saying: "All this requires great personal unease, and very large sums of money. The need for this (and all the more so, whether this is a requirement)—is questionable—and why should you enter into all of this?"¹⁴

But when *rabbanim* in the city offered to help support a new *shliach* to serve the Yidden who hailed from the Soviet Union, and Rabbi Kaplan wrote about that to the Rebbe, the Rebbe replied, circling the word "*rabbanim*," and writing, "If they are serious, [then you should do so,] for this is literally *pikuach nefesh* [saving lives]."¹⁵

At one point in the late 5730s, he was considering whether to open a Chabad House in Washington, D.C. for students or whether to open a Chabad house 10 miles outside the city, where most D.C. commuters lived. The Rebbe left the first option unanswered, circled the words "10 miles outside the city," and wrote, "This is not something [to do], of course."

When Rabbi Kaplan later wrote (in the summer of 5745) that he was interested in opening a Jewish center in the heart of Washington, the Rebbe wrote that he could do so "if there will be a proper administration."¹⁶

Rabbi Kaplan once thought that if he could just open three Chabad houses, they'd be able to cover all of the area. Today there are many times more that number, continuing the more than century-long involvement of our Rabbeim with the city and its Yidden. **7**

1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz vol. 1, p. 219-21.
2. Ibid vol. 11, p. 17.
3. Ibid p. 49.
4. For more about Reb Avraham Elye, see "The First Shliach to America" - Derher Shevat 5785.
5. This section is based primarily on Toldois Chabad B'artzois Ha'bris, and the forward to Sefer Hasichos 5688–5691.
6. The maamar and letter were printed on their own in 5773.
7. Teshura Kastel-Jacobs 5783.
8. Igros Kodesh vol. 1, p. 15.
9. See ibid vol. 8, p. 83. Teshura Webb 5761.
10. A Tribute to Horav Yitzchok Springer On the Occasion of his Shloshim, 26 Iyar, 5773.
11. Brachos 6a.
12. Tribute, ibid.
13. As told to Derher by Rabbi Moshe Slavaticki.
14. Teshura Shuchat 5777, p. 27.
15. Kfar Chabad issue 1308, p. 17.
16. Teshura ibid, pp. 26–7.

Letters

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

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

The Impact of “The Rebbe will Find A Way”

Dear editors,

I would like to share a piece that I wrote in connection with the amazing book “The Rebbe Will Find A Way - First-hand Accounts of the Rebbe’s Brachos and Guidance after Gimmel Tammuz”:

The Chassidisher Derher published “The Rebbe Will Find A Way” as a source for bringing inspiration, guidance, *kochos*, and comfort to its readers. On a personal level, reading these experiences provides a way to connect with our Rebbe—through these stories and accounts—even after Gimmel Tammuz.

I vicariously share with each person their heartfelt prayers in difficult situations or times of uncertainty and am encouraged by the blessings, guidance, and even healing that they received from the Rebbe.

I have been shown, through story after precious story, how the Rebbe finds a way to answer people who, like me, have never met him and yet find a connection with him through their experiences of writing a letter to him or visiting his holy resting place at the Ohel. As stated so well by Mendel Federman in his vignette, “Although I never met the Rebbe *b’gashmiyus*, I feel the Rebbe’s tremendous *brachos* and attention all the time.”

This volume does not sit idle on my end table. It’s been read cover to cover at least twice since I bought it a year ago, and is within eyesight each day for those frequent snippets of time when it’s needed for inspiration, or sweet Shabbos reading. Just seeing the photo of the Rebbe on the cover, brings comfort and encouragement.

There are many colored bookmarks in my book. They draw me back to ideas I need to rethink, revisit, or merely enjoy. For example, page 97 shares a quotation from the Rebbe’s message given on Yud Shevat, 5711: “Some may think that, Chas V’Sholom, our Hiskashrus with the [Friediker] Rebbe is now weakened somewhat. The truth, though, is quite to the contrary. Now that the Rebbe is continuously going higher and higher, there is more in his power to share with us here below, making it easier for us to strengthen ourselves in doing what he would want of us; i.e. the Shlichus he gave each of us...”

Hashem has led me to Mt. Hood in Oregon, where there may be as many as two other Jewish people residing. At times I feel isolated from the greater Jewish community—most profoundly since the October 7 attacks in Eretz Yisroel. This has been a difficult time for Yidden everywhere, and frequently it’s heard that Jews crave to be with other Jews. In the days between classes and events provided by Chabad Houses in Gresham and Portland, this book serves as my connection with other Yidden. Perfectly relevant to this

thought is the account written by Mr. Gaby Silver, titled, "I needed a hug," where his Kvittel to the Rebbe literally and even miraculously resulted in an answer to his request.

The life-learned lessons shared by the individuals in this book give me *kochos* and strengthen my *emunah*. Witnessing the successes of others in areas of decision-making, spiritual growth and bitachon as they reached out to the Rebbe for help, has greatly impacted my own connection with Hashem and the Rebbe. Their experiences encouraged me to write to the Rebbe at his Ohel when there was a health scare in my own life. I could sense the knowing look in his eyes that people who have merited to see him in person have described. And I was given a share in the truth that "The Rebbe Will Find A Way."

Basha Necha Rothstein

RHODODENDRON, OR

Kiddush Levana before a Journey

My sincerest appreciation for the Rebbe's "Practical Hora'os for Safe Journeys" in the recent Tammuz issue. What an impactful article filled with many spiritual and material instructions that a Yid can take to heart on the road.

Regarding what Reb Zalman Jaffe twice heard from the Rebbe, "Kiddush Levana is good before a journey," I am reminded of a story told by a well-known *mechanech* in my Denver community, Rabbi Myer J. Schwab.

Once, prior to driving his elderly father Rabbi Shimon Schwab ל"י back to New York following a family simcha in Philadelphia, after entering the vehicle, the senior Rabbi Schwab said that he must get out to be *mekadesh* the *levana*. With exertion he exited the car and fulfilled the mitzva. Upon again entering, he asked his son if he had been *mekadesh* the *levana* yet that month. Rabbi Myer J. Schwab

replied in the negative, and his father insisted he likewise do so before the journey back to New York... and so he did.

Off they went when soon thereafter, the vehicle struck black ice, spinning wildly and tilting out of control at high speed in several circles and directions spanning four lanes of the busy freeway. When the terrifying moments finally subsided, the car at a safe halt, and *boruch Hashem* everyone unharmed, father and son exchanged knowing glances, recalling their Kiddush Levana right before the journey.

Rabbi Shimon Schwab would quote the Ba'er Heiteiv (Orach Chaim 602:4):

גם שמעתי שמי שיקדש הלבנה, מיום שקדשה שוב לא ידאג
שימות באותו חודש מאותו יום ואילך

Loosely translated: I also heard regarding someone that is *mekadesh* the *levana*, that from the day he was *mekadesh* he should not be concerned about dying from that day onward during that month.

What Reb Zalman Jaffe heard twice from the Rebbe seems beautiful in the spirit of this story and the Ba'er Heiteiv's remarkable words in Shulchan Aruch.

Thank you again for publicizing these *hora'os* from the Rebbe; in taking them to heart, may the Guardian of Israel grant Yidden safe journeys all our days.

Adam J. Leventhal

DENVER, COLORADO

