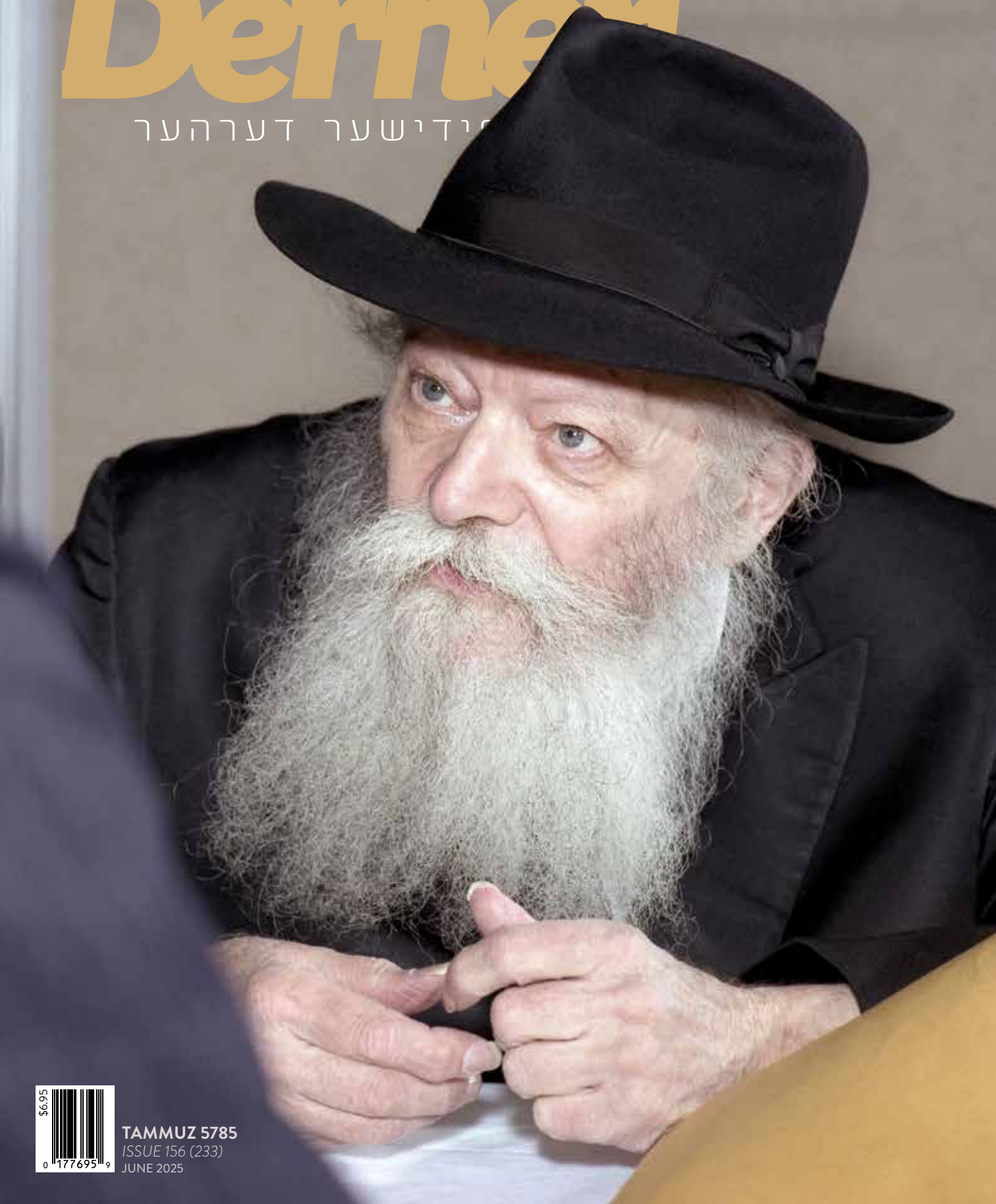


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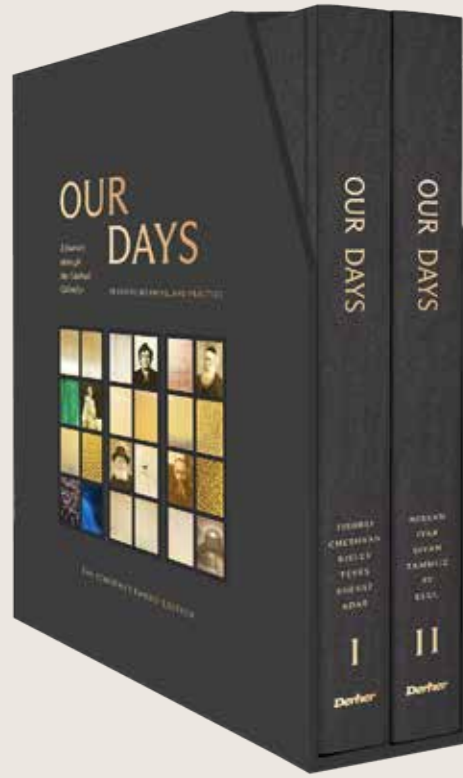
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THIRTY-ONE STEPS UP

As we prepare to mark 31 years since Gimmel Tammuz, a story that the Rebbe related about the Rebbe Maharash comes to mind:

On the Erev Rosh Hashanah right before his *histalkus*, the Rebbe Maharash entered his Rebbetzin's room to share a few moments with her before the new year (as was the practice of all the Rabbeim). The Rebbe Maharash told her: "I will ascend 31 steps above, and you will ascend 31 steps below..."

Hearing this, the Rebbetzin was frightened, saying that they still had young children. Indeed, two weeks later, the Rebbe Maharash was *nistalek*—on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei.

The 31 steps that the Rebbe Maharash spoke of were the 31 *maamarim* in the series of *Likkutei Torah L'Gimmel Parshios* by the Rebbe Maharash which he wanted her to publish. Decades later, another interpretation of the "31 steps" became clear: The Rebbetzin herself passed away exactly 31 years after her husband (Yud-Gimmel Tishrei 5643—Yud Shevat 5674).

When relating this story at a Yud Shevat farbrengen, the Rebbe explained that it carries an important lesson for us:

The Rebbe Maharash connected his ascension up in the higher worlds with the ascension of those

who remain in this lowly, physical world. This is true of a *neshama* in general: the fact that we mark a *yahrtzeit* based on the fixed calendar, within the realm of physical time and space, indicates that the *aliya* experienced by a *neshama* in the higher worlds is still very much connected with the experience of the people who remain here in this world.

The same is true of our connection with the Rebbe:

Each year on the *yom hahilula*, the Rebbe experiences an *aliya*, ascending to new levels incomparable higher than where he was before. But we too have the ability to join the Rebbe and rise along with him. By pushing ourselves to do more than we've done in the past, beyond our own perceived limitations, we too can ascend to places incomparably higher than before.

The only condition is that whatever we do, we do with a firm commitment to the Rebbe, holding steadfast in our *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe. Come what may, regardless of the cost, we are prepared to continue walking with the Rebbe in all his ways. We recognize that the Rebbe is our connection with Hashem, and that all the blessings we need—be it for children, health, or livelihood—all come to us through the Rebbe's *hashpa'a*.

The firm commitment we make will be enough to carry us through the coming year, in a manner that even our simplest actions will be permeated with this sense of *hiskashrus*, ensuring that we will always be together with the Rebbe.¹

The Rebbe gave us a mandate, entrusting our generation with the task of bringing Moshiach and finally making *geula* a reality. As we refocus our connection with the Rebbe for the year ahead, let us recommit ourselves to carrying out the final steps needed to get the job done. As the Rebbe concluded the first *maamar*, *Basi L'Gani* 5711:

Being that we've already been through it all, it now remains only up to us, the *dor hashvi'i*...

ונזכה זעהן זיך מיט'ן רבי'ן דא למטה אין א גוף ולמטה מעשרה
טפחים, והוא יגאלנו!

The Editors
ט"ו סיון ה'תשפ"ה

¹ Yud Shevat 5712; Toras Menachem vol. 4, pp. 308–315.

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

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להצלחה רבה ומופלגה
בשליחותם הק'
בנאפה וואלי, קאליפורניא

Who's the Culprit?

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

COMPILED BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ א-ל-א-לֹהֵי
הָרוּחַת לְכָל-בָּשָׂר הָאִישׁ אֶחָד יִחַטָּא
וְעַל כָּל-הָעֵדָה תִּקְצָף: (טז, כב)

They fell on their faces and said,
“Hashem, the G-d of the spirits of all
flesh, if one man sins, shall You be
angry with the whole congregation?”

“א-ל-א-לֹהֵי הָרוּחַת: יוֹדֵעַ מַחֲשָׁבוֹת; אִין מַדְתָּה כְּמֹדֵת
בָּשָׂר וָדָם, מִלֵּךְ בָּשָׂר וָדָם שֶׁסָּרַחָה עָלָיו מִקְצַת מְדִינָה, אִינוּ
יֹדֵעַ מִי הַחוֹטָא, לְפִיכָה בְּשֵׁהוּא כּוֹעֵם נִפְרַע מִכָּלָם, אֲבָל
אַתָּה, לְפָנֶיךָ גְּלוּיּוֹת כָּל הַמַּחֲשָׁבוֹת וַיֹּדֵעַ אַתָּה מִי הַחוֹטָא.

הָאִישׁ אֶחָד: הוּא הַחוֹטָא וְאַתָּה עַל כָּל הָעֵדָה
תִּקְצָף; אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, יָפָה אֲמַרְתָּם,
אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ וּמוֹדִיעַ מִי חָטָא וּמִי לֹא חָטָא.”

“Hashem, the G-d of the spirits: [means:] You know [their] thoughts. Your nature is not like that of flesh and blood: A human king against whom part of [his] country has offended does not know who the sinner is; therefore, when he gets angry, he punishes everyone. But to You, all thoughts are revealed, and You know who the sinner is.

One man: is the sinner, yet You would be angry with the whole congregation?! The Holy One, blessed be He, replied: “You have spoken correctly. I know and will make known who sinned and who did not sin.” (Rashi)

At first glance it seems that Rashi's intention is to say that a human king also punishes those in the country who did not offend, since he is unable to know who did and who did not; Moshe's argument was that Hashem ought not act like this, but rather distinguish between those who sinned and those who did not, and not punish everyone.

According to this interpretation, however, Rashi's words require clarification:

The comparison to a “king of flesh and blood” is unneces-



sary in order to establish the demand that Hashem not punish the innocent—this is a logical and obvious truth!

Furthermore, even a human king, if he is honest and fair, would certainly not punish innocent people solely due to his inability to identify the true culprit.

Rashi's true meaning lies in his precise language, מֶלֶךְ בָּשָׂר "אדם שֶׁסָּרַח עָלָיו מִקְצֵת מְדִינָה אֵינוֹ יוֹדֵעַ מִי הַחוֹטֵא":

The expressions of "סרח" and "חוטא" are not equal in meaning: A "חוטא" is a person who committed a real sin against the king and rebelled against him, whereas "סרח" "מקצת מדינה עליו" means that some of the country's residents behaved in a way that was not to the liking of the king. Still, there was no real rebellion against him.

We are dealing here, therefore, with a case of a single individual (the "חוטא") who incited some of the residents of the state and caused them to misbehave ("סרח עליו"). And since the king does not know who the sinner responsible for instigating the rebellion is, he punishes even those who were merely swept along—but not the rest of the country's citizens, who are innocent.

The same thing happened here:

In *possuk* 19, on the words "וַיִּקְהַל עֲלֵיהֶם קֹרַח" ("Korach assembled [all the congregation] against them") Rashi comments: "...he circulated among the tribes and enticed them [to join him]... until **they were all persuaded [to join him]**." Korach was, therefore, the main "חוטא"—the instigator—and he dragged "the whole congregation" along with him into the rebellion against Moshe Rabbeinu.

Even with regard to the other leaders of the rebellion—Dasan and Aviram and the other 250 men—Rashi on *possuk* 1 says: "Because *shevet* Reuven was encamped south [of the Mishkan, being] a neighbor of Kehos and his descendants who were [also] encamped to the south, **they joined with Korach in his dispute.**" In other words, they were all dragged into the *machlokes* by Korach.

This, then, was Moshe's argument: A "king of flesh and

blood" might, in such a case, punish all those who followed the instigator, since he does not have the ability to know who is the instigator and who a follower. But you, Hashem, since all thoughts are revealed before you, and you know that Korach alone is the "חוטא," it is appropriate that you punish only him, and not those who followed him.

To this Hashem replied, "You have spoken correctly. *I* know and will make known who sinned and who did not sin": You are right that only the sinner should be punished and not those who follow him. However, your statement that Korach alone is the sinner ("האיש אחד יחטא") is not correct, for I know that Dasan and Aviram are also sinners in their own right (and not only under the influence of Korach). Therefore, they too will be punished (but not the rest of the Yidden).



A profound lesson emerges from this exchange between Moshe Rabbeinu and Hashem:

The preceding *pessukim* recount the audacious and brazen words of Dasan and Aviram directed at Moshe Rabbeinu (see *possuk* 12 and on), causing him immense anguish and distress.

And yet, despite this, Moshe sought to exonerate them and attribute the blame entirely to Korach.

This teaches us the extent to which one must strive to inculcate in oneself the instruction to always be "*dan l'kaf zechus*"—to judge every person favorably—even when, judging by their exterior appearance, it does not seem possible.

Takeaway:

Don't get distracted by external appearances; every single person deserves to be judged favorably.

(Adapted from Likkutei Sichos vol. 13, p. 51; vol. 18, p. 196)



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

Dedicated
 In memory of
 R' Yehoshua Elchonon
 ben R' Yosef Mordechai, A"H.
 In honor of his 1st Yartzeit
 1 Tammuz 5785

It's Fixed

The Effect of a Mezuzah's Permanence

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Balak 5734, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of promoting “The Five Mivtzoim” (as they were then known), highlighting specifically Mivtza Mezuzah.¹ The unique value of this mitzvah can be deduced from the words of the Gemara² in the context of *Ir Hanidachas* (a city completely corrupt with idol worship):

“Rebbi Eliezer said: Any city which has even one mezuzah cannot become an *ir hanidachas*.”

Imagine: even a city entirely corrupted by the worst sins is spared destruction merely by having a single mezuzah. This demonstrates the immense spiritual power and protection afforded by a mezuzah.

In a radio program broadcast shortly after the farbrengen, Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz conveyed a message encouraging his listeners to get involved in the Rebbe's *mivtzoim*, including a summary of the Rebbe's *sicha* from the preceding Shabbos about mezuzah.

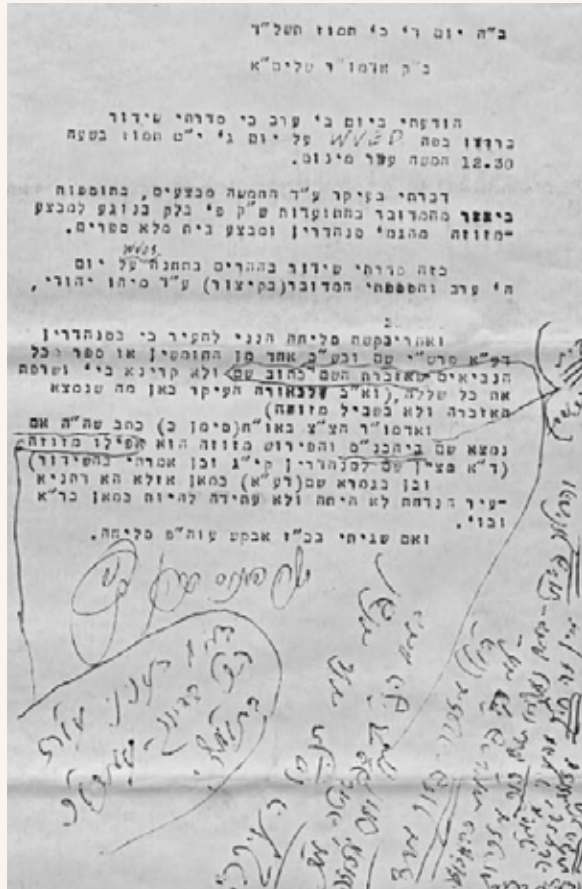
In his report to the Rebbe³ about the radio program, Reb Moshe Pinchas took the opportunity to ask the Rebbe the following question on the *sicha*:

Rashi on the Gemara adds that this halacha applies not only to mezuzah, but “...all the more so [the city is saved if it has] one of the *Chumashim* or one of the *Sifrei Nevi'im* with Hashem's name written in it...”

It seems that the Gemara's meaning is that any written mention of Hashem's name is enough to save the city from destruction; it's not an exceptional quality linked to mezuzah.

Reb Moshe Pinchas then cited a *teshuva* from the Tzemach Tzedek⁴ stating that the city is also saved if it contains a shul. The Gemara's intent is to emphasize that the city is saved **even** on account of one mezuzah; not **only** if there's a mezuzah.

The Rebbe circled the words “with Hashem's name written in it...” and responded:



לפלא שלא תפסו **העיקר**: באם הפי' [שאזכרת השם כתוב שם] כפשוטה, א"כ ל"ל לומר **מזוזה**, הו"ל"ל אזכרת **פסוק אחד** - ולא ב' פרשיות כבמזוזה.

והחילוק **פשוט** - באם נמצאו שם כו"כ אזכרות אין זה **חלק** מהעיר, משא"כ מזוזה שנעשה חלק **הבית** ובמילא דהעיר.

בית הכנסת

A **house** of gathering. [I.e. the reason a shul saves the city is also because it is a house; part of the infrastructure of the city itself.]

Commenting on the words that the city is saved "**even** on account of one mezuzah," the Rebbe wrote:

באם בעניני עוה"ז הכל בדיוק - עאכו"כ בתומ"צ.

If in worldly matters [we know that] everything is precise—certainly this is true when it comes to matters of Torah and mitzvos. [I.e. it is clear that the Gemara specifically chose the example of a mezuzah; it teaches us something and was not selected randomly.]

It is surprising that you did not [contextualize and] understand **the main point**: If the meaning [of the Gemara was that the mere mentioning of Hashem's name in writing is enough to save the city] is to be understood literally, then why would it use the term "**Mezuzah**"? It could have said [if there is even] **one possuk** with Hashem's name [it is sufficient]; not two [full] *parshiyos* as can be found in a mezuzah.

The difference is **simple**: [a mezuzah is needed because without it,] even if **several** writings of Hashem's name are found there, they would not [necessarily] be considered **part** of the city. A mezuzah, however, is [fixed and becomes] part of **the house**, and consequently, of the city [itself].

Where Reb Moshe Pinchas cited the Tzemach Tzedek's *teshuva*, the Rebbe underlined twice the word "*Beis Haknesses*" (lit.: a house of gathering; i.e. a shul) and added:

1. Toras Menachem vol. 77, p. 18.
2. Sanhedrin 71a.
3. Published by Rabbi Levi Garelik in *Teshura*, Laufer-Garelik 5768.
4. Orach Chaim *siman* 20.

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

Summertime with the Rebbe

TAMMUZ—5750

Tammuz is a special month of *geulah*, celebrating the Frieddiker Rebbe's release from prison on Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, and the Rebbe's words throughout the month reflected that.

Continuing our story of **Shnas Nissim—
Year of Miracles** with the Rebbe.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL

WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS





THE REBBE RECITES THE HAFTORAH
ON SHIVA ASAR B'TAMMUZ, 5750.

Farbrengens

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Chukas, 7 Tammuz, the Rebbe encouraged everyone to organize large farbrengens on the upcoming auspicious days; the more the better.

After this *sicha*, the crowd sang “*Ufaratzta*,” and the Rebbe encouraged the singing vigorously by waving his holy hands in all directions.

The following week, on Shabbos Parshas Balak, 14 Tammuz, the Rebbe held a most exceptional farbrengen.

It was two days after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s 110th birthday on Yud-Beis Tammuz, and the Rebbe addressed this milestone in great detail. The Rebbe pointed out that the Frierdiker Rebbe’s namesake, Yosef Hatzaddik, lived to 110 years old and drew lessons for all of us from Yosef’s life.

As this day is “*isru-chag*” of the Yom Tov of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe called for more farbrengens to be arranged in the upcoming week, especially on the 15th and 16th of the month, and even on the night of the 17th before the fast of Shiva Asar B’Tammuz.

A memorable part of the farbrengen was when the Rebbe dedicated an extended portion of a *sicha* to wishing

blessings upon all of the Jewish people, especially those in Eretz Yisroel. It seemed like the Middle East was at the cusp of a period of instability (which ultimately culminated in the Gulf War), and the Rebbe blessed the Jewish people with peace and prosperity, especially peace of mind, to last through the imminent coming of Moshiach.

The parsha of the week includes the prophecy of Bilam, which the Rambam quotes in context of the laws of Moshiach. Speaking of Halacha, the Rebbe went into a discussion about the importance of an actionable *psak din*, and how, in addition to ordinary *semicha*, one must also acquire *shimush chachamim* in order to render an authentic ruling. With that, the Rebbe mentioned that many *rabbanim* worldwide have already ruled that the time for Moshiach has arrived. May their ruling be fulfilled immediately!

At the conclusion of this *sicha* the Rebbe stood up in his place and began singing “*Ufaratzta*” with immense joy, clapping and dancing along with the exuberant crowd.

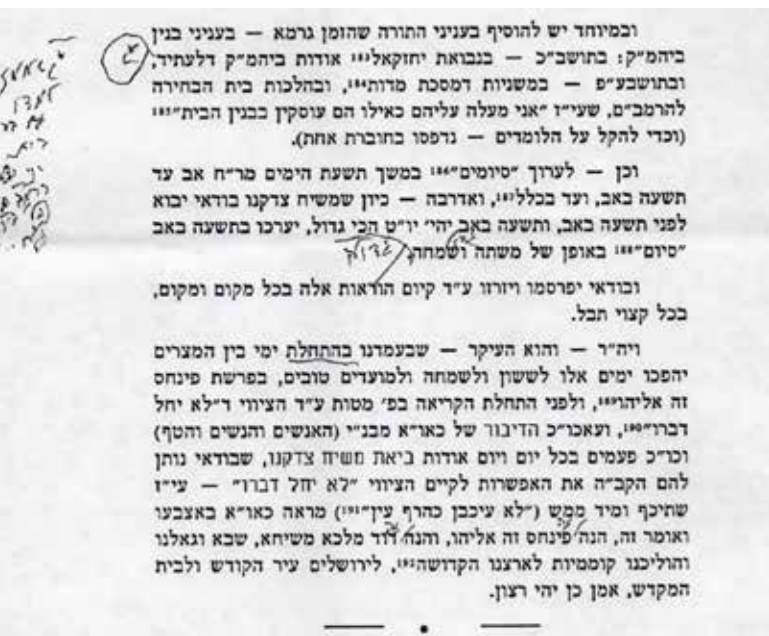
On Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, the first Shabbos of the Three Weeks, the Rebbe quoted his father’s ruling that one must avoid all signs of mourning on Shabbos, and therefore must increase in joy during these Shabbasos.

As is the custom every year, the Rebbe reiterated his call to study the *halachos* of Beis Habechira during this time, familiarizing ourselves with the laws of the Beis Hamikdash. Additionally, the Rebbe spoke about making *siyumim* on *masechtos* of Gemara, as well as sections and *seforim* of the Rambam.

An interesting moment occurred when the Rebbe quoted the Parsha about the Yidden inheriting the land, applying it to the imminent coming of Moshiach. “We will be able to point with our fingers,” the Rebbe said, “and say ‘*Leileh teichalek ha’aretz*’—to these individuals the land will be bequeathed; including everyone here in this room, amongst all the Jewish people.” With a smile, the Rebbe pointed at the women’s section upstairs and said, “And the women too; although we can’t see them behind the *mechitza*, but they can see us. They, too, are certainly pointing and saying, ‘*Leileh teichalek ha’aretz*.’”

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that anyone who had prepared a bottle of *mashke* for an upcoming event should come up and retrieve it. Then the Rebbe wished for every single Jew, “*Lchaim! Lchaim v’livracha! Lchaim tovim ul’shalom!*”

Then he repeated: “*Lchaim! Lchaim v’livracha! Lchaim tovim ul’shalom!*”



A PORTION OF THE REBBE’S EDITS ON THE SICHOS OF PARSHAS PINCHAS ABOUT ARRANGING JOYOUS SIYUMIM DURING THE NINE DAYS AND ESPECIALLY ON TISHA B’AV ITSELF.



THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES THE KUNTRES ON THE NIGHT OF 9 TAMMUZ.

On the final Shabbos of the month, Shabbos “Chazak,” Parshas Matos-Masei, the Rebbe spoke about the fact that when reaching the end of the *Sefer*, we proclaim “Chazak” three times. This alludes to the descent we experience during the three weeks of mourning and how, ultimately, we emerge even higher and stronger than before.

When speaking about making *siyumim* throughout the coming Nine Days, the Rebbe mentioned that an increase in Torah study is so crucial at this time: We know that Moshiach should have been here already, and yet he still hasn’t come for some reason. There’s obviously just one thing missing from our *avoda* that is holding back the *geulah*. Since we don’t know exactly what it is, we must seize every possible opportunity to increase in Torah and mitzvos.

A Pleasant Surprise

In addition to the farbrengens, the Rebbe addressed the Chassidim several other times throughout the month. On the afternoon of the fast of Shiva Asar B’Tammuz, the Rebbe delivered “*divrei kivushin*” after Mincha, as is his custom on fast days.

On the evening of 25 Tammuz, after Maariv, something special happened:

The Rebbe descended from his platform to distribute dollars, when suddenly he began speaking a *sicha*! The last time there was a *sicha* at such a setting was several

months earlier on 25 Adar, and no one was expecting this welcome surprise. Immediately, crowds of people pushed forward to where the Rebbe was standing, and some chaos ensued, causing the Rebbe to begin his words again three times! In the meantime, the Shabbos siren blared through the Crown Heights neighborhood, and throngs of people hurried to 770. The Rebbe spoke about the two *parshios* of the week—Matos and Masei—and their connection to the 25th of the month.

Chag Hageulah

Yud-Beis Tammuz in the Rebbe’s presence is always celebrated as a special *yom tov*, but this year the Rebbe marked the day in an unprecedented way:

On Motzei Shabbos, Parshas Chukas, the Rebbe instructed that 15,000 copies of the “*Kuntres Yud-Beis Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5688*” be printed for the Rebbe to distribute. The booklet contained a *maamar* by the Friediker Rebbe which he published in honor of the first anniversary of his release from prison, along with the famous letter where he describes his release as a momentous occasion for all the Jewish people (as well as some appendices). The Rebbe also instructed that in the foreword to the *kuntres*, a paragraph should be added from the Rebbe’s *maamar* of Yud-Aleph Nissan, including a reference to Tehillim 89—the Rebbe’s *kapitel*.

The next day, on Sunday afternoon, after the usual



THE REBBE EXITS THE SHUL ON 12 TAMMUZ WITH THE NEW KUNTRES TUCKED INTO HIS SIDDUR.

dollars distribution, the Rebbe left for the *mikvah* holding the newly printed *kuntres* in hand.

That evening, after returning from the Ohel and davening Mincha and Maariv, the Rebbe distributed the *kuntres* to thousands of men, women, and children, along with a dollar for tzedakah. It is interesting to note that since distributing a *kuntres* on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe kept a copy of the *kuntres* he had distributed inside his siddur at all times. However, when the Rebbe came into the shul for Mincha and Maariv on this evening, that *kuntres* was no longer there.

The distribution lasted about an hour and a half, throughout which the Rebbe was in excellent spirits, smiling at many who passed—especially women and children. At the end, the Rebbe placed three copies into his siddur and began exiting the shul. At the exit, a few



THE REBBE'S MESSAGE TO CHILDREN ATTENDING GAN YISROEL CAMPS, 3 TAMMUZ 5750.

more people who hadn't yet received their copies were present, and the Rebbe took the copies out of his siddur and distributed them. Rabbi Leibel Groner brought additional copies, and the Rebbe distributed them as well. Outside the elevator, both downstairs and upstairs, the Rebbe gave out a few more copies.

At 11:47 p.m., the Rebbe came out to the service lane on Eastern Parkway for Kiddush Levana. Then, on his way back into 770, Rabbi Groner told the Rebbe that several individuals hadn't yet received *kuntreisim*. The Rebbe placed his siddur on the car parked nearby and proceeded to hand out additional copies for another few minutes. After the Rebbe went back into his room (at midnight!), some more individuals showed up, and this time the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner to give them *kuntreisim* on his behalf.

Several days later, on Wednesday, Erev Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe issued a written message with blessings for all the participants in farbrengens of Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz around the world. A special request was added by the *Mazkir* that the message should be disseminated especially among campers at



THE REBBE WISHES HATZLACHA TO CAMPERS AND STAFF MEMBERS ON THEIR WAY TO CAMP FOR THE SUMMER.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 49618



REB BENTZION SHAFRAN VISITS THE REBBE ON SUNDAY, 1 TAMMUZ.



RABBI YOSEF GUTNICK WITH HIS SON AT DOLLARS ON 8 TAMMUZ.

summer camps.

A few days later, on Monday, 16 Tammuz, the Rebbe held *yechidus klolis* for the guests who had come for Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz. When the Rebbe entered the shul, he asked why there were no chairs for those who wished to sit, as usual. The Rebbe then began with his address, then received *panim* from each guest while distributing dollars for tzedakah.

Summer

As the summer was underway, many children in the neighborhood were leaving to spend time in various camps.

On Tuesday, Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe sent out a written message to Gan Yisroel attendees, wishing them much success throughout the summer.

On Sunday, 1 Tammuz, during the usual Sunday dollars, a group of campers and staff who were heading out to Camp Gan Yisroel in Michigan passed by the Rebbe. The Rebbe wished each one of them "*Hatzlacha rabba* in Detroit!"

To a group of staff members heading up to Camp Gan Yisroel in Parksville, NY, the Rebbe gave additional dollars, instructing them to "Give this to tzedakah in camp."

Dollars

In addition to the campers and staff, many thousands of people came to seek the Rebbe's *brachos* and guidance each Sunday during "dollars," as usual.

On Sunday, 1 Tammuz, the Rebbe was visited by Reb Bentzion Shafran, who was marrying off his daughter later in the week. The Rebbe told him, "Thank you for the gift; the *ksav yad*." (On the preceding Friday, he had gifted the Rebbe with a *ksav yad kodesh* of the Tzemach Tzedek.) Reb Bentzion told the Rebbe that his mother had come to New York for the wedding, but she couldn't come to dollars because she was unwell. The Rebbe said that she would dance at the wedding and gave an additional dollar for her to have a *refuah sheleima*.

On Sunday, 8 Tammuz, Rabbi Yosef Gutnick came by the Rebbe with his family. The Rebbe pointed at his young son, Isser, and said, "He's also a Kohen; he can bless with



THE REBBE CONCLUDES THE DISTRIBUTION OF DOLLARS ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 15 TAMMUZ.

RABBI YOSEF GUTNICK WITH HIS SON AT DOLLARS ON 8 TAMMUZ.

birkas kohanim."

Rabbi Gutnick told the Rebbe that his son's birthday was on 16 Tammuz.

"Shiva Asar B'Tammuz?" the Rebbe asked. Rabbi Gutnick repeated that the birthday was one day earlier, on 16 Tammuz. The Rebbe smiled and said, "He caught (*"arein-gechapt"*) the last moments of the first Luchos!"

The Rebbe then gave Rabbi Gutnick a dollar, saying, "*Bracha v'hatzlacha*," then another dollar saying, "*Kiflayim l'tushiya*," then a third dollar, "for all the good news until now," a fourth dollar, "for all the good news to come," and a fifth dollar, "for all your activities."

A woman came to the Rebbe and said that she had a dream in which Moshe Rabbeinu appeared to her. The Rebbe said, "This is a good sign for you that you'll have only good things, even in your dreams!"

Rabbi Zalman Lipsker from Philadelphia brought a group of 80 Israelis to see the Rebbe, and the Rebbe told them that the word "Philadelphia" means love of wisdom. May they all learn to love true wisdom: the Torah.

To one individual, the Rebbe said: "You look downcast (*"mara-sh'choradik"*). Get rid of your *mara-sh'chora*. You want to accomplish things, but this [dejection] doesn't allow you to accomplish anything."

On Sunday, 15 Tammuz, Rabbi Hirshel Fogelman from Worcester, Massachusetts, came to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe gave him an additional dollar "for the wedding."



LATER THAT EVENING, FOLLOWING MINCHA AND MAARIV UPON RETURNING FROM THE OHEL, THE REBBE BEGINS DISTRIBUTING DOLLARS AFTER MIDNIGHT.

MORDECHAI BARON VIA JEM 1/7881

Rabbi Fogelman was confused, and the Rebbe explained, “For your wedding anniversary!” Rabbi Fogelman then remembered that his wedding anniversary was indeed later in the week, and he smiled. The Rebbe responded with a smile, “I have to remember? I have to remind you?” The Rebbe then gave him another dollar for his wife.

An individual approached the Rebbe holding a pair of tefillin that the Rebbe had advised him to check, saying that he sent it to two expert *sofrim* and they both said it was completely kosher. The Rebbe replied, “If that’s the case, you don’t have to worry. The Torah relies on the testimony of two witnesses, so you can rely on them.”

The dollars distribution concluded at 3:30 p.m., and shortly thereafter the Rebbe left for the Ohel, returning at 11:45 at night! No one at 770 could recall another instance throughout the years in which the Rebbe returned from the Ohel so late at night.

At 11:50 p.m., the Rebbe entered the shul and davened Mincha and Maariv, followed by another distribution of dollars!

Mayoral Delegation

In addition to the regular Sunday dollars encounters, the Rebbe was visited by several interesting individuals on other occasions throughout the month.

On Friday night of Shabbos Parshas Chukas, 7 Tammuz, as the Rebbe was on his way out of shul following davening and approaching the door to his room, a small child was crying and running towards the Rebbe. The Rebbe waited until one of the *bochurim* picked up the boy, and then waved his hand several times in encouragement towards him.

On Sunday evening, 1 Tammuz, the Rebbe distributed dollars after Maariv, and one of the people who came by was Harav Yisroel Hager, son of the Vizhnitzer Rebbe of Bnei Brak, who later became the Vizhnitzer Rebbe.

The Rebbe conversed with him and another individual who accompanied him for a few minutes, wishing them “*Besuros tovos*” and other blessings.

On Monday evening, 9 Tammuz, the Rebbe was visited by three mayors from cities in Eretz Yisroel: Sderot, Chatzor Haglilit, and Ofakim, accompanied by Reb Nachum Markowitz.

Two of them presented honorary medals from their city to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe blessed them, saying that their cities should grow and be successful.



ON MONDAY EVENING, 9 TAMMUZ, THE REBBE IS VISITED BY THREE ISRAELI MAYORS AND PRESENTED WITH HONORARY MEDALS FROM THE CITIES.

The mayor of Sderot gave the Rebbe the key to his city, and the Rebbe said:

“Thank you very much. According to halacha, when you give someone the key to a location, you’re essentially giving them ownership of that place. I usually like to leave the decisions regarding most details up to the general public, and I do not wish to get involved in how the city runs. However, I wish to emphasize that you must stand strong in all matters of the integrity of the Torah, which is dependent upon the integrity of the Land of Israel and the integrity of the Jewish people.”

The Rebbe blessed all three mayors with a safe trip home and went into his room. Then the Rebbe emerged once more and told the group: “I often quote what is stated in the Talmud, that when a citizen of Eretz Yisroel leaves and goes out to *Chutz Laretz*, his return to Eretz Yisroel is double as strong as before!”

An Amazing Impression

Rabbi Dr. Naftali Lowenthal of London, England, has been publishing a weekly pamphlet called “Friday Night” with insights from Chassidus on the Parsha.

On Erev Shabbos Balak, the Rebbe wrote to him:

“Our Rabbeim publicized that disseminating (explanations on ideas of) Chassidus—the wellsprings of the Torah—**hastens** the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, about whom it speaks in the Parsha of [this] Friday Night [Parshas Balak].

“It might be worthwhile to print (and in the issues already published—to add a sticker stating), in English obviously, ‘be careful to respect the sanctity of this publication.’”



At the end of the month of Sivan, there were several regional Kinus Hashluchim gatherings around the world, and many of them received encouraging responses from the Rebbe.

On Erev Shabbos Parshas Shelach, Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky wrote a report about the ongoing regional Kinus in Nice, France. He asked the Rebbe if there were any specific instructions to be implemented at the Kinus. The Rebbe replied: “As shall be discussed tomorrow at the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Shelach.” Indeed, the next day, the Rebbe discussed the importance and meaning of *shlichus* at the Shabbos farbrengen.

A report to the Rebbe from the regional Kinus in New York and New England was dated “Sunday, Parsha of ‘אני וחלקך’” [I.e. Parshas Korach where Hashem tells Aharon Hakohen and his sons that they would not inherit a portion of the land, since Hashem is their portion.] The Rebbe circled these words and wrote:

“[Hashem is the portion] of all those who dedicate themselves [to do his holy work], as the Rambam rules. And he concludes: ‘[You, Hashem] are my guide...’”



A *bochur* wrote to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha* for success in learning and keeping the *sedarim*, and the Rebbe replied: “You are guaranteed by our holy Torah that if you work hard, you will find success. I will mention this at the Ohel.”



Members of the administration of Oholei Torah Elementary School wrote to the Rebbe about a new



THE REBBE IS CALLED TO THE TORAH FOR MAFTIR ON SHIVA ASAR B'TAMMUZ.

program for children who need extra attention to keep up with their learning, and the Rebbe replied:

“This is a great thing, and it comes at an appropriate time: Chag Hashavuos, [which marks] the beginning of a renewed education for all the Jewish people, *shlita*. I will mention this at the Ohel.”



The Shluchim Office sent a questionnaire to all Shluchim worldwide, gathering information and statistics about their activities. When they sent a report to the Rebbe of their findings, the Rebbe wrote:

“[The report] was received. Thank you very much. May this be an ongoing endeavor, and with an **increase**. [The report] makes an amazing impression, **etc.** I will mention this at the Ohel.”

They wrote that when more information comes in from the Shluchim, they will share it with the Rebbe. The Rebbe put an arrow from his words “with an increase” pointing towards this sentence of the report.



A shliach wrote to the Rebbe that he was traveling to Detroit to participate in a *siyum* of Gemara Maseches Shabbos, which the students there, including his son, had learned by heart. The Rebbe replied:

“Chazal say that [when the Torah says] ‘the days of your joy’ this refers to Shabbasos. I will mention this at the Ohel.” **1**

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
שטערנא שרה שתחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה ב' תמוז

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת חיים אפרים וזוגתו
מרת חיל' מושקא שיחי
גאלדשטיין

Let's Talk About Eretz Yisroel

THROUGH THE LENS
OF THE REBBE'S TORAH

PART 10 Fake Peace (1)

COMPILED BY:
RABBI MENDEL MISHOLOVIN

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

On 27 Adar 5739, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat signed a peace treaty at an elaborate event hosted by US President Jimmy Carter on the White House Lawn. The ceremony was witnessed by 1,500 guests and millions of television viewers worldwide. The world called it a historic step in bringing peace to the Middle East. Two nations that had been at war for decades agreed to reconciliation and friendship, and the three leaders were hailed as heroes for making it happen.

But in truth, these accords were a humiliating disaster for Israel, from the negotiations to the final treaty and its implementation. All that was gained through the miracles of the previous wars—security, energy resources, prestige, and deterrence—was squandered in exchange for a piece of paper.

Peace is a very good thing, but peace has a specific definition. When two opponents decide to stop fighting, reconciliation will demand concessions from both sides. Inevitably, the stronger side will get more than the weaker side, but only an arrangement where both sides walk away with wins can be defined as peace. When one side receives everything and the other receives nothing in exchange, it's a humiliating retreat for that side. Calling it peace is a farce.

General Timeline

26 Kislev – 4 Teves 5734: Following the Yom Kippur War, the United Nations convenes the Geneva Conference, co-chaired by the United States and the Soviet Union, to promote Arab-Israeli peace. Representatives from Israel, Egypt, and Jordan attend, but it is a failure.

Shevat 5737: President Jimmy Carter moves to rejuvenate the Middle East peace process.

4 Menachem Av 5737: Prime Minister Menachem Begin meets Carter at the White House to discuss how to move toward an overall settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

28 Cheshvan 5738: President Anwar Sadat shocks the world by announcing that he is ready to go to the Israeli Knesset to discuss peace.

Motzei Shabbos, 9 Kislev 5738: Sadat is received in Israel as an honored guest and delivers a speech in the Israeli Knesset, calling for peace.

3–15 Elul 5738: Carter invites Begin and Sadat to a summit at Camp David, the presidential retreat in rural

Maryland, to negotiate a peace treaty. After thirteen days of intensive negotiations, the Camp David Accords—a framework for an eventual peace treaty—are signed at the White House.

27 Adar 5739: Begin, Carter, and Sadat sign the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty.

Tough Negotiations

Entering the negotiations, the Egyptians demanded full Israeli withdrawal from the territories it liberated during the previous wars (including the Sinai, West Bank, and Gaza Strip) and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Israel focused on maintaining its security, preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state, ensuring free naval passage through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran, and securing official Egyptian recognition of Israel.

The demands from the respective sides were asymmetrical. Retreat from territory is an action that can never be reversed, but official recognition, diplomatic relations, and trade agreements can be easily revoked. Whereas Egypt was demanding irreversible actions on Israel's part, the Israelis were pushing for paper promises at best.

Most of Egypt's demands were ridiculous, in the first place, since they were not within Sadat's purview at all. He could not speak on behalf of other Arab nations, who all condemned his readiness to negotiate, and surely not on behalf of the Arabs living in the territories. Sadat's main objective was to open with an outrageous demand and negotiate down to his main objective, forcing Israel to withdraw from 23,500 square miles of the Sinai Peninsula, an area more than double its original size.

During the twelve years Israel controlled the area, it established 18 settlements and built air force and naval bases, which enhanced its defense capabilities throughout the region. Most importantly, during the Six-Day War, Israel captured the Abu Rudeis oil fields and developed them to provide a significant portion of Israel's fuel supply. Additionally, the Alma oil fields were explored and developed approximately 100 kilometers to the south, near El Tor. By the time the two leaders convened at Camp David, Israel no longer depended on foreign nations for oil and was on track to become an oil exporter, a prestigious position in the Middle East.

The crucial importance of these oil fields to Israel cannot be overstated. Fuel is the most vital commodity for every modern society. Most importantly, a modern army with all its sophistication is useless without major oil supplies, especially during wartime. Giving up these resources is essentially suicidal for any country. Turning them over to your mortal enemies is unthinkable.

At Camp David, Egypt demanded that the settlements and military bases be destroyed and that the oil fields be transferred to Egyptian control. Israel should have rejected these demands as impossible. Retreating from the Sinai would mean retreating from a strategic security buffer zone, an egregious error from a military standpoint and absolutely forbidden according to Halacha, as explained at length in a previous article. Whereas some areas of the Sinai could be determined non-essential from a security perspective, a wholesale retreat from the peninsula should have been a non-starter.

The Political Map

Although there was tremendous American pressure on Israel to accept the Egyptian demands, Israel was in



JIMMY CARTER AND MENACHEM BEGIN WITH MEMBERS OF THE ISRAELI DELEGATION DURING NEGOTIATIONS AT CAMP DAVID.

a political and moral position to withstand it. When Sadat demanded Israel give up its sovereignty of Yerushalayim, Begin emphatically rejected this outright, and it never came up in the negotiations again. The same attitude was perfectly justified and would have worked regarding all matters crucial to Israel's security.

Both Sadat and Carter needed a deal to happen more than Begin did. Sadat was very unpopular in Egypt and needed to regain lost prestige following the defeat of the Yom Kippur War. Carter, who struggled with a poor economy and high inflation, desperately needed an international diplomatic win. Threatening that Begin would be held responsible for the summit's failure was a bluff. If he had not budged from Israel's vital security interests, Carter would have applied more pressure for Sadat to accept a face-saving formula of an Israeli withdrawal from non-essential security areas in the Sinai, sign the treaty, secure American foreign aid, and call it a win.

Instead, the Israelis misread the political map and backtracked from most of their red lines. The "physics of pressure" dictates that giving in to pressure only invites more pressure, and eventually, they agreed to all of Egypt's "logical" demands. Egypt recovered all the territory it lost in a war it had started, regained control of oil fields, and received new ones, returning Israel to utter dependence on foreign oil.

Israel secured passage through the Suez Canal, which Israel had controlled just a few years earlier, and extracted an Egyptian commitment to sell oil for a steep price, from oil fields it had controlled and greatly enhanced, as well as some it had explored and developed itself! Most humiliatingly, it considered Egyptian recognition and the newly created diplomatic ties between the two countries as the two crowning achievements of the treaty.

Although Egypt did not receive all of its demands regarding the West Bank, Gaza, and a Palestinian State, it had achieved all of its goals in entering the negotiations. Everything else was either aggressive posturing or meant to signal to its Arab allies that it was also looking out for their interests.

During the Six-Day War, Egypt lost the Sinai in a humiliating defeat. Six years later, it attempted to regain the territory and restore its prestige through war, but failed. Consequently, Sadat reverted to peace talks and succeeded beyond his wildest dreams.

Even if the fragile peace agreement held and Egypt



no longer engaged Israel in direct conflict, this treaty signaled to the world that Israel was willing to trade away its most vital security assets for recognition and international acceptance.

Many more details of the treaty endangered Israel, and the eventual withdrawal caused tremendous humiliation, impacting the general morale in Israel and its economy. In addition, Egypt violated clauses of the treaty with impunity. Nevertheless, the government ratified it, implemented it, and concealed many of the incriminating details from the public to contextualize this resounding defeat as a moral and political victory for Israel.

Perhaps, the most poignant way to frame the disaster of the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty that resulted from the Camp David Accords is to quote Sadat, who laughed during an October 1980 interview with The New York Times: "Poor Menachem [Begin] ... I got back ... the Sinai and the Alma oil fields, and what has Menachem got? A piece of paper." ❶

NEXT MONTH:

When diplomats discuss ideas divorced from reality.

Primary Sources: *Sichos Kodesh* 5739 vol. 2, p. 723; *Hisvaaduyos* 5742 vol. 3, p. 1722; *Daas Torah* Chapter 7; *Berega Haemet* Chapter 7.

BY: RABBI MENDY GREENBERG (Twinsburg, OH)



“Not Just My Liberation”

*The Rebbe's
account of
Yud-Beis Tammuz*





BASED ON JEM'S "INTERACTIVE
TIMELINE" ON ASHREINU AUDIO.

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

נדפס ע"י הרוצה בעילום שמו

Lead Up to Arrest

The first seven years of the Frierdiker Rebbe's nesius were fraught with danger. Every day, the Frierdiker Rebbe risked his life by combating the forces trying to stamp out Yiddishkeit in Russia.

Things came to a head around Purim Katan, in the year 5687.

In the Rebbe's words:

Before Purim Katan, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe traveled to Moscow, the capital city, source of the many terrible decrees against the Jewish people. The news of his impending arrival spread among the Yidden in the area, and it also reached the “higher-ups.”

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe announced that he would deliver a *maamar* on Purim Katan at the last remaining shul in Moscow.

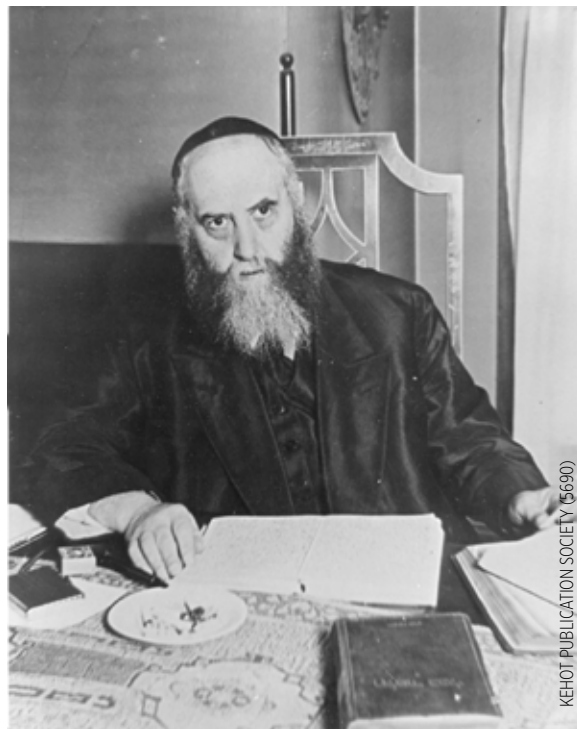
A messenger immediately arrived from the higher-ups, a Jew who was also a good friend. He told the [Frierdiker] Rebbe—although the Rebbe obviously knew this on his own—that there was clear information that informers would be present at his *maamar* delivery. They would immediately pass on whatever he said to the necessary officials. Therefore, he said, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe should consider the potential consequences of his words...

When the [Frierdiker] Rebbe arrived at the shul, the room was packed. He delivered a *maamar* which was based on the *posuk*, “*mipi olelim v'yonkim yisadta oz... l'hashbis oyev umisnakem*” that the Torah of children nullifies the enemies of Yiddishkeit and Yidden. After speaking in *haskalah* terms of Chassidus, he spelled out his intentions in no uncertain words, to make sure that everyone understood exactly what he meant. He openly said that one should disregard all obstacles and ensure that Yiddishe children emit from their mouths studies which will obliterate the enemies.

Needless to say, the *maamar* produced a strong, new-found inspiration to do everything possible to provide a Jewish education to every Jewish child within reach—whether tiny children or adults who were children with regard to Jewish education—and to do so without regard for decrees, difficulties, or individuals who had the power to impede those efforts.¹

The Arrest

Sure enough, the GPU soon showed up—on 15 Sivan—to arrest the Frierdiker Rebbe. They barged into his home late at night, just as the Frierdiker Rebbe was sitting down



to eat something after a long night of yechidus.

The Rebbe pointed out that the miracles began immediately.

There were many open miracles that took place throughout the story [of the Frierdiker Rebbe's imprisonment]. At the very beginning, there was an open miracle.

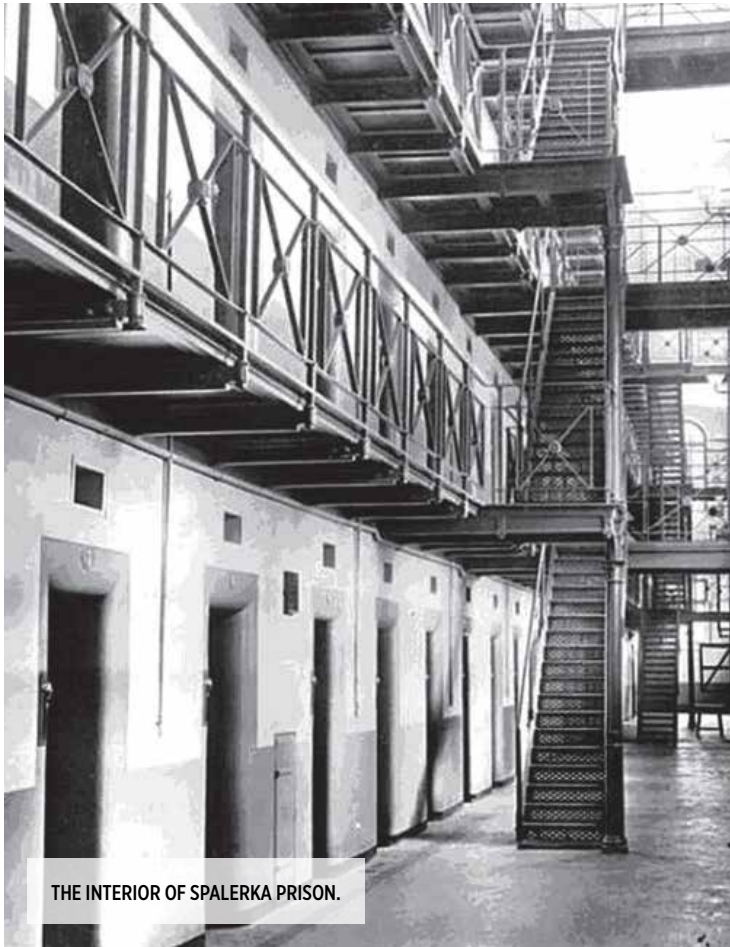
When they entered his home for the search, they posted guards in every room to ensure that nothing could be hidden and no information could be passed [to others]. Then, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, entered the room and began crying uncontrollably; nobody was able to calm her down.

The Jew among the officers told the [Frierdiker] Rebbe to go into a private room with her and calm her down. That allowed the [Frierdiker] Rebbe to give over important instructions regarding what should be done—instructions that ultimately led to his release. Again, when he was walked out of the house, only the non-Jewish guards were present, and they did not hinder the [Frierdiker] Rebbe from giving over additional instructions...

This completely defied logic and protocol—and it was these very moments that led to the ultimate release.²

On a different occasion, the Rebbe described the Frierdiker Rebbe's tactic to avoid divulging incriminating evidence during the search:

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe related that in his private study, he had a drawer filled with letters and papers that were



THE INTERIOR OF SPALERKA PRISON.

old and irrelevant. They were kept there so that in the case of a police search, the large pile of letters would make it difficult to find the real, incriminating ones.

This is exactly what happened. When they came on 15 Sivan and wanted to search his study, he pulled out that pile and inserted all the incriminating paperwork into it; they could find nothing among the massive amount of irrelevant papers.³

In Prison

From the first moment in prison, the Frierdiker Rebbe made a decision to act like a Rebbe—he would behave on his own terms, not as dictated to him by the prison officials.

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe related that when he first arrived at the prison, he made the firm decision that he wouldn't 'lose himself,' and he wouldn't be intimidated by them. He would treat them as if they didn't exist.

When he refused to answer their question, they put him in solitary confinement in a cell covered in mud where there was nowhere to lean, a room crawling with rats. He was there for some time—a day, or half a day. Nonetheless, he refused to give in to them, not only in matters of *yiras shamayim*, but in everything—acting as if they simply didn't exist.⁴

On another occasion, the Rebbe gave more context:

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe's arrest was on the night of a state-of-emergency after a certain Soviet ambassador was killed in a different country; that night the authorities decided to arrest (and execute) a certain number of people...

Despite being aware of the situation, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe behaved *b'harchavah* not only after his release, but also during his imprisonment. He entered prison with the decision that, despite the state of affairs in the world—*Chazal* say, "Do



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not provoke a *rasha* when he is doing well”—he couldn’t allow [fear] to be evident in his behavior or speech, or even appear on his face... He knew that he was being accompanied by “all those who cherish Torah, observe mitzvos” and even those “who are [just] called ‘Yisroel’”...⁵

In truth, the Frierdiker Rebbe related, there was something that happened earlier, on Rosh Hashanah, that gave him the strength to carry on despite the terrible situation.

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe related that in the *maamarim* of Rosh Hashanah 5687, the year of his arrest, he spoke about the concept of *Hashgacha Pratis*, as taught by the Baal Shem Tov.

It was not directly related to the *maamar*, but it was mentioned during the *maamar* nonetheless. Without that, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe said, he did not know whether he would have been able to withstand the arrest.⁶

One story about the Frierdiker Rebbe’s imprisonment stands out. When the Rebbe retold this story, he was overcome with emotion:

During his imprisonment, they came on Shabbos to take his picture. It was Shabbos afternoon, and the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was davening with his tallis over his head. When they walked inside and saw him in his tallis, they left.

Some more time passed; they came again, and the

[Frierdiker] Rebbe was still davening, but his tallis was no longer over his head. Seeing the whole delegation, he motioned to them with his hand—not wanting to interrupt his davening—and they left again.

Soon, they came a third time. This time, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe informed them that it was Shabbos and photographs were forbidden, so they left and set the matter aside for later.

This story doesn’t make any sense. They shouldn’t have been impressed by a tallis—the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was arrested for being a Rebbe, after all...

What is the explanation?

When you go with a *bitual atzmi*, and therefore with a *tokef atzmi*, even the spark of holiness hidden in the lowest *kelipah*, when seeing... *atzmus umehus* with a tallis on his head... It wasn’t something they could explain, but interrupting wasn’t an option. They simply lost themselves entirely...⁷

After several weeks in prison, the Frierdiker Rebbe was informed that he would be exiled to Kostroma for three years. As the Rebbe related on several occasions, the Frierdiker Rebbe was first sentenced to receive capital punishment. The sentence was then changed to ten years in the Solovki Islands prison camp, and subsequently, it was again changed to three years of exile in Kostroma.

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe received the news on Thursday, 1 Tammuz; he was given permission to go home and meet with his family for six hours before he would have to go to the train station for his journey to Kostroma.

However, the journey was ultimately delayed to 3 Tammuz, because when, in response to his question, he was told that he would arrive in Kostroma on Shabbos, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe adamantly refused and stated, “Under no circumstances will I travel on Shabbos.” He was told that he would not be allowed to stay outside of the prison until after Shabbos, and that if he refused their orders he would remain in prison for longer, but the Rebbe nonetheless said, “I will sit as long as it takes, but I will not travel on Shabbos!”⁸

Kostroma

At the train station before he left, a large crowd of Chassidim gathered. The Frierdiker Rebbe addressed the assembled with the same words his father, the Rebbe Rashab had used during the famous conference of Rabbanim, against Czarist attempts to interfere in matters of Yiddishkeit:

“*Yehi Hashem Elokaenu imanu kaasher haya im avosaynu...* This is not only a prayer, but also a promise and blessing—that Hashem will not forsake us, even when we are in exile.

“Let the nations of the world know and realize. We did not go into exile of our own will, nor will we return to Eretz Yisroel by virtue of our capabilities. Hashem, our Father and King, sent us into exile, and He will redeem us by sending us Moshiach. However, only our bodies were sent into exile and subjected to foreign rule. Our souls were not.

“We are obligated to publicly proclaim before all, that on any matter affecting the Jewish religion, Torah, Mitzvos and even its customs, no one can impose his beliefs on us nor coerce us to act contrary to our beliefs...”⁹

When the news arrived that the Frierdiker Rebbe would be exiled to Kostroma, Reb Michoel Dvorkin was immediately dispatched to the distant town, where he had an old acquaintance, to prepare for the Frierdiker Rebbe’s arrival.

The friend that he had known had since passed away, but his son-in-law still lived there and served

as the town’s shochet. Reb Michoel arranged for the Frierdiker Rebbe to stay in his house, although—Reb Michoel later recounted—there was a suspicion that this shochet was an informant for the GPU. In addition to finding suitable accommodations, Reb Michoel had the town’s mikvah repaired, and he began organizing a cheder for the local Jewish community.

In essence, he began to engage in the very activities for which the Frierdiker Rebbe was being punished (in sichos, the Rebbe compared it to the story of Yehuda doing the same for Yaakov Avinu before he arrived in Mitzrayim).

The Frierdiker Rebbe himself took part in these efforts, but he was not satisfied.

During the time the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was in exile in Kostroma, he continued to be active in hafatzas hamaayanos, such as creating chadarim and mikvaos. On Shabbos, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe davened at length in the shul. This caused a stir in the town—a Jew davening until three or four in the afternoon! Everyone had already finished davening, eaten seudas Shabbos, and also had enough time to sleep, and here stands a rabin and is still davening. The furor was to the extent that the town priest came to shul to see the attraction...

Nevertheless, the fact that at that time the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was not able to write a letter to a Yid concerning basic things bothered him terribly, to the point that he told one of the Chassidim who were with him—either Reb Elya Chaim or Reb Michoel—that if this is the case, who needs a hand? It would be better if it would wither away.

This was the hand of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, with which he laid tefillin, and did many acts of kedusha. Nevertheless, he said that since a few days had gone by without writing to another Yid, it would be better for it to wither! The lesson to each of us is obvious...¹⁰

However, salvation was soon at hand:

The Geulah

On Yud-Beis Tammuz, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was supposed to register [at the police station]. He went there with Reb Elya Chaim Althaus. It turned out that it was a holiday of some sort, and the office was closed; there was only a person responsible for the most important matters. The [Frierdiker]



Not Just My Liberation

The Rebbe's account of Yud-Beis Tammuz

Rebbe was informed that a message had arrived from Moscow stating he was free to return home, but since the office was closed, he would need to come the next day to collect his official papers.

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe noticed that Elya Chaim was too overwhelmed, and he needed to calm him down.

By the time they returned, the news had already reached the home they were staying at—the shochet of Kostroma. Reb Michael Dvorkin, hearing the news—in general, he wasn't always *b'medida v'hagbala* (calculated and measured), and in his great excitement, he took a large bottle of mashke—he didn't *chas v'shalom* drink it—but he danced around the house where the [Frierdiker] Rebbe stayed, singing a song in Russian, a Chassidishe song about *ein old milvado*—Nyet Nyet Nikavo... He continued dancing like that for quite a while.¹¹

On several occasions, the Rebbe reflected on the miracles that occurred throughout the story.

Dozens of people were involved in the release efforts. There is no question that their movements were carefully monitored, especially the movements of those who openly entered the most dangerous locations to demand the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's release. Nonetheless, not a single one of them was affected, neither during the imprisonment nor later...

Thinking back, a question arises: What is the greater miracle? The miracle of the *baal hageulah*, which came about through activism through natural means (*derech hateva*), or the fact that all those who openly advocated for his release in the most dangerous places weren't touched, not even in their livelihood. It is totally unexplainable, even from a spiritual point of view...¹²

The miracle was evident even in the way the release

was handled:

When he came to sign the papers for his release, they asked him to sign in a manner that indicated they weren't at fault for the matter being delayed by one day. Imagine the change—from capital punishment to the point that the officials were afraid of being punished for delaying the Rebbe's freedom for a single day...¹³

Arriving Back Home

The Rebbe once related the following amusing story about the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrival back home:

When the [Frierdiker] Rebbe arrived in Leningrad, he needed to recite *Hagomel*. In general, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe would receive *Maftir*. Now, the *brachos* of *Maftir* and *Haftorah* are connected to each other, and are in a specific order and number. Usually, *Hagomel* is recited after receiving an *aliya*, but since he would receive *Maftir*, which must immediately be followed by *Haftorah*, there was a dilemma about the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *Hagomel*.

The *rabbanim* sat down to decide when the [Frierdiker] Rebbe should recite *Hagomel*. There were a number of suggestions: One suggestion was that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe should receive a different *aliya*, such as *Shlishi*, thereby avoiding the scenario in which the *rabbanim* would be 'forced' to engage in the 'immense task' of opening a Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim and possibly also some *Acharonim*...

That option was quickly rejected; the [Frierdiker] Rebbe always receives *Maftir*, and that couldn't change. Some suggested that he recite *Hagomel* before the *aliya*; others suggested to do so after the *Haftorah*, and the main suggestion was to recite the *bracha* between *Maftir* and *Haftorah*. I don't remember what actually happened...¹⁴

Established the Following Year

News quickly spread about the Frierdiker Rebbe's release, and Chassidim throughout Russia began to celebrate. However, the celebrations were muted.

When the news of the release arrived, the instructions were that it should be celebrated *bli pirsum* (without publicity), because the future was still uncertain. Therefore, it wasn't celebrated properly.

The following year, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was already over the border, outside of their dominion, and it was clear that the victory was complete; not only in a personal way, but in the words of the Rebbe Rashab, "not



REB ELYA CHAIM ALTHAUS.



REB MICHOEL DVORKIN.

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, SUMMER, 5687, IN MALAKHOVKA, NOT LONG AFTER HIS RETURN FROM EXILE.

REPRINTS OF THIS PHOTO—TAKEN SHORTLY BEFORE HE PERMANENTLY DEPARTED THE SOVIET UNION—WERE DISSEMINATED AMONG CHASSIDIM AND WERE A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND CONNECTION FOR DECADES TO COME. IT IS THE ONLY KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE DURING THE YEARS OF HIS NESIUS IN RUSSIA.



only with our *atzmi*, but also with our *hisphashtus*.” This atmosphere was felt throughout the home and beyond. It was celebrated on a much greater scale, and will indeed be celebrated in this manner until the coming of Moshiaich...¹⁵

That year, the Frierdiker Rebbe penned a public letter—a letter cited by the Rebbe countless times, in which the Frierdiker Rebbe clarifies:

It was not I alone that Hashem redeemed on

Yud-Beis Tammuz, but also those who cherish Torah, those who observe mitzvos, and so too all those who merely bear the name “Jew”... Today, 12 Tammuz, is the Chag Hageulah of *all* Jews who are involved in the dissemination of Torah.¹⁶

It was not a personal liberation; it was a celebration for the entire Jewish people, until the end of time. ①

1. Purim 5733, Toras Menachem vol. 71, p. 256.
2. 12 Tammuz 5727, Toras Menachem vol. 50, p. 93.
3. 12 Tammuz 5718, Toras Menachem vol. 23, p. 160.
4. 13 Tammuz 5722, Toras Menachem vol. 34, p. 140.
5. 12 Tammuz 5725, Toras Menachem vol. 44, p. 83.
6. 12 Tammuz 5724, Toras Menachem vol. 40, p. 197.
7. 12 Tammuz 5711, Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 194.
8. Chukas 5743, Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 3, p. 1693.
9. Sefer Hasichos 5680–87 p. 169. Translation from “A

Day to Recall, A Day to Remember,” by Rabbi Sholom Ber Avtzon.

10. 28 Sivan 5712, Toras Menachem vol. 6, p. 12.
11. 12 Tammuz 5725, Toras Menachem vol. 44, p. 70.
12. 12 Tammuz 5726 Sichas 1, from the audio recording. See also Likkutei Sichos vol. 28, p. 150.
13. 12 Tammuz 5711, Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 186.
14. 10 Shevat 5723, Toras Menachem vol. 36, p. 134.
15. 12 Tammuz 5716, Toras Menachem vol. 17, p. 51.
16. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 2, p. 80.



Not Just My Liberation

The Rebbe's account of Yud-Beis Tammuz

נשי
ובנות
חב"ד

TAMMUZ

N'SHEI
U'BNOS
CHABAD

COMPILED BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (OH)

WRITTEN BY:
MOTTI WILHELM

Thank you Rebbe that I and all
my family merited to each be
your personal Shliach/Shlucha!

We are unbelievably grateful and
humbled and empowered.

אשרינו מה טוב חלקנו!

ע"י הרוצה בעילום שמו
אחד מהשלוחים במרחבי תבל

SENSING THE TRUTH

Exploring the connection between the month of Tammuz and women, a relevant *possuk* is found in Yechezkel¹: “והנה שם הנשים ישובות מבכות את התמוז”—“And behold, there sat women making the Tammuz weep.”

This *possuk* does not refer to the month itself, but rather to its namesake: a Babylonian idol. Rashi explains that they would heat the image until its eyes, made of lead, melted, creating the illusion that it was weeping.

Though this episode is clearly negative, the fact that it is recorded in the Torah suggests that it contains a lesson. At the very least, it presents an opportunity for *tikun* (rectification). And since the *possuk* specifically describes women involved in this event, the path of correction is particularly relevant to them.

What was the essence of this *avoda zara*? The worshippers made a grave error: they believed that their physical needs and livelihood were provided by the Tammuz, and therefore, it deserved their devotion. Although we no longer struggle with idol worship in its original form—since the *yetzer hara* for it has been done away with—the underlying distortion still exists. People continue to make the critical mistake of attributing their sustenance to forces other than Hashem.

This challenge is especially pronounced among people who must operate within the framework of the natural world to earn a livelihood. It's easy for them to fall into a logical trap: My work brings my paycheck. The proof? Someone who works less, or isn't as good at what they do, earns less than I do.

But this thinking is deeply flawed. In truth, all sustenance comes from Hashem. Yes, we are required to create a *keili*, a vessel, for Hashem's *bracha*. As the Torah says, “*Uveirach'cha Hashem Elokecha b'chol asher ta'aseh*”²—Hashem blesses *what you do*. But the blessing itself, the actual success and livelihood, is entirely in Hashem's hands. At the end of the day, it is Hashem alone who determines how much each person will earn.

WOMEN AND THE CELEBRATION OF GEULAH

Another significant aspect of the month of Tammuz is the *Chag HaGeulah*, Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz—when the Frierdiker Rebbe was released from Soviet exile. This was not merely a personal redemption, but a victory for all of *Klal Yisroel*. As the Frierdiker Rebbe himself explained, the struggle was not about one individual—it was a battle of ideologies: Yiddishkeit versus an antireligious superpower. His *geulah* marked a triumph for Torah, and a victory for every Yid.

Alongside its general significance, the *geulah* of Yud-Beis Tammuz holds a special connection to Jewish women.

Firstly, one of the main reasons the Frierdiker Rebbe was arrested and sentenced to death was his unwavering dedication to authentic *Yiddishe chinuch*—a mission deeply tied to women. He stood firm against one of the most powerful regimes in the world to ensure that Jewish children would

learn Torah and receive a proper, holy education. From this, today's Jewish woman can draw immense strength and inspiration: to stand strong for the *chinuch* of her children, no matter the challenges or societal pressures.

In addition, even while in Soviet Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe invested enormous effort to have Torah teachings, particularly Chassidus, translated into other languages, making them accessible to those who were not fluent in *Lashon HaKodesh*, especially women. This was based on his deep belief that women should not only study Torah and Chassidus, but actively participate in *hafatzas haTorah v'hamaayanos*—spreading these teachings and bringing themselves and others closer to Hashem.

Yud-Beis Tammuz should serve as a call to action, encouraging women to continue growing in these areas, lighting up their homes, communities, and the entire world in preparation for the coming of Moshiach, may it be speedily in our days.

Adapted from Likkutei Sichos vol. 8, pp. 320–1.

This is no simple task—to internalize that Hashem alone controls every detail of the world, precisely because one is immersed in the natural order. Engaging daily with cause and effect, profit and loss, can easily blur the deeper truth: Hashem is the one orchestrating it all.

The same challenge exists for women. Women are more involved in managing the physical needs of the household, ensuring that their families are cared for and provided for. This, in fact, is one of the reasons they are exempt from many mitzvos, including Talmud Torah. Their role places them in constant interaction with the material world, and the natural order can sometimes occupy an outsized space in their minds and hearts.

What is the antidote to this mindset?

A woman must recognize that what truly matters is Hashem's *bracha*. It's not the amount of money that determines peace and satisfaction in the home—it's the presence of divine blessing. There are times when a woman may receive only a small amount for household needs, yet she's able to stretch it in a way that every family member has what they need—and

more importantly, they're content and happy. And then there are times when there's more money, but instead of bringing more joy, it gets swallowed up by unexpected and unpleasant expenses, like medical bills or repairs.

How does one ensure that this *bracha* rests in their home?

By making sure that the money they receive is earned in a kosher and honest way. This means running a business in full accordance with *halacha*—being scrupulous in keeping Shabbos, avoiding dishonesty, respecting others' business territory, and staying far from even the slightest trace of theft or deception. When the *keili* for livelihood is clean and pure, it becomes a proper vessel for Hashem's *bracha* to flow—and that *bracha* is what brings true *hatzlacha*, peace, and happiness in the home, including that each cent is used for happy and healthy purposes. **1**

Adapted from Toras Menachem vol. 12, pp. 106–9.

1. 8:14.

2. Devarim 15:18.

לע"נ
התינוקות חיילת בצבאות ה'
ברכה ע"ה בת הרה"ת ר' חיים
אפרים שליט"א
לרגל יום הולדתה ט' תמוז

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו
מרת ח' מושקא שיחיו
גאלדשטיין

LEARNING *the*
REBBE'S TORAH:

a TRANSFORM CONNECTION

The
DEEPEST
& TRUEST
HISKASHRUS

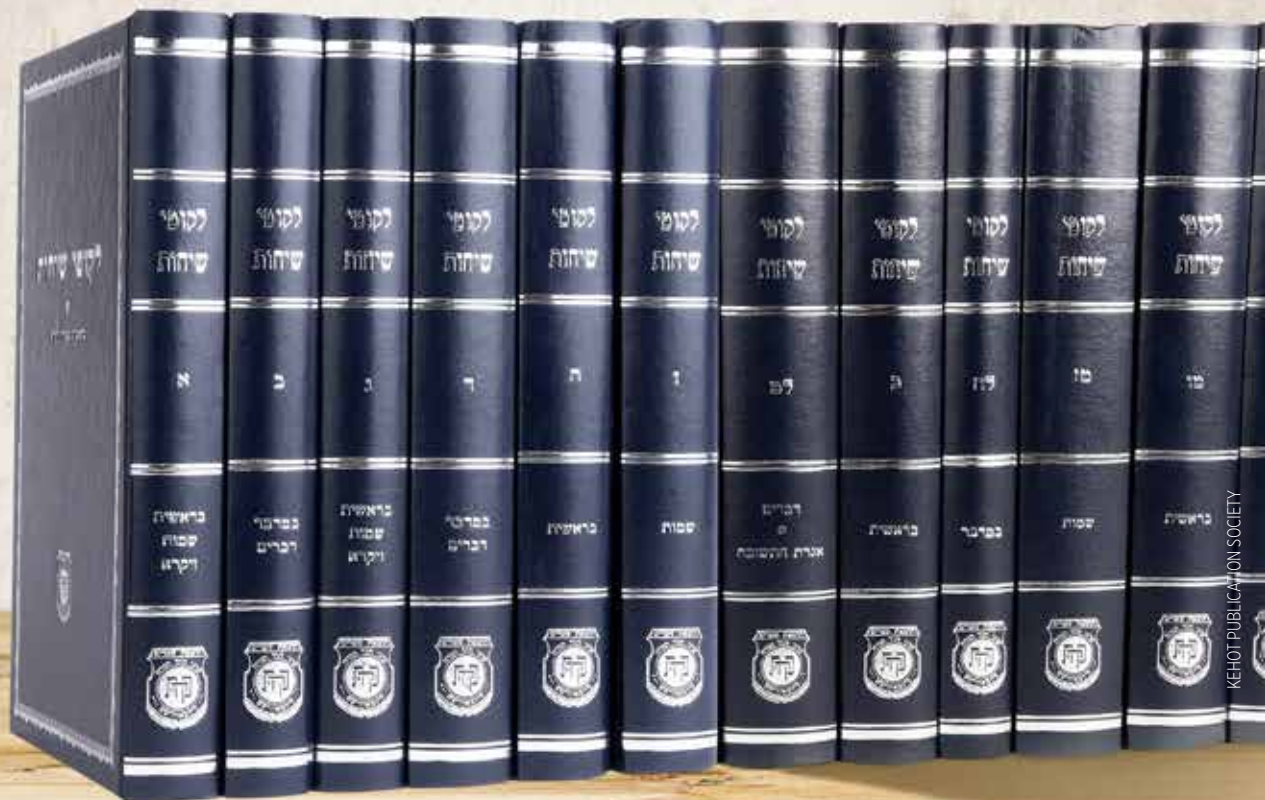
BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS



ATIVE

In honor of Gimmel Tammuz, we present a collection of what the Rebbe says on how to stay focused on our mission as Chassidim in what could sometimes be a confusing world.

We conclude with a special farbrengen with the legendary Shliach, Rabbi Sholom Ber Lipskar of Bal Harbour, Florida, who passed away on 5 Iyar of this year. He shared these words with the Derher in honor of Gimmel Tammuz several years ago, and we felt it appropriate to publish them again this year, along with some other stories and anecdotes that he shared over the years, for the benefit of our readership. Yehei Zichro Baruch.



Seeing It Like the Rebbe

The Rebbe once explained the difference between the connection to a Rebbe based solely on emuna, and a connection based on learning, understanding, and internalizing the Rebbe's teachings:

Chassidus explains the difference between the two levels of submission and negation of the ego before Hashem, *bittul b'metzius* and *bittul hayesh*, as follows:

Bittul b'metzius means that Hashem's infinite light shines so strongly that it leaves no room for the individual. Overwhelmed by its immensity, the person naturally does not feel "self."

Bittul hayesh, on the other hand, is when a person *does* feel themselves as a real entity, but they submit that self to Hashem of their own accord.

Generally speaking, *bittul b'metzius* is considered a more complete level of submission to Hashem, since the individual is non-existent before Hashem. There is, however, a great advantage to *bittul hayesh*:

When it comes to *bittul b'metzius*, the reason the person completely submitted is only due to the great divine energy that *he personally* feels. On the other hand, *bittul hayesh* means that the person is actively working to *negate* the self, to subdue their own existence before Hashem. With this route, it may take longer to reach total *bittul*, but as a person works on themselves towards greater *bittul*, their submission before Hashem runs far deeper and truer than it would with *bittul b'metzius*.

The same is true of the relationship between a Chossid and his Rebbe:

In the Polish Chassidus tradition, the Rebbe himself, in his saintliness and holiness, gives life and vitality to his Chassidim. The *possuk* says, "*V'tzaddik be'emunaso yichyeh*," a tzaddik lives with his faith; it is interpreted as "*Yechayeh*"—he enlivens *others* with his faith, with his *avoda*. A Chossid is expected to completely submit himself to his Rebbe, based on intense emotional inspiration.

The Chabad approach is different. "Chabad demands *pnimiyus*," as the Frierdiker Rebbe put it. *Hiskashrus* to a Rebbe must be based on intellectual appreciation, by studying and internalizing the Rebbe's Torah.

For this reason, we find that the Polish Chassidim had the custom to give "Sholom" to their Rebbes, shaking their hand, and so on. The *bittul* to their Rebbe was so overbearing and intense, a "*bittul b'metzius*," that they were not afraid to approach their Rebbe. There was no fear that the closeness might lead to becoming too familiar

or comfortable with the Rebbe.

For Chabad Chassidim, however, there is no practice of giving "Sholom" to a Rebbe. The intellectual appreciation for the Rebbe's Torah could lead a person to come too close, and this practice was therefore discouraged.

But when all is said and done, the *bittul* that emerges with the Chabad approach runs truer and deeper. If a person only relies on emotion to connect with a Rebbe, they never really change who they are inside. Their mind and intellect remain unaffected.

Submitting oneself with an intellectual approach ensures that the person is deeply *permeated* with *bittul*. Ultimately, little by little, the Chossid will become completely *bittul* to the Rebbe, to the point that everything he says is in sync with what the Rebbe would say. The Chossid's mind becomes reconditioned to understand and see things the way the Rebbe does.¹

Staying Current

In the following letter, the Rebbe writes to a mashpia about the importance of learning the maamarim of one's own Rebbe specifically, in addition to learning Chassidus in general:





Regarding what you write about learning the Torah of *nessi doreinu*, my father-in-law, the Rebbe: My intention was obviously not to exclude studying the *maamarim* of the previous Rabbeim. It's only that each student must have *hiskashrus* in a manner that is befitting for the time and generation in which he lives. *Hiskashrus* is [primarily] through studying the Torah of one's Rebbe, as [the Frierdiker Rebbe] explains in many letters, also cited in Hayom Yom. I therefore expressed my opinion that this study is of utmost importance...²

Guidance in the Desert

The Rebbe teaches us how to stay connected in a chaotic world, especially after the histalkus:

When a Yid finds himself in a deep dark *galus*, in a spiritual desert, he may ask: How is it possible for me to serve Hashem in such a state?

In days gone by, he continues, when we had true *Nesi'im*, Rabbeim, who could show us the way and guide us through any difficult circumstance, we relied on them. Even if we ourselves were in the dark, we could connect ourselves with someone who saw Elokus, and we walked the world with stability.

In our time, however, we live in an orphaned generation, right before Moshiach's arrival. We don't see our

Nesi'im with our physical eyes. How can we find the true path, Hashem's path?

The answer to this issue is based on the words of Chazal, "Tzaddikim are likened to their Creator":

Hashem created the world in a manner that His presence is concealed. He sends the *neshama* down to this physical world, clothing it in a physical body, and yet He expects a person to fulfill his mission in this world without being distracted by a raging world outside! How is this possible?

For this reason, Hashem gave us the Torah. As long as we have the Torah with us, we have access to Hashem Himself; no matter where in the world we may be. Hashem put His very essence within the Torah.

The same is true of the tzaddikim, leaders of the Jewish people, whose job is to show them how to serve Hashem. They continue to do so even after their passing, for the shepherds of the Jewish people do not forsake their flock through their Torah. Tzaddikim who toiled to the point of *mesirus nefesh* and taught innovative Torah ideas thereby invested their very being within the Torah they taught. When we, in turn, toil to learn and understand their Torah, we connect with the very essence of the tzaddik, receiving all the necessary energy from and through the tzaddik.³



Making It Yours

A FARBRENGEN WITH RABBI SHOLOM BER LIPSKAR A"H

Someone I am close with once told the Rebbe that he felt his *hiskashrus* was lacking. The Rebbe told him that if he wants to be *mekushar*, he should learn the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*.

This person might have been looking for a more “fan-ciful” proposal; perhaps to say some *l'chaim* and become inspired, or another “instant” formula. That attitude was very distant from reality. Instant inspiration quickly dissipates. To be truly connected to the Rebbe, a much longer process is needed.

Through studying the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*, one's thought patterns one with the Rebbe's. Through imbibing the Rebbe's talks, our brains begin to automatically think in the Rebbe's fashion; that is true *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe.

When I was a young yeshiva *bochur*, we used to learn *maamarim* with our teacher, and when we would reach the last few paragraphs, which discuss *avoda*, we would read through them quickly. This was a terrible mistake; the whole point of the *maamar* was those last paragraphs, where the Rabbeim show us how we must implement the ideas in our behavior. Understanding the schematics and the “map” of the *olamos* is only a precursor to making Chassidus part of our life.

It goes without saying that this *hiskashrus* will not be created by quick study sessions where a *sicha* is looked at once and forgotten within moments. I once decided to do a poll: I walked around 770 asking *bochurim* what was written in that day's Tanya. *Yadah inish b'nafshei*, we all know whether we will have the ability to answer that question without being a tad embarrassed.

To become *mekushar* to the Rebbe, it is imperative that we apply ourselves with true dedication to studying the Rebbe's Torah, and then—trust me—when we do so, new doors of opportunity and *hatzlacha* are opened before a person.

On a Personal Note

Beyond learning the Rebbe's Torah, there is a specific directive from the Rebbe about what to do when dealing

with a personal dilemma. Even if one is knowledgeable in the Rebbe's Torah, he must still appoint a *rav*, a *mashpia*, to assist him with his personal decisions. The Rebbe explained that this person must be someone who is dedicated to Torah and mitzvos and has a comprehension of Chassidus; if we do so, the Rebbe said, the Rebbe will make sure that you receive the correct answer.

In truth, finding the Rebbe's answer is quite simple in our generation. We have merited to receive a veritable ocean of directives from the Rebbe, and with the proper application, with the help of a *mashpia*, one can easily find the Rebbe's instructions for his personal situation.

The Doorknob

There is one more imperative to *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe. To remain connected and to ensure that one does not veer one iota from the Rebbe's path, a Chossid must visit the Ohel.

When we look back at the Rebbe's own conduct, we find something very interesting. The Rebbe spent every day in 770, which the Rebbe described as *Beis Rabbeinu Sheb'bavel*, the *daled amos* of the Friediker Rebbe, and so on.

The Rebbe often cited the letter of the Alter Rebbe, where he explains that *tzaddikim* live on after their passing, and have even more influence in the world than before.

Yet, the Rebbe still chose to spend countless hours at the Ohel.

These were not perfunctory *yahrtzeit* visits; we saw a living, breathing connection. Before the Rebbe announced a new mitzvah campaign, he would visit the Ohel. *Sichos*, dollars after *maariv*, and *kuntreisim* distributions usually took place following a visit to the Ohel. And when hard times came and special *yeshuos* were needed, there was one place—the Ohel. In fact, during the Hei Teves court proceedings, the Rebbe went to the Ohel every single day, for hours on end!

Some maintain that since the Rebbe's presence is felt in other locations, they do not need to visit the Ohel.

The thought is ludicrous. Before we moved on shlichus to Florida, the Rebbe told us, “*Ich for mit eich*, I am going together with you.” And needless to say, we truly see and feel the Rebbe’s presence here in our work constantly and consistently. However, we never imagined this to mean that we no longer need to go to the Rebbe, to be at farbrengens, *yechidus*, and dollars... And with a mere glance at the Rebbe’s own conduct, we can understand that the same attitude applies to us today as well.

I can only point to my own experiences; coming to the Rebbe’s Ohel for me is always a source of inspiration, guidance, and open miracles.

“*Taamu ure’u ki tov*”—try it and you’ll see!

Wake Up!

I’d like to conclude with the following personal story that has a deep and profound lesson for all of us:

In the early 5730s, the esteemed academic and famous refusenik, Professor Yirmiya Branover, was able to leave the Soviet Union. The Rebbe showed him incredible *kiruvim*, as we will see.

At the time, I was experiencing a serious medical issue, and I went to the hospital, where I underwent a very difficult test. This test was still undeveloped, and the risks were high. As it turned out, the morning after the test, my wife called the hospital to talk to me, and I didn’t answer the phone. There was another man in the room with me, and finally, after many rings, he answered the phone and told her: “He’s sleeping, and I can’t wake him up.”

To make a long story short, I was in a coma. They couldn’t wake me up and they didn’t know why. Maybe the anesthesia was too strong, or maybe the test didn’t work. Whatever the case, I could not be revived.

My wife rushed to the hospital, and by the time she got there, she saw a whole team of doctors in my room. They had sealed it and wouldn’t let her in. They called it a “code blue,” a serious emergency. Of course, the first thing she did was run to the nurses’ station and call 770. Rabbi Binyomin Klein answered the phone, and my wife explained the situation. He asked her to leave a callback number and to wait for his call. A few minutes later, Rabbi Hodakov called the hospital, telling my wife that he wanted to speak to me.

My wife said, “He’s in a coma.” But Rabbi Hodakov didn’t pay attention. “I have a message for him,” he said. “I need to speak with him.”

My wife came to my room and forced herself in. She knew there was a message for me from the Rebbe, and

nothing would stop her. She came into my room and handed me the phone (they had connected it from the nurse’s station to my room), telling me it was an emergency; Rabbi Hodakov was on the line!

She put the phone next to my ear, and the next thing I remember is hearing the Rebbe’s voice in the background. Rabbi Hodakov then told me that Professor Branover was scheduled to come to Miami, and the Rebbe wanted me to introduce him to the other professors at the University here.

The doctors were stunned. “He’s talking! He’s awake!” But that’s not what I want to bring out from this story.

What’s the real point here?

Think about it: when Rabbi Hodakov called me, he knew my situation. He didn’t ask “How are you feeling?” “What do the doctors say?” or anything like that.

He called to say what I needed to do.

Get out of your stupor! Get out of your coma! Get out of your *narishkeit*!

You have a job to do!

That’s what the Rebbe wants from each and every one of us. We are living today in a time that can sometimes feel very difficult.

We want to see the Rebbe physically. We want to be at a farbrengen or get a dollar. We miss the Rebbe, and it’s painful that we have to suffice with the spiritual side.

But the truth is that we really do have the Rebbe, even on a very practical level. Practically speaking, the Rebbe is here with each and every one of us. And I can tell you for a fact that it’s so. I know it in my own life. And I’m sure that half or three-quarters of anyone reading this can tell you the same thing. The Rebbe is with each and every one of us.

More importantly, the Rebbe expects us to fulfill the vital mission that he gave us. There’s nothing that the Rebbe said that didn’t come to pass. And he said that this is the generation of Moshiach, that we’re in the *dor hashvi’i* and will see the coming of Moshiach. It means it’s happening.

It’s up to us to do what we have to do to make it happen sooner. We all have our work cut out for us.

Ask yourself: What does the Rebbe want from me right now?

If we all do our part, we will be *zoche*, and the Rebbe will lead us out of *galus*, *teikef umiyad mamash!* **T**

1. Shabbos Parshas Re’eh 5713; Toras Menachem vol. 9, p. 146.
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 153.
3. Acharon Shel Pesach 5717; Toras Menachem vol. 19, p. 303.



AN
EXCEPTIONAL
SHLIACH

REB ZUSHE POSNER



BY: RABBI SHOLOM POSNER

It was an ordinary night at 770. A few bochurim had gathered together for an informal farbrengen, seeing off their peer as he embarked on a shlichus to Eretz Yisroel. What happened next defied anyone's wildest imagination: The Rebbe notified through his *mazkir* that everyone should remain seated, and that he would join the gathering in another five minutes!

When the Rebbe arrived, he spoke about the importance of shlichus, and the great *zechus* of the shliach who is traveling—one that should be envied and emulated by others.

The shliach we speak of was Reb Zushe Posner. A Tomim from the yeshiva at 770 whom the Rebbe held on a pedestal as an example for his friends and other Chassidim to emulate.

Below is the story of Reb Zushe, collected from various sources.

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source of the information below.*

לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
ולזכות הילדה שייגדל תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ג תמוז

נתרם ע"י ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא
שיחיו
שוחאט

Childhood

Zushe was born on 5 Adar 5696, in the city of Elizabeth, NJ. His father, Rabbi Sholom Posner, had learned in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in the town of Lubavitch. He was one of the first Chassidim to have moved to America at the behest of the Frierdiker Rebbe. He and his wife Chaya, were entirely devoted to the Rebbe, a passion they instilled in their children from an early age.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in New York in 5700, the Posners were living in Chicago and were therefore not present. (The family had greeted the Frierdiker Rebbe upon his visit to America in 5689, but Zushe had not yet been born).

As soon as they could barter some of their meager possessions for a train ticket, Reb Sholom traveled to the Frierdiker Rebbe. During that visit, he told the Rebbe that he was entrusting his children to the Rebbe, along with the responsibility that they belong to Yiddishkeit and Lubavitch.

Soon thereafter, the Rebbe established Tomchei Temimim in New York, followed shortly by a Yeshiva Ketana. Reb Sholom immediately transferred his two older sons, Zalman and Laibel, from Yeshiva Torah Vodaas to 770.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe visited Chicago in Shevat 5702, the Posners were entrusted with preparing the Frierdiker Rebbe's meals throughout his stay. Zushe, together with his older sister Kenny, merited to deliver these meals to the Frierdiker Rebbe's hotel room every day.

In the Rebbe's Holy Presence

At the age of ten, Zushe was also sent to study in Tomchei Tmimim. By then, the Yeshiva and dormitory were housed at the corner of Bedford Ave. and Dean St., a 25-minute walk from 770. It was rare for a *bochur* to make the trek to 770 in those days. The Frierdiker Rebbe's *minyan* and *farbrengens* were not open to the public, and it was difficult for a *bochur* to gain entry. The "main shul" primarily served the *bale-batim* of Crown Heights—a community of nice, frum, upper-class, beardless American Jews. The Chassidim that did live in New



REB ZUSHE AS A YOUNG BOY WITH HIS PARENTS AND SIBLINGS IN PITTSBURGH IN THE LATE 5700'S.
LEFT TO RIGHT: ZUSHE POSNER, ZALMAN POSNER, CHAYA POSNER, BASSIE GARELIK, SARA RIVKA SASONKIN, LAIBEL POSNER, SHOLOM POSNER, AND KENNY DEREN.

York were mostly in Brownsville (about a half hour's walk from 770) and davened in the various *shtiblach* of their neighborhood.

The *bochurim* drew their *chayus* from the fortunate times they could successfully squeeze their way into the Frierdiker Rebbe's presence.

Another highlight of his Yeshiva years was spending time around the older *bochurim*. At that time, refugee *bochurim* from Tomchei Tmimim in Poland began arriving in America via China.

These *bochurim* who had lost their entire families "adopted" the few younger *bochurim* who would hang around 770. Zushe related, "I became their younger brother, replacing one who was killed by the Germans. *Der Aibershter hot mir geholfen* (with Hashem's help) people liked me, and so they adopted me."

These *bochurim* taught Zushe how to speak Yiddish and showered him with stories of Lubavitch from bygone times. They recounted how unique individuals came to Lubavitch, how Reb Yehuda Eber started the "Seder Niggunim" in Otwock, how the *bochurim* escaped the Nazi advance with Hashem's mercy, and also stories from

Chassidim of previous generations.

Stories would always hold a special place in Zushe's heart; he saw it as a personal responsibility to transmit the history of Lubavitch.

A New Era

One Shabbos—Yud Shevat 5710, Zushe's life, along with the lives of all Chabad Chassidim, changed dramatically. Zushe recounted those events from his unique experience.

There were Shabbosim that I did come to 770, Shabbosim that I didn't come. This Shabbos I came. I come into the Shul, and the Shul is empty, empty. I take a look at the clock, I remember it was 8:17 when I came into 770.

I came with my brother Leibel and he went into the small classroom² and did whatever he did and I'm walking around, a fourteen year old kid walking around to see what's happening. Somebody told me to go upstairs. In those days, you don't go upstairs just like that, the door is locked! But I went up and the door was open.

A guy was standing near the door on the left side (then I found out that it's a bedroom) and I saw the [Friediker] Rebbe laying on the floor, his body covered. Rebbetzin Nechama Dina was sitting by the window with her arm on the windowsill holding her forehead. No one else was there.

I didn't really grasp what was happening. I said some Tehillim for 10–15 minutes, but for how long can a kid say Tehillim? So I started wandering around the apartment.

Sholom Ber Eichorn (a helper in the Friediker Rebbe's house) saw me and said "Zushe, do me a favor, go to Brownsville and tell everyone to come."

I went downstairs to get my winter jacket and was ready

YECHIDUS WITH THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

Zushe merited to be in *yechidus* with the Friediker Rebbe several times, where he witnessed and experienced the Friediker Rebbe's holiness firsthand.

As a young child, while in *yechidus* with his family, Zushe accidentally knocked over the inkwell on the table. His mortified mother was furious with him, but the Friediker Rebbe calmed her down.

Normally, it was difficult to understand the Friediker Rebbe's speech. Reb Sholom would have to repeat the Friediker Rebbe's words to the rest of the family, and when he wasn't present, one of the *mazkirim* would "translate." Nonetheless, Zushe remembered two occasions where the Friediker Rebbe spoke with such force that every word was heard clearly.

The first: Zushe was born with a defect in his arm. The Friediker Rebbe once called him over to place his hand on the desk. Putting his own arm on Zushe's, the Friediker Rebbe said, "*du zulst hobben, un du vest hubben, a gezunten hartz*" (you should have, and you will have, a healthy heart).

The second: Zushe's oldest brother, Zalman, had just returned from a long *shlichus* in Europe. His mother hoped he could return to his studies, despite the financial burden they would endure, but the Friediker Rebbe planned for him to open a branch of Achei Temimim in Springfield, Mass. The Friediker Rebbe replied, "*Di velt zugt, frier lernt men, nach dem geit men arois in velt. Un ich zug, men geit arois in velt, un men lernt!*" (The world says that one first learns and then goes out into the world. I say that one should go out into the world and learn there!)

The Posners last *yechidus* with the Friediker Rebbe took place on 6 Kislev 5710, in honor of two weddings they were making back-to-back.



THE REBBE SEATED WITH THE FRIEDIKER REBBE AT THE DINNER FOR YESHIVAS TOMCHEI TEMIMIM, 7 ADAR II 5703.

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to leave, but my brother Leibel stopped me and asked, “Where are you going?” We had already been in 770 for a half hour and he still didn’t find out what had happened!

I told him Eichorn asked me to go to Brownsville to tell the guys to come. He told me not to go. “Ay, the Rebbe has to say Maftir today (the Rebbe was going to get maftir in honor of the Yahrzeit of his mother and grandmother). Sholom Ber’s too lazy to go to Brownsville, so he’s sending you instead.”

I don’t remember exactly what I said, but he was very distraught by what I said and he finally understood what had happened. He sat down and began crying.

I walked the half hour to Brownsville, going from shul to shul, calling all the Chassidim to 770. In one of the shuls that I went into, Rabbi Mentlick had just been given an

aliya, but he didn’t go up to the Torah. He took his coat, walked out, and went to 770.

We came back to 770. It was about ten-thirty, eleven o’clock. It’s Yud Shevat, but you still have to daven. I remember Kriyas HaTorah. Both the Rebbe and Rashag were given aliya.

I remember the contrast: when Rashag got an aliya, his eyes were red and bulgy from crying. On the Rebbe we didn’t see anything externally. You’re not allowed to cry on Shabbos, and the Rebbe is a Shulchan Aruch Yid.

Motzei Shabbos people began coming in; there was much chaos and confusion. I went to my apartment to sleep. In the morning I came back to 770. The building itself was locked, but outside, thousands of people were waiting for the levaya to begin—Eastern Parkway was packed.

On both sides of the walkway from 770 to the sidewalk, there were police standing, telling everyone to stand back and give proper honor for the funeral... As soon as the door opened, it was a rachmanus on the police. The people just jumped over, and that was that.

They got the aron down to the sidewalk and then they were supposed to turn left to Brooklyn Avenue. Two motorcycle policemen were starting the exhaust so that people would move back. There were hundreds of people standing there, so both motorcycles gave up and the people remained there and kept on going.

They brought the aron into a car that would take it to the cemetery, and everyone else got onto buses. As far as I remember, the Rebbe was on the same bus that I was on. He was on the right side, I was on the left side. We stopped by the Yeshiva at Bedford and Dean, and he didn’t get off the bus. I seem to recall that everyone else got off the bus, but the Rebbe did not. We then continued to the cemetery. By a levaya you’re supposed to say Yoshev B’Seser but I didn’t know it by heart, since the Rebbe says everything from a Siddur, I said it together with the Rebbe.

Once we got to the entrance of the cemetery, people began pushing fiercely, so I stayed behind and didn’t see anything. All of a sudden I heard a wild scream. It seems Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, overwhelmed by the burial, gave a heart-wrenching yell. It was terrible to hear that yell.

After sitting shiva at 770, my father and I went to the house of Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky (they were Mechutanim). I was a kid and didn’t even listen to what these two old guys were talking about. I just heard one sentence, “S’iz do a Rebbe”—there is a Rebbe.

For a long time, Chassidim addressed the Rebbe as Rebbe, but he would not openly acknowledge his position.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITY

The privilege of seeing the Frierdiker Rebbe was worth any effort.

Zushe recounted one instance on Rosh Hashanah 5708¹ when a group of seven *bochurim* congregated outside the Frierdiker Rebbe’s room, seeking entry to watch the *seuda*. The Rebbe, known then as Ramash, answered the door and asked the closest *bochur* how many they were. When the *bochur* answered that they were seven, the Rebbe replied, “Gut, vel ich gayn freggen baym Rebbin” (okay, I’ll ask the [Frierdiker] Rebbe).

By the time the Rebbe returned, the crowd had swelled to twenty *bochurim*. As soon as the door opened, they all began pushing their way in. With remarkable strength, the Rebbe held the door in place with one hand while blocking the open space with his other hand and leg, until he managed to shut it completely and reprimanded the *bochurim* for their behavior.

Another time, on Shavuot 5708, all entries to the upstairs apartments were locked. Noticing that a small window in the back of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s office was ajar, Zushe—the smallest of the group—was hoisted through. Ignoring the papers scattered by his fall, he quickly unlocked the door (which in those days led to an outdoor porch), allowing the group to rush upstairs and triumphantly enter the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *seuda*.



THE REBBE IN CONVERSATION AT THE KABBALAS PONIM OF REB LEIBEL POSNER, 30 SHEVAT 5711, SHORTLY AFTER ASSUMING THE NESIUS ON YUD SHEVAT. REB ZUSHE IS THE YOUNG BOCHUR WITH THE GRAY HAT STANDING ON THE RIGHT.

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He continued to sit in his regular place in shul for davening and farbrengens—at the wall directly opposite the *aron kodesh*. For the Yud Shevat farbrengen, everyone assumed that’s where the Rebbe would sit and set up his chair accordingly.

That night, Jews from all communities packed into 770, expecting something momentous to occur. Zushe didn’t want to be in the center of the room with all the pushing, so he positioned himself by the door between the shul and the *ezras nashim*.³

While waiting for the farbrengen to begin, Zushe felt someone pushing from behind. Zushe returned with a push of his own and turned around to discover it was the Rebbe! Nobody there knew who the Rebbe was, and he needed to push his way through.

Before anybody could react, the Rebbe strode to the end of the table, at the south wall. After a brief commotion, a chair was brought over for the Rebbe, and the historic farbrengen began.

A Friend

In those first years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, the crowd was small, and a very intimate atmosphere presided. Zushe felt that the Rebbe’s own attitude inspired that feeling. In those days you didn’t see “Rebbe,” you saw a friend.

Sometime between 5714 and 5718, something changed—the Rebbe didn’t stop being a friend—but it wasn’t as personal. There was a sense of “*hisromemus*,” “*hisnasus*,” and “*malchus*” (elevation and royalty).

Over the course of the first Tishrei—5712, Zushe experienced this relationship in a very personal way:

Throughout Erev Yom Kippur, several groups of *anash* and *bochurim* entered the Rebbe’s room to receive a *bracha* for a *Gmar Chasima Tova*. The Rebbe relayed a message through Reb Yoel Kahn, that the *bochurim* should come to receive a *bracha* before Kol Nidrei (even those who had already received one earlier in the day).

When they arrived, the Rebbe was dressed in his tallis and Kittel. A yungerman attempted to come in as well, but the Rebbe turned to him and said “*Du bist a yungerman, gei arois*” (you’re a married man, go out).

After gazing intently at each *bochur*, the Rebbe spoke in a trembling voice, “*Ir lernt duch in Rebbin’s yeshiva, zayt ir duch dem Rebbin’s kinder. Erev yom kippur iz duch birchas habanim...*” (since you all learn in the Rebbe’s yeshiva, you are the Rebbe’s children, and on Erev Yom Kippur, fathers bless their children).

Throwing his tallis over his face and the table before him, the Rebbe gave the traditional *brachos* followed by *brachos* for success in learning, *yiras shamayim*, and fulfilling the Rebbe’s *kavana*.⁴

AT THE
KABBALAS PONIM
OF REB ZALMAN
POSNER, 6 KISLEV
5710. REB ZUSHE
IS THE YOUNG
BOY STANDING
NEAR THE REBBE.



One Simchas Torah,⁵ Zushe suddenly broke down crying in the middle of *Hakafos*. The Rebbe noticed and advised him to step outside for some fresh air.

A few days later, when his mother, Mrs. Chaya Posner, was in *yechidus*, the Rebbe inquired, “*Vos macht zushe? Er hut eppes gefilt nisht gut Simchas Torah*” (How is Zushe? It seemed like he wasn’t feeling well on Simchas Torah).

Such was the feeling of connection in those years.

The Prank

Zushe was not always the most studious boy, and at times could even be mischievous. One day in Adar 5714, he and a few friends were in a hyper mood. Together, they decided to play a practical joke in the Yeshiva’s English library. The next person to enter the library was

WITH REBBETZIN CHANA

When Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe’s mother, came to America, she became a familiar face at 770. *Bochurim* would often wait at the door of the shul following Davening on Shabbos or Yom Tov, where she would greet each one with a “Gut Shabbos” or “Gut Yom Tov.” Her smile and greeting were worth everything in the world.

Every Friday night, the Rebbe would walk with his mother, back and forth along Eastern Parkway. Zushe and his friends would often hide behind cars to watch, and saw that they wished a Gut Shabbos to everyone

sitting on the benches.

One Purim, while delivering *Mishloach Manos* for Reb Sholom Ber Goldschmidt, Zushe went to Rebbetzin Chana’s apartment. Accepting the gift with a warm smile, she told him good-naturedly, “*Du vest sei vee gornit nemmen fun mir, vell ich dir gornisht gebben*” (you won’t take anything from me anyway, so I won’t give you anything). “In fact,” Zushe later remarked, “she did give me something—that precious smile!”



THE YESHIVA BUILDING ON THE CORNER OF BEDFORD AND DEAN.

greeted by a chaotic scene. A pile of tables and chairs was set up to block the door, and all of the books were in complete disarray.

The *Hanhala* was furious and linked the incident with recent locker thefts. Looking to clear things up, Zushe confessed to Rabbi Mentlick that they were guilty of the prank, but had nothing to do with theft. Trusting their close relationship, Zushe expected him to keep the matter a secret.

Later that month at the Purim farbrengen, Zushe stood behind the Rebbe and asked for a *bracha* for his mother, who was not well. The Rebbe responded that he should not do “such things” again.

Zushe assumed the Rebbe was referring to his general laxity in keeping *sedarim*. Only when the Rebbe instructed him to tell his friends to say *l’chaim*, did he realize what the Rebbe really meant.

One of the *bochurim* involved was Immanuel Schochet, who was a talented writer. He penned a passionate defense, filled with complaints about the *Hanhala* in general and how they had handled this situation in particular. In response, the Rebbe instructed the boys to do *teshuva*, giving them a detailed regimen.⁶

The Rebbe’s instructions were to fast half a day during the weeks of BeHa”B⁷ after the following Pesach, to memorize the first eleven *Perakim* of *Derech Chaim* (a *sefer* of the Mittlerer Rebbe dealing with *teshuva*), and to learn *Maseches Taanis*—and if possible, all the boys should

study together.

That Friday night, as they sat in the *zal* learning Taanis late into the night, the Rebbe walked in close to 3am: “Don’t you have a place to sleep? Did you get *chapp’t* with *hasmada*? (A sudden urge to study diligently.) *Sheina b’shabbos taanug?!*” (Sleeping is considered a Shabbos pleasure). Obviously, they remained silent, and the Rebbe left.

That year, Zushe spent Pesach with the Rebbe for the first time. After watching the Rebbe conduct his *seder*, the *bochurim* followed the Rebbe downstairs to his room. The Rebbe turned around in the open doorway and began speaking in a very elevated mood.⁸

In the *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about Zushe and his friends, focusing on their responsibility to experience their own *Yetzias Mitzrayim* through their Seder Teshuva. To Zushe, the Rebbe said (in a question and answer tune), “*Ay Zushe hut getun a shtus?! Getun a shtus.*” (Zushe did something silly?! Okay, he did something silly.) As if to dismiss the issue.

The Rebbe concluded by instructing Rabbi Mentlick to lead all of the *bochurim* in a joyous dance. The Rebbe himself pulled Immanuel Schochet into the circle, dancing like it was Simchas Torah.

Throughout the entire story, the Rebbe acted with strict attentiveness, yet with such sensitive care.

Shlichus

In regard to his lack of fulfillment in Yeshiva, Zushe once expressed to the Rebbe his desire to learn in Eretz Yisroel, feeling that he would be better off there. The Rebbe didn’t entirely negate the idea, but advised him, “*Az m’fort ergetz vu, der Yetzer Hara fort mit.*” (Wherever one travels, the Yetzer Hara comes along. In other words, he shouldn’t think that by relocating to another place, all his problems would automatically be solved.)

Nonetheless, towards the end of 5714, Zushe transferred to Tomchei Tmimim in Montreal, where he remained for two years. There he flourished and developed a close relationship with the *mashpia*, Reb Volf Greenglass.

In Tammuz 5716, Zushe wished to travel to the Rebbe for Yud-Beis Tammuz, but Rabbi Greenglass was upset with him at the time and would not give him permission to go. Without a letter of permission from *hanhala*, a *bochur* would not be allowed into the Rebbe’s presence, so going without permission was not an option.



When another *bochur*, who had received permission, could not get a visa and had to cancel his plane ticket, Zushe seized the opportunity to try once more. “Look,” he said, “there’s an empty space on the plane. Either I can go to the Rebbe or a non-Jew will take the spot.” Rabbi Greenglass finally gave his consent on condition that Zushe memorize the *hemshech* “*Zeh Hayom 5695*” from the Frieddiker Rebbe and be back on Sunday.

Zushe already knew seven out of ten *maamarim* of that *hemshech* and had no problem returning to Yeshiva after Shabbos. His only issue was that he had no money for a plane ticket! Rabbi Greenglass paid for the ticket himself and sent Zushe off with a kiss. Zushe never again stepped foot in Montreal.¹⁰

About a month prior, the Rebbe had announced that a special delegation of *bochurim* would be sent on shlichus to Eretz Yisroel. Their purpose was to strengthen the community of Kfar Chabad, left devastated by a brutal terror attack. They were also to visit locations in Europe and the rest of Eretz Yisroel, inspiring *rabbanim*, politicians, children, and farmers with the Rebbe’s Torah and *niggunim*.¹¹

At that point, a group of shluchim had already been chosen, but upon the request of his father, the Rebbe added Zushe to the group (so long as a doctor approved him to be fit for travel). Within two days, Zushe had a passport ready and boarded the first available flight to Europe, meeting the rest of the group in France.

After two weeks in Europe and another three in Eretz Yisroel, the Shluchim were set to return to America.

However, on their last day in Eretz Yisroel, Zushe received an unexpected telegram from the Rebbe instructing him to remain in Yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel.

Zushe became the dorm counselor in the Yeshiva in Lod, thus beginning his life-long career in the field of chinuch. His initial position as a mere dorm counselor was no hindrance to teaching and giving guidance.

Every night after lights out, he would visit another room, sharing *Chassidische maasos* until the boys drifted off to sleep. He also led informal farbrengens where he essentially “introduced” the Israeli *bochurim* to the Rebbe. As Rabbi Leibel Alevsky once related, “We Israeli *bochurim* felt close with Reb Zushe. He played an important role in inspiring us to come learn in 770 near the Rebbe.”¹²

Indeed, throughout his life, Zushe was never particular about his official position. Whether teaching in a classroom or bookkeeping in the offices, he was happy to be doing the Rebbe’s work.

An Honorable Farewell

In honor of his sister Basya’s marriage to Gershon Mendel Garelik, which took place 4 Tammuz 5718, the Rebbe permitted Zushe to come to America as long as he returned to Eretz Yisroel by mid-Elul.

By the end of Av, Zushe was ready to go back to his post. Every day he wrote a *tzetel* to the Rebbe, asking when he should travel, but received no response. On 5 Elul, he

finally received instructions to fly back the following Monday.

On Sunday night, Reb Dovid Raskin, on behalf of Tzach, arranged a farewell farbrengen in honor of the outgoing shliach. A handful of *bochurim* gathered in the *zal* with a humble spread of *farbeisen*, and Rabbi Mentlick spoke.

About a half hour into the farbrengen, Rabbi Hodakov began poking his head into *zal* every few minutes. At 10:55, he announced that if everyone stays in their seats, the Rebbe would come join them for five minutes.

Whoever could be reached in the interim was hastily phoned and everyone took up their “positions.” The *bochurim* standing against the eastern wall, and Zushe standing by the opposite wall—no *bochur* would dream of **sitting** in the Rebbe’s presence.

The Rebbe entered and sat down at his farbrengen spot, remarking to Zushe, “*Zetz zich avek, nita kein bank?*” (Sit down, is there no bench?) Only after Zushe leaned his foot on the bench did the Rebbe begin.

The Rebbe began by explaining that the leading cause for this farbrengen is in honor of a shliach who is traveling to Eretz Yisroel to work in *Chinuch Al Taharas Hakodesh*—particularly in institutions which bear the name of the Frierdiker Rebbe (Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchak).

The *sicha* took a sharp turn. People should be volunteering for such a merit, the Rebbe said, yet there was a lack of interest in shlichus. “People are sending their parents and in-laws (to the Rebbe on their behalf) to be excused from going on shlichus.”

Zushe was petrified that his parents had asked the Rebbe for their “baby” to remain in America, but his fears were quickly allayed, “*Nit veggen di haintiger shliach redt men*” (we’re not speaking about the current shliach), the Rebbe clarified.

The Rebbe went on to elaborate on the greatness of the mission being undertaken. The *sicha* was later edited by the Rebbe and released by *Mazkirus* in a special *kuntres*.¹³

Zushe later reflected, “Many of my peers were extremely jealous. There were some other very good *bochurim*, and I wasn’t the most..., but the Rebbe sent me!”

ZICHRONOS

Reb Zushe was witness to some extraordinary moments with the Rebbe. Here are some of the unique recollections he shared:

- After Maariv on Yom Kippur, the custom is to recite the entire Tehillim as a *minyan*. In 5712, it seemed to the Chassidim that the Rebbe wasn’t feeling well, and nobody wanted to go up to the *amud*, as it would prolong the Rebbe’s time in shul. Seeing that nobody was stepping up, the Rebbe himself began leading the Tehillim. The Rebbe completed the entire Tehillim in only 45 minutes—but Reb Zushe, who stood close by, heard every word clearly!
- In those days, few people owned their own Lulav and Esrog. Early Sukkos morning, anyone without one—primarily *bochurim*—had to find someone willing to lend theirs.

Once, (before the Rebbe’s *nesius*), Zushe and some friends asked the Rebbe if they could use his while he was learning in 770’s communal sukka. One *bochur*, apparently wishing to show off, pointed out an alleged *psul* in the Lulav. Unfazed, the Rebbe replied that if there’s a problem, you don’t need to *bentch* on it.

After the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*, no one had the nerve to ask for the Rebbe’s own Lulav and Esrog. Only after one person asked did everyone around line up to use it as well.

The entire process took about half an hour. All the while, the Rebbe looked on from the corner of the sukka, repeating to each person, “*Matana al menas lehachzir*.” This practice of Chassidim making the *bracha* on the Rebbe’s Lulav and Esrog continued throughout the years.

- 5714 was the only year that Reb Zushe remained by the Rebbe for Pesach instead of being with his parents. After completing his *seder* at the home of his hosts, he hurried to 770, arriving just as the soup was being cleared. The waiter offered him “*shirayim*” from the Rebbe’s leftover soup, and without thinking twice, Zushe accepted.

One of the most powerful moments was in the middle of Hallel. The Rebbe had broken out in tears and could not utter a single word. When the *Makri*, Reb Yankel Katz, reached *Nishmas*, he hesitated, unsure if he should continue. The Rebbe instructed him to read on, catching up towards the end of the Haggadah.



REB ZUSHE STANDS BEHIND THE KALLAH, HIS SISTER BASYA, AS THE REBBE WARMLY WISHES THE FAMILY MAZAL TOV.



FIRST PAGE OF THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE SICHA DELIVERED AT THE FAREWELL FARBRENGEN FOR REB ZUSHE, 9 ELUL 5718.

Marriage

Shortly after his return, Zushe received a letter from the Rebbe with instructions to actively pursue *shidduchim*, noting that many have made *shidduchim* with *acheinu Bnei Yisroel hasefardim*, and were very successful.

Not long thereafter, a *shidduch* was suggested for him with Yehudis Kibudi, an immigrant from Turkey then living in Kfar Chabad. After meeting a few times, they wrote the Rebbe, asking for his *haskama* and *bracha* for their marriage. Ten days later, they each received a letter with the Rebbe's *bracha*.

Although she had studied in Lubavitch schools in Eretz Yisroel, Mrs. Posner was not yet ready for everything that comes with marrying a *Tomim*. In matters deemed more trivial, Zushe acquiesced and therefore came to their *chasuna* sporting a short jacket.

For her part, she unwaveringly supported his dedication to the Rebbe's *shlichus*, joining his educational efforts in even the most remote and challenging cities. Within a year, he was wearing a *kapote* as well. It is therefore not surprising that the Rebbe praised her, saying, "*Du host doch an isha keshayra, zee iz osah retzon baalah*" (you have a good wife, who follows the will of her husband).

Unconventional Education

Throughout his six decades of *Shlichus*, Reb Zushe was primarily involved in *chinuch*, and truly connected to his



mission. By no means was he conventional. However, the Rebbe himself initiated Reb Zushe's *chinuch* career and encouraged him to continue in light of his past success.

In fact, Reb Zushe's unconventional methods often had a deep and lasting impact in ways that few other educators did. Reb Meir Shlomo Kaplan, today the Rosh Yeshiva of Oholei Torah, recalls his first interaction with Reb Zushe as a young boy in the Mesivta in Lod:

"At that time, Reb Zushe was one of the supervisors, helping *bochurim* learn Gemara and answering their questions during *seder Gemara L'girs'a*. I went over to ask a question, but before I knew it, he went off on a monologue, decrying how everyone thinks only about themselves and not about what the Rebbe wants.

"I didn't understand what he wanted from me; I just wanted him to explain the Gemara! Ultimately, though, his discussion such as these ingrained within me deep, foundational concepts."

Specifically because his speeches were not boxed in by the typical structure, he was able to convey deeper feelings and ideas. The authenticity of his listeners was provoked.

Perhaps referring to his unique approach, the Rebbe gave him a bottle of *mashke* at *kos shel bracha* for "*deine inyonim*" (your matters).

What Reb Zushe sought most to give over to his students was a deep and personal connection with the Rebbe. These formed the fabric of every thought he shared. But, arguably most of all, he transmitted yearning for the Rebbe. "When was the last time you lost sleep because of Gimmel Tammuz?" he cried.

Shortly before Reb Zushe passed away on 12 Shevat

5782, his health was deteriorating as he battled a devastating illness.

Taking a questionnaire with a nurse while undergoing treatment, he was asked how long he had been suffering. His immediate response was "26 years and several months." The nurse may have been confused, but his message rings true in our ears. Let us take his admonishment to heart—we must not be complacent with the status quo, we must be stirred to action and do all that is within our power to bring Moshiach. Then, we will see the Rebbe once more. **❶**

1. In an interview, Reb Zushe was unsure if this story occurred in 5708 or 5709.
2. The room that would later become *Mazkirus* office.
3. Today—the *Cheder Sheini*.
4. For further reading, see *Toras Menachem* vol. 4, pp. 18–19.
5. In an interview, Reb Zushe was unsure if this story occurred in 5712 or 5713.
6. The Rebbe's letters regarding this affair are printed in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 8, letters from 25 Adar, 2 and 4 Nissan.
7. A series of fast-days following *Yomim Tovim*. See *Orach Chaim siman* 492.
8. For further reading, see *Toras Menachem* vol. 11, pp. 184–186.
9. *Sefer Hamaamarim Kuntreisim* vol. 2, pp. 635–696.
10. The full interview can be viewed at: chabad.org/3800716.
11. For more on this Shlichus, see "Transforming Tragedy," *Derher Sivan* 5774.
12. *Derher*, Cheshvan 5784.
13. The *sicha* was later printed in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 632—*Hosafos to Parshas Teitzei*.

Reb Mendel 'der Chossid'

The chossid who crowned
the Frierdiker Rebbe

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg (Twinsburg, OH)

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י' תמוז

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

The Middleman's Son

Reb Menachem Mendel Kaplan was born in the city of Bobruisk in 5629. His father, Reb Yaakov Kaplan, was a devoted Lubavitcher Chossid; he had traveled to the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, and would later be a chossid of the Rebbe Rashab as well.

Living in Bobruisk, he also had a close relationship with the scion of another branch of Chabad Chassidim: Reb Shmarya Noach, the son of the Maharil of Kopust. Reb Shmarya Noach was the *rav* of the Chassidim in Bobruisk, and assumed leadership of the Kopuster Chassidim after the passing of his brother, Reb Shlomo Zalman.

The Bobruisker had a large Yeshiva, and Reb Yaakov served as a *maggid shiur*. Every Tishrei, upon Reb Yaakov's return from his visit to Lubavitch, the Bobruisker would ask him, '*vos hertz zich in Lubavitch?*' (What's doing in Lubavitch?) Reb Yaakov would share the Rebbe Rashab's *maamarim* and also the regards he had sent for the Bobruisker.¹

His son, Reb Mendel, was of a very different character.

Reb Mendel and his wife ran a large store, which occupied most of his day. Nonetheless, he spent hours davening *barichus* and giving *shiurim*—he would teach Ein Yaakov after Mincha and Mishnayos after Maariv. But what exuded most from his personality was "der Chossid."

Reb Mendel was a fiery chossid, ready to go through fire and water for his Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab. He would often speak passionately about the importance of *hiskashrus*, and every Tishrei, as guests would start arriving in Bobruisk for Rosh Hashanah with Reb Shmarya Noach, Reb Mendel would take up his tallis and tefillin and announce that he was headed to the real Rebbe, in Lubavitch.

There wasn't, *chas v'shalom*, an element of disrespect towards the Bobruisker. Reb Mendel always maintained a close connection with him; as the local *mara d'asra*, he was even *mesader kiddushin* at his daughter's wedding to Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin (see below). Nonetheless, to Reb Mendel, "*der Rebbe iz in Lubavitch.*"

At one point, after years of davening in the Bobruisker's shul, he decided that he had had enough; he picked up and



REB SHMARYA NOACH SCHNEERSOHN (5602–5683),
REBBE OF THE KOPUSTER CHASSIDIM.

moved to the shul of the Lubavitcher Chassidim—which was named after Reb Hillel Paritcher—and davened there for his remaining years. This was such an intense part of his identity that he became known in the city as “Reb Mendel der Chossid.”

When Zionism first began to spread, Reb Mendel’s interest was piqued. “But then,” his son Eliyahu recalled, “he decided to wait for the Rebbe’s opinion before forming his own opinion. For Rosh Hashanah 5658, he traveled to the Rebbe and returned with a firm anti-Zionist conviction. He fiercely opposed Zionism, going so far as to throw JNF pushkas out of the shul. This often earned him insults from congregants who were Zionist supporters and would put the boxes back. Yet, despite their ideological differences, even his opponents respected him for his integrity and *frumkeit*.”

Reb Mendel and his wife were known for their *hachnasas orchim*. It was said that no meal was ever eaten in their home without guests—be it a visiting *rav*, *meshulach*, or *bochur* traveling to obtain a reprieve from the military. In the Kotel Chabad records from Eretz Yisroel, Reb Mendel is listed as an “individual” donor, which meant that he made his donations directly, without going through *meshulachim*.

One aspect of his home and family that people found very amusing: His wife, Gitel, came from a wonderful



REB YAAKOV KAPLAN, FATHER OF REB MENDEL
KAPLAN. PHOTO FROM THE YEAR 5657.

family in Slutsk—of *misnagdim*! How, people would ask, could Reb Mendel ‘der Chossid,’ the fiery Lubavitcher, have married a daughter of *misnagdim*?

“There is no greater mitzvah,” Reb Mendel would humorously respond, “than to save a *Yiddishe tochter* from the *misnagdim*.”

The Automatic Approval

Most of the stories we know about Reb Mendel come to us through his son-in-law, Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin, a Tomim from Lubavitch who was later one of the elder Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel. In his memoirs, Reb Yaakov Yosef recounts how his *shidduch* came to be—a story that encapsulates the character of Reb Mendel.

“It all unfolded after Rosh Hashanah 5679. As my father [Reb Bentzion Raskin] waited in line for *yechidus*, my *shidduch* was on his mind, and he voiced his concern to the Chassidim around him, asking if anyone had a suggestion.

“Standing nearby was our dear friend, Reb Yankel Maskalik ‘Zhuravitzer’.² He told my father that there was a visiting chossid from Bobruisk named Reb Mendel Kaplan who had a daughter of marriageable age. My father had never met him, although they both traveled to Lubavitch for Rosh Hashanah each year. With so many guests, it was impossible to know everyone.

“Without hesitation, my father jotted down Reb Mendel’s name on the *tzetel* he had prepared for his *yechidus*. When he presented the idea to the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe approved and gave his *bracha*.

“When my father left *yechidus*, he ran into Reb Yankel Zhuravitzer, and shared the Rebbe’s approval and *bracha*. My father asked him, ‘Where is this Reb Mendel Kaplan from Bobruisk? I’d like to meet him.’ Reb Yankel immediately introduced the two *mechutanim*.

“My father told Reb Mendel that the Rebbe had given his agreement for the *shidduch* between their children, and suggested that since Reb Mendel was already there, he should go in for *yechidus* and receive the Rebbe’s approval for his side as well. But my future father-in-law declined. ‘You already received the Rebbe’s approval. That’s enough for me. I don’t want to disturb the Rebbe with unnecessary questions.’

“Then he shook my father’s hand and said, ‘*Mazel tov, mechutan!*’”

Changing Worlds

On Beis Nissan 5680, the Rebbe Rashab was *nistalek*. Russia was in the throes of a bloody civil war, and communication was slow and sparse. The news only reached Bobruisk in the middle of the summer.

When Reb Mendel and the Chassidim in Bobruisk heard the devastating news, everyone sat *shiva* and mourned terribly. But for Reb Mendel, that wasn’t enough. He decided that he needed to travel to Rostov, to the Friediker Rebbe.

It was a perilous decision. Jews were being attacked left and right. The anti-communists of the White Army attacked Jews for supporting communism, Ukrainian nationalists killed Jews for supporting the Soviets, the Red Army was officially against antisemitism but didn’t always manage to control its soldiers, and random criminals enjoyed the lawlessness to give free rein to their antisemitism. There weren’t even normal trains; people traveled on



REB YAAKOV YOSEF RASKIN.

trains made for cargo or animals, on irregular schedules.

Still, Reb Mendel was firm in his decision; he was determined to head to Rostov. After securing a travel permit, he bid farewell to his family and set out in the month of Elul on the twelve-hundred-kilometer journey.

The trouble started almost immediately. In the next big city, Zhlobin, Reb Mendel was searched and detained by the authorities. Why and on what cause? Nobody bothered to tell him. Somehow, news got to the Chassidim in the city, and through the efforts of the *rav*, Reb Moshe Akselrod, he was freed and allowed to continue on his journey.

About two hundred kilometers outside of Rostov, in an area controlled by Cossacks, trouble began brewing again. A group got onto the train and began harassing the Jewish passengers. They attacked them, stole all their belongings, and even killed some of them. Then, for sport, they began throwing Jews off the moving train. They grabbed Reb Mendel, dragged him to the door, and threw him out.

Reb Mendel landed on the ground with several broken ribs, unable to move. He later related that as he lay there that night, he began to feel certain signs of *gesisah* (throes of death) which he had learned in Shulchan Aruch... But in the morning, railway workers found him lying near the tracks and mercifully brought him to the nearby clinic.

At the time, the Communists had announced that letters would no longer need postage



REB MENDEL KAPLAN.

stamps. Any paper with a letter on one side and an address on the other side would be sent to its destination, albeit after many delays. Reb Mendel was able to send several letters to his family from the clinic, describing his experiences.

He wrote that the attackers weren't even Cossacks; they were college students, attacking Jews with the claim that "all Jews are communists, and if they aren't, their children are." In the clinic, despite his severe wounds and complex medical condition, the only medical attention he got was a bit of iodine spread over his wounds.

He was soon transferred to a larger hospital, and over the course of Tishrei, he miraculously began to regain his strength. Before Sukkos, he decided to finish his journey, finally arriving in Rostov for Yom Tov.

"Rebbe"

It was a period of uncertainty regarding the *nesius*. While the Rebbe Rashab had explicitly stated in his *tza-va'ah* that the Frierdiker Rebbe should say *maamarim*, lead *Tomchei Tmimim*, and strengthen Yiddishkeit throughout Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe refused to formally accept the *nesius*.

Throughout the entire year of *aveilus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe secluded himself in his room and, aside from de-

living *maamarim*, refrained from acting as the Rebbe. Although the Chassidim had accepted the Frierdiker Rebbe as Rebbe, they were hesitant to say so openly in his presence. It had already been half a year since the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*, but nobody had ever said "Rebbe" to the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Reb Mendel could not bear the situation. During the *farbrengen* on Simchas Torah, he repeatedly addressed the Frierdiker Rebbe as "Rebbe." The Frierdiker Rebbe was visibly uncomfortable and responded, "Why are you spilling my blood?" But Reb Mendel was undeterred. Chassidim would later relate that he had 'broken the ice,' and from then on, the Frierdiker Rebbe was always addressed as Rebbe.

During that same *farbrengen*, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke in the *sichos* with great intensity about a chossid who had sent *Panim* to him, asking for a *bracha* to "be brought to *kever Yisroel*" (to be buried as a Jew).

The Frierdiker Rebbe didn't identify him by name, but it was clear that he was speaking about Reb Mendel, who had sent several *Panim* to the Frierdiker Rebbe from the hospital, with that exact request. The severity of his wounds had made recovery seem impossible; he had asked for the Rebbe's blessing to at least merit a Jewish burial. But the Frierdiker Rebbe was very distressed by the request.

"How can a Yid write a *pidyon* asking for mercy that he merit a proper Jewish burial? A Jew should ask for life, not for burial!"

The Shelf that Fell

One night, back in Bobruisk, something dramatic happened in Reb Mendel's home: out of nowhere, his bookshelf of *seforim* collapsed and all the *seforim* fell to the ground. It was an ominous sign. The next day, his son, Reb Chaim, in Minsk, had a dream in which his father came to him and said, "Why is no one saying *kaddish* for me?" The dream recurred three times, on three consecutive nights.

A few weeks later, the news arrived. In his weakened state, Reb Mendel had fallen ill with pneumonia and had passed away on 6 Cheshvan, just weeks after reaching the Frierdiker Rebbe for Sukkos and Simchas Torah. Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah gave an article of the Rebbe Rashab's clothing to be buried with Reb Mendel, and he was laid to rest right near the *Tziyon* of the Rebbe Rashab. Twenty

years later, when the Rebbe Rashab's Ohel was moved to the new cemetery, Reb Mendel was moved alongside him.³

A Hidden Debt of Gratitude

In the book *Bobruisk*, Reb Mendel's son Eliyahu related the following story:

"In 1921, just a few months after my father passed away, a Jewish commissar came to our home and warned my mother that the authorities were planning to conduct a thorough search of our house. Thanks to his tip, we managed to quickly hide our valuables before the officials arrived. Ultimately, they confiscated only a few minor items.

"I knew this commissar as a hardened Communist, fiercely loyal to the regime. His unexpected act of kindness puzzled me. My curiosity got the better of me, and after much effort, I managed to arrange a meeting with him. When I pressed him to explain his actions, he revealed his secret.

"Back in 1919, when Poland controlled our city, he had been part of the underground Communist movement and was arrested. He knew that as a Communist, his fate was sealed, so he staunchly denied any association with the group. When the authorities asked if any prominent townspeople could vouch for him, he gave them my father's name.

"The authorities summoned my father and asked him if he knew the prisoner. 'Yes,' he replied. Then they asked, 'Can you confirm that he is not a Communist?' Without hesitation, my father answered, 'Yes.'

"The officer demanded that my father swear an oath, but my father explained that religious Jews do not take oaths. Instead, he was asked to sign a written statement. The officer warned him: *If it turns out you are lying, not only will he be hanged, but so will you—as a false witness.* Without hesitation, my father signed his name.

"After the Soviets took over, that same Jew—now a commissar—came to my father in his full military uniform. 'Reb Mendel,' he said, 'I will never forget what you did for me.' My father was shocked to see him in communist uniform, and responded, 'I ask only one thing from you: *bleibt a Yid*' (remain a Jew). Years later, this same man risked his own safety to warn our family of the coming raid.

"Where did my father find the courage to sign his



FINAL PHOTOGRAPH OF REB MENDEL KAPLAN, TAKEN A FEW MONTHS BEFORE HIS UNTIMELY PASSING.

name and risk his life for someone else? He later explained his reasoning: 'A true *maamin* can never deny his faith. If this person could deny his 'faith'—his Communist ideology—then clearly, he wasn't truly a Communist to begin with.'" **T**

This article is based on "Hachossid Shelo Viter," Kfar Chabad Magazine issue 1882 by Rabbi Levi Mondshine, and "Beis Hachassidim" by Eliyahu Kaplan in Bobruisk. The memoirs of Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin are available in the Gourarie-Reitzes Teshura, Adar 5779. Special thanks to the great-great-grandchildren of Reb Mendel, Rabbi Levi Mondshine and Rabbi Bentzion Pearson.

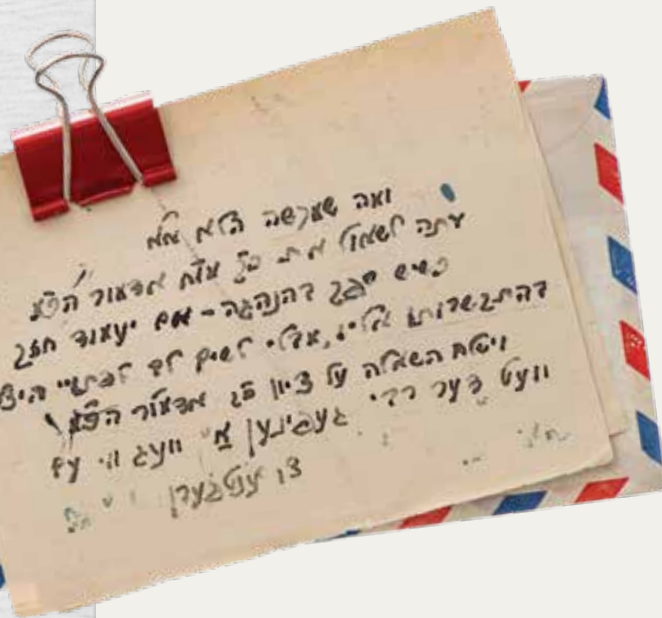
1. Reb Yaakov is mentioned in *Reshimos Hayoman* pp. 298–9, as an eyewitness to the events surrounding the Rebbe Maharash's appointment of Reb Shmarya Noach as the *rav* of Chassidim in Bobruisk.
2. See "If I Had Twenty Yankelach," *Derher Tammuz* 5784.
3. See "Moving the Ohel," *Derher Cheshvan* 5785.



Story

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' דוד בן שיינא
וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא בת
לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

Carly's Group

AS TOLD BY
MRS. TZALCHA AMAR
(Seine-et-Marne, France)

The first women's trip to the Rebbe from our community was in the winter of 5780. Since then, we've organized multiple women's trips every year. In Kislev of 5782, as I arrived at JFK Airport with a group, I received a WhatsApp voicemail from a woman in our community. She requested that we arrange a special group trip to the Ohel to daven for her cousin Carly, who had a severe, life-threatening illness.

Carly's family was one of the first we connected with at the start of our shlichus in Seine-et-Marne, 23 years ago. Her parents had six children, Baruch Hashem. Carly (her Jewish name is Sarah), their second child, was a young teenager then, and the youngest was barely a year old. A few months after we met them, Carly's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Two years later, tragically, she passed away, leaving behind a devastated husband and

six young children.

We stood by the family, offering comfort and help in any way we could. Years later, Carly married, and *baruch Hashem* was blessed with four children.

In 5781, Carly was diagnosed with lung cancer. The doctors claimed there was no known cure, and they estimated that she had only six months to live. The shock was overwhelming for her, her husband, her family, and all who knew her.

When her cousin reached out to me to arrange a special trip to the Ohel for her family members to daven on her behalf, I readily agreed. In the meantime, they had found a doctor who was willing to try an experimental treatment, though with no guarantees. It was a last resort.

Two months later, at the end of Shevat, we arranged a trip for seven women to visit the Ohel together with Carly. She was in a very low mood, the atmosphere was heavy, and the davening at the Ohel was incredibly emotional and powerful.

We spent Shabbos in Crown Heights and were hosted for the day meal at the home of Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook. He said that the night before, he had been searching for something meaningful to share with us. At first, he looked through an older issue of the Kfar Chabad magazine, but did not find anything that felt right. In the current issue, he found a letter from the Rebbe addressed to someone battling lung cancer, the same illness Carly had. The Rebbe's words were: "*Why are you so sad? Strengthen your emunah and bitachon in Hashem, and you will return with good news!*"

We were emotionally overwhelmed and moved by the clear *hashgacha pratis*.

When we returned to the Ohel on Sunday, Carly resolved that if she recovered, she would return to thank

the Rebbe for the *brachos*. Indeed, the experimental treatment worked, and although she did not recover from the illness, it stabilized and stopped spreading. The next year, she asked me to arrange a special trip to the Ohel to thank Hashem for the Rebbe's blessing of another year of life and to ask for the merit to return the next year. Carly's group has become an annual tradition, in addition to other women's trips from our community.

In Shevat of 5785, 16 women joined Carly's group. For more than half of them, it was their first time participating, and one of them was Carly's sister-in-law, Stephanie. Although Carly had invited her every year, this was the first time she agreed to come.

Stephanie comes from a very secular family and was never given a Jewish name. As a child, when asked for her Jewish name, she felt embarrassed and claimed her name was Sarah, and everyone knew her as Stephanie Sarah. This was the name written in her *Kesuba*, and only after several years did she tell her husband that she had never been officially called Sarah. They consulted *rabbanim*, who advised that her husband receive an *aliya* at the Torah and officially give her the name Sarah according to Torah tradition.

When Stephanie was seven years old, her grandmother traveled to New York. Someone suggested she visit the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and she was *zoche* to have a *yechidus*—a private audience with the Rebbe. A few days later, she tragically died in a boating accident. The family was devastated. As a young child, Stephanie had felt a deep sadness and couldn't understand what had just happened with the Rebbe. How could her grandmother receive a *bracha* and then pass away so suddenly? She struggled to make sense of it.

As she grew older, her perspective matured, and she



MEMBERS OF THE GROUP
DAVEN IN THE REBBE'S ROOM.

realized that Hashem runs the world and watches over His children, and that His ways are beyond our comprehension. But despite this intellectual understanding, an emotional block remained. Every time Carly invited her to join the trip to the Rebbe, she refused, feeling that she didn't deserve the Rebbe's *brachos* because of her past feelings.

As we were about to enter the Rebbe's *yechidus* room at 770, I paused to explain the significance of the entrance room, where the Rebbe distributed dollars for blessings to so many, and I pointed out the video screen playing videos of people receiving dollars from the Rebbe. Suddenly, Stephanie started crying uncontrollably. I wondered what had triggered her strong emotional reaction, but we had to stay on schedule and continued the visit.

Later that Shabbos, during the meal, Stephanie shared what had happened. The video playing on the screen was of a woman who introduced herself as Stephanie and asked

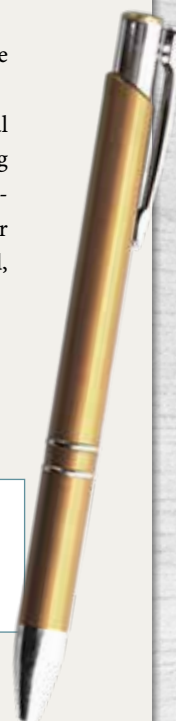
the Rebbe which Jewish name she should choose. The Rebbe responded with "Sarah!"¹

For Stephanie, it was a moment of profound personal clarity and connection. She felt the Rebbe was affirming the name she had chosen so many years ago, and welcoming her with warmth and understanding. She no longer felt distant or unworthy of the Rebbe's *brachos*. Instead, she felt embraced, accepted, and spiritually uplifted. **T**

1. Living Torah program 328.

YOUR STORY

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



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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

COMPILED BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (OH)

WRITTEN BY: RABBI SHNEUR ITZINGER

*The information in this article was mostly culled from the Sefer
Admurei Chabad V'Yahadus Romania by Rabbi Zushe Wolff.*

P I N P O I N T S

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

ROMANIA



ROLLING IN THE ROMANIAN STREETS

The dramatic news of the Alter Rebbe's arrest spread far and wide—and slowly. In those days, it took time for information to get around. The small but devoted community of the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim in Yasi, Romania, almost 1000 miles away from Liozna, received word of his arrest only two weeks after the fact. Then, on the second night of Chanukah, the exciting news of the Alter Rebbe's release was finally received—a whole week after Yud-Tes Kislev.

"There was barely a *minyan* of Chassidim in Yasi," the Friediker Rebbe related,¹ "yet when news of the *geulah* was received, their joy was so contagious that the entire city *hot zich gekulet* (was somersaulting) in the streets celebrating!"²

The Friediker Rebbe personally heard the story on a visit to Yasi in 5667 from the Chossid Reb Berel, whose father, Reb Yitzchak Moshe, had been a Chossid of the first three Chabad Rabbeim.³

The Rabbeim's connection to the Romanian region runs deep—the Friediker Rebbe also records⁴ a visit by the Rebbe Maharash to Bucharest and Yasi, during which he discreetly observed the state of local Jewish life. And in nearby Piatra Neamt, a long-held tradition tells that "the old wooden shul" was visited by the Baal Shem Tov himself, before he revealed himself.⁵

THE SOVIET REPUBLIC WITH RELIGIOUS "FREEDOM"

The Rebbe's concern for the well-being of Jews behind the Iron Curtain is well documented. Yet Romania, a satellite state of the USSR, has its own unique story. That story is best told through the Rebbe's relationship with the country's longtime Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Dovid Moshe Rosen—a fascinating individual with equally fascinating *kiruvim* from the Rebbe.

Rabbi Rosen led Romanian Jewry through decades of Communist rule, faithfully guiding the community until his final day. The Rebbe stood behind his many efforts to improve both the spiritual and material lives of the Jews in



EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF THE 'OLD WOODEN SHUL' IN PIATRA NEAMT, SAID TO HAVE BEEN VISITED BY THE BAAL SHEM TOV.



his care. In fact, Rabbi Rosen's very presence in the country during those difficult years was thanks to the Rebbe, who repeatedly encouraged him to remain at his post.

Overcoming strong opposition from the Yevseksiya, Rabbi Rosen successfully negotiated with the Romanian government to allow religious practice. He opened schools, shuls, and welfare organizations for the community and held a rare "free pass" to enter and leave the country as he pleased.

MEZUZOS AND SHECHITA IN ROMANIA

Each time he visited New York, from 5721 through 5752—long after the practice of *yechidus* officially ended—Rabbi Rosen merited a lengthy private audience with the Rebbe, during which they discussed the well-being of his community.

While traveling outside his Communist homeland, Rabbi Rosen generally remained tight-lipped about the full extent of his efforts to strengthen Yiddishkeit. Only the Rebbe knew the whole picture.

One example is found between the lines of a letter in Igros Kodesh⁶ addressed to Rabbi Rosen, where we learn of the Rebbe's efforts to secure Mezuzos for Romanian

Jews, which Rabbi Rosen would distribute. From the letter, it seems that this was part of an ongoing arrangement, among other efforts to bolster Jewish life that the Rebbe encouraged and closely followed.

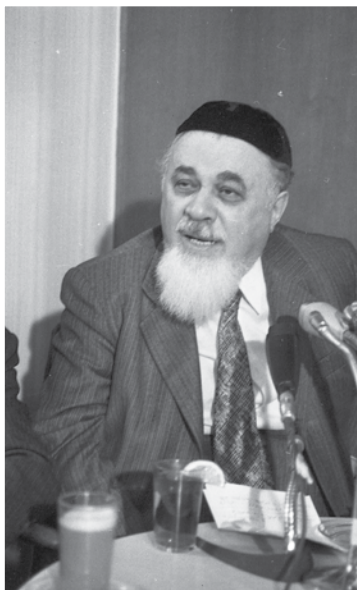
"His spiritual influence extends over us, and it's truly unbelievable how every instruction and piece of advice the Rebbe gave me over the years hit the mark in an incredible way," Rabbi Rosen told the Kfar Chabad Magazine in a 5744 interview. "For example, he recently sent us two yeshiva students who joined our six regular *shochtim*, and together they travel from city to city and village to village, making it possible to uphold Kashrus."

"ENOUGH TIME FOR SIXTY THOUSAND JEWS!"

Rabbi Rosen's *yechidusen* would routinely last for hours. Once, noticing many people waiting in Gan Eden Hatachton for their turn to enter the Rebbe's room, he asked how much more time the Rebbe had for him.

"You told me there are sixty thousand Jews in your country," the Rebbe replied. "I have as much time as it takes to assist sixty thousand Yidden!"

Perhaps the final person to merit a private *yechidus* was Rabbi Rosen, who spent over an hour and a half in conversation with the Rebbe in Kislev 5752. At that *yechidus*, as he had many times over the years, he again asked whether the time had come for him to fulfill his lifelong dream of moving to Eretz Yisroel. Once again, the Rebbe encouraged him to continue his shlichus, which he did until his passing in 5754.



RABBI ROSEN SPEAKS ON THE STATE OF ROMANIAN JEWRY IN 5739, MORE THAN THREE DECADES AFTER BECOMING THE CHIEF RABBI.





RABBI YISROEL TZVI HEBER
RECEIVES KOS SHE'EL BRACHA FROM
THE REBBE IN 5740, DURING THE
YEARS HE SPENT IN ROMANIA.

“DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THE REBBE LOVES YOU?”

A summer day in 5738 found two *bochurim* at 770 summoned to Rabbi Hodakov's office. Yosef Baruch Friedman and Aharon Chitrik were to travel to Romania as Merkos Shluchim, the first to the Communist country.

In addition to the classic Merkos Shlichus activities of spreading Yiddishkeit, part of their mission was to visit Rabbi Rosen and convey birthday wishes on the occasion of his 66th birthday, marked that summer by the Romanian Jewish community. “Rabbi Hodakov added a surprising note,” the *bochurim* later recalled. “We were to tell Rabbi Rosen: ‘Do you know how much the Rebbe loves you?’”

Rabbi Rosen warmly received the Rebbe's regards and shared a reciprocal message of love for the Rebbe. The *bochurim* traveled across the country for three weeks, following Rabbi Rosen's guidance on which cities to visit. Under the guise of American tourists, they visited numerous Jewish communities, distributing *tashmischei kedusha*, teaching Torah, and sharing encouraging words to uplift the community.

Upon returning to New York, they presented the Rebbe with a full report of their activities. “It seems,” they later reflected, “that part of our mission was to assess the situation on the ground in Romania, to help pave the way for a future full-time shliach.”

EXTRACURRICULAR HAFATZA

Another individual who received remarkable attention from the Rebbe for his efforts in Romania was Rabbi Yisrael Tzvi Heber, a *Tomim* who spent several years there serving as an official shochet.

Trained as a shochet and seeking employment outside of Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Heber consulted the Rebbe in *yechidus*. The Rebbe told him he would need permission from a *rav* to leave Eretz Yisroel, adding that active involvement in spreading Yiddishkeit might serve as grounds for such a *heter*. When Rabbi Heber consulted a *rav* about moving to Romania, the *heter* he received reflected exactly what the Rebbe had suggested: he could leave Eretz Yisroel on the condition that he also engage in *Hafatzas Hayahadus* in Romania, in addition to *shechita*.

Rabbi Heber took this responsibility seriously, despite the significant risks. The laws of the land, while not officially banning Judaism, allowed one to act only in line with their official position. In his case, *shechita* was allowed, but anything else—certainly teaching or any form of outreach—was strictly prohibited. Especially as a foreigner, he had to walk a very careful line. The Rebbe's strict instructions to carefully follow Romanian law allowed him to continue operating in the country, despite years of being followed by the Secret Police. All correspondence with the Rebbe, as well as phone conversations with *Mazkirus*, were carefully censored to

avoid any government criticism or mention of his “extracurricular” activities.

With the Rebbe’s encouragement, Rabbi Heber succeeded in doing far more than just *shecht*. He found legal loopholes that allowed him to print the Rebbe’s *sichos* in the local Jewish newspaper, which counted government censors amongst its readership. He also innovatively arranged *Siyumei HaRambam* and *farbrengens* for Yud Shevat and Yud-Aleph Nissan, but his role as organizer was never made public. Traveling to remote villages to *shecht*, he would carefully meet with local Jews, sharing words of encouragement and Torah.

THIRTY THOUSAND LETTERS, ONE BUYER

With the launch of *Mivtza Ois B’Sefer Torah*, the Rebbe’s initiative to unite all Jews by purchasing individual letters in a *sefer Torah*,⁷ Rabbi Heber faced a new challenge. Gathering the names and mothers’ names, along with the symbolic payment for each letter from all of Romanian Jewry, seemed impossible. Always seeking innovative solutions to fulfill the Rebbe’s *hora’os*, Rabbi Heber received special permission from the Rebbe to purchase the letters collectively, an exception from the general *hora’ah* that letters be bought individually for each person. Rabbi Rosen made a special trip to Nachalas Har Chabad to make the purchase and later participate in the *siyum*.

A Tziyur of a Tomim

Rabbi Heber’s contract with the community was on an annual basis, and each year’s renewal came with the Rebbe’s approval. After his first term, he hoped to return to his family in Eretz Yisroel, but the Rebbe told him in *yechidus*: “You and your *tziyur* need to be in Romania for another year.” After that, he made a point of walking openly on the capital’s main streets, displaying the rare *tziyur* of a *Tomim* with pride. He was eventually joined by his wife and served as the Rebbe’s direct *Shliach* for several more years.



A COLLAGE OF ROMANIAN YIDDISH NEWSPAPERS CONTAINING SICHOS OF THE REBBE PUBLISHED UNDER COMMUNIST RULE BY RABBI HEBER.

THE NINETEENTH TANYA

In the mid-5740s, Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu himself granted permission for a Jewish book to be printed in Romania—the first such approval ever given under Communist rule. The *sefer* in question? None other than the Tanya. Here’s how it happened.

At the end of 5738, the Rebbe launched a campaign to have Tanyas printed in every country.⁸ On Chai Elul of that year, the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Rosen asking that he arrange for its printing in Romania,⁹ but the idea did not materialize at the time. Following the Rebbe’s renewed call in 5744 to print a Tanya in every community, the Rebbe explicitly instructed Rabbi Heber to facilitate its printing in Romania. Rabbi Rosen believed that the only way such rare permission could be obtained was by informing the local authorities that the Lubavitcher Rebbe had requested that the Tanya be printed everywhere Jews reside.

At that time, Rabbi Rosen was engaged in a public relations battle against libels targeting the Jewish community. When the Rebbe gave his direct *bracha* for the Tanya to be printed, the Romanian government miraculously chose to appease the Chief Rabbi by approving his request to print a *sefer*. Thus, on the auspicious day of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5744, permission was granted by Ceausescu himself.

The printing brought great excitement to the entire community, and public *shiurim* were held using the newly printed Tanya, including one well-attended class delivered by Rabbi Rosen in the main shul on the night of Yom Kippur(!). Shortly afterward, at the *lekach* distribution on Hoshana Rabbah 5745, the Rebbe told Rabbi Heber, “A *groisen yasher koach*; the Tanya was printed in Yasi!”

This was not the first Tanya to be printed in Romania, however. In fact, of thousands of editions, the 19th Tanya

Silence is Golden

The long line of guests entering *yechidus* at the conclusion of Tishrei 5725 included Rabbi Avraham Michael Halperin, a *rav* in Yerushalayim, who asked the Rebbe if he should travel to Romania for a *pidyon shvuyim* mission.

After giving his consent and blessing his trip, the Rebbe spoke passionately about Romanian Jewry, encouraging him to use the opportunity to—cautiously—spread Yiddishkeit. “A word is worth a *sela*, and silence is worth two,” the Rebbe quoted from the Gemara.¹¹ “Be very careful what you say, and try to speak in as many shuls as possible.”

ever published was printed in Yasi, Romania, in 5603. At that time, the aforementioned Chossid Reb Yitzchak Moshe of Yasi was leading efforts to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus throughout the Bessarabia region. Operating under the leadership of the Rabbeim throughout his long life, he held chief responsibility for the region during the Tzemach Tzedek’s *nesius*.



THE FIRST TANYA PUBLISHED IN YASI, 5603.

Reb Yitzchak Moshe lived for over 100 years, from the times of the Alter Rebbe until 5621, and devoted many decades to bringing the life of Chassidus Chabad to Yasi and its surroundings. The Tzemach Tzedek also placed him in charge of the Kolel in Yasi, one of approximately twenty Kolelim he established in various towns. He was also responsible for the printing of the Mitteler Rebbe’s *Derech Chayim* in 5619. His son, too, lived a long life, meriting to meet the Frierdiker Rebbe, as mentioned above. These two Chassidim, who acted under the leadership of the Rabbeim to bring Chassidus to Yasi and the region, are buried in the Jewish cemetery in the city.

“THE TIME WILL YET COME”

“Regarding [your request] to send a *yungerman* to visit your community in the near future, this presents some difficulties at the moment,” the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Rosen in 5736.¹⁰ “Nevertheless, it is understood that I will not, *chas v’shalom*, forget about it, and the time will yet come.”

Today, that time has arrived, with several families of the Rebbe’s shluchim serving Romanian Jewry, revitalizing Yiddishkeit in the post-Communist era. **7**

1. Sefer Hasichos 5697, p. 226.
2. See also Motzei Shabbos 20 Kislev, 5717—Toras Menachem vol. 18, p. 301–2, for the Rebbe’s explanation on this story.
3. For more on Reb Yitzchak Moshe, see “Life of a Chossid”—Derher Shevat 5780.
4. In his Igros Kodesh vol. 4, p. 42.
5. Introduction to *Admurei Chabad V’Yahadus Romania*.
6. Vol. 31, p. 95.
7. For an overview of this *mitvza*, see “600,000 Souls”—Derher Iyar 5780.
8. See at length in “Tanya to the World”—Derher Adar II 5776.
9. Igros Kodesh vol. 33, p. 390–1.
10. Igros Kodesh vol. 31, p. 95.
11. Megillah 18a.

