

# A Chassidisher **Derher**

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In memory of 'Reb Yisroel' ע"ה Friedman

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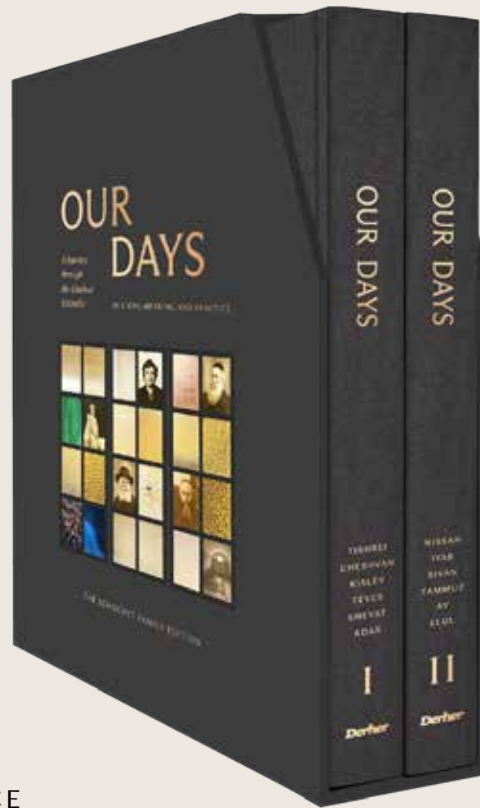
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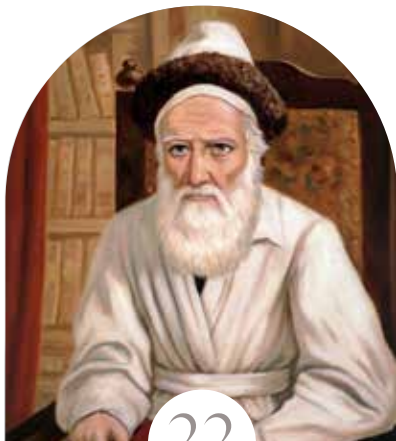


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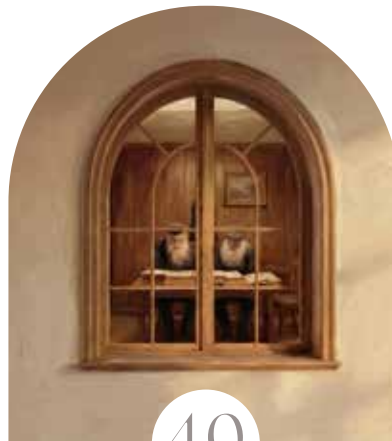
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## STEADFAST MOUNTAIN

As we celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan this year, a special message comes to us from the Rebbe's new *kapitel*—125:

”הַבְּטָחִים בְּה', כִּהָר צִיּוֹן לֹא יִמוּט גּו'”

“Those who trust in Hashem, like the Mountain of Tzion, will not falter...”

Having *bitachon* in Hashem is more than just maintaining faith that everything He does is for the best. According to Halacha, Mussar, and Chassidus, true *bitachon* means living with the certainty that Hashem will always fill your every need—not only in the spiritual realms, but in this physical world as well.

Given all the turmoil life brings, how can one maintain this sense of *bitachon* at all times?

The answer is in this *possuk*, by strengthening one's “Mountain of Tzion”:

The word Tzion refers to the innermost part of the *neshama*; that part that is always at one with Hashem. When we make sure that this part of us stands tall, open, and revealed like a mountain, we can be sure that our trust in Hashem will not falter.<sup>1</sup>

Connecting with and revealing the *pnimius haneshama* comes through studying *pnimius haTorah*.<sup>2</sup> Readers of this issue will enjoy a featured overview of the importance of studying

Chassidus every day, as taught by our Rabbeim throughout the generations.

Alongside is an article about the Torah of the Tzemach Tzedek, in honor of his *yom hahilula*—13 Nissan.

Interestingly, exactly 60 years ago, the Rebbe marked the Tzemach Tzedek's 100th *hilula* (5626—5726) by launching a special campaign to raise money for publishing the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah.<sup>3</sup>

Let us conclude with the hope that this year, we will merit the fulfillment of the words of the Rebbe's *kapitel*: “הַבְּטָחִים בְּה', כִּהָר צִיּוֹן לֹא יִמוּט.”

As the *meforshim* explain, these words speak of the Yidden throughout the generations of galus who are steadfast in their *bitachon* that the *geula* is almost here. They will indeed live to see the coming of Moshiach, and the rebuilding of the eternal Beis Hamikdash, *teikef umiyad mamash!*

ברכת חג הפסח כשר ושמחה,

**The Editors**  
י"א אדר ה'תשפ"ו

1. 20 Cheshvan 5745; Hisvaaduyos 5745, vol. 1, p. 619.
2. See Leil Simchas Torah 5715; Toras Menachem vol. 13, p. 51.
3. See Toras Menachem vol. 46, p. 285; Igros Kodesh vol. 24, p. 113.

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“In addition to thanks, I would like to add the blessing of ‘mazal tov’ for your merit in taking part in such an important project, bringing merit to the masses, illuminating their souls with the light of the words of my father-in-law, the Rebbe Shlita, inspiring them to Torah, Avoda, & Gemilus Chasadim...”

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

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## ח"י ניסן

# Pharaoh Becomes Aware of Escape

COMPILED BY: RABBI MENDEL VOGEL

*Following the Jews' exodus from Mitzrayim, Pharaoh, who had thought they would only leave for three days, was informed that they had no intention of returning. Pharaoh decided to mobilize his army and pursue the Jewish people to bring them back to Mitzrayim, leading to the drowning of the Mitzriyim in the Yam Suf.*

"למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך" — In order that you remember the day you left Egypt all the days of your life" (Devarim 16:3).

This means that everything that occurred during *yetzias Mitzrayim* recurs every year and remains relevant to us today. What lesson can we take from 18 Nissan, the fourth day of Pesach?

The Mechilta (Beshalach 14:2) tells us that when Pharaoh sent the Yidden out of Mitzrayim, he sent along special agents ("*Ikturin*") to accompany them and ensure the Yidden returned to Mitzrayim after three days, as per their request, "...Let us therefore make a

three-day journey in the wilderness..." (Shemos 5:3). For three days the Yidden marched forward, but on the fourth day—18 Nissan—when the Yidden prepared to travel deeper into the desert, the Egyptian agents protested.

"The time Pharaoh granted you has passed," they warned. "Now you must turn back."

"We did not leave Egypt because of Pharaoh's permission," the Jews responded. "We left because Hashem Himself took us out."

The agents threatened, "Whether you like it or not, Pharaoh will force you to obey!"



Hearing this, the Yidden overpowered the agents, striking many of them down. Those who survived fled in shame back to Pharaoh and related what had happened. Moshe then instructed the Yidden to travel back a bit the way they had come, so that Pharaoh should not say that they were fleeing out of fear.

Every Jewish child—and every Yid in general—can take away an important lesson from this occurrence: Three days of *zman cheiruseinu* (Festival of Our Freedom) have passed. These are days when a Yid experiences a taste of true freedom—freedom from the *yetzer hara* and from the limitations of “Mitzrayim” in every form. But even after such elevated days, the *yetzer hara* may still attempt to slip back in and trick a person into listening to him by telling him, “Pharaoh is very strong,” or some other sly remark: “This food is really tasty. Why would you bother with a *bracha*? Eat it right away!”; or, “It’s okay, don’t worry about checking if it has a good *hechsher*, just eat it.” He will use similar tactics for other *mitzvos*.

What should a Yid do when faced with such a voice?

Look at the conduct of the Yidden in the *midbar*: When Pharaoh’s agents confronted them, they did not negotiate or argue. They ignored them and chased them away in humiliation. Not only did they stand up to Pharaoh, they immediately demonstrated their inner strength by traveling *backward* a little, proving that they were not acting out of fear, but out of confidence and certainty.

When it comes to fighting the *yetzer hara*, we demonstrate that we are not affected or afraid of him at all, because he has no chance to succeed.



18 Nissan is also the birthday of the Rebbe’s father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, who writes (Likkutei Levi Yitz-

chok, Igros p. 197) that the traditional Pesach greeting, “חג קֶשֶׁר וְשִׂמְחָה,” holds a deeper meaning:

The word “קֶשֶׁר” (which means fit and proper to eat) is an acronym for the words “כְּמוֹצֵא שְׁלֵל רַב”—...As one who finds great spoil” (Tehillim 119:162). He explains that one who is careful with *kashrus* is comparable to a person who acquires “great spoils” from a war, and from this comes a *simcha* (“חג קֶשֶׁר—וְשִׂמְחָה”).

This teaches us to be mindful of our actions, just as we carefully check whether food is kosher before eating. When a person is careful to eat only kosher, and makes sure to know for certain—not *maybe*—that something is kosher before eating, this is a victory over the *yetzer hara*. This mindset should extend to all areas of life, asking ourselves, “Is my behavior proper and befitting for a Yid?” By conducting ourselves in this manner, we not only avoid negative behaviors, but we also receive the “great spoils” of the war, having withstood the temptations of the “old and foolish king,” the *yetzer hara*.

### Takeaway:

When one scores a victory over the *yetzer hara*, he achieves true *simcha*. This in turn hastens the fulfillment of the *possuk* regarding the coming of Moshiach: וְשִׂמְחָתָם “עוֹלָם עַל־רֵאשֵׁיָם—And the redeemed of Tzion shall return, and they shall come to Tzion with song, **with joy of days of yore shall be upon their heads**; they shall achieve gladness and joy, and sadness and sighing shall flee” (Yeshayahu 35:10; 51:11).

(Adapted from *Hisvaaduyos* 5745 vol. 3, p. 1782)



*Compiled By:* Rabbi Levi Greenberg (OH)

*Written By:* Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

# The Great Beginning

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Tzav—Shabbos Hagadol 5729,<sup>1</sup> the Rebbe quoted the Alter Rebbe's words in his Shulchan Aruch<sup>2</sup> where he explains the meaning behind Shabbos Hagadol:

לפי שבשבת הגדול היתה התחלת הגאולה והנסים..."

"Because on Shabbos Hagadol, the **beginning** of the redemption and the miracles took shape..."

The Rebbe explained that the Alter Rebbe meticulously chose the word "*has'chalas*" (the beginning of), because the miracle of Shabbos Hagadol actually continued through the following days as well.

Why then is the occurrence marked only on Shabbos Hagadol, the first day of the miracle?

To answer this question, the Alter Rebbe uses the word "*has'chalas*": We mark the miracle on the first day of its occurrence since afterward, the Egyptians had become

accustomed to it, and its effect was not as pronounced (or in Talmudic terms: "*keivan d'dash dash*").

[It seemed that the Rebbe was referring to the miracle described by the Tur: when the Egyptians saw the Jewish people preparing their sheep for the Korban Pesach, they did nothing to stop them, even though they worshiped sheep as a god.

The fact that the Egyptians did not attempt to stop the Jewish people even once throughout the following days is in itself a great miracle. Nevertheless, as the Beis Yosef explains, "*keivan d'dashu dashu*."]

After Shabbos, the Rebbe was asked:

The Alter Rebbe actually cites a different miracle as the cause for celebration on Shabbos Hagadol. When the firstborn of Egypt saw the Jews taking their lambs on that Shabbos, they found out that a plague was about to come



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# Month of Miracles in a Year of Wonders

NISSAN 5751

The month of Nissan is defined by its miraculous character—the month of *geulah*. In this Year of Wonders, the wonders and miracles were all the more pronounced. The Rebbe repeatedly emphasized the importance of recognizing and celebrating miracles. The end of the month took a drastic turn when the Rebbe let out a painful cry for the *galus* to finally end. Let us explore the month of miracles in the Year of Wonders—Nissan 5751.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL

WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS





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'MAYIM SHELANU', 2 NISSAN 5751.

## L'chaim to the Bar Mitzvah

The first day of the month occurred on Shabbos—a special Shabbos, on which three *sifrei Torah* are used (for Parshas Vayikra, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbos Hachodesh).

The Rebbe spoke about this at the afternoon farbrengen, drawing lessons from the number three and what it represents.

Special guests present at this farbrengen were a group from Long Island who had come to celebrate the bar mitzvah of the son of their shliach, Rabbi Tuvia Teldon. Between *sichos*, the Rebbe turned toward the group and waved his hands in encouragement. Turning towards the bar mitzvah boy, Boruch Nissan, and his father, the Rebbe motioned that they should both say *l'chaim*.

During Mincha, when the bar mitzvah boy was called up to the Torah, the Rebbe turned his gaze towards the boy and watched him carefully.

## The New Niggun

The next Shabbos, Parshas Tzav, was Shabbos Hagadol and the Shabbos before Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The Rebbe entered the farbrengen holding a large paperback Haggadah (which he would use to recite

Avadim Hayinu after Mincha). After the Rebbe made kiddush, Chassidim sang the new *niggun* composed by Reb Feitel Levin on the words “*Shuva Hashem Ad Masai*”; it was immediately noticeable that this *niggun* was special. The Rebbe encouraged the singing for much longer than usual, and it seemed that the Rebbe was singing along with the crowd in an undertone.

The spirit of Yud-Aleph Nissan was felt throughout the farbrengen, as the Rebbe elaborated on the *pessukim* of both the previous and new *kapitelach* (Tehillim 89 and 90). As the Rebbe entered his ninetieth year, he explained the meaning of the number 90 as represented by the letter “*Tzadi*” or “*Tzadik*.”

Interestingly, the law passed by Congress establishing the Rebbe’s birthday as “Education Day” was resolution number 104, which, as the Rebbe pointed out, is the *gematria* of “צד.”

When discussing the great *simcha* of Shabbos Hagadol, the Rebbe mentioned that in this shul they sing “*Hu Elokeinu*” loudly and joyfully two times each week (once by the crowd and once by the chazzan) and that this *niggun* will be the “*Shira Ha’asiris*”—the “Tenth Song” to be sung with the coming of Moshiach.

At the conclusion of this *sicha*, the crowd sang *Hu Elokeinu* and the Rebbe strongly encouraged the singing.



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THE REBBE SEPARATES A PORTION OF MATZAH AS HAFRASHAS CHALLA BEFORE DISTRIBUTING PACKETS OF MATZOS TOGETHER WITH THE MIGHTAV KLOLI, 5 NISSAN 5751.

Out of great excitement, Reb Yosef Neymotin stood up on a table and made the *bracha* “*Shehecheyanu*,” and the Rebbe answered Amen. Then the Rebbe told him to say *l’chaim* and to drink the entire cup.

The Rebbe continued delivering words of Torah on many occasions throughout the month, including a *sicha* on the night of Yud-Gimmel Nissan, and even a short *sicha* after Mincha on Erev Pesach!

## Mayim Shelanu

On Sunday, 2 Nissan, after distributing dollars for more than five hours, the Rebbe went into the small *zal* for Mincha, then came outside of 770 to draw “*mayim shelanu*”—water to be used for matzah baking.

The Rebbe rinsed out the glass cup he would use to pour the water, then the glass jug in which the water would be stored overnight. Then the Rebbe took the cup, drew water from the faucet connected to the underground spring, and poured it into the jug three times. All the while, Chassidim sang the *niggun* “*Keili Ata*.”

The next day, a group of *bochurim* baked the *matzos* which the Rebbe would send to Eretz Yisroel and other distant locations. They brought seven cases of *matzos* to 770 and placed them in Gan Eden Hatachton, ready for the Rebbe’s distribution two days later.

## Matzos for the World

On Wednesday, 5 Nissan, a group of individuals who would be bringing the Rebbe’s *matzos* to various communities around the world stood in the lobby of 770, waiting for the Rebbe to distribute the *matzos*. In previous years, the only ones who received the Rebbe’s *matzos* at the beginning of the month were overseas communities, while all communities in the United States and Canada received theirs on Erev Pesach. On occasion, these *matzos* would not arrive on time for the first seder, and Chassidim in these communities would be disappointed. This year, it was decided that all out-of-town communities could have a representative receive their *matzos* now, at the beginning of Nissan, ensuring they’d arrive on time for Pesach.

At 3:55 p.m., the Rebbe emerged from his room into Gan Eden Hatachton for the distribution. All the cases of *matzos* were covered with one long sheet of paper, and the Rebbe separated challah from two of the boxes. Then the Rebbe began distributing packs of *matzos* to the representatives, along with a *michtav klali* and a dollar for *tzedakah*.

After the Rebbe finished giving out all the small packs of *matzos* to the various representatives, five and a half cases remained, which would be shipped to Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe lifted one of the cases and handed it to Rabbi

Yosef Rosenfeld of Tzfas, who would be traveling with the *matzos* to Eretz Yisroel. The rest of the cases were quickly packed up and sent outside, headed for the airport. As the *matzos* were carried outside, the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Yekusiel (Kuti) Rapp, who oversees all the shipping arrangements with El-Al, and gave him a *michtav klali*, saying, “*Ah groisen yasher-koiach.*”

## Yud-Aleph Nissan

A most important highlight of the month is, of course, the Rebbe’s birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan, when the Rebbe would begin his ninetieth year (“*Shnas HaTzaddik*”).

Preparations for the momentous day had been long in the making.

In the weeks leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe sent out three *michtavim klaliyim* addressed to all Jewish people around the world (usually he would only send two), dated 25 Adar, 5 Nissan, and 11 Nissan.

The content of the letters were quite extraordinary, focusing on the miraculous nature of this time of year, and calling on everyone to take heed to the great miracles occurring in our time.

“It is now highly opportune to give full attention to the miracles and wonders which came to pass just recently around Purim time,” the Rebbe writes. “These were revealed miracles, obvious miracles, not only for Jews but also for all nations...”

“In view of the existing international conditions, it seemed inevitable that not only would there be a declaration of war, etc., but that the war would engulf many nations and set off a new world-war, G-d forbid — yet, in a most extraordinary turn of events, not only was a world-war prevented, but the war that had begun was quickly over!

“While all signs pointed to the outbreak of a massive war, requiring a huge army with massive weaponry of



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THE REBBE HANDS ONE OF THE CASES OF MATZOS FOR ERETZ YISROEL TO RABBI YOSEF ROSENFELD.



THE REBBE THANKS RABBI YEKUSIEL (KUTI) RAPP.

the most advanced technology, and after everything was duly assembled and in place for a long war expected to last weeks and months, victory came in a matter of days!”

The Rebbe called on everyone to act in accordance with these miracles by upgrading their observance of mitzvos to a transcendent, “miraculous” mode, rising above ordinary behavior.

On Thursday, 6 Nissan, a special event was held near the White House in Washington, D.C., honoring the Rebbe as he begins his ninetieth year. Some ninety shlichim from across the country attended the event, hosted by more than 30 senators and 50 members of Congress.

## The Day Arrives

On Monday, 10 Nissan, the “*Kuntres Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751*” was published, featuring the Rebbe’s recently edited *maamar* on the words “*Tefila L’Moshe*”—a *possuk* from the Rebbe’s new *kapitel*.

In the morning, the Rebbe gave Rabbi Leibel Groner a bottle of *mashke* and a bottle of wine as his participation in the Yud-Aleph Nissan *farbrengens* this year.

At 6:40 p.m., the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and came downstairs to shul for Mincha and Maariv.

The room was packed. Thousands of guests arrived from all over the world to celebrate this special milestone in the Rebbe’s presence.

After Maariv, the Rebbe stepped down from his platform and stood with closed eyes as he listened to the *bracha* offered by Reb Zalman Gurary on behalf of all the Chassidim. Reb Yitzchok Hendel then blessed the Rebbe with *birkas kohanim*.

In response to the *brachos*, the Rebbe delivered a *sicha*, offering heartfelt *brachos* to everyone in return while quoting extensively from his new *kapitel*. The evening concluded with the Rebbe distributing dollars for *tzedakah* to all.

On the morning of Yud-Aleph Nissan after Shacharis, the Rebbe could be seen reciting his new *kapitel*—*Tefilla L’Moshe*.

This morning, construction began on the shul at 770, a process long in the making.

A parade of 42 Mitzvah tanks drove through the New York streets in honor of the Rebbe’s birthday, spreading Yiddishkeit to every corner of the city and supplying *shemura matzah* for every Yid.

The Rebbe visited the Ohel again today. As he was leaving his room, he encountered the philanthropist



THE REBBE ENTERS THE SHUL, 11 NISSAN 5751.

Ronald Perlman together with Rabbi Avraham Shemtov standing in Gan Eden Hatachton. The Rebbe blessed Mr. Perlman and asked about his son, also referencing Mr. Perlman’s gesture from the previous year, when he pledged eighteen cents to *tzedakah* for every Jew in the world.

The Rebbe returned from the Ohel at 7:10 p.m., and after davening Mincha and Maariv, distributed dollars to all. The Rebbe was in exceptionally good spirits, encouraging the singing of the new *niggun*, and smiling at many passersby. Some took the opportunity to give the Rebbe new *seforim* and *kovtzim* published in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, and the Rebbe thanked each of them.

## Mechiras Chametz

On the night of Erev Pesach, the Rebbe sold his chametz in Gan Eden Hatachton. Present in the room were the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yisroel Piekarski, Rabbi Hodakov, and Rabbi Mordechai Rivkin. A sum of money could be seen on the table.

After signing the document, the Rebbe spoke to the group for a few minutes, expressing his wishes for a happy and kosher Pesach, and his hope that Moshiach will come very soon. Turning to Rabbi Piekarski, the Rebbe said,



THE REBBE DELIVERS A SICHA FOLLOWING THE BRACHOS, 11 NISSAN.

“You will certainly find a *hetter* for us to bring the *korban Pesach* this year, even though we weren’t able to examine the animal for four days prior.” And to Rabbi Rivkin, who is a kohen, the Rebbe said, “Get ready to give the *bracha hameshuleshes* in the *beis hamikdash hashlishi!*”

## Erev Pesach

On the morning of Erev Pesach, a *siyum* was held in the shul after Shacharis, and the Rebbe sent down two bottles of wine as his participation. The Rebbe asked to convey that the wine was kosher for Pesach.

Later on, the Rebbe came down to the boiler room of 770 to burn the *chametz*.

After Mincha, the Rebbe said a *sicha*, followed by dollars. When Rabbi Avraham Shemtov came by, the Rebbe gave him an additional dollar for Mr. Perlman. When Dr. Moshe Feldman came by, the Rebbe gave him an additional dollar for all his patients, “including me.”

Then the Rebbe distributed matzah to the members of the kollel (to be distributed to local *anash*) and to people who were conducting community *sedarim* in the tri-state area.

Members of the Rebbe’s *Mazkirus* and other select individuals also came by to receive *matzos*, as usual.

That evening, after Maariv and Hallel, the Rebbe went to his room, where he conducted his seder. At 10:40 p.m., the Rebbe came out to the door of 770 holding a paperback Haggadah and recited *Shefoch Chamascha*. A crowd of about 50 people stood around in the area, and the

Rebbe scanned the crowd before returning to his room.

The next night, on the second eve of Pesach, the Rebbe again distributed *matzos* from his room to select individuals, and sent *matzos* to the members of the kollel, for those who hadn’t yet received.

At 11:10 p.m., the Rebbe again appeared at the front door of 770 for *Shefoch Chamascha*.

## Tahalucha

On Shvi’i Shel Pesach, the Rebbe stood at the front door of 770 to see off the crowds as they left for *Tahalucha*. The Rebbe strongly encouraged the singing of Napoleon’s March for some twenty minutes, until all the *Tahalucha* goers were no longer visible.

Later that night, when everyone returned to 770, the Rebbe came out to the front door once again to greet them and encourage their singing. In a most unusual gesture, the Rebbe suddenly motioned with his hand for the singing to stop, and began delivering a surprise *sicha!* This was completely unexpected and caught everyone off guard. The Rebbe spoke about the fact that one full week of Sefiras Ha’omer was now completed, and how it was high time for Moshiach to finally arrive.

## Farbrengen

On Acharon Shel Pesach, toward the end of Yom Tov, the Rebbe came into the shul for a farbrengen. The Rebbe washed for Hamotzi and ate some of the *matzos*, then gave a pile of ten *matzos* to Reb Berel Junik to be

distributed among the crowd.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked that the *niggunim* of all the Rabbeim be sung. For the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*, B'nei Heichala was sung (since it was also Shabbos afternoon), and the Rebbe encouraged the singing very strongly.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen the Rebbe *benched* on a *kos*, which he later used for Havdala and for distribution of *kos shel bracha*.

The Rebbe left the shul at 12:45 a.m. to the *niggun* of "Ki V'simcha..."

## Time to Dance!

On Tuesday evening, 25 Nissan, the Rebbe held *yechidus klalis* for the Pesach guests.

Addressing current events, the Rebbe said that it is highly important for everyone to recognize the unbelievable miracles that occurred this year; even greater miracles than at the time of the original Purim. All the nations of the world came together to punish a notorious Jew-hater (the Rebbe mentioned him by name, "Saddam"), shaming him and stripping him of power.

Yet people are still going about their days as normal, thinking that "there's no cause for celebration."

On the contrary, said the Rebbe. We should all recognize the great miracles to the point that we break out in a dance!

## The Fateful Sicha

On Thursday, 27 Nissan, the Rebbe went to the Ohel, returning at 8:00 p.m.

After Maariv, the Rebbe told Rabbi Leibel Groner that he would now deliver a *sicha*.

The *sicha* started as any ordinary *sicha* would; the Rebbe explained the greatness of the day and the time of year, and how this is a time connected with the *geulah*.

Then, the Rebbe's tone suddenly changed, and he began speaking with great anguish:

How could it be, the Rebbe asked, that despite all of these great things, we still haven't brought Moshiach in actuality?!

People scream "*Ad masai*" and ask for the *geulah*, but if they would really mean what they were saying and truly want the *geulah*, there's no question that Moshiach would have come a long time ago!

Then the Rebbe delivered his famous words:



CHOL HAMOED PESACH 5751.

"I have already done everything that I can to bring Moshiach. From now on, you must all do whatever you can to bring Moshiach..."

The crowd was flabbergasted. As the Rebbe went down from his platform and began distributing dollars, he told Reb Zalman Gurary, "*Lo naga v'lo paga*" (my words have had no effect at all).

As the night went on, the shul at 770 filled up more and more as people tried to digest what the Rebbe had just said. A recording of the *sicha* was replayed over and over, as people sat together and tried to come up with ideas on how to bring the Rebbe's request into reality.

## The Response

That Shabbos, the Rebbe entered the farbrengen at 1:30 p.m., as usual, and seemed in uplifted spirits. The Rebbe encouraged the singing very strongly, waving his hands in all directions, motioning to many people to say *l'chaim*.

After the first *sicha*, a member of *Anash* stood up and asked the Rebbe to please issue a decree that Moshiach must come now! *Tzaddik gozer, v'Hakadosh Baruch Hu*

*m'kayem* (if a *tzaddik* issues a decree, Hashem will fulfill it).

In response, the Rebbe began the next *sicha* by saying that instead of each person deciding what they can do, they're looking to give the Rebbe a new *avoda*...

"I know what I need to do. When it comes to matters that need a *bracha*, I bring a note to the *tziyun*, and my father-in-law certainly fulfills the *bracha* (whether in a manner of '*tzaddik gozer*' or in some other way).

"When it comes to bringing Moshiach, I know what I need to do, and I'm doing it to the best of my ability. Instead of giving me more jobs, I'll be alright without it; everyone should decide what they personally can do in this matter."

The Rebbe concluded:

"We spoke previously that each person must do all they can to bring Moshiach. Beginning with an increase in Torah study—*nigleh* and Chassidus—and elevating their mitzvah observance to a level of *hiddur*..."

## Dollars

As usual, the Rebbe greeted thousands of visitors each Sunday, offering *brachos* and advice and giving each one a dollar for *tzedakah*. This month, there were only three Sundays with dollars, as the third Sunday was the second day of Pesach.

### SCARED?

On Sunday, 2 Nissan, the Rebbe was visited by an individual who said that he was in Eretz Yisroel while the SCUD missiles were falling, and it had a very negative effect on his health. As such, he consulted a *rav*, who advised him not to return to Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe responded, "This *rav* is a frum Yid. Do we need to explain to him what Eretz Yisroel is?!"

A woman came to the Rebbe saying that her doctor advised her to get a sonogram, and the Rebbe said, "If two doctors tell you to do it, then you should. May it help you get better."

### BEFORE YOU WERE BORN

Rabbi Shagalow of FREE introduced Rabbi Nochum Tzvi Josephy, the *rav* of Beis Midrash Hagadol of Boro Park, to the Rebbe. Rabbi Josephy told the Rebbe that he's thankful to Rabbi Shagalow for bringing him here, and the Rebbe replied: "He brought you here? You learned in Tomchei Temimim before he was born!"



THE REBBE RECITES HAVDALA, MOTZEI PESACH.

### NEVER ALONE

An individual asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for good health, and the Rebbe wished him long and healthy years. Then the man told the Rebbe that he had no one in the world; he was all alone. The Rebbe said, "You have Hashem!"

One of the police officers who escorted the Rebbe on his trips to the Ohel asked the Rebbe to give him a Jewish name. His English name was Donald. The Rebbe told him to choose between Don and Dovid and thanked him for his protection.

A young boy told the Rebbe that he studied the whole Parshas Bereishis by heart in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

"When was this?" the Rebbe asked.

"Last week," the boy said.

The Rebbe gave him an additional dollar and told him to give it to *tzedakah* for his learning, may it be even better than it has been until now.

### IS IT A SHIDDUCH?

A woman asked the Rebbe if it's permissible for her to marry a man who works on Shabbos, and the Rebbe told her to ask a *rav*.

"Tell the *rav* all the details," the Rebbe said, "and add that you feel that you'll soon be able to influence the man

THE REBBE  
ENTERS THE OHEL  
ON 27 NISSAN,  
HOURS BEFORE  
THE SICHA OF  
28 NISSAN.



DELIVERING THE SICHA ON THE EVE OF 28 NISSAN.

[to start keeping Shabbos]. Still, you need to get a *rav's* approval, since soon it'll be Shabbos, then Pesach, then many more Shabbasos. May Hashem help you to make the right decision."

## ROCKY BUDGET

On Sunday, 9 Nissan, many people gave the Rebbe *brachos* in honor of his upcoming birthday, and the Rebbe wished them in return to be blessed by Hashem Himself.

Mr. Donald Halperin from the New York State Senate budget and revenue committee came to the Rebbe to wish him well in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. The Rebbe wished him to be blessed in return by Hashem, and that he should always have good news to report, "because Albany is a most important city in New York."

The senator told the Rebbe that they were experiencing many difficulties with the budget, and the Rebbe said, "Here in America, if you have problems with your budget, it's a good sign. If the budget is too smooth, it means you're not getting enough done."

The senator was pleased. "Now I have a new way of looking at it," he said.

The Rebbe wished him, "May Hashem help you to see

things a little differently, and with a joyous approach—which will bring even more success."

## YOU MUST DO IT!

Sunday, 30 Nissan, was only three days after the Rebbe said the powerful *sicha* about the need to bring Moshiach. Several people asked the Rebbe about it, and the Rebbe addressed them poignantly.

An individual from another community came to the Rebbe and said: Perhaps it would be a good idea for the Rebbe to go to Eretz Yisroel and daven with all the Yidden at the Kosel for Moshiach to come.

The Rebbe replied: "I already said that at this time I'm giving advice to others. You don't need to give me advice as to what to do."

The man apologized, saying that he was not, *chas v'shalom*, trying to give the Rebbe advice.

The Rebbe said, "I don't mind if people give suggestions. It's just that some people use it as an excuse instead of doing something on their own."

The Rebbe concluded, "Don't be intimidated by my sharp tone (*"b'roigez"*), because I'm not upset..."

One woman told the Rebbe that every time she comes to the Rebbe, Hashem puts a thought in her mind, and she knows what to say. But this time she's drawing a blank. She thought this meant that the Rebbe should tell her something.

"What I have to tell you," the Rebbe said, "is that you should see to it that Yidden should bring Moshiach, instead of giving me more work. *Besuros tovos.*" **1**

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg (Twinsburg, OH)

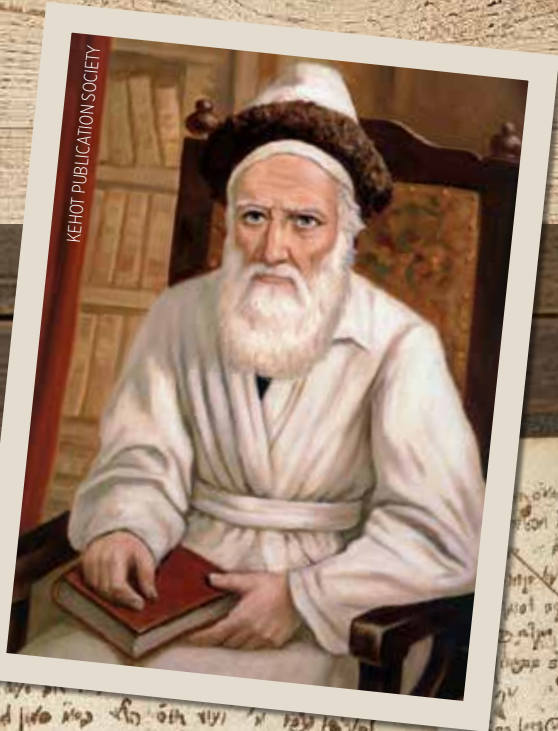
# Endless Waters

THE TORAH *of the*  
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Presented in connection with the  
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לזכות  
החיילות בצבאות ה'  
אסתר מרים תחיל  
לרגל יום הולדתה ט' ניסן

ואחותה חיל' מושקא תחיל  
נדפס ע"י  
הוריהם הרח"ת ר' מנחם מענדל  
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו  
טרייטעל



ספרי - אוצר הספרים - ליובאוויטש

היכל  
הספרי

ספר

# צמח צדק

הידושים אליבא ההלכתא  
על שיחא סדרי משנה נגמרא

ס א ת

בביר סודות אדוננו מורנו ורבנו חידול תנאן תאמרי תאלמי  
חסידא קרישא אורי פולם נבי ישראל ותפארתו סודות ה'  
מינה ורבנא **מנחם מענדל**  
ס ליובאוויטש

הוצאת שני' עם תוספות וסולואים



# THE SOUL OF TORAH

On Pesach 5727, the Rebbe and Rashag sat at the table in the Frieddiker Rebbe's apartment for a Yom Tov *seuda*. During the meal, Rashag relayed a request to the Rebbe: "The *bochurim* requested the publication of *Hemshech Samech Vov!*"

It was quite common for the *bochurim* to convey questions and requests to the Rebbe through Rashag at these *seudos*. In this case, however, the Rebbe responded pointedly:

"A terrible *rachmanus* on them—they don't have anything to learn... *Several new seforim were just published!*"<sup>1</sup>

In the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, few *sifrei Chassidus* were available in print. Funds were limited, and publishing new *seforim* was a costly undertaking. Yet somehow, there was always enough money to publish the set the Rebbe was referring to in that conversation: Ohr HaTorah—the teachings of the Tzemach Tzedek.

Beginning in the mid-5720s, the volumes of Ohr HaTorah began to appear at such a rapid pace that the Rebbe himself remarked—once again in conversation with Rashag—that the *yungeleit* were voicing a complaint.

"When one *bichel* was published each year," they said, "it was possible to learn it through. Now, before you even begin one volume, another has already appeared!"<sup>2</sup>

It was clear that Kehos's publishing decisions were

guided directly by the Rebbe, and the decision to prioritize the *maamarim* of the Tzemach Tzedek puzzled many. Foundational works such as *Hemshech Samech-Vov* and *Hemshech Ayin-Beis* were still available only in mimeograph form, while Ohr HaTorah—which seemed to draw far less demand—was being published steadily and consistently.

At another Yom Tov *seuda*, Rashag raised the question directly. "Why," he asked, "is Ohr HaTorah being published, when these *maamarim* are too difficult for the broader public to comprehend?"<sup>3</sup>



One who opens a volume of Ohr HaTorah can quickly feel intimidated.

The text draws on sources from the entire expanse of the Torah. The Tzemach Tzedek can reference numerous obscure *mekoros* in a single sentence. A simple example: the very first paragraph in Ohr HaTorah cites *pesukim* from Yeshaya, a Gemara in Brachos, three citations from Zohar, "*Sifrei Hateva*," and numerous *maamarim* from the Alter Rebbe—citing them all concisely while weaving them into the structure of the *maamar*.

Another challenge is the organization. On any given page in Ohr HaTorah, you might find a cryptic one-line comment on a Midrash, a few paragraphs on a *possuk*, or a full-length *maamar*.

As a result, one might easily conclude that this *limud* is not for him. The hurdles can seem insurmountable.

However, the Rebbe spoke about it very differently!

When Rashag asked the Rebbe why Ohr HaTorah was being prioritized, the Rebbe began to speak at length about its wonders.

"It has incredible *reichkeit*," the Rebbe said. "Even a young child can see it." It combines Bavli, Yerushalmi, Sifri, Sifra, Kabbalah, Eitz Chaim, Pri Eitz Chaim, Midrash. A *darshan* can use it for speeches, and it can be used to be *mekarev Yidden*—just by showing them its incredible richness. "Even in many *sifrei nigleh*," the Rebbe said, "I haven't found such a *reichkeit*."<sup>6</sup> The theme of being *mekarev Yidden* through Ohr HaTorah was repeated by the Rebbe in a *sicha* about making gatherings for Torah study on Shabbos ("*hakholas kehillos*") at the beginning of 5750. The Rebbe said that at those gatherings, a *possuk*



ONE OF THE VOLUMES OF OHR HATORAH PRINTED IN THE 5720S. THE DATE IS '25 ADAR II', THE REBBETZIN'S BIRTHDAY.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

FOR THE MAAMAR “VAYOMER ELOKIM TADSHEI HA’ARETZ DESHE’, THE TZEMACH TZEDEK WROTE THIS LENGTHY LIST OF SOURCES, CITING NUMEROUS TEXTS FROM GEMARA, MIDRASH, AND KABBALAH. THIS LIST IS PRINTED AS A PREFACE TO THIS MAAMAR IN OHR HATORAH, BEREISHIS VOL. 1, PAGE 33.

from the weekly parsha should be learned with a *pirush* of *nigleh* and a *pirush* of *Chassidus*, “and to spare the search, there are readily available *maamarim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, published in *Ohr HaTorah!*”

The Rebbe clearly placed extraordinary value in the *seforim* of *Ohr HaTorah* and the *Chassidus* of the Tzemach Tzedek.

To get a taste of what those *seforim* contain, we interviewed Rabbi Eli Matusof and Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Keller, members of *Ma’areches Otzar Hachassidim*, the team appointed by the Rebbe to edit and publish the *kesovim* of the Rabbeim.



Rabbi Matusof explains:

“To appreciate the style of the Tzemach Tzedek’s *Chassidus*, we need to take a step back and look at the *Chassidus* of the Mittlerer Rebbe and the Alter Rebbe.

“*Chassidus* is full of descriptions of the *olamos ha’ely-onim*—Seder Hishtalshelus, the Sefiros, and so on. But those are not original to *Toras HaChassidus*; they are brought from Kabbalah, especially from the Kabbalah of the Arizal and his *talmidim*.

## THE REBBE’S PERSONAL MATTER

Even the dates chosen for the release of *Ohr HaTorah* point to the significance the Rebbe attached to this work.

One volume was released for *Vov Tishrei* 5725, the next on 5 Av 5725. The following one appeared for *Vov Tishrei* 5726, and the next one on 28 Teves 5726. While generally, new *seforim* were dated to *Yomei D’Pagra* or to *Yomim Tovim*, all four of these dates are connected to Rebbetzin Chana (the day of her passing, the *siyum hakaddish*, the first *yahrtzeit*, and her birthday). Later volumes also have dates connected to the Rebbe’s immediate family, such as *Yud-Aleph Nissan* (the Rebbe’s birthday), *Chof-Hei Adar* (the Rebbetzin’s birthday), *Yud-Gimmel Iyar* (the Rebbe’s brother’s *yahrtzeit*), and *Chof Av* (the Rebbe’s father’s *yahrtzeit*).<sup>4</sup> The Rebbe personally covered the cost of the publication. Even in the late 5730s, when Reb Zalman Gurary began sponsoring the publication of all *sifrei Chassidus*, the Rebbe did not allow him to sponsor *Ohr HaTorah*. “*Dos vil ich nit avekgeben*,” the Rebbe told him—I don’t want to give this away.

Another expression of the extraordinary value the Rebbe saw in the set came during another *yechidus* with Reb Zalman. On that occasion, the Rebbe spoke of his pain at not having accomplished enough—but then he turned toward the shelf of *Ohr HaTorah* and said, “*Ober dos ken keiner nisht tzu-nemen fun mir*”—this, nobody can take from me.<sup>5</sup>

## FROM KOPUST TO LUBAVITCH

“The publication of Ohr HaTorah and the Tzemach Tzedek’s Chassidus is a story in itself,” Rabbi Matusof says.

“The first person to publish the Chassidus of the Tzemach Tzedek was Reb Chaim Eliezer Bichovsky, who printed *Derech Mitzvosecha*, Ohr HaTorah—*Bereishis*, and *Yahel Ohr* on Tehillim in the 5670s, in the days of the Rebbe Rashab. He was assisted by Reb Chaim Meir Heilman, the author of Beis Rebbe. Until that point, the *maamarim* had existed only in manuscript form.

“These were very well-done volumes, but Lubavitcher Chassidim would not touch them. The publishers were Kopuster Chassidim, and in addition, Rabbi Bichovsky had been involved in a very public dispute with the Rebbe Rashab regarding Collel Chabad in Eretz Yisroel. The *seforim* were considered contraband.

“It therefore came to many as a shock when, in 5709, the Rebbe himself published Ohr HaTorah—*Parshas Shemos*, a collection of the Tzemach Tzedek’s Chassidus in the exact same format as Rabbi Bichovsky’s *Bereishis*. It sent a very clear message that it was a new generation and there was no reason to maintain the old conflict. In the words of the *possuk* in Koheles, ‘גַּם אֶהְבֶּתֶם גַּם שִׁנְאֶתֶם גַּם קִנְאֶתֶם כְּכֹר אֲבֹדָה.’”

“Due to time constraints, the release of the set didn’t continue immediately. *Parshiyos Va’era* and *Bo* were added by Rabbi Leibel Groner some years later, but the real breakthrough began when Rabbi Aharon Chitrik *a”h* was appointed to *Ma’areches Otzar Hachassidim* in the mid-5720s, and the Rebbe gave him the task of Ohr HaTorah. The volumes began to be published in rapid succession—almost every Yom Tov—until the series reached its full scope of forty-two volumes in the early 5750s.



ORIGINAL PRINT (5673) OF THE FIRST VOLUME OF OHR HATORAH.

“The central *chiddush* of the Alter Rebbe’s approach is *Chabad*—that our *minds* can appreciate and comprehend those *olamos ha’elyonim*. Even if our souls are not lofty enough to see them—as were great *tzaddikim* like the Arizal—we can use our minds to contemplate the ‘spiritual universe,’ and from there to develop *ahavas Hashem* and *yiras Hashem*.

“A central pillar of this approach is ‘מבשרי אחזה אלוה’.<sup>ה</sup> The Alter Rebbe shows how the *olamos ha’elyonim* reflect our own selves—*sefiros* correspond to the ten *kochos hanefesh*, for example—and therefore, by understanding our own selves, we gain a better understanding of our connection to Hashem.

“The Mittlerer Rebbe continues in the style of the Alter Rebbe; he takes this ‘philosophy’ introduced by the Alter Rebbe and explains it at much greater length with the backdrop of the *sifrei Kabbalah*.

“He draws on the Zohar and its commentaries, the Ramak, Reb Chaim Vital, *Mikdash Melech*, and all the *mekubalim*



RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK KELLER.



RABBI ELI MATUSOF PORING OVER MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE RABBEIM.

who followed the Arizal's path, to elaborate and introduce new *chiddushim* in the Alter Rebbe's ideas.

"Of course, like all *maamarim*, they begin as a commentary on the Torah, with a *dibbur hamaschil* and the explanations on the *possuk*, but the underlying philosophy of the *maamarim* are Kabbalah and Chassidus—the *olamos ha'elyonim* and the *nefesh ha'adam*.

"But the Tzemach Tzedek introduced a new path.

"The Tzemach Tzedek will usually begin a *maamar* by citing the Alter Rebbe. But then, after a few lines, the *hagahos* begin. The word *hagahos* makes it sound like short comments, but they often run to many pages. He takes ideas from across Torah, from *pshat*, *remez*, *drush* and *sod*, and brings them into one coherent whole with the *maamar* at hand. It could be *meforshei haTorah* like the *pshat* explanations of the *Bechaye* and the *Rikanti*, or a *sugya* in Gemara about a *bayis* and *aliyah*, and even *sifrei chakirah* like *Ikrim* and *Kuzari*—the Tzemach Tzedek shows how an explanation of Chassidus could illuminate them all.

"He showed how the Alter Rebbe's Torah wasn't just a *derech* in *machsheves Yisrael* and *musar*. He showed how these concepts were at the core of the entire Torah—how they truly are *nishmasa d'oraysa*. This, of course, is central to the Rebbe's own Torah: that *Toras HaChassidus* is not just one stream of Torah, but the inner core of all of Torah.

"There is an incredible *geshmak* in this approach. Every few lines in Ohr HaTorah has a new *chiddush*, a new illuminating insight into some aspect of Torah. The Tzemach Tzedek takes what seems like a random or misunderstood idea in Torah and opens it up, showing its full depth and its full reach. And the *geshmak* is all the more for someone who knows the entire Torah, for a *gaon*—in that case, one might say, the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah is simply addictive."



"However, for the average person, there are several challenges when approaching Ohr HaTorah," Rabbi Matusof continues.

"The first is simply its size—forty-two volumes of Ohr HaTorah, plus many other published works of the Tzemach Tzedek's Chassidus. The Tzemach Tzedek was a prolific writer. He wrote and wrote and wrote—Chassidus and *nigleh*, *teshuvos*, *maamarim*—far more than the other Rabbeim, who wrote prolifically themselves.

"This is evident in the *kisvei yad* at the Rebbe's library today.

"The Rebbe's library contains some three thousand

*bichlach*—bound manuscript volumes—with 'Chabad' content, and of those, about four hundred are *guf ksav yad kodesh*—the original writings with the handwriting of the Rabbeim themselves.<sup>8</sup>

"Very little is from the Alter Rebbe, because he didn't write his *maamarim*; there are some thirty volumes from the Mitteler Rebbe, some forty from the Rebbe Maharash, and many from the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe.

"But the most come from the Tzemach Tzedek. Between eighty and one hundred volumes are filled to

## AN EXAGGERATION?

When the Tzemach Tzedek began writing his *chiddushim* in *nigleh* and Chassidus, the Alter Rebbe told him, with a twist of the Mishnah, "*Vi'kaneh lecha chaver*, the pen is a friend for you."<sup>10</sup>

The Tzemach Tzedek wrote constantly. Chassidim relate that he had an inkwell and pen in every room of his house, always ready for him to write something down. He would do so on occasion even in the middle of davening.<sup>11</sup>

According to a tradition recorded in the *hakdama* to the original *Derech Mitzvosecha*, the Tzemach Tzedek authored no fewer than twenty-four thousand *boigen* (8-page-pamphlets)<sup>12</sup> over his lifetime.<sup>13</sup> The Frierdiker Rebbe repeated in the name of the Rebbe Maharash that the number stood at sixty thousand *boigen*—amounting to more than three *boigen* written every single day!<sup>14</sup>

The Rebbe once referred to the figure cited in *Derech Mitzvosecha* and noted that he had initially assumed it was a *guzma*, an exaggeration. But seeing how much of the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah had already been published, and how much still remained, the Rebbe said it became clear that the number was accurate—and perhaps even an underestimate.<sup>15</sup>

the brim with his own personal handwriting—and that’s besides the vast number of volumes which contain his Chassidus in the handwriting of others.”



“There is also a challenge with the organization,” says Rabbi Matusof.

“The Tzemach Tzedek’s Torah comes in many categories. Just in Chassidus alone—without accounting for all the *nigleh*—there are ‘*reshimos*,’ where he might quote numerous *midrashim* or segments of Zohar or Gemara on a *possuk*, and perhaps connect them with Chassidus. There

are *kitzurim* and *roshei perokim*—for example, on parts of Tanya and on many of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim*. There are *hagahos* on the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe, and there are the *maamarim* themselves—some from the Alter Rebbe, some original. Often, the categories will mix, with one type suddenly morphing into another.

This was clearly a problem for the original publishers of Ohr HaTorah [see sidebar], and for that reason, the *seforim* were simply organized according to *pesukim*. And for that reason, when the Rebbe ‘picked up where they left off,’ so to speak, the same order was continued.”



Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Keller has done considerable work to organize the writings of the Tzemach Tzedek.

“The truth is,” he explains, “although the organization of Ohr HaTorah could seem very confusing, going back to the *bichlach* in the Rebbe’s library actually can be very helpful.

“Ohr HaTorah is not simply a series of *maamarim* delivered during the Tzemach Tzedek’s *nesius*, rearranged by parshah. We are looking at something far broader in scope. It is the systematic organization of all of the Alter Rebbe’s Torah—a massive project

## EDITING SEFORIM IN THE REBBE’S ROOM

Rabbi Matusof relates:

“The Rebbe had an early handwritten version of *Likkutei Torah*—*Bamidbar* and *Devarim*. Both are very large volumes, with about 1000 pages bound in each, in which the *hagahos* from the Tzemach Tzedek differ substantially from the printed version.

“In contrast to most *kesovim*, which the Rebbe sent to the library, the Rebbe kept these original *kisvei yad* in his own room.

“Sometimes I needed access to those volumes in the course of my work. The Rebbe would under no circumstances allow the *seforim* to leave his room; instead, he told Rabbi Groner that we could be allowed into his room while he was at the Ohel. We were welcome to stay as long as we needed to copy everything by hand.

“This happened several times. Rabbi Groner told me to knock on the door at a certain time, and I would be granted access. It was very special to be in the Rebbe’s room, especially in those years, but of course, I didn’t get busy looking around—I was there for a very specific and very urgent reason, so I was very focused and didn’t really get distracted.”



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

ONE OF THE EARLIEST EXTANT MANUSCRIPTS OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK, IN WHICH HE TRANSCRIBED A MAAMAR OF THE ALTER REBBE (‘SHEMA YISRAEL’) FROM THE YEAR 5566.

the Tzemach Tzedek undertook after the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*, and never really stopped.

“The Rebbe’s library is full of handwritten volumes of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim*, organized according to parshah, prepared and edited in the handwriting of the Tzemach Tzedek. The Tzemach Tzedek rewrote them, edited them, organized them according to *pesukim*, and added his own *hagahos*. He often had someone copy an entire *bichel*, and then he would add *hagahos* again—sometimes, there are three or four versions of the same *maamar*, each more extensive than the last.

“They were no longer simply *hanachos* of a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe; these had received a new form from the Tzemach Tzedek.

“The centerpiece of this project is the publication of Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah. We view them as *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe, but they are carefully edited by the Tzemach Tzedek. Sometimes a *dibbur hamaschil* is added. Sometimes, a short *maamar* is inserted into the flow of a longer one. The famous *maamar* of Adam Ki Yakriv, for example, is based on the Tzemach Tzedek’s personal *hanacha* of the *maamar* which the Alter Rebbe delivered in 5572, the last Vayikra before his *histalkus*, but it also includes insertions from the *hanacha* of the Mittlerer Rebbe.<sup>16</sup>

“*Maamarim* like these form the bulk of Ohr HaTorah. It is essentially a reworking of the entirety of Toras Hachassidus.”



“Of course, the Tzemach Tzedek delivered his own *maamarim* as well,” Rabbi Keller points out. “We have a full *bichel* in which the Tzemach Tzedek wrote his *maamarim* during the winter of 5600, called *Bichel ‘Hashomayim Mesaprim.’* We also have many *hanachos* from the Rebbe Maharash and his brother the Maharin from Niezchin, as well as from various Chassidim, such as Reb Hillel Paritcher and Reb Berel Kalisker.

“However, there is significant overlap. Many of his *maamarim* were closely based on those of the Alter Rebbe, and many of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* recorded in his compilations are actually *maamarim* he delivered himself.

“*Torah Ohr* and *Likkutei Torah* are again a good example.

“Many of the *maamarim* were actually delivered by the Tzemach Tzedek in the early years of his *nesius*, and the *marei mekomos* at the end of the *sefer* often note where you can find the exact same *maamar* in Ohr HaTorah. *Adam Ki Yakriv*, to use the same example, was delivered

by the Tzemach Tzedek in the year 5591 (combined with the *maamar Vayikra* which directly precedes it in Likkutei Torah).<sup>17</sup> The *maamarim* in *Torah Or* were usually printed without the Tzemach Tzedek’s additions, but one can often open Ohr HaTorah and learn the identical *maamar* with all the *hagahos* as well.”



“Viewing the *maamarim* in Ohr HaTorah from the perspective of *kisvei yad*,” says Rabbi Keller, “makes them much more approachable.

“Imagine taking all the *maamarim* of the Rebbe Rashab and organizing them by parshah. It would also be difficult to navigate! A *maamar* from 5643 next to a *maamar* from 5672 would be very jarring. Learning through Ohr HaTorah isn’t much different.

“However, you could follow the order of the *kisvei yad*.”

“For example: in Ohr HaTorah—*Bereishis* vol. 6, the *parshiyos* of *Vayeshev* through *Vayechi* all come from one specific *bichel*, a collection of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* which the Tzemach Tzedek wrote during the *nesius* of the Mittlerer Rebbe. Although they are not *hemshechim*, those *maamarim* have a unified style and a continued flow, which makes it much easier to learn.

“You could also learn the *maamarim* in the order they were delivered by the Tzemach Tzedek. In 5754, Kehos released a volume which I edited for print, *Reshimas Maamarei Da’ch Shel Kevod Kedushas Admu”r HaTzemach Tzedek*, which is a list—organized by date—of all the *maamarim* the Tzemach Tzedek delivered.

“In earlier years, organizing the *maamarim* in this way would have been almost impossible, but as the collection of *bichlach* in the Rebbe’s library grew, it became possible to determine many of the dates the *maamarim* were delivered. Sometimes we have *bichlach* with a full year of *maamarim*; sometimes we have *maamarim* dated by *manichim*, and sometimes they were dated by the Tzemach Tzedek himself.

“These make the *maamarim* far easier to navigate. The *maamarim* are still incredibly deep, but they are much more approachable.”<sup>18</sup>



This entire section has dealt with only one element of the Tzemach Tzedek’s Torah: his writings on Toras HaChassidus.

But then there is an entirely different dimension as well: the world of Nigleh.

# A GUIDE TO MULTITUDES

It was a dark, windy Elul night in Lubavitch in the later years of the Tzemach Tzedek's *nesius*, when a terrible fire broke out. A visiting wagon driver had been careless when lighting his pipe, and the entire town was going up in flames.

The Rebbe Maharash raced out of his home to ensure the safety of his father, the Tzemach Tzedek. He quickly arranged his safe transport out of the town, and then he raced on to the next priority: the *kesavim*.

Due to fear of government searches, the Tzemach Tzedek had given three chests of *kesavim* to three different Chassidim—the butcher, the *moreh tzedek*, and the bookbinder. The Rebbe Maharash first ran to Reb Todros the butcher's home. After ascertaining the safety of the *kesavim* there, he ran on to the home of the *moreh tzedek*, only to find it on fire. The *moreh tzedek* was dragging a large chest out, and without thinking twice, the Rebbe

Maharash approached to help him.

“Are all the *kesavim* here?” the Rebbe Maharash asked.

“Oy!!” the *moreh tzedek* cried out in shock. He had forgotten entirely about the *kesavim*—the chest contained just honey...<sup>19</sup>

Priceless treasures were lost that night.

The majority of the *kesavim* lost were in *nigleh*. There were 500 *boigen* written on a single question in *Hilchos Chalitzta*, which he had begun writing at the behest of the Alter Rebbe, and had rewritten and expanded upon five full times. There were full *simanim* of Halacha meant to fill in the missing parts of the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*. Those, and so much more, went up in flames.<sup>20</sup>



In the early years of his *nesius*, many years before the great fire, the Tzemach Tzedek had collected his *teshuvos* into fourteen volumes of *kisvei yad*. Later, he reorganized them into volumes according to the four sections of *Shulchan Aruch*. Of all those volumes, only three remain—two of the *mahadura kama*, and one of the *mahadura basra*.

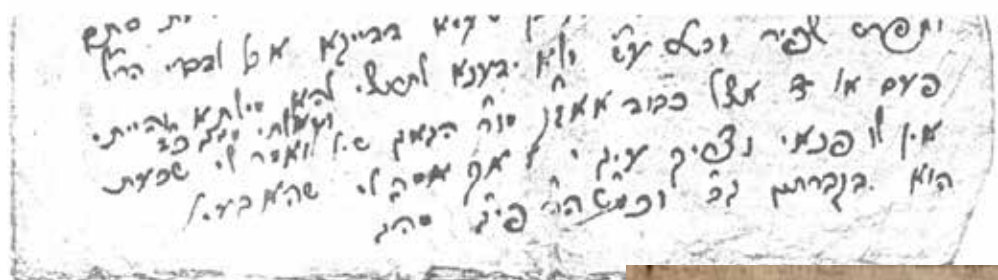
Many *teshuvos* were later collected from their recipients, but it is still clear that the approximately 1,000 responsa published in *Shalos Uteshuvos Tzemach Tzedek* are only a small fraction of what he actually wrote. In fact, in sheer numbers, the Tzemach Tzedek was one of the greatest *meishivim* of his generation.

Looking at the names published in the *mafteichos* already gives one an inkling of the scope of his writing. Questions reached him from *rabbanim* throughout the Russian empire, and numerous dialogues were held with other major poskim of his generation, like the *Pischei Teshuvah*, the *Beis Efraim*, *Mishkenos Yaakov*, the *Tzanzer Rav* (*Divrei Chayim*), and others.

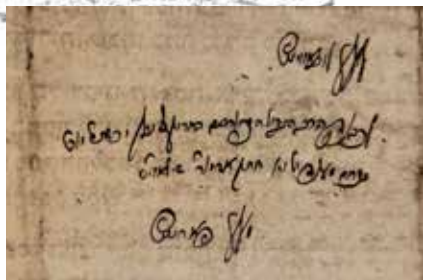
Most of the questions came, naturally, from *chassidische rabbanim*. This was a continuation of a process that had begun with the Alter Rebbe. The Rabbeim in later generations rarely answered halachic questions, but the Alter Rebbe—the author of the *Shulchan Aruch*—did very much correspond on halachic issues, and it was only natural for the *rabbanim* among his Chassidim to turn to him for guidance. When unable to personally respond due to time constraints, the Alter Rebbe would refer questions



A PAGE FROM A VOLUME OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK'S *KESAVIM* THAT WAS SALVAGED FROM THE FIRE. NOTICE THE SCORCHED EDGES.



ONE OF THE EARLIEST EXTANT TESHUVOS OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK (UNDATED, BUT) WRITTEN IN THE ALTER REBBE'S LIFETIME. THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT REMAINS IN EXILE IN RUSSIA.



A SHAILA SENT TO LUBAVITCH ADDRESSED TO HARAV M. M., 'THE SON-IN-LAW OF THE REBBE שילאוי"ט.

to his brother, Reb Yehudah Leib (Maharil).  
 After the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*, questions continued arriving at the Rebbes' household. The Mittlerer Rebbe did not usually write *teshuvos*, so the Maharil remained the main address for the first few years. At some point, however, the Tzemach Tzedek began answering as well.

The Chassidim in those years wrote under the assumption that the answer was being approved by the Mittlerer Rebbe himself. "Surely," one query says, "the answer of your exaltedness will be with the knowledge of the Rebbe, *sheyichye*."<sup>21</sup> After the passing of the Maharil and the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek became the sole address of those questions.

Often, the Tzemach Tzedek would write numerous *teshuvos* on a single topic. There was an *aguna* whose husband had disappeared after traveling from Shklov to Bucharest, and news had arrived from Bucharest that someone with his name had died. In *Tzemach Tzedek-Even Ha'ezzer*, the publishers note that there had been an entire volume of his *shakla v'tarya* with other *gedolei yisroel*, but it had all been lost. Only two *teshuvos* remained.<sup>22</sup> The Tzemach Tzedek wrote so voluminously that people began to wonder when he had time for anything else! In a story recorded in *Likkutei Sippurim*, a Polisher chossid asked his Rebbe, "Reb Mendele Lubavitcher—when does he *praveh* with his Chassidim? On the night of Erev Yom Kippur, he wrote three *teshuvos* in *Even Ha'ezzer*! When does he have time for Chassidim??"<sup>23</sup>



The Tzemach Tzedek wasn't the *rav* of his town.<sup>24</sup> Lubavitch had its own *moreh tzedek* who answered regular *shaalos*, and only more difficult issues would reach the Rebbe.

This is reflected in the style of his *teshuvos*.  
 Other *poskim*, especially those who served as *rabbanim* in their own cities, write their *teshuvos* to be accessible to a larger audience. After presenting a question, they lay out the entire *sugya*—from the Gemara to the latest *poskim*—and then proceed with their answer.

The Tzemach Tzedek does nothing of the sort. Those turning to him for guidance are usually *rabbanim* who are already well-versed in the relevant *sugya*, so the Tzemach Tzedek has no need to repeat it. He jumps right into the *sugya*, assuming the reader knows the relevant sources by heart. As a result, the *teshuvos* seem quite difficult to understand for the average *talmid*. (In recent years, *Kehos* released a new edition of the *teshuvos* of *Orach Chaim*, which cites the *mekoros* at length, making those *teshuvos* much easier to navigate.)

The main topics addressed in the Tzemach Tzedek's *teshuvos*—although they span the entirety of halacha—are *gittin*, *agunos*, and *treifos*. There is a significant focus on the question of writing names in *Gittin* as well.

One aspect that is immediately evident is the Tzemach Tzedek's humility. "The Rebbe commanded us," he writes of the Mittlerer Rebbe in one *teshuvah*, "to look into this matter of resolving an *agunah* ... and although we know our lowly status—that we aren't worthy of writing answers to distant lands—nonetheless, *ein mesarvin lagadol*, one does not refuse the request of a great person."<sup>25</sup>

There were often cases in which two disagreeing *rabbanim* would write to the Tzemach Tzedek for an opinion. In some instances, the Tzemach Tzedek voiced his displeasure about being asked to enter a *machlokes*, but he would answer anyway. However, he would never give a *chavas daas*, a halachic opinion, to one side of a *din Torah*—even to the *rav* representing that side. He would respond only if asked by both parties.

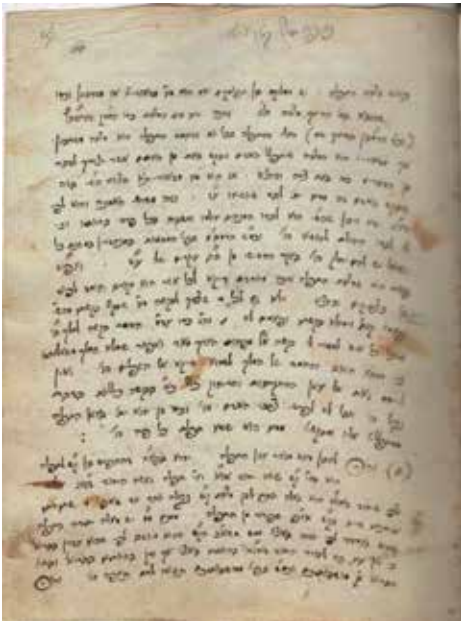
Many *teshuvos*, especially those that involve permitting an *eishes ish* to remarry, include a request that the *rav* obtain the approval of two other major *poskim* before proceeding with the *psak din*. This is relatively common among *poskim*, but what is more unusual is the Tzemach Tzedek's engagement with the *poskim* of his day.

Most major *poskim* do not cite their contemporaries; they base their *teshuvos* on the *poskim* of previous generations. But the Tzemach Tzedek is perfectly comfortable citing ideas and *svaros* of the *poskim* of his day, treating them with great respect.

Interestingly, the Tzemach Tzedek does not always adopt the Alter Rebbe's view. He will cite the Alter Rebbe's rulings and deliberate on them, but there are plenty of instances where he does not reach the same conclusion.



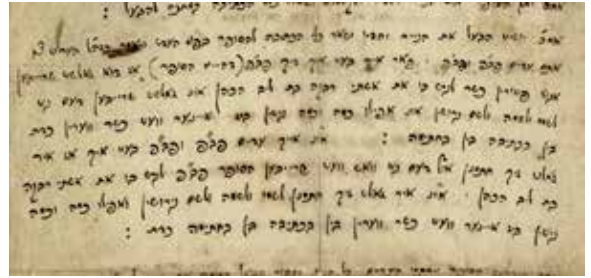
Aside from regular *teshuvos*, there are a few other categories of Torah writings published in *shu"t* Tzemach Tzedek.



A SHORT TESHUVA BY THE TZEMACH TZEDEK FROM THE MID 5580'S, WRITTEN UNDER THE SHAILA THAT WAS RECEIVED.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

One category is the *psak hakatzer*—a short, clear set of instructions as to what should be done in the case, separate from the scholarly *teshuva* on the topic.



This image, for example, is a recently discovered handwriting of a *psak din*, in which the Tzemach Tzedek details exactly what a husband (a *mumar*) should say to the *sofer* writing a *get* to his wife.<sup>26</sup> Regarding the same case, there is a full *teshuva* to the *rav*,<sup>27</sup> another *psak hakatzer* regarding the delivery of the *get* to the wife,<sup>28</sup> and a *teshuvah* to the *rav* regarding questions that had later arisen.<sup>29</sup> Aside from *teshuvos* and *piskei dinim*, there are also *hagahos* the Tzemach Tzedek wrote on earlier *teshuvos*, and also an entirely different genre—*chiddushei Torah*, written according to the order of Shas.

These often come in several versions, some longer and some shorter. The longer versions often include the Alter Rebbe's halachic opinions, which indicates that they were likely written at a later point, when the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch was published. Sometimes, these served as templates for the *teshuvos*, with entire sections often copied into their relevant *teshuvos*.

Part of the challenge in navigating Tzemach Tzedek—similar to Ohr HaTorah—is the organization of the *sefer* itself. In the above instance, there are four *teshuvos*, published in four separate locations, despite being all about one case. This is only the tip of the iceberg. Sometimes, a half a *teshuva* will be published in one location and a second half elsewhere—in a different *sefer* altogether!

Much of this is due to the story of the publication of Tzemach Tzedek.



After the *histalkus* of the Tzemach Tzedek, two Chassidim—Reb Chaim Yaakov Vidrevitch and Reb Shimon b"r Dovid—began the work of compiling and preparing the *teshuvos* for print. Most of the content came from the collections of the Rebbe Maharash and his brother, Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman of Liadi.<sup>30</sup>

Two volumes of *Even Ho'ezzer* were released in 5631-2,

three volumes on *Yoreh De'ah* were released in 5634, *Chiddushim Al HaShas* was published in 5638, and *Orach Chaim* and two volumes of *Piskei Dinim* were completed in 5644. They named the set *Tzemach Tzedek*—the *gematria* of the name Menachem Mendel—and thereafter, the *Tzemach Tzedek* became known by this name.

Because so many of the originals had been lost, new *teshuvos* were constantly being discovered, and they were usually included in the next volume to be released. The final volume, *Piskei Dinim*, was ultimately a composite of many different things—*chiddushim* on Shulchan Aruch and Rambam, *teshuvos*, and more.

The discoveries didn't end. When the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch was republished twenty years later, many new *teshuvos* were included in the *hosafos*. In 5706, when the Rebbe republished the set of *Tzemach Tzedek* with sources and *ha'aros*, he published a new volume with *Choshen Mishpat*<sup>31</sup> which included many additional discoveries. Kehos's new edition of the *Piskei Dinim* in 5732 included many additions, and another full volume of *miluim* was published by Kehos in 5738. Yet further *teshuvos* were published in journals such as *Yagdil Torah*.

Finally, in 5749, the Rebbe gave a broad instruction to reprint all the old *seforim* that had been published in Rashi script, in new, regular typeset.<sup>32</sup> This time, an attempt was made to deal with the chaos.

Work began on a new *Tzemach Tzedek*. Trying to preserve some sense of continuity from the earlier set, the new edition has the same *tzuras hadaf* and follows the same volume structure. Instead of incorporating the

new material in their appropriate place—and thereby renumbering all the *simanim*—the decision was made to include them as *hosafos* in their respective *seforim*—all *Orach Chaim* additions at the end of the original *Orach Chaim*, etc. This edition appeared in 5754. An additional *shaar hamiluim* was printed in 5769, with material discovered in Russia.

Only in recent years (as mentioned earlier), Kehos has begun work on an entirely new and improved edition. So far, *Orach Chaim* has been released in two volumes, with new typesetting, voluminous footnotes, and clear, organized formatting, making it far easier to navigate. Additional volumes are in various stages of preparation.



At the *farbrengen* of the *Kinus Hashluchim* 5751, the Rebbe spoke in wondrous terms about the revelation of the *Tzemach Tzedek's* Torah.

The Rebbe noted that as the darkness of *galus* increases, the revelations of *Toras HaChassidus* have increased, generation after generation.

In recent years, the Rebbe said, the revelations have become unprecedented—*l'maala mimedida v'hagbala*—with treasures that had remained hidden for generations suddenly becoming revealed for all to learn and understand.

The Rebbe singled out one specific example:

“Especially the Torah of the *Tzemach Tzedek*—two names which are the names of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, who will teach *pnimiyus hatorah* to the entire Jewish nation.”<sup>33</sup>



ONE OF THE FIRST VOLUMES OF 'TZEMACH TZEDEK' PRINTED IN 5631.



THE ORIGINAL KEHOS EDITION OF TZEMACH TZEDEK FROM THE 5700S.



THE UPDATED EDITION OF TZEMACH TZEDEK, PRINTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN REGULAR TYPESET.

\* 5638-1878, 5644-1884, 5706-1946, 5732-1972, 5738-1978, 5749-1989, 5754-1994, 5769-2009, 5751-1990, 5671-1911, 5700s-1940s

# BIBLIOGRAPHY:

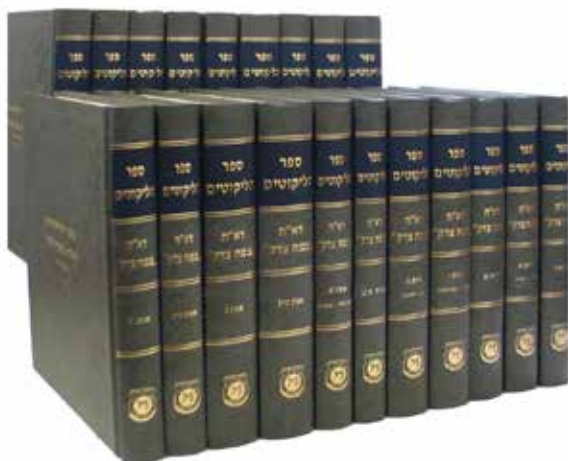
**Maamarei Admur Hazaken:** In addition to organizing the Alter Rebbe's Torah, the Tzemach Tzedek wrote many *hanachos*—transcripts of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*—during the Alter Rebbe's lifetime. For example, the Rebbe's library has two full volumes of the Tzemach Tzedek's handwriting with organized *hanachos* from the years 5571 and 5572.

The earliest *hanacha* is a summary of a *maamar* delivered in 5567, when he was seventeen years old (although it may be a *kitzur* based on a *hanacha* of the Mittlerer Rebbe).

Of course, these are not categorized as Torah of the Tzemach Tzedek; they are published in the set of Maamarei Admur Hazaken.

**Derech Mitzvosecha:** This is actually a composite of two separate works of the Tzemach Tzedek, *Taamei Hamitzvos* and *Shoresh Mitzvos Hatefillah*. The text refers to the Alter Rebbe as *zy" a* and the Mittlerer Rebbe as *do" ch* [= *dodi chami*, my uncle and father-in-law] *sheyichye*, which indicates that this version was written during the *nesius* of the Mittlerer Rebbe.<sup>34</sup>

Unlike the later chassidus which incorporates a lot of *nigleh*," says Rabbi Matusof, "this is written in the style of the Alter Rebbe—with Kabbalah and Chassidus alone. In fact, the vast majority is culled directly from the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe; in the endnotes to the new Derech Mitzvosecha, we identify the source of every single mitzvah. Only *Haamanas Elokus* seems to be entirely new, in a style similar to *Sefer HaChakirah*.



"He first introduces the mitzvah as it is explained in Kabbalah, and then proceeds to introduce the Alter Rebbe's ideas—entirely rewritten in very beautiful and rich language. The Tzemach Tzedek would often describe the Alter Rebbe's language as '*leshono hazahav*,' but I think we could say the same about the Tzemach Tzedek's writing in *Derech Mitzvosecha*."

**Ohr HaTorah:** The main bulk of the Tzemach Tzedek's *maamarim* and *reshimos*, organized by topic—Torah, Nevi'im, Kesuvim, and so on.

**Biurei HaZohar:** Essentially a continuation of Ohr HaTorah, these contain the Tzemach Tzedek's *maamarim* and *reshimos* on Zohar.

**Yahel Ohr:** The *maamarim* and *reshimos*—mostly *reshimos*—on Tehillim.

**Kitzurim V'Haaros:** The Tzemach Tzedek wrote many comments on Tanya and many *kitzurim* as well. The first version was prepared by the Rebbe himself in 5708. Right before Erev Rosh Hashanah 5750, marking two hundred years since the Tzemach Tzedek's birth, the Rebbe asked if anything updated had been prepared. By *hashgacha pratis*, a new and improved version had actually *just* been completed—and the Rebbe distributed it to all men, women, and children on the night of Erev Rosh Hashanah.

**Sefer Hachakirah—Derech Emunah:** When the Czarist government began pressuring Jewish communities to 'modernize' the education system, the Tzemach Tzedek and other Gedolei Yisroel were called to a conference in S. Petersburg where they debated the topics with the maskilim. Many of the discussions were based on philosophy—the proofs for the existence of Hashem, *Matan Torah*, and similar questions discussed in *sifrei Chakirah*. In the years that followed, the Tzemach Tzedek wrote several long essays modeled as *hagahos* to parts of famous *chakirah seforim*—*Emunos V'Deios* of Rabbeinu Saadya Gaon, *Milchamos Hashem* of the Ralbag, and *Yesod Ho'emunah* and *Kuzri*—explaining the concepts as they are illuminated by Kabbalah and Toras Hachassidus.

In the *ksavim* of the Rabbeim, this volume was called *Sefer Hachakirah*, or plainly, *Hachakirah*, but it later became known by the name given by the publisher: *Derech Emunah*. Therefore, the Rebbe instructed that both be included on the cover.



**Maamarei Admur HaTzemach Tzedek—Hanachos:**

Unlike all the previous *seforim*, these are *maamarim* written not by the Rebbe but by the *manichim*—the *manich* often being the Tzemach Tzedek’s son, the Rebbe Maharasha

**Tzemach Tzedek:** A composite of all the Tzemach Tzedek’s Nigleh writings—see above.

**Sefer HaLikutim:** In 5737, the Rebbe asked that the Torah of the Tzemach Tzedek be used as the basis for a comprehensive encyclopedia of Toras Hachassidus. This massive project was undertaken by the bochorim of 770 and completed seven years later. The 27-volume set cites selections of Ohr HaTorah by topic, organized by Aleph Beis.

**Igros Kodesh:** A volume of ‘regular’ letters—those not included in the *shaalos uteshuvos*. ①

1. Hamelech B’Mesibo vol. 1, p. 151.
2. Hamelech B’Mesibo vol. 2, p. 91.
3. Hamelech B’Mesibo vol. 1, p. 102.
4. Hiskashrus 1002, Nitzotzei Rebbe.
5. Bichol Beisi Neeman Hu p. 258–9.
6. Hamelech B’Mesibo vol. 1, p. 102.
7. Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 1, p. 335.
8. And in the case of the Alter Rebbe, the original *hanachos* of his *manichim*, Maharil, the Mittlerer Rebbe, Reb Pinchas Reizes, and the Tzemach Tzedek.
9. 9:6. See Hamelech B’Mesibo vol. 2, p. 85, where Rashag mentions that even the Rebbe Rashab disapproved of using the *seforim*—yet the Rebbe explains that it was a *hora’as sha’ah*, a temporary edict.
10. Sefer Hatoldos Tzemach Tzedek p. 214.
11. Likkutei Sippurim p. 198.
12. A standard pamphlet (called a quarto) which was used to write matters which were later intended for binding. It consisted of one large sheet folded twice and cut to form an eight page pamphlet.
13. Derech Mitzvosecha p. 559 (Hakdamas Hamo”l).
14. Sefer Hatoldos Tzemach Tzedek p. 60, from Hatomim *choveres*

- 3 p. 25.
15. Hamelech B’mesibo vol. 2, p. 86.
16. See Maamarei Admur Hazaken Haketzarim p. 604.
17. Published in Ohr HaTorah-Vayikra vol. 3, p. 721.
18. For more on this topic, see the *Mavo* to Reshimas Maamarei Da’ch Shel Admur Hatzemach Tzedek.
19. Divrei Yimei HoRabbanis Rivkah pg. 58. See there for variations of the story.
20. Sifriyas Lubavitch p. 33–34.
21. Orach Chaim 13.
22. The above section is based on the introduction to the Tzemach Tzedek’s *teshuvos* published in Tzemach Tzedek—Maftaichos.
23. p. 204
24. The rest of this article is based on an interview with Rabbi Sholom Ber Shuchat, and on the introduction to the Tzemach Tzedek’s *teshuvos* published in Tzemach Tzedek—Maftaichos, unless otherwise noted.
25. Even Ho’Ezer 347–8, written together with his uncle, the Maharil.
26. Published in a booklet called Tzemach Tzedek. Mahadura Basra—Even Ho’Ezer 444.
27. Even Ho’Ezer 442.
28. Even Ho’Ezer 382.
29. Even Ho’Ezer 166.
30. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRashab vol. 1, p. 183.
31. The Czarist regime did not see kindly to *rabbanim* dealing with monetary issues, and therefore this volume had never before been published.
32. Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim 5749, Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol. 2, p. 431.
33. Sefer Hasichos 5751 p. 150. The names Tzemach and Tzedek are mentioned regarding Moshiach in Zecharia 3:8 and Yeshayah 11:5.
34. There is a famous story of the Alter Rebbe seeing Shoresh Mitzvos Hatefillah (see Sefer Hatoldos Tzemach Tzedek p. 62) but that seems to be about an earlier version—a very likely scenario, as the Tzemach Tzedek wrote and rewrote his *kesavim* copiously.

# An Eyewitness in Lubavitch

By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg (Twinsburg, OH)

*In the final Elul of the Tzemach Tzedek's lifetime, a young visitor arrived in Lubavitch for the first time. A teenage bochur, he likely passed unnoticed. The only thing remarkable about his visit was the distance he had traveled—from the far reaches of southern Ukraine, near present-day Moldova.*

*His name was Pinye Ber Goldenshtein. He grew up in a region in which Chabad was not well-known, but encounters with several Chabad Chassidim led him to join a group traveling to Lubavitch. He spent two weeks in the presence of the Tzemach Tzedek—hearing the maamarim, entering for yechidus, and absorbing the atmosphere of Lubavitch.*

*For the rest of his life, as a respected shochet in Ukraine and Crimea, and later in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Pinye Ber regarded himself as a Lubavitcher chossid. Yet within the annals of Chabad history, his name was virtually unknown. His story survives only because of a remarkable decision he made: to record his memoirs. Reb Pinye Ber wrote his life story for his children, so that they might recognize the hand of Hashem that had guided him throughout his life, and draw inspiration from it.*

*Among the yirei Shomayim of his generation, such a choice was virtually unheard of. Personal life stories were considered unworthy of preservation. Autobiography was a new and suspect genre, largely associated with maskilim—those who had distanced themselves from Yiddishkeit.*

*For this reason, Reb Pinye Ber's account of his time in Lubavitch is unique. Eyewitness descriptions of the Tzemach Tzedek are exceedingly rare, and those that do exist were written by maskilim who had encountered him in their youth (and, in one case, by a non-Jew).<sup>1</sup>*

*Only one eyewitness account survives from a Jew who was a yirei Shomayim—someone who treasured the memory of his visit and sought to live the rest of his life in its spirit: the account of Reb Pinye Ber Goldenshtein.*

*Alongside this month's article on the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah, we present the following selections from his memoirs, focusing on the same theme—his description of the Tzemach Tzedek's delivery of maamarim, and his firsthand account of the Rebbe's learning in his private sanctum.*



By the Rebbe [the Tzemach Tzedek] ztz"l ... there was no *tish*—not on Shabbos and not on Yom Tov. He did say Torah every Shabbos and Yom Tov, but not at a *tish*, as is customary in Poland. Here, the Rebbe would say Torah in a large empty *zal*, with no furniture, except a *bima* in its middle surrounded by benches.

When Shabbos or Yom Tov arrived, all the local *balebatim* and Chassidim—those who *davened* in other Batei Midrash—would daven quite early, and after davening would

immediately go to the Rebbe, to the *zal*. Especially the Chassidim who arrived from all over, and those who davened by the Rebbe in his Beis Midrash—right after davening, they would run to catch the best positions.<sup>2</sup>

The Rebbe's five sons, all *gedolei hador*, who lived in the city—each of them had their own Beis Midrash, and there were Chassidim who davened there.<sup>3</sup> They also came after davening into the Rebbe's *zal*. The eminent sons with their own children, their sons and sons-in-law, and their places were around the *bima* on the benches. The rest of the crowd stood.

The *zal* was packed before the Rebbe arrived. When the Rebbe arrived, they barely managed to clear a path for him to the *bima* with great difficulty. The Rebbe went up to the *bima*, followed by the *chozer*, and the Rebbe would say Torah for an hour or two at a time. When he finished the delivery, they once again made a path for him to leave, and the Rebbe would leave. He was followed by all of his renowned sons.

The entire *olam* would remain to hear the Torah once again from the *chozer* who had absorbed it the first time.

Not everyone would remain to hear the *chozer*. Many would leave as soon as the Rebbe concluded saying the Torah. Often, the *balebatim* would leave, but the Chassidim would remain until the *chozer* had repeated the newly-delivered Torah.

After eating [the Shabbos *seudah*], every chossid would go to one of the Rebbe's sons, to Reb Shmuel [=Yisrael] Noach, or Reb Leib, or Reb Zalman, or Reb Boruch Shalom, or Reb Shmuel, and hear how the Torah was being reviewed there. In this way, every chossid was able to hear the *chazara* of the Torah many times.

All the sons would say Torah during the week, not only on Shabbos, whenever they gathered and requested it. The last *chazara* of the Torah of the week was always at Reb Leib, after Kabbalas Shabbos and before Maariv.

You can already understand that the Torah was being *chazered* by the Chassidim the entire week, from Shabbos to Shabbos, until they knew it by heart.

This made a very positive impression on me...

All week, the Rebbe would eat alone in the room where he spent his time davening and learning, and where he would receive the Chassidim with their *kvitlach*.

I became aware of this in the following way:

I hid myself in the Beis Midrash, and after davening, the *shamash* didn't notice me and locked the Beis Midrash. I wanted to see what the Rebbe was doing in his room.

At eleven o'clock, I looked in through the keyhole, and since the table was just across from the door, I could see that

the Rebbe was still sitting in his tallis and tefillin.

The Rebbe's room had a door to the Beis Midrash and a door to other rooms. I waited a long time, and suddenly I heard the Rebbe bang on the table. I looked into the keyhole again and saw that the *gabai* had entered, put away the tefillin, and helped the Rebbe away.

I heard water being poured, so I understood that he was washing.

He helped the Rebbe back to the table and left the room.

The Rebbe began writing *ksavim*, and wrote for about an hour, and then the Rebbe banged again on the table, and the *gabai* entered and put away his tallis, and left.

The Rebbe then sat down to learn. After about an hour, he finished and again banged on the table. The *gabai* entered and set the table, and brought him water to wash. The Rebbe washed and made *Hamotzi*. The *gabai* brought in the soup with some meat or chicken, and he ate a bit from each, and then the *gabbai* removed the leftovers. He brought in *mayim acharonim*, the Rebbe *bentched*, and went back to learning.

Such simple conduct by the Rebbe, the Tzaddik Hador—you would never find in Poland!

The room in which the Rebbe lived had two walls covered with *seforim*. There was a bed and a large chest by the third wall, and by the fourth wall, there was an armchair upon which the Rebbe sat. Near the armchair was a so-to-speak table, and two more chairs. Such a simple study you would not find in Poland either.

*Ashrei ayin ro'asoh kol eileh*, fortunate are the eyes who have seen all this!

The Rebbe himself wore white clothing; even the crown of his *shtreimel* was made of white velvet or satin. He looked like a *mal'ach Elokim*. Day and night, he sat '*al hatorah v'el ho'avodah*,' learning Torah and in *avodas Hashem*; only two hours a day would he *praveh chassidus*, meaning, he would let in the Chassidim with requests.

And what did the Rebbe do with the [money of the] *pidyonos*? Everything was distributed to tzedakah for the poor Chassidim who came to learn Torah and hear Torah by the Rebbe. Meaning, the Chassidim who lived close by, around Lubavitch, and would come only for Shabbos—they were given support only for Shabbos, and the Chassidim who lived far away and needed to spend weeks or months by the Rebbe—they were given money for the week as well, and if they noticed that one of the visiting Chassidim was not learning, they would stop giving him his stipend, and he would automatically be forced to return home.

The *ikar* of Chassidus there was Torah and Avoda...

Now you can already imagine the holiness of the

Lubavitcher Rebbe and the refined nature of the Lubavitcher Chassidim, the “Chabadnikes.”



For many decades, these memoirs went largely unnoticed. Printed in small runs and never widely distributed, they quietly faded from view. Then, in the 5740s, Rabbi Yehoshua Mondshine uncovered this hidden treasure and published the above account—describing the author’s visit to the Tzemach Tzedek—in Kerem Chabad.

Only in recent years has the complete memoir come to light. It was translated by a Lubavitcher Chossid named Reb Michoel Rotenfeld, and published in two volumes under the title *The Shochet: A Memoir of Jewish Life in Ukraine and Crimea*.

The memoir is remarkable for its depth of detail, vivid descriptions, and striking honesty and sincerity. For Chabad Chassidim in particular, it is of exceptional value—especially its accounts of the author’s encounters with the Tzemach Tzedek, and later with the Rebbe Maharash.

The narrative also introduces a cast of notable figures, including Reb Monye Monezson, who would later become a prominent chossid—and relative—of the Rebbe Rashab, and

Reb Shaya Rafalovitch, founder of the Jewish community in Nikolaev, who appointed Reb Avraham David Lavut—the Rebbe’s great-great-grandfather—as its rav.



According to Reb Michoel Rotenfeld, this visit took place in Elul of 5625, the final year of the Tzemach Tzedek’s life, during the Shabbosim of Shoftim and Ki Seitzei.<sup>4</sup> The maamar of Ki Seitzei is unknown. However, as recorded by Rabbi Yossi Keller in Reshimas Maamarei Da”ch Shel Admur HaTzemach Tzedek, the maamar delivered on Shabbos Shoftim was Ani L’Dodi, published in *Or HaTorah—Devarim*, volume 2, p. 781.<sup>5</sup>

Reb Pinye Ber describes the maamar as being delivered after davening on Shabbos morning; hence, the “davening early” in all the Botei Midrash—which is not customary in Chabad on Friday night—and his description of the final chazara taking place in the Beis Midrash of the Maharil on Friday night after Kabbalas Shabbos.

In later generations, the Rabbeim generally delivered Torah on Friday night, but this does not seem to be the case in the days of the Tzemach Tzedek.

As recorded in *Sefer HaToldos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe describes maamarim being delivered regularly on Friday morning, as well as at various other times—Friday night, Shalosh Seudos, and more.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, in *Reshimas Maamarei Da”ch Shel Admur HaTzemach Tzedek*, the footnotes often record the precise circumstances of the maamarim as preserved in the kisvei yad, noting a range of times: Shabbos morning before Shacharis, after Shacharis, or during Shalosh Seudos. It would therefore seem that at the time of Reb Pinye Ber’s visit, the maamarim were being delivered on Shabbos morning, following Shacharis.



The account here is translated directly from the original Yiddish. The full account of his visit can be found in Yiddish in “Mein Lebens Geshichte” p. 141, and in English in “The Shochet” volume 1, p. 244. ①

1. Several are published in the introduction to *B’nei HaTzemach Tzedek*.

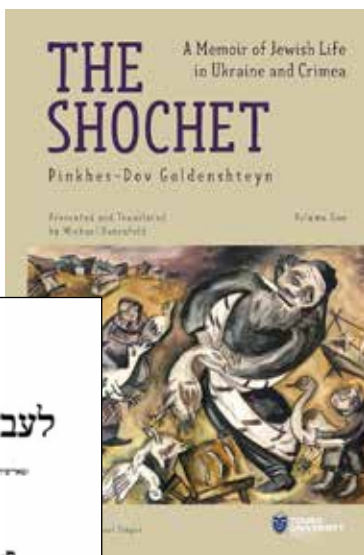
2. In Lubavitch, davening would generally take place in the “small zal,” and the *maamarim* and larger occasions would be held in the “big zal.”

3. The sixth son, Reb Yosef Yitzchak, was already serving as a rebbe in Avrutch at the time, at the behest of his father-in-law, Reb Yaakov Yisrael of Cherkass. Another son, Reb Yaakov, had passed away in his youth.

4. P. 248 fn. 10.

5. P. 162.

6. pp. 149, 205.



THE ORIGINAL EDITION OF PINYE BER’S MEMOIRS IN YIDDISH, PRINTED IN THE LATE 5680S, AND THE RECENTLY TRANSLATED ENGLISH EDITION TITLED ‘THE SHOCHET’.



# The REBBE'S KAPITEL



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



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

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

BY: RABBI SHOLOM POSNER

# *Life,* Daily

LEARNING  
CHASSIDUS  
EVERY DAY



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

ולזכות  
הת' השליח זאב יוסף הלוי שיחי'  
לאנג  
בקשר עם יום הולדתו כ"ד ניסן  
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה ולרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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

In simple terms: We must have a fixed time to study Chassidus every single day. Not just learning superficially, but to really toil and understand Chassidus, to the point that it feels like hard work.

This is true of every single day without exception.

One cannot rely on the fact that he already knows so much, has already learned so many *maamarim* by heart, or that he already toiled learning Chassidus yesterday. You need to connect with your source of life every single day. You can't decide to breathe on Sunday and Tuesday, while skipping the Monday in between—because there wouldn't be a Tuesday at all...<sup>1</sup>

**F**rom the time Chassidus was revealed in the world, its teachings breathed new life into all of Yiddishkeit, infusing it with joy and passion.

The path paved by the Alter Rebbe demanded that the light of Chassidus must be absorbed in oneself through understanding and intellect—Chabad. Throughout each generation, our Rabbeim constantly emphasized the need to set times for this discipline—underscoring that memory doesn't suffice, and consistent study reigns supreme.

With time, the message became clear that this is not a method limited to the extra devout, but an absolute necessity for every Jew. Only through regular study of Chassidus can one truly fulfill their obligation to study Torah and perform the mitzvos with Ahava and Yirah.

Below, we will explore what our Rabbeim say about the necessity of regular study of Chassidus: its relevance, importance, and practical directives of implementing it in one's life.

## Crucial To Learn Chassidus

The Yeshiva of Tomchei Temimim was established to be different from any other yeshiva. Whereas the traditional understanding of a yeshiva is an institution to enable students to delve into the study of nigleh, this yeshiva's purpose was that these students who learn should be "Yidden"—yirei shamayim and dedicated to Hashem and His Torah. In order to ensure these traits in the students, emphasis was placed on each student dedicating significant time each day to learn Chassidus.

However, this value came under question. There were students in Tomchei Temimim who made little of the study of Chassidus, seeing it as less than vital.

Nearly a decade later, these values were challenged in the greater society in the same way. Their issue was not quite animosity or resentment toward the teachings of Chassidus. On the contrary, Chassidus was held in great

regard—too great for them.

Their thought process was as follows. To learn nigleh is a requirement for a frum Jew just as any mitzva, but Chassidus is a lofty philosophy. Why must someone engage in Chassidus, a deeper and loftier way of life?

For the bochurim, the Rebbe Rashab addressed this issue

thoroughly in *Kuntres Etz Hachaim*—effectively a handbook for Tomchei Temimim. In great detail, he outlines the purpose of the yeshiva's founding and the expected behavior from the bochurim. Ten years later, the Rebbe Rashab responded to public opinion with a letter. The core elements of both works are the same; each primarily addresses its intended audience. These two works serve as a foundation for many of the ideas in this article and will be referenced throughout.

The key is that learning Chassidus is not a voluntary exercise of deepening one's Yiddishkeit. It is absolutely vital in order for one to serve Hashem. Without Chassidus, one faces two great obstacles in fulfilling their purpose:<sup>2</sup>

All of Torah is Hashem's wisdom and holy. However, the nigleh parts of Torah deal with (are en clothed in) physical matters—good and evil. The purpose therein is to refine the physical world; to distinguish the good from the evil. But in that process, the light of *Elokus* is concealed, and all one can see is the physical subjects. This has practical ramifications for one studying Torah. Firstly, the Torah itself will be affected. Without the sense of G-dliness to guide him in the complex study of Gemara, the student may easily be misled into an erroneous halachic ruling. Secondly, his personal conduct will be affected. His accomplishments in Torah can make him conceited, and instead of elevating the world, he effectively drags down his soul and his Torah with it.

The entire purpose of man is to radiate the light of his *Nefesh Elokis* in heartfelt *avoda*, correct his actions, and refine his body and *Nefesh Hativ*'s. Even the Torah one learns has no elevation without *ahavas Hashem* and *yiras Hashem*.

The solution to all of this is found in *pnimiyus haTorah*—the *neshama* of Torah. It is not en clothed in physical matters; it deals exclusively with the spiritual. In it, one can see and feel the *Ohr Eloki* without concealment. Through the understanding and contemplation of *Elokus* one will



be aroused with *ahava* and *yirah*. (Aside from this knowledge being a prerequisite to *avoda*, the G-dly light in Chassidus (when studied properly) brings out the strength of the *nefesh Elohis* and ultimately brings a person to engage in *avoda*.) In this light, we can “know” Hashem and what He wants from us — in *tefilla*, Torah study, fulfilling the *mitzvos*, and every detail of our conduct throughout the day.

Therefore, Chassidus was revealed in later generations when the *neshamos* are of lower stature and entrenched in *gashmiyus*. The lesser a level we are on, the more we must delve into the teachings of Chassidus to find the G-dly light.

In conclusion, the Rebbe Rashab applauded the public *shiurim* of *anash* in Gemara, Rashi, and Tosfos (“*Gefes*”), but made it clear that this was insufficient. It must be accompanied by studying Chassidus and engaging in its *avoda*.

## Immunity And Remedy

Although not explicitly stated in the Rebbe Rashab’s letter, this would require that every Jew study Chassidus in order to serve Hashem, not only those who count themselves within the “Camp of Chassidim.” In previous generations, it may have been less vital to *mitzvah* fulfillment. However, as the *galus* darkens, the light of *pnimiyus haTorah* becomes ever the more crucial. “When a new disease appears in the world, *Rachmana litzlan*, or an old disease is intensified, it’s crucial to increase remedies. And if it’s contagious, even those who are healthy [need remedies]...”<sup>5</sup>

The case for *pnimiyus haTorah* as essential can be made by bringing sources to that effect, but reality is the strongest proof.

A *bochur* was once invited to join a Tanya *shiur* delivered in his Litvisher yeshiva by a Lubavitcher. The *bochur* considered it but debated if it would be more appropriate to begin this esoteric study once closer to the recommended age of forty.

The Rebbe responded with alarm:

“How great is the *helem v’hester* in these last moments of *galus*, that after what has been cited in many places... regarding the **necessity** to learn *pnimiyus haTorah* in these generations, one can remain in doubt, even considering to begin the study [only] once reaching forty years!

“The question is further magnified on the

## THE LIGHT OF CHASSIDUS

In the Rebbe Rashab’s letter, an underlying theme is that the value in Chassidus goes far beyond the content. Regardless of which *maamar* you learn and the topics it discusses, you will benefit from the “*Ohr Eloki*,” the G-dly light which shines in every *vort* of Chassidus.

The famous Chossid, Reb Hillel Paritcher asked the Mittlerer Rebbe if he should teach Chassidus even in towns where the people have no conception of Chassidus. The Mittlerer Rebbe responded: “The *neshama* hears the words of Chassidus... When the *neshama* hears, a ‘flow’, a ‘stream of drops’ enters that part of the *neshama* which vitalizes the body, and the person is spiritually strengthened as a result.”<sup>3</sup>

Chassidim would elaborate upon this point: The light of *pnimiyus haTorah* causes the *pnimiyus* of the *neshama* to shine. A wagon driver once heard the Alter Rebbe mention “*neshamos d’Atzilus*.” The man, thinking the Alter Rebbe had said “*neshamos in patchiles*” (*neshamos* in wallets), was moved to tears and completely transformed his life.

In this vein, *maamarim* of the Rabbeim are essentially different from commentary written by Chassidim. Anyone can create a structural guide to understanding holy concepts, but only the Rabbeim’s Chassidus transmits *Elohis* itself.

Through learning the Rebbe’s Chassidus, one will have no doubts in *emunah*. Not because he will necessarily find all the answers to his questions. Rather, doubt will be impossible in the face of the holiness absorbed through Chassidus. Just as the Rebbe has no doubts in *emunah*, neither does anyone who is connected to the Rebbe.<sup>4</sup>

foundation of *maaseh rav*. We see practically that in order to withstand the unusually [strong] winds that... blow in the street quite regularly, a special shelter is needed. The shelter of previous generations does not suffice... It is necessary to learn *pnimiyus haTorah*, which in our generations was revealed in a comprehensible manner only in Toras Chabad.

“...*Yehi ratzon* that a spirit should shower upon you from above and you should fix times for the aforementioned study—fixed not only in time, but in your soul as well—and in short order you will see that it is good...”<sup>6</sup>

The most powerful “test case” was when elementary fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos* came under attack.

In the following letter, the Rebbe responded to the claim that Chassidus—as a new innovation—is a deviation from traditional Jewish practice. After expounding

### CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE

To an individual who wrote to the Rebbe complaining that he was haunted by distracting thoughts during davening and learning Torah, the Rebbe wrote:

“Your daily routine does not include study... which inspires love and awe of Hashem, and certainly not of His unity (because obviously the intent is not merely to recite the words ‘*Hashem echad*’ without knowing the meaning of this unity...) It is obvious and vividly clear that the primary content and accomplishment of *Mussar* is [only] in bettering the human character. How then does one reach *ahava* and *yirah*? It is through contemplating Hashem’s greatness... When one is lacking in these three constant *mitzvos*, their davening lacks as well, because ‘*ein omdin l’hispalet ela mi’toch koved rosh*’ which means (as explained by Talmidei Rabbeinu Yonah and codified in Shulchan Aruch) that one must contemplate Hashem’s greatness and man’s lowliness.

“Practically speaking, you must immediately affix—both in your daily schedule and in your soul—a session to study *pnimiyus haTorah*...”<sup>8</sup>

on the baselessness and hypocrisy of such a view, the Rebbe makes this powerful point:

“...We have seen especially in our time [regarding] those who were under Soviet rule. From all of the young men of the various *yeshivos*, to our great pain, the only ones who withstood the test throughout all of the decades [of oppression] were these youth who studied *Toras HaChassidus*. Not those who sufficed with learning *nigleh*. Not even those who learned *Mussar*...”<sup>7</sup>

## A Personal Obligation

The value that learning Chassidus brings to the fulfillment of *mitzvos* is not only as motivation. Nor is it only an insurance for the endurance and survival of *mitzvos*. Through studying Chassidus, one is directly fulfilling several halachic obligations:

Before davening, one must focus oneself by contemplating the greatness of Hashem<sup>9</sup>—this information is found in Chassidus.

Likewise, the Rebbe explains:

“There are... six Mitzvot which are... constant... and they are obligatory on all Jews without exception: (1) To believe in... G-d, (2) Not to believe in any other thing, (3) To affirm His Unity, (4) To love Him, (5) To fear Him, and (6) Not to go astray after the temptation of the heart and the vision of the eyes.

“The first five of the above obviously demand intellectual preparation. Even the sixth can be properly fulfilled only after the acquisition of certain doctrines and knowledge.

“It is clear that to obtain the essential knowledge (without which these six constant Mitzvot could not be fulfilled properly) by an effort to glean it from different sources, would require an enormous amount of time and effort, and even then one could not be sure whether or not the sources were rightly understood, and the right opinions and beliefs were formulated.

“On the other hand, Chassidus has done just that. It has gleaned and collected from various sources the necessary knowledge, and it presents it in a pure and concise form to all who wish to avail themselves of it.

“...Having the brain and ability to acquire the necessary knowledge about G-d, yet refusing to make use of them, is tantamount to willful refusal to comply with the Mitzvah.

“Likewise with regard to the commandments to love and fear Him. Surely it is impossible really to love or fear anything without at least some knowledge of that thing, as is also alluded to in the Rambam...”<sup>10</sup>

## Why Chassidus? Why Chabad?

The above reasons apply to all of *pnimiyus haTorah*, but the Rebbe is adamant that one must learn specifically Chassidus—and specifically Chassidus Chabad.

“In our era, the study of Chassidus of Polish origin is not at all sufficient... because the remedy must be commensurate with the illness. Being that lately [the illness depends] mainly on intellectual dialogue, the cure must as well come through something which will draw and grab hold of the intellect and *ChaBaD*...”<sup>11</sup>

Additionally, there is a real halachic obligation to learn *pnimiyus haTorah*—just like there is to study every other part of Torah. This obligation cannot be fulfilled without comprehension, and that is only available in Chassidus Chabad.

“...Since the days of the Baal Shem Tov’s students, we have merited additional revelation in *pnimiyus haTorah* [Chassidus Chabad], providing intellectual explanations, at the very least through *mishalim* etc. In this scenario, the halacha applies—as with all sectors of *Torah Shebaal Peh*—that study without comprehension does not count as learning at all...”

Being that we have been bestowed with the ability to comprehend *pnimiyus haTorah*—through Chassidus Chabad—simply reading about lofty concepts does not suffice.<sup>12</sup>

## Structure — Kvius

It is not enough to learn Chassidus. It’s important for it to be given a space in your schedule because, “...The strength and continuity of everything is: *kvius bizman*.”<sup>13</sup>

As a matter of fact, one daily *kvius* is not ideal. In response to someone who arranged for the study of Chassidus from 6:00–7:00 a.m., the Rebbe replied, “Although the greatness of learning *pnimiyus haTorah* before davening is cited in many places, it is nonetheless understood that this alone does not suffice. There must be an additional study of *pnimiyus haTorah* at night as well...”<sup>14</sup>

The time that you can choose to set your *kvius* is flexible. However, Chassidus must be studied, “at least a few moments before davening to fulfill the... Mishna’s ruling regarding davening [*ein omdin l’hispalet ela mitoch koved rosh*]...”<sup>15</sup>

These guidelines are universally applicable and

attainable. As the Rebbe writes, “Obviously, the detailed methods of learning... are not the same for everyone and are also dependent on time conditions...” However, there are elements that are universal and a must for everyone. Namely, “to have a *shiur* in learning Chassidus at least twice in a 24-hour period—once at daytime and once at night. [Everyone] must also study... [Chassidus] preceding... [Shacharis] as it is then possible to contemplate Hashem’s greatness...”<sup>16</sup>

## A Chossid’s Additional Responsibility

Along with the need every Jew shares to learn Chassidus, as Chassidim, there is an added element. A Chossid, by definition, before any deeper readings into the word, is someone who learns Chassidus. How can one call themselves a Chossid if they lack this quality?

In the words of the Rebbe Rashab:

“We, who have merited to be students of our holy Rabbeim, are obligated to study their holy Torah... Just as the obligation is on every Jew to study Torah, we have an extra portion—the obligation to study Chassidus. When lacking this study, **in what way are we Chassidim?** How are we connected to our holy Rabbeim? **Heaven forbid** we should not accept this goodness that Hashem has bestowed upon us...”<sup>17</sup>

The implications were spelled out by the Frierdiker Rebbe with greater intensity. In this letter, he entrusts the *shadar*, Reb Itche Masmid, to transmit its message effectively to the greater community of *anash*:

“It would be fitting to write a structured and organized letter to *anash* everywhere to explain the obligation to

### THE REAL THING

When someone boasted to the Rebbe that he learns Chassidus, he pointed out that he learns the *sefer* Emek Hatefillah, which is “Similar to Chassidus Chabad”—referring to the teachings of the Cherkasser Rebbe (son-in-law of the Mitteler Rebbe, whose Chassidus contains Chabad influence). The Rebbe replied: “Why go for ‘similar’ when you can have the original?”

fulfill the words of our Rebbe. [Namely, the] demand from every individual who is called by the name ‘Chossid’ to learn Chassidus. That every member of *anash* with a link and connection to [the Rabbeim] and wishes to benefit from their *zechus* in [being blessed with] children, health, and livelihood in abundance, should dedicate himself to... connect to the ‘Tree of Life’. Each person in their own way—and everyone together through learning Chassidus as a group, at fixed times and events.

“Furthermore, we need to explain the flip side—*chas v’shalom, v’chas v’shalom*; those who don’t take heart to fulfill the words of our Rebbe... have no relation or connection at all to [the Rabbeim]. They have no justification to benefit from the *zechus* of [the Rabbeim]. Difficult it is to say, but the clear truth is that they are detached from the community of Chassidim and distant from the face of the Holy of Holies...”<sup>18</sup>

The date of this letter—12 Nissan 5687—is arguably as significant as its content. During this despondent era of Communist persecution, only two months before the Friediker Rebbe’s arrest in Soviet Russia, he was concerned that all *anash* should uphold the study of Chassidus.

## Strengthening The Connection

In the following letter, the point is underscored that someone with roots in Chabad, or a respect towards the Rebbe, must certainly learn Chassidus:

“You write that... the girl [who has been suggested for a shidduch] is unsure and will possibly come with her father to ask my opinion...”

“I am interested to know if you have a set time to learn Torah at all yourself, and *Toras HaChassidus* in particular... In this case, it is superfluous to elaborate being as your grandfather traveled to [a] Rebbe. In the words of [the Friediker Rebbe]... if you turn to me with questions regarding a shidduch... whereas I am not an expert shadchan nor an amateur shadchan—and yet you wish to hear my opinion—certainly you will also heed my opinion in setting a *shiur* to learn Chassidus...”<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, it is only appropriate that one who requests the Rebbe’s *brachos* should also learn Chassidus. Often, when asked for a *bracha* the Rebbe would advise that the *bracha* would only be effective together with the study of Chassidus<sup>20</sup>—especially the Chassidus of our Rebbe:

“A *bracha* is likened to rain. As rain is beneficial after

plowing and planting, a *pidyon* is effective through the *hiskashrus* between the one who makes the request and the one who receives it. Since your wish and desire is that I read your *pidyon* at the *tziyun* of [the Friediker Rebbe], certainly you will set a *shiur* in the study of his Torah...”<sup>21</sup>

The benefits of learning the Rebbe’s Torah apply not only when requesting a *bracha*. Referring to the rural Chabad settlement in Shepparton, Australia, the Rebbe wrote to Reb Betzalel Wilshansky:

“Surely, you have there a *shiur* to study the Chassidus of [the Friediker Rebbe,] the *nossi* of this generation. And through it—automatically—all provisions are drawn down... As is explained in numerous places that the conduit for all divine provisions is through Torah...”<sup>22</sup>

To a member of the administration of Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe wrote:

“It is quite simple that in [the yeshiva’s] Chassidus curriculum, the study of [the Friediker Rebbe’s] Torah must retain an important position—especially for the older grades...”<sup>23</sup>

The Rebbe acknowledged that one must study the Chassidus of all Rabbeim—as with all of Torah, which one must study in its entirety at least once in their lifetime, “But I stand by my opinion; since more than one hundred *kuntreisim* of the [Friediker Rebbe’s] *maamarim* have been printed, we must **institute their [study] as a set curriculum** in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim...”<sup>24</sup>

## The Struggle Is Not New

Presented are but a few examples of how our Rabbeim addressed the persistent struggle against the *yetzer hara* who particularly despises the study of Chassidus:

The Rebbe Rashab writes:

“Already in years bygone, the Mitteler Rebbe bemoaned the lack of toil in Chassidus. As for us, what can we say in these times when it has practically disappeared entirely. [There’s only] one person in town who volunteers to learn Chassidus infrequently, like on Shabbos before davening... and even then, he sits alone without a friend or peer. He learns only cursorily—as if being *maavir sedra*—and doesn’t reach the depth and the true [intent]...”<sup>25</sup>

“There are three pillars on which the world stands: Torah, *Avoda*, and *Gemilus Chassadim*. The *nefesh habahamis* agreed to *Gemilus Chassadim* long ago. Recently, he has conceded to Torah as well, because it also does not deter him from... enslaving man. Only *Avoda* he doesn’t allow, because it is in direct opposition to him. The same applies to studying Chassidus, which is counted as a part

of *Avoda*.”<sup>26</sup>

In a fascinating letter, the Rebbe writes:

“...All that has been written above at such length is... in the hope that perhaps it may after all bring you to the realization that it is the Yetzer Hora that is inventing for you all sorts of strange and peculiar reasons to discourage you from learning Chassidus, thereby not merely stopping you from knowing what is taking place in the World of Atzilus, as you put it, but preventing you from fulfilling actual Mitzvoth, commanded in the Torah, Toras Chaim, to be fulfilled every day. But, of course, the Yetzer Hora does his work ‘faithfully’, and he will not come and tell you: Do not observe those six Mitzvoth which one is obliged to fulfill every day; he is too ‘smart’ for that; instead, he will tell you, What good will it do you to know what is happening in Atzilus!”<sup>27</sup>

## Fringe Benefits

The Rebbe often highlights that, aside from its inherent value, Chassidus carries a multitude of benefits.

To a young man feeling depressed, the Rebbe writes that by missing Chassidus, it's only natural to lack *chayus*, because:

“All aspects of our Torah—Toras Chaim—are instructions in life... Since *pnimiyus haTorah* is... called ‘*Nishmasa D'oraysa*’ [the soul of Torah], it follows that when the soul's vitality is lacking, the vitality of all bodily matters will be lacking... The correction and solution to all of the aforementioned is understood [in light of] the above—increasing the *chayus* of the *neschama*. Namely, fixing times to study *pnimiyus haTorah*, which, in our generations, was revealed in *Toras haChassidus*.”<sup>28</sup>

Eyesight is referred to by Chazal as “*me'or einav shel adam*” (luminary of man's eyes). Since every nuance of Chazal is intentional, the Rebbe saw a connection between eyesight—luminary of man, and Chassidus—*Ma'or shebaTorah*—luminary of Torah. Therefore, setting times to learn Chassidus, or adding to one's existing *shiurim*, will

## TRUE TORAH STUDY

Reb Yoel Kahn related:

A brilliant *bochur* learning in a Litvisher yeshiva found himself in need of the Rebbe's advice, and Reb Yoel was able to arrange for him to have *yechidus* with the Rebbe. Due to time constraints, Rabbi Hodakov only granted the *bochur* a five-minute appointment, but the *bochur* agreed, saying, “If the Rebbe can help me, it need not take longer than one minute.”

On the night of his appointment, the *bochur* entered the Rebbe's room while Reb Yoel waited outside in the lobby of 770. The five-minute appointment stretched into an hour.

It is unknown what issue the *bochur* came to discuss with the Rebbe. However, he did share that the Rebbe instructed him to learn Chassidus. The Rebbe also explained that the amount of time one needs to dedicate to studying Chassidus varies from person to person. Based on his personality and ability, the Rebbe “prescribed” him six hours of Chassidus each day.

The Rebbe advised him that studying Torah must be *lishma*. Learning for ulterior motives—for example, to become a “*gadol*”—cannot last. Once the ulterior motive disappears in whichever way, the motivation to learn will disappear. It is even likely that the person will stop learning altogether.

To learn *lishma*, the Rebbe told him, runs far deeper than learning in order to know what Hashem says, or even to connect to Hashem. To learn Torah *lishma* is to learn Torah simply because Hashem is there. A child's natural impulse when reunited with his father is to embrace him. The child isn't looking to gain from this action in any way; he does not seek to deepen their relationship through this hug, he simply wants to hold onto his father.

The *bochur* did not heed the Rebbe's advice, and it did not take long for the Rebbe's warning to be fulfilled. The *bochur* suddenly lost some of his prestige in the yeshiva and soon felt his enthusiasm toward learning dissipating. By the time he married, he no longer retained any of his previous ambition and, although he remained a *frum* Jew, could hardly be called an *ehrlliche Yid*.

Years later, upon seeing an ad for the Rebbe's *farbrenge*n in a Yiddish newspaper, his interest in Chassidus was kindled and, through a remarkable set of experiences with the Rebbe, he was inspired to make a *chavrusa* with Reb Yoel. They began to learn Chassidus together, and his passion in Torah was kindled anew.<sup>33</sup>

## WHO HAS AUTHORITY?

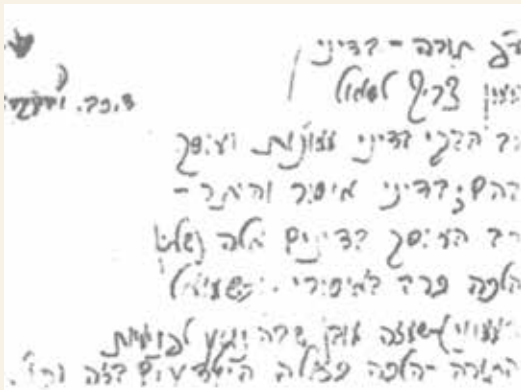
Time and again, the Rebbe maintained that studying Chassidus is not an extracurricular study for those who are already well-versed in *nigleh*. It is absolutely vital for every single Yid.

As the Rebbe put it to a *bochur* in *yechidus*:

“The Rema clearly states that before davening, one must contemplate the greatness of Hashem. This does not mean that you need to think over an entire *maamar*; a few lines are also enough, provided that they penetrate the person. We need to follow the Rema’s ruling in this regard. We follow his ruling about the prohibition of eating milk and meat; we need to follow his ruling in this regard as well!”<sup>31</sup>

A *bochur* from a Litvisher yeshiva was told by a great *rav* that there is no halachic obligation to understand our faith in Hashem, and therefore no obligation to study *pnimiyus haTorah*. The Rebbe wrote about this assertion: “?!” and added that this is contrary to the opinions of the Vilna Gaon, the Arizal, Reb Chaim Vital, the Alter Rebbe, and others (who all maintained that it is absolutely obligatory).

In response to the assertion that there are many great Torah scholars who maintain that there is no obligation to study *pnimiyus haTorah*, the Rebbe wrote:



ע"פ תורה - בדיני ממונ צריך לשאול רב הבקי בדיני ממונות ועוסק בהם; בדיני איסור והיתר - רב העוסק בדינים אלה (שלכן הלכה כרב באיסורי, וכשמואל בממוני) - שמזה מובן שבהנוגע לפנימיות התורה - הלכה כאלה היודעים בזה וכו'.

According to Torah law, when it comes to

[questions of] monetary issues, one must ask a *rav* who is well-versed in, and deals with, the *halachos* of monetary issues. When it comes to questions of religiously permissible and prohibited matters, you must consult with a *rav* who deals with those matters (which is why the halacha follows the opinion of Rav in ritually prohibited matters, and Shmuel when it comes to monetary issues).

From this, we can discern that when it comes to issues of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the halacha [of whether or not this is an obligatory subject] follows those who are familiar with it, etc.<sup>32</sup>

## WHAT MESSAGE ARE WE SENDING?

Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok Hecht was invited to speak at a frum educational conference and asked the Rebbe whether he should accept the invitation.

The Rebbe replied:

מוכרח מכו"כ טעמים. נקודת נאומי (בשמי או לא - כפי שיראה על אתר): הכל מודים שא"א להיות רופא מבלי לימוד חכמת הרפואה ועד"ז - בונה בתים וכו' - ואיך זה אפשר שיגדלו הת' להיות יר"ש - מבלי שילמדו עד"ז?! ובפרט שנשתנו העתים מלפנים - שאז ראו זה הת' בהוריהם וברחוב וכו', ועתה רק בבי"ס יכולים ללמדו עד"ז. וד"ל.  
ופשוט שאין מספיק כלל אמירה לת' אשר 15 רגעים ביום עליהם ללמוד מוסר וכיו"ב - אם רוצה ובאיזה ספר שרוצה. ואדרבה - ע"י גישה זו מביטלים חשיבות הענין, באמור הת': הרי כו"כ לימודים בבי"ס, ורובם מכריחים אותי ללמוד ובזמן קבוע ובספרים קבועים וכו', ושוכרים ע"ז מורה מיוחד במשכורת וכו' וכו' - ודוקא לימוד זה (דיר"ש) אין לו זמן וכו'. הרי ברור שזה ענין דמהיכי תיתא וכו' וכו'. - פשוט שצ"ל דבורו עד"ז - בכל הברייתקייט ומבלי חת כלל ובקול רעש (ובפרט שכנראה וואקסט א נייער יש וכו' - והלואי שבעוד מועד יגבילוהו. וד"ל) ידבר בתוקף וה' יצליחו.

It is imperative [that you accept the invitation] for many reasons.

The point of your speech should be (whether in my name or not—depending on the situation, as you determine on the ground):

Everyone agrees that one cannot become a doctor without studying medicine, and similarly, one cannot become] a builder of houses [without

studying carpentry], etc. How then is it possible that the students should grow up to be *yirei shamayim* without having been taught about the subject?!

This is especially true since times have changed from the way it used to be: [in previous generations] students saw [the conduct of *yiras shamayim*] in their parents and in the streets, etc. But now, the only opportunity they have to learn about this is at school. **This is sufficient for the wise.**

Obviously, it is not enough to just tell students that, for 15 minutes, they should learn *Mussar* or the like—if they want, and from whatever *sefer* they want. On the contrary, this approach only **degrades** the importance afforded to this study, since the students will say: “There are so many subjects studied at

school; most of them are mandatory for me to learn, and at specific times, with specific textbooks, etc. A special teacher is hired with a salary to teach these subjects, etc. etc. But only this subject (about *yiras shamayim*), has no [set] time etc. This clearly demonstrates that [the school’s administration] doesn’t take it seriously, etc. etc.”

Obviously, you must speak about this emphatically and without trepidation **at all**, with a loud voice (especially considering the fact that recently there seems to be a new and bold voice growing [in opposition to Chassidus] etc.; if only it would be restrained in due time. This is sufficient for the wise).

Speak with strength and determination, and Hashem will grant you success.

strengthen the eyes.<sup>29</sup>

For someone undergoing treatment for a speech impediment, the Rebbe suggested that learning Torah—and specifically Chassidus—diligently, will hasten his recovery.<sup>30</sup>

The ultimate accomplishment in learning Chassidus, however, is the fulfillment of Moshiach’s assurance to the Baal Shem Tov that “*lichshyafutzu maaynosecha chutza*”—when the wellsprings of Chassidus are spread to the “outside”—the *geula* will arrive.

This should spur us to action in creating and advancing our times to learn Chassidus—thereby gaining a taste of Moshiach as well. ❶

1. Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 175.

2. Kuntres Etz Hachaim pp. 82–84, 87.

3. Hayom Yom 24 Adar I.

4. Hamashpia (Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman), vol. 1, pp. 15, 402; vol. 2, pp. 714, 828.

5. Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 364.

6. Igros Kodesh vol. 15, p. 283.

7. Igros Kodesh vol. 11, p. 337. This message is also powerfully expressed in Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 124.

8. Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 230.

9. Orach Chaim 98:1.

10. English letter dated 24 Marcheshvan 5720.

11. Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 364.

12. Igros Kodesh vol. 11, p. 297.

13. Kuntres Etz Hachaim p. 52.

14. Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 398.

15. Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 230.

16. Igros Kodesh vol. 12, p. 241.

17. Kuntres Etz Hachaim p. 85.

18. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 1, p. 589.

19. Igros Kodesh vol. 4, p. 313.

20. Igros Kodesh vol. 9, p. 20.

21. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 45.

22. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 212.

23. Igros Kodesh vol. 4, p. 104.

24. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 47.

25. Kuntres Etz Hachaim p. 84.

26. Kuntres Etz Hachaim p. 87. The Rebbe referenced this point many times, see for example Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 111.

27. English letter dated 24 Marcheshvan 5720.

28. Igros Kodesh vol. 19, p. 314. See also vol. 12, p. 321.

29. Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 127; vol. 8, p. 305.

30. Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 49. The Rebbe found precedent for this in the story of Reb Bere Volf Kozevnikov (Sefer Hasichos 5700 p. 32).

31. Sefer HaYechidus (Glitzenstein) p. 237.

32. Teshura Horowitz-Wilschansky, 5774.

33. B’darkei Hachassidim p. 244.

# THE HOME'S BUILDER

THE WOMAN'S ROLE AS  
AKERES HABAYIS

Compiled By: Rabbi Levi Greenberg (OH)

Written By: Rabbi Shneur Itzinger

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

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

## THE VOICE IN THE TENT<sup>1</sup>

Two hundred and fifty strong, the mutinous crowd marched toward the tent of the leader of the Jewish people. Spurred by grievances and armed with arguments, they brought exhibits to prove their point. They were dressed in strange garments: robes woven entirely of blue wool, *techeiles*, poised to challenge Moshe's authority as the transmitter of Hashem's Torah.

Two men, explicitly named in the Torah as leaders of the uprising, stood worlds apart. One was Korach, a man of towering lineage, vast wealth, and sharp intellect, a first cousin of Moshe and Aharon. The other was On ben Peles, a simple Jew, without renown, scholarship, or pedigree.

To understand why one would be lost forever while the other would be saved, we must turn away from the crowd and step inside their tents, where quieter voices shaped the course of history. Let us listen in on the conversations each man had with his wife.

Korach's wife fanned the flames within him, becoming a cheerleader of his rebellious path. "Do you see what Moshe has done?" she pressed. "He crowns himself as king. His brother becomes Kohen Gadol, and his nephews *sgan kohanim*, while you, with your lineage and wisdom, are left standing outside."

She went further. Moshe, she claimed, enriches his own household with *terumos* and *maasros*, taking from others to support his brother. Even the *mitzvos* themselves, she scoffed, are tools of humiliation. "He shaves you entirely and waves you in all directions like waste,<sup>2</sup> all to make you look deranged!"

It was in this tent that the idea of the *techeiles* test was born. The tallis of pure blue was not Korach's inspiration alone. It was his wife who urged him to bring it forward as an open challenge to Moshe Rabbeinu's authority and his role as the faithful transmitter of Hashem's word.

Over in the camp of Reuven, in the tent of On ben Peles, a very different scene unfolded. Originally, On had sworn allegiance to Korach. He sat at the table when the plot was hatched, pledging to join the uprising when called upon. Yet now his wife attempted to dissuade him.

"You are secondary to Moshe, a mere student," she reasoned. "If Korach is victorious, what will you be then? Also a student! Why choose whom to play second fiddle to? Better to sit this one out."

Two men. Two tents. Two very different voices within them. Only one was saved at the last minute.

When the moment of truth arrived, and the earth opened its mouth to swallow those who challenged Moshe Rabbeinu, one of

נשי  
ובנות  
חב"ד  
N'SHEI  
U'BNOS  
CHABAD



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these two men stood among them, his brilliance and lineage offering no protection. The other was in bed, his wife ingeniously guarding the entrance to their home, turning away the rebellious rabble and keeping her husband from their mutinous mission.

The man of lineage or the simpleton. Who was saved? Was it Moshe's cousin who ultimately backed out of the rebellion, or the simple Jew with no special wisdom?

Counterintuitively, Korach, the man of wealth and wisdom, was swallowed up by the earth, lost forever. On ben Peles, the unremarkable man, survived.

## BUILDERS OF THE HOME

Certainly, our husbands, sons, and brothers are not subject to being part of Korach's rebellion. Yet this three-thousand-year-old story still teaches a powerful lesson about the influence of the woman in the home.

"The wisest of women builds her house, but a foolish one tears it down with her hands," writes the wisest of men in Mishlei.<sup>3</sup> Rashi tells us exactly whom Shlomo Hamelech is describing. The

first half of the *possuk* refers to the wife of On ben Peles. The latter speaks of Korach's wife. One wise woman was an *akeres habayis*, a builder of the home. The other was an *okeres habayis*, uprooting her family from its core values and destroying the home from within.

This story calls on us to think deeply about the responsibility placed in the hands of the Jewish woman, and the decisive role she plays in shaping the actions and direction of her household. When a woman's intuition is guided by Torah wisdom, she *builds* her home, meriting the title of *akeres habayis* and raising generations of children on a strong foundation.

"The woman, as the **Akeres Habayis** (the foundation of the home), is the builder of the Jewish home," writes the Rebbe to the tenth annual N'shei Chabad Convention. "In a very large measure she determines the spirit and conduct of the whole family"<sup>4</sup>

The home in which the future of the Jewish people is shaped rests in our hands. Let us guide it down the correct path.

## THE HOLY CHAOS<sup>5</sup>

“Kohen.” What does the word bring to mind? The term is conceptually linked to *meshares*, a servant. We picture Kohanim as holy servants of Hashem, moving barefoot across the hallowed floors of the Beis Hamikdash. Every step measured, every object they touch sanctified, their bodies purified, and their garments a pristine white.

Yet Kohanim are not only “at service” during the formal *avoda*, nor only when they daven, learn Torah, or perform *mitzvos*. As faithful *mesharsim*, they are dedicated to Hashem at all times. Eating, sleeping, and even the most mundane activities are part of their *avoda*.

This brings us to another image of “Kohen.” A home filled with children and the lively chaos that comes with it. A *Yiddishe mame* moves through the house, making sure her children are fed, clothed, and clean. On the physical level, she is the steward of their well-being. Are the windows open, letting in too much cold air? Are the home’s conditions conducive to health?

To be called a home, the Torah teaches, it must be clean and furnished with care. Clean in the physical sense, so that davening and holiness can exist within its walls, as well as on the spiritual plane, free of foreign, unholy influences.

Her influence reaches every corner. Take the kitchen, for example. Beyond clean surfaces and nutritious meals, is the food kosher? Is the *hechsher* reliable? Once the food is removed from its packaging, has it come into contact with anything that is not kosher?

The *chinuch* of the children is, of course, a central priority, and it begins immediately. From the moment of birth, it is the mother’s responsibility to ensure that her child’s environment is one of *kedusha*, with sights and sounds of Torah and *pessukim*. It is she who chooses a proper nursery in which to care for and educate them. Nor is *chinuch* limited to the spiritual alone; it begins with keeping a child clean, dressed properly, healthy, and whole.

At first glance, this does not appear to be “holy” work. Much of the day is spent on technicalities, from messes to menus. It can feel far removed from *avodas Hashem*.

But nothing could be further from the truth. Even while occupied with what appears trivial, such as ensuring the food is prepared properly, a woman is engaged in a cornerstone of her *avodas Hashem*.

Keeping this awareness front and center is not simple. It is easy to become lost in the details, to forget that the home is not merely a house, but a sanctuary for Hashem. That the food, the cleanliness, the health, and the order are all expressions of serving Him. Yet Hashem grants the Jewish mother the wisdom and strength to fulfill this responsibility faithfully and with joy.

Just as the Kohanim are devoted *mesharsim* of Hashem, so too is the Jewish woman. “*V’atem tih’yu li mamleches kohanim*—You

## FOUNDATIONAL OVERSIGHT<sup>11</sup>

I carefully read the conclusion of your letter, which describes your heart’s feelings. After investing so much strength, energy, and time in building and strengthening family life, it seems to you that this effort was not sufficiently recognized or appreciated, especially given its steady, ongoing commitment over many years.

Surely you know, both from tradition and through your own “merits,” that in our Torah, *Toras Emes*, a woman in her home is called the “*akeres habayis*,” meaning the very essence and foundation of the home.

Now, there’s something puzzling here. Everyone agrees that the stability of any building depends entirely on the foundations on which it was built, on their strength and ability to withstand any possible change. Yet no one speaks of the foundation itself, except during the actual construction, and even then, only by the contractor, architect, and builder. Meanwhile, people speak at length about and praise the building’s exterior beauty, the elegance of the inside walls and ceilings, and the tastefulness of its furnishings and decor, etc.

Even if someone were to come and explain the foundation’s key importance, that the walls, ceiling, floors, and everything within them depend entirely on it, and everyone would readily agree, they would immediately return to speaking of all the other features.

The comfort in this is not merely that an apt analogy exists, but that the lack of verbal appreciation is by no means indicative that people doubt its importance. Rather, it is human nature that what is well known does not draw the eye or stir curiosity and the like, and therefore [as you wrote] “there is no reason for extended discussion or even mention of it at all.”

With blessings for success in your responsibilities as *akeres habayis* with inner satisfaction, for success in all your affairs, and for good news.

## ADDITIONAL INSIGHT:

» When it comes to choosing a home and community, the Friediker Rebbe's guidance, based on *Chazal*, tells us that special weight should be given to the opinion of the woman—the *akeres habayis*. Living in the right atmosphere and among the right friends is especially important for women, who are more sensitive to the influence of their surroundings.<sup>6</sup>

—Adapted from a letter to a chosson

» When building a home, too, the woman should be consulted (and certainly the husband will be able to swallow his pride to do so!). Her *bina yeseira* and more expansive vision in these matters should be utilized to expand further than what the husband may feel is enough.<sup>7</sup>

—Adapted from a *sicha* regarding *shnas habinyan*

» *Akeres habayis* does not stop at the home's door; the Jewish woman builds the entire nation. This began with the wives of Yaakov—Rachel, Leah, Billah, and Zilpah—who devoted themselves to raising his children and safeguarding the future of the Jewish people. With their assistance, even in a foreign land under difficult conditions, Yaakov

Avinu successfully built the Jewish nation, raising children loyal to the path of the Avos.<sup>8</sup> —Adapted from a letter to women

» “As the *Akeres Habayis*—the foundation of the Jewish home, the Jewish mother is largely responsible for the perpetuation of the very foundations of Jewish existence: Taharas Hamishpocho, Kashrus, the sanctity of Shabbos and Yom Tov, the education of the children—the whole set-up of the home and of all the members of the household, to maintain the continuity of the Jewish way of life and the very existence of our Jewish people.”<sup>9</sup>

—Excerpt from an English letter to N'shei Chabad

» “It is generally recognized that religion, morality and ethics must begin at home...the responsibility for the conduct of the home and the spiritual development of the children has in a large measure shifted from the “head” of the family to the “heart” of the family, namely from the father to the mother. The Jewish wife and mother has always been recognized as the **AKERES HABAYIS**, the “Foundation of the home.”<sup>10</sup>

—Excerpt from an English letter to participants of the cornerstone laying of Beth Rivkah of Melbourne

shall be to Me a kingdom of Kohanim,” Hashem told the Jewish people at Matan Torah. Every part of a Jew's life, physical and spiritual, is *avodas Hashem*. The same devotion that once filled Hashem's palace is meant to be lived out in every Jewish home.

A woman's work in raising her children, including what is often labeled mundane, is not merely *part* of *avodas Hashem*. It is its *essence*. What greater service is there than being the *akeres habayis*, the steady anchor of the home, raising *Yiddische kinder* in their own *mikdash me'at*?

*Akeres habayis* means the *ikar habayis*, the central foundation of the home. Who is more essential than the mother, ensuring that the furnishings, the food, and above all, the souls within the home are nurtured with holiness and purity?

The Kohanim's careful *avoda* once sanctified the walls of the Beis Hamikdash. Today, within a people called to be a *mamleches kohanim*, the Jewish mother sanctifies the walls of her home, making it a *mikdash me'at*. **T**

1. Adapted from a *sicha* to Beis Rivkah graduates and camp counselors from 20 Sivan 5744—*Hisvaaduyos* 5744 vol. 3, pp. 2003–2004; and a letter from Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5713—*Igros Kodesh* vol. 7, pp. 300–301.

2. As was done to all *Leviyim*—see Beha'aloscha 8:5-22.

3. 14:1.

4. Excerpt from an English free rendition of the Rebbe's letter to the N'shei Chabad Convention of 5725. Printed in the original Yiddish in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 7, pp. 329–330.

5. Adapted from the *sicha* to the N'shei Chabad convention of 5742—*Hisvaaduyos* 5742 vol. 3, pp. 1476–1479.

6. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 22, p. 257.

7. *Hisvaaduyos* 5748 vol. 4, pp. 380–381.

8. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 19, pp. 78–79.

9. *Letters by the Lubavitcher Rebbe* vol. 1, p. 199.

10. English letter dated 8th of Iyar, 5728.

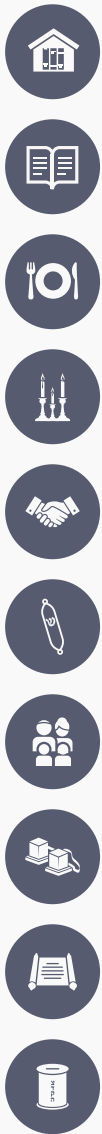
11. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 29, pp. 141–142.

BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

נדפס ע"י ולזכות  
הרה"ת ר' שרגא פייוול  
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
מאן

GENERATIONAL  
WEALTH

MIVTZA  
TAHARAS  
HAMISHPACHA



# TAKING ACTION

THE TEN  
MIVTZOIM  
REVISITED

“Regarding your arranging a women’s organization to strengthen *Taharas Hamishpacha*:

“I carry deep pain and anguish over the terrible apathy and neglect shown toward this mitzvah. The responsibility in this matter rests squarely upon the *rabbanim*.

“At this moment, the world is crumbling before us, with every country suspended over erupting volcanoes, while we, the Jewish people—even here in this country—stand at the very threshold between life and death. All of us—every rebbe, every rabbi, and every communal activist—should be rushing out in groups into the streets of every city, calling out and crying bitterly to awaken the hearts of the Jewish people; regardless of what party they belong to or what their aspirations may be. Awaken them to *teshuvah*! Create a movement of *teshuvah*! Cry out with passion: ‘*Shuva Yisroel!*’

“We must raise our voices like a shofar until we are heard by every Jew, from the laborer to the banker.

“Instead, everyone sits with folded arms, waiting for some young women to decide on their own to keep *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

“No, my friend! A thousand times no!

“The *rabbanim* must go out on their own initiative, doing everything they can—even if it means visiting people in their private homes and telling them the truth: Hashem is showing us His strong hand, urging us toward mitzvah observance.

“This kind of effort would indeed bring the desired results...”<sup>1</sup>

This impassioned, even desperate cry was written by the Frierdiker Rebbe shortly after his arrival in the United States to Rabbi Yaakov Aizer Dubrow, a *rav* in Washington D.C.

Awareness and observance of *Taharas Hamishpacha* were in a very sorry state. The Frierdiker Rebbe did everything he could to better the situation. He formed committees and personally raised much-needed funds to build new mikvahs or repair old ones. In fact, only a few days after arriving in New York—on Purim afternoon—a mere few hours before coming out to his first farbrengen in his new country, the Frierdiker Rebbe busied himself with nothing else. He sat down and wrote letters to the powers that be, attempting to start a campaign for a new mikvah in his neighborhood on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

This was followed by dozens more letters to community leaders throughout the country, encouraging them to take on the task and build mikvahs wherever needed.

In fact, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was informed by Rabbi Yosef Breuer that the Jewish community of

Washington Heights was in need of a mikvah, he personally raised the six thousand dollars needed for the project.<sup>2</sup>

It was a call of desperation that echoed a similar sentiment years earlier, when—under the most dangerous circumstances—the Frierdiker Rebbe built mikvahs in cities throughout Communist Russia.

“Every city must have a mikvah,” the Frierdiker Rebbe said. “Let me say this in simple Yiddish: A child who is born after the mikvah, in holiness and purity, will always come back home. He might be handicapped, he might be broken, or he might be bruised. But he will come back home...”<sup>3</sup>

Decades later, the Rebbe would launch a new campaign, raising even greater awareness and observance of this special mitzvah.

## Surprise

It was 16 Tammuz, the day before the fast of Shiva Asar B’Tammuz, 5735.

Shortly after Mincha, Rabbi Leibel Groner came into the *zal* and announced that there would be a farbrengen that evening.

In the preceding year, the Rebbe had formalized what became known as the “Five Mivtzoim”: Tefillin, Torah, Bayis Malei Sefarim, Mezuzah, and Tzedakah. Towards the end of the year, the Rebbe introduced a



MIVTZA TAHARAS  
HAMISHPACHA

TAKING  
ACTION  
THE TEN  
MIVTZOIM  
REVISITED

sixth *mitvza*: Neshek (Neiros Shabbos Kodesh V'Yom Tov).

Throughout this time, it wasn't uncommon for the Rebbe to hold short farbrengens during the week, in which he would encourage everyone to get involved with the *mitvzoim* and disseminate them as much as possible.

It must have been assumed that this surprise farbrengen would be no different.

What the crowd could not have imagined was that the Rebbe was about to introduce two new *mitvzoim*; both truly revolutionary:

Taharas Hamishpacha and Kashrus.

Up to this point, all of the *mitvzoim* consisted of small, simple acts. These new campaigns demanded much greater commitment.

*Taharas Hamishpacha* was particularly startling. The nature of the mitzvah is private, almost the opposite of what one would expect for a public campaign.

Nevertheless, the Rebbe explained that desperate times call for desperate measures. A public campaign is not only justified—it is essential.

## The Right Tools

“People ask,” the Rebbe began, “how is it possible that in recent generations, the observance of Torah and *mitzvos* in some circles is in such a low state?”

The Rebbe went on to offer two possible explanations:

In order for a Jewish soul to be spiritually healthy, it must be brought into this world with holiness and purity. Neglecting the mitzvah of *Taharas Hamishpacha* has a negative effect on the *neshama* of the child born thereafter. It lacks the necessary means and tools (*levushim*) to properly express itself.

Naturally, the responsibility for ensuring that this mitzvah is properly observed lies with Jewish women. The men must, of course, be supportive in any way possible and not, *chas v'shalom*, be opposed. But the ones entrusted with practically keeping the mitzvah are primarily women.

As such, women have an incredible *shlichus* to try to influence other Jewish daughters to observe *Taharas Hamishpacha*. Not only is this mitzvah so essential to the physical and spiritual sustainability of every Jewish family, it actually affects generations upon generations of Jewish children, in an everlasting way.<sup>4</sup>

## Every Day Is Crucial

Throughout the years, the Rebbe never ceased encouraging and assisting women to observe and raise awareness of this mitzvah.

“Many young women are not sufficiently fluent in all the

*halachos* of *Taharas Hamishpacha*,” the Rebbe writes. “Jewish people are, by nature, a bashful people, and it's unlikely that these women will speak about this, and certainly not ask about it. It is therefore of utmost importance that one of the women who is well versed in these laws should set up a fixed time to learn all the necessary *halachos* with the others. The best would be if a similar class were arranged for the young men as well...”<sup>5</sup>

The Rebbe also pushed for many mikvahs to be built, and quickly. “Opening the mikvah as soon as possible, even pushing the opening date just one day earlier, is extremely important!” the Rebbe says.

“Our Rabbeim were also very explicit about making a mikvah aesthetically beautiful. If even one additional woman has a more pleasant experience while using the mikvah, it's worth all the trouble. It makes no difference whether the woman's expectations are justified; we need to provide her with whatever she needs to fulfill this mitzvah properly. It will have an everlasting impact on generations upon generations to come!”<sup>6</sup>

## Don't Keep Quiet

When *rabbanim* were hesitant to speak about *Taharas Hamishpacha* in public due to *tznius* concerns, the Rebbe responded:

“I asked a *rav*: Have you ever asked your community members how much they know about these *halachos*? Many of the young women in your community learn in public schools or universities where they receive an education on these subjects, but only from the side that is opposite of *kedusha*. When does she hear about the holy approach, about the mitzvah and all its laws? Only a mere five or six months before her wedding. By that time, she's already well-versed in these subjects, but not in a good way. So what have you accomplished with your hesitancy to address this subject directly?”<sup>7</sup>

## Is it too late?

The Rebbe pointed out that even elderly women who did not keep *Taharas Hamishpacha* during their childbearing years should still be persuaded to participate later on. By using the mikvah only once, they ensure that for the remainder of their life, for decades long, they will live in a state of purity and holiness in all aspects.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, the Rebbe instructed those who experienced deficiency in this mitzvah to rectify it in another way:

To a father whose daughter was going through a difficult medical procedure, the Rebbe asked to clarify if the child was born in a state of *tahara*. “I hope you will not take offense at my asking,” the Rebbe added, “since I don't know you

personally, and when it comes to the spiritual health of a fellow Jew, there's nothing to be ashamed of."

If there was indeed a lapse in observance, the Rebbe said, the parents should resolve to be extra careful about this mitzvah from now on. Additionally, they should make the effort to influence others who do not yet keep this mitzvah to begin doing so.

"This will help, at least in some sense, to rectify what was lacking in the past," the Rebbe concluded.<sup>9</sup>

## Source of Great Blessings

The Rebbe pointed to observance of *Taharas Hamishpacha* (along with *tznius* in general, especially covering the hair) as a source and channel for Hashem's blessings in the lives of Jewish women and their families.<sup>10</sup>

It would be impossible to count how many times couples would ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* to have children—whether by dollars, in letters, or in *yechidus*—and the Rebbe told them to start keeping, or be more careful in the observance of, *Taharas Hamishpacha*. This would create the necessary channel to bring this blessing from Hashem into their lives.

## A Mother Only Wants Best

I received your letter about your son, who has been married for a few years and still does not have any children.

The first thing you need to ensure is whether his wife, your daughter-in-law, follows in the way of all Jewish daughters by observing *Taharas Hamishpacha*. By keeping this mitzvah, Hashem blesses the couple with healthy children—healthy both in body and spirit.

If indeed she (temporarily) does not yet keep *Taharas Hamishpacha*, then Hashem has actually shown them a great kindness by not yet giving them children. Hashem wants to bless them with children who are physically and spiritually healthy.

The fact that you see others who do not observe *Taharas Hamishpacha*, *chas v'shalom*, and they still have (what appear to be) healthy children, is not a contradiction. No one really knows what's going on in another person's private life; the pain that parents feel from having deprived their children in whatever respect. They are embarrassed to share such things, and they find various ways to hide their inner turmoil and suffering. If you knew the facts that these parents do share in an intimate setting, you would know about the regret that most of these parents feel for neglecting to



THE REBBE OUTSIDE THE MIKVA IN CROWN HEIGHTS.

keep *Taharas Hamishpacha* and the pain it brings upon their children as a result. We wouldn't have to speak so much about the importance of *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

I truly do not want to cause you any pain, but as a mother and a wife, you should exert much effort that your son and his wife, as well as your other children, observe *Taharas Hamishpacha*. You wouldn't be doing Hashem a favor, you'd be doing yourself the greatest kindness...

I conclude with a wish that you will be able to share good news, that you've indeed put effort into all of the above, and that you've succeeded.

(*Igros Kodesh* vol. 7, p. 321)

## Mikvah of Geulah

The mitzvah of *Taharas Hamishpacha* is especially connected with the *geulah*. Hashem says of that time, "I will pour pure waters upon you, and you will become pure..." Any effort in assisting with the mitzvah of *Tahara* today serves to hasten that time of Hashem's purifying waters, with the true and complete *geulah*, may it be now!<sup>11</sup>



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# THE POWER OF A MITZVAH



An interview with  
**Mrs. Sarah Dubov**  
Wimbledon, London

Thank you for asking me to share some thoughts about my involvement with the mitzvah of *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

*I would like to dedicate this interview in memory of my dear father, Reb Boruch Sholom ben Reb Michael Yehuda Leib HaKohen Kahan, הרב"ח מיכאל יהודה לייב הכהן קאהן, who passed away earlier this year, on 25 Cheshvan. תנצב"ה.*

## The Rebbe's Encouragement

It all began when my husband and I were newly married. We were living in Crown Heights; my husband was in kollel, and I was teaching in Machon Chana's Sunday program for not-yet-observant women.

One day, one of the administrators approached me and asked, "One of the girls here is engaged. Could you teach her *Taharas Hamishpacha*?"

I was taken aback. I was newly married and had only recently learned the laws myself. "Are you sure?" I asked. "Maybe you can choose someone more experienced to teach her?"

But she insisted, so I agreed. I taught this bride everything I had learned, consulting with Rabbi Heller *sheyichye* whenever a question came up, and *baruch Hashem*, she agreed to keep this mitzvah, at least before her wedding. I completed teaching her, and then there was a gap of several weeks before her actual wedding.

A few days before her wedding, I thought to myself, *Let me just check in to make sure she's doing everything correctly.* I called her and discovered that unfortunately, she had forgotten some of the important elements to properly prepare herself for the mikvah.

I was devastated. I turned to my husband and said, "What should we do? She's getting married in a few days!"

We spoke to several *rabbanim* in an attempt to rectify the situation, but the whole episode left me very shaken. I felt responsible for not reminding this bride of the important details at the correct time.

The next day, I sat down and wrote a letter to the Rebbe detailing the whole story and how I was feeling. I concluded that if I'm indeed meant to continue teaching *Taharas Hamishpacha*, I'm asking the Rebbe for a *bracha*.

Very shortly thereafter, the Rebbe replied to my letter, "*Azkir al hatziyun.*"

That *bracha* gave me the confidence I needed, and since then, *baruch Hashem*, I've taught many women about this special mitzvah for close to four decades now.

## Continue the Good News

Another important factor that encouraged me to teach *Taharas Hamishpacha* was the fact that three years after we moved on shlichus here to Wimbledon, South London, we built and opened

a mikvah, the first and only one in this area.

We embarked on the project of building the South London mikvah in 5750, during “*Shnas Habinyan*,” when the Rebbe announced that it was “a time to build.”

The Rebbe participated in the building campaign by sending us a \$100 check in the mail. We were overwhelmed and humbled by this gesture of support from the Rebbe.

The project took a year to complete. When the mikvah was finally opened, we made a grand dinner to mark the occasion. We invited the *rabbanim* from the various local synagogues, and we were even honored to host the Chief Rabbi at the time, Lord Jakobovits, *a”h*.

It was a unique milestone: this was the first mikvah south of the River Thames in London.

After the event, my husband wrote a *duch* to the Rebbe describing the entire process of building the mikvah, as well as the opening dinner. He included the line, “*shehaya b’hishtatfus kol haRabbanim*”—that all the *rabbanim* in the area participated—and “*v’haya bahavas Yisroel u’v’achdus Yisroel*”—that the whole event took place with a spirit of *ahavas Yisroel* and Jewish unity.

It was a long and detailed letter about the mikvah, the construction, the dinner, and everything surrounding it.

Incredibly, from the entire *duch*, the Rebbe selected and underlined one specific line—about the *ahavas Yisroel* and *achdus Yisroel*—and wrote on the side: “*Kein yamshich levaser besuros tovos. Azkir al hatziyun*” (may you continue reporting such good news; I will mention this at the Ohel).

It meant so much to us that the Rebbe highlighted the unity and the *ahavas Yisroel*, expressing how much *nachas ruach* it brought the Rebbe. This made a deep impression on us and on the way we try to carry out our *shlichus*.

Sometime later, my husband also went to

New York to the Rebbe. He had made a photo album of the mikvah and dinner, and brought it with him to Sunday dollars. When his turn came, the Rebbe gave him a dollar and said, “*bracha v’hatzlacha*.”

Then my husband gave the Rebbe the album, saying, “This is the album of the South London mikvah.”

The Rebbe gave my husband another dollar and said, “*Dos is far der album*” (this is for the album). And then another dollar and said, “*Dos zolst du areinleigen in der mikvah; nisht in der mikvah alein, nor in der cheder vu men tut zich ois*” (this you should put in the mikvah, not in the mikvah itself but in the dressing room).

Empowered by this *kiruv* from the Rebbe, we of course wanted the mikvah to be used as much as possible! So we tried our best to spread awareness of this mitzvah. We printed a brochure about our new mikvah and *Taharas Hamishpacha*, which we sent to our entire mailing list, and I also gave talks at local synagogues and women’s groups. In addition, I also approached women individually about it.

*Baruch Hashem*, over the years, we have had many women, both from our community and from surrounding areas, use the mikvah.

## Mikvah.Org

A great part of my involvement in this mitzvah, in addition to teaching *kallahs* over the years, was, and is continually, inspired by the sterling work of Mikvah.org, known as *Mivtza Taharas Hamishpacha* in the earlier years. Several years ago, I took their extremely comprehensive and exceptional *Kallah-Teachers’* training course covering both *halacha* and *hashkafa*, and much more, and it has deeply motivated me—just as it has inspired so many others—to strengthen my efforts in sharing this mitzvah. The incredibly dedicated staff at Mikvah.org has brought this



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mitzvah to the forefront of *klal yisroel* and elevated it to an entirely new level.

The resources and support they provide—for women of all backgrounds—are truly remarkable. Whether it's their website, helpline, online calendar, books, flyers, and brochures, as well as podcasts and videos, and much more, these tools have played a major and significant role in helping me, and women worldwide, to spread this mitzvah.

## Literally Saving Lives

In addition to the above, I am also very inspired by the Rebbe's words on the subject of *Taharas Hamishpacha* in general.

A most powerful message about this mitzvah is found in Hayom Yom, 10 Nissan:

“Regarding the efforts to increase the observance of *Taharas Hamishpacha* in your locale, contemplate this: If Hashem enabled you to save an entire Jewish community from extinction, you would certainly be willing to risk your life to do so. Moreover, you would praise and laud Him for His kindness in granting you this great merit.

“The same then holds true to an even greater degree with regard to the campaign for *Taharas Hamishpacha*; it is an endeavor which literally saves lives (“*hatzalas nefashos mamash*”).

Although all *mitvzoim* are of course so vital and important, it is only regarding *Mivtza Taharas Hamishpacha* that the Rebbe uses the expression of “saving lives.” One senses a deep urgency here.

Perhaps we can suggest the following analogy: Shluchim, for example, are occasionally called upon to help in life-threatening situations—hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters *rachmana litzlan*, or to help a Jew who is imprisoned or in trouble; they will drop everything and do their best to save a life or rescue someone in a dire situation. Similarly, we should approach this mitzvah with the same, if not greater, urgency—it deserves our greatest attention.

There are many ways one can go about this. But when mentioning it to women, I will try to emphasize the Rebbe's words, written in *Igros Kodesh*:



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

A PICTURE OF THE ORIGINAL MIKVAH BUILDING IN SOUTH LONDON THAT WAS SENT TO THE REBBE AND IS IN THE LIBRARY.

that keeping *Taharas Hamishpacha* brings blessings, both *b'gashmiyus* and *b'ruchniyus* to a woman, her husband, and family, for all generations.

When one approaches it with this perspective, it becomes a *zechus* and privilege to share this well-spring of blessings with them.

## An Auspicious Hour

Another very inspiring and uplifting quote when speaking with women about mikvah is from the words of the Frierdiker Rebbe said at a fundraising dinner for Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in 5703:

“...The *techinos* (personal prayers), that women whisper before and after candle-lighting, in which they request that Hashem light up their home with *shalom bayis*, and with children who radiate *nachas*; the *techinos* that women customarily utter before and after they fulfill the mitzvah of taking challah, requesting from Hashem ample livelihood to support Torah scholars and give tzedaka generously... The personal prayers that women customarily utter before and after immersion in a mikvah, when they ask to be blessed with fine and healthy children who will grow up to be *frum* and upstanding men and women. All of these customs are part of Torah...”

I find this to be a beautiful thought to share with women: that the time of immersion in the mikvah is an “*eis ratzon*”—an auspicious time for personal prayer. I have found women to be very receptive to this special opportunity. In fact, over the years, many women have told me that the prayers that they



RABBI DUBOV PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH THE ALBUM.

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uttered in our mikvah were indeed fulfilled.

Sometimes we may feel reluctant to broach the subject of mikvah with a woman or couple, as this is a very personal mitzvah. Perhaps we worry that we are intruding on a very private part of their lives.

In this regard, I'd like to share the following illuminating answer from the Rebbe:

The legendary *shlucha* to Minnesota, Rebbetzin Mindelle Feller *a"h*, once wrote to the Rebbe that she wasn't sure whether a couple was ready to hear about *Taharas Hamishpacha* ("im *muchanim heim lishmoa al Taharas Hamishpacha*"). The Rebbe replied: "They have been ready since [they heard about it at] Har Sinai..." ("*Muchanim heim mi'maamad Har Sinai.*")

These holy words from the Rebbe give us tremendous confidence in spreading this mitzvah! Women are ready to hear it; their *neshomos* are receptive.

In fact, in a *sicha* addressed to the Nshei Ubnos Chabad convention on 17 Sivan 5740, the Rebbe emphasised and spoke at great length that we shouldn't be shy or

embarrassed to speak about this mitzvah.

On the contrary, we should speak about it openly and encourage others to do the same. To quote from the Rebbe's extensive words:

"At one time, people were embarrassed to speak about the topic... However, times have changed. It is necessary to bring it up at every possible opportunity! They [women] can influence their rabbis, lecturers, and teachers to speak about this topic. *Taharas Hamishpacha* is perhaps the most important factor in raising a generation of Jews who will follow the path of Torah and *mitzvos*."

## Mesirus Nefesh Today

In her book *Total Immersion*, Mrs. Rivka Slonim relates:

When the Communists were attempting to destroy Yiddishkeit in Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent his Chassidim to travel around the country to strengthen Yidden and aid them in keeping Torah and *mitzvos*. One such chossid was assigned the task of building *mikvaos*. This task was fraught with danger; if he was caught by the police, he'd face prison, or



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Siberia, or worse, *Rachmana l'tzlan*.

Whenever the authorities closed one mikvah, this chossid would try to build another in its place. Sometimes the mikvah he built or reopened would not last more than a few days before it was discovered and locked, or concrete poured into it. The Frierdiker Rebbe was asked, how could he allow this chossid to endanger his life to build *mikvaos*, if they would be closed only several days later?

The Frierdiker Rebbe gave a most incredible, emphatic reply, one which should reverberate in our ears to this day:

No sacrifice is too great if it ensures that even one Jewish soul is born in purity!

We tend to think, justifiably so, that those years were a completely different era, fraught with *mesirus nefesh* to keep Torah and *mitzvos*, with great risk to life.

Of course, thank G-d, it is much easier to keep this mitzvah in our day and age.

But the truth is, that *mesirus nefesh* for *Taharas Hamishpacha* (albeit of a different kind) is still very much a reality for many women.

It may not be breaking the ice in Russia, but it can be in other ways. As a mikvah attendant, I have personally witnessed, and many stories have been recorded, of women who have overcome great personal challenges to keep this mitzvah.

Many mikvah attendants also go to great lengths to help and enable another woman to use the mikvah, sometimes under extremely inconvenient circumstances, such as opening the mikvah at very late hours, or in very inclement weather, or leaving their young children at home, to help another woman.

As part of an international shluchos mikvah attendants WhatsApp group, we have shared many such stories (anonymity preserved, of course) of *mesirus nefesh*, both of women attending the mikvah, as well as *mesirus nefesh* of the mikvah attendants, to enable a woman to keep this mitzvah.

I am deeply humbled and inspired by all of these women, who show such incredible devotion to keep *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

## When A No Can Become a Yes

I remember as a young shlucha, the very first time I approached a woman about keeping *Taharas Hamishpacha*, I was so nervous! I wasn't sure how the idea would be received. But with time, I've learned to accept whatever response or reaction I get, and not to take it personally. In fact, one never knows when a woman might come around and agree.

I'm reminded of one woman whom I knew. She lived an hour away, and I went to meet her at her home. But even after my long, persuasive talk, putting my heart and soul into it, and having had to make arrangements for my young children at home, she turned to me and said, "That sounds really interesting, Sarah, but I don't think it will work for us."

I traveled back home feeling very disappointed. After all that effort, I hadn't been successful. Or so I thought.

Five years later—yes, five whole years later—this woman called me up.

"Sarah," she said, "I'm going through a difficult time with my young son. We were just at the doctor, and he was diagnosed with a degenerative muscular disease." It was feared that her son would soon lose much of his strength, to the point that he'd be unable to walk or run.

I sent her a link to write a letter to the Rebbe, and I assured her that we'd say a "*Mi shebeirach*" for his *refua sheleima* by the *sefer Torah* on Shabbos.

Then I plucked up the courage and said, "We are told that when a woman immerses in the mikvah, it is a very auspicious time to pray. Would you consider this mitzvah, to pray for your son?"

She agreed.

She told me they had an appointment with a top consultant soon. I asked her to call me after the appointment to update me on any news.

A little while later, she called me back and said, "Sarah, you won't believe what happened!"

They had gone to the hospital for a checkup, and the doctor insisted that they take one more X-ray.

After the X-ray the doctor came back to her and

her husband, apologising profusely. “I made a terrible mistake,” he said. “Your son does not have this muscular disease! There’s some other issue with his muscle, but in time, it will correct itself, and he’ll be just fine.”

Then she said to me: “Sarah, last night, I went to the mikvah and as you suggested, I prayed very hard for my son there. The next morning, we got the amazing news that he’s okay! Thank G-d! I feel that my prayers were answered specifically because I went to the mikvah. *Baruch Hashem*, this began her journey of keeping this mitzvah more regularly.

Of course, when we share this mitzvah, we cannot make any guarantees, but we can share the Rebbe’s words that it is a channel for blessing.

## The Power of Chassidus

A similar story comes to mind:

I was once approached by a woman who wanted to brush up on her Hebrew reading skills. We decided to have a weekly study session learning Megillas Rus. As we were learning, I would often think about how I could broach the mitzvah of mikvah to her. I would mention it in our conversations whenever possible.

She found it interesting but said she wasn’t yet ready to observe this mitzvah. After having brought the subject up numerous times with the same response, I was beginning to lose hope.

After we finished Megillas Rus, we wanted to continue studying, so I suggested that we learn a *sicha* from “*Maayan Chai*” each week. Each section contains a short idea based on the Rebbe’s *sichos*, written in simple vowelised Hebrew, and it seemed like a good choice for her.

Throughout the years I learned with her, I would often ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* that this woman would keep *Taharas Hamishpacha*. Now that we decided to learn

the Rebbe’s *sichos*, I asked the Rebbe that “*hama’or sheba machziro l’mutav*”—the inner part of Torah should have a positive effect on her, especially with regards to *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

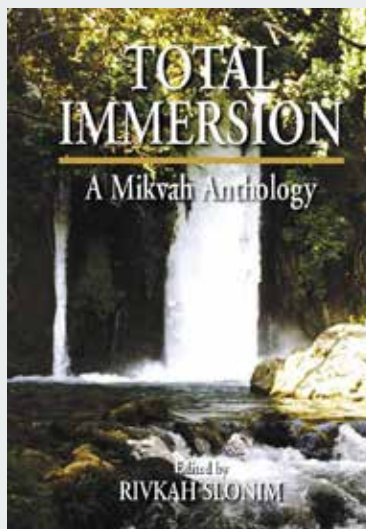
We began learning the *sichos* on a Tuesday. The very next day, Wednesday morning, the woman called me up and said, “Sarah, I’m ready for the mikvah.”

I was stunned. After years of delay, literally the day after we started learning Chassidus specifically, she realized that she was ready for this mitzvah. I saw so clearly the power of Chassidus to awaken the *neshama* of a Yid!

## Front Burner

As a *shlucha*, I am presented with different opportunities to meet other women. On these occasions, the mitzvah of mikvah is always at the forefront of my mind, and I try to use these encounters as opportunities to promote it.

But the truth is, wherever one is and in whatever environment one finds oneself, we can find opportunities to mention this mitzvah. We are familiar with this concept when it comes to *mitvzoim* like tefillin or Shabbos



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candles, and with the Rebbes *kochos*, we can apply the same to *Taharas Hamishpacha*.

When new people join our shul, I will give them a tour of our mikvah as well. On one such occasion, a woman told me, “This is such a beautiful mikvah; but unfortunately, I’m not eligible to go to mikvah anymore.” I explained that, of course, she can, and that the Rebbe encouraged even older, married women to go once, bringing *tahara* to the rest of their married lives. *Baruch Hashem*, over the years we have had quite a few older women happily embrace this mitzvah. The Rebbe encouraged this, saying that this would also have a positive retroactive effect on their families.

Bat mitzvah classes are another opportunity. The mothers usually come with their daughters, and I speak to the girls and their mothers together. *Baruch Hashem*, there have been beautiful results from that too.

Of course, if a young Jewish couple is planning to get married, we will speak to them about mikvah, or if we meet a couple who are already married, I will try to broach it too.

At our Chabad House, I run a mothers-and-toddlers group; I often use this opportunity to mention it in conversation, and women have been receptive. Also, if a young woman is pregnant, I will try to convince her to go to the mikvah before the birth (of course, in a halachically correct manner) and then to return to the mikvah after the birth, to say thank you to Hashem for her new baby. We have also run mikvah spa events, to help draw women to keep this mitzvah.

Unfortunately, sometimes opportunities arise through challenging situations. A woman in our community was diagnosed with a terrible illness. I gently offered her the opportunity to go to the mikvah. She said she didn’t know how much time she had left. But, *baruch Hashem*, she went. Later, I met this woman’s mother, who confided to me that she was extremely concerned about her daughter’s health.

I encouraged the mother to also go to mikvah, explaining that it’s a special time to pray for her



RABBI AND MRS. DUBOV DEDICATING THE NEW CHABAD CENTER.

daughter.

She agreed to go, and with Hashem’s help, her daughter’s health has improved. She is still in need of a *refuah sheleima*, but the original prognosis was that she only had a few months to live, and *baruch Hashem*, it’s been more than two years since then.

## Total Transformation

I’d like to share another interesting story:

Once, a woman from a prominent local traditional Jewish family came to our Chabad House in a very distressed state.

Her son had met a non-Jewish girl, and announced that they were planning to get married. This had never happened in their traditional family. My husband reassured her that he would speak to her son, and then suggested she speak with me.

I explained to her that sometimes G-d may place us in a challenging situation not to cause distress, G-d forbid, but to encourage us to think out of the box and perhaps consider making certain changes in our lives.

I showed her the Rebbe’s letters about the

connection between the mitzvah of *Taharas Hamishpacha* and its positive spiritual effect on one's children. She replied, "Sarah, I will listen to whatever you suggest. I am willing to do anything to stop my son from marrying a non-Jewish girl."

Meanwhile, close family members, although grateful for our efforts, advised us not to get our hopes up—the couple were definitely still planning to get married. All attempts by many people to speak to the son were unfortunately unsuccessful. But the mother started coming to our mikvah faithfully, month after month, praying with great emotion each time. After each appointment, she updated me: one month, she reported that the couple had an argument over the phone bill; the next, his job was moved, and they no longer shared the same office, and so on.

Finally, after seven or eight months, she came out of the mikvah and said, "Sarah, guess what... He left her!" We were both overjoyed!

I said to her, Thank G-d! But please don't stop coming to the mikvah! I encourage you to continue!"

She replied, "Don't worry; I'm not stopping!"

Eventually, her son met a nice Jewish girl, and my husband was *mesader kiddushin* at their wedding. At the chuppah, the young man said publicly, "I would like to thank Rabbi and Mrs. Dubov. If not for them, I wouldn't be here today."

His mother later told me, "Sarah, if anyone ever comes to you for help or advice because their child is planning to marry out, send them to me. I'll send them straight to your

mikvah! I cannot explain any other way why my son didn't marry the non-Jewish girl. I feel that it was definitely my going to mikvah and praying there that caused him to leave her."

As an additional note regarding *Taharas Hamishpacha*, I would like to add an important point: this *mitvza* also includes women who already keep it! The Rebbe encouraged all couples to review these *dinim* regularly to ensure they are keeping all the *halachos* correctly. *Baruch Hashem*, reviews do take place worldwide, and women are encouraged to participate.

## Some final thoughts

In the course of our lives, we meet many different women: at simchas, at events, on shlichus, our neighbors, through work, medical care, and so on. We can use these opportunities to share and strengthen this special mitzvah with whomever we can.

We should always remember: we are going with the Rebbe's *kochos*. Try your best, and remember that no effort to promote a mitzvah, especially one as important as *Taharas Hamishpacha*, will ever go unanswered. One may see results today, tomorrow, or in years from now....or even not at all. But know that the Rebbe's *brachos* accompany you, and that your efforts will bear fruit, in one way or another.

May we be *zoche* to see the fulfillment of the *possuk* in Yechezkel:

“זרקותי עליכם מים טהורים וטהרתם” (יחזקאל לז:כה)

“I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be purified” (Yechezkel 36:25) with the coming of Moshiach, now!

1. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 6, p. 201.
2. Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris p. 356.
3. Sefer Hasichos 5687, p. 164.
4. Likkutei Sichos vol. 13, p. 258. The second explanation (about Kashrus) will be discussed in a future issue, iy"H.
5. Igros Kodesh vol. 9, p. 284.
6. 13 Tishrei 5743; Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 1, p. 149.
7. Yechidus, 4 Adar II 5741; Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2, p. 816.
8. Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul 5735; Toras Menachem vol. 81, p. 344.
9. Igros Kodesh vol. 9, p. 91.
10. Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 470.
11. Igros Kodesh vol. 9, p. 101; et. al.

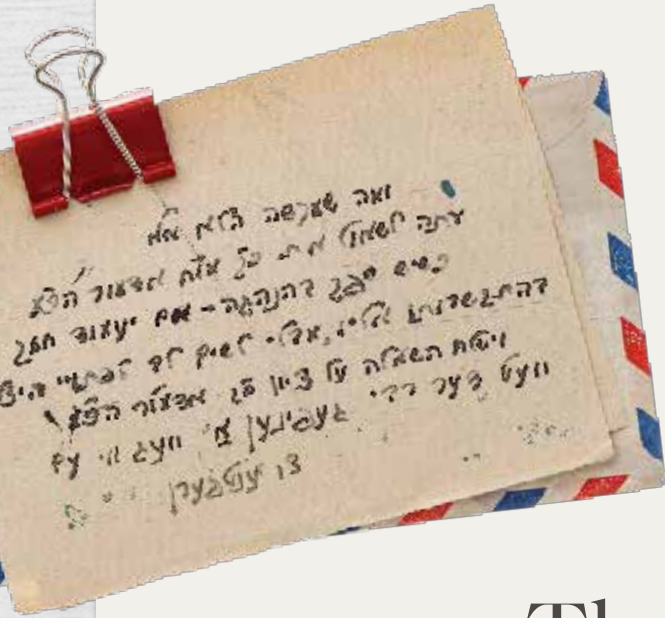


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Story



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

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

נדפס ע"י

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

דער רבי העט  
געפינען א העג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (TX)

# The Best Time to Come



AS TOLD BY  
**RABBI SHIMON SUSSKIND**  
(Vernon Hills, Illinois)

Before Rosh Hashanah this year, on Sunday, 21 Elul, I arranged a trip to the Ohel for members of my community. One of the participants was Stacy\*, whose husband had recently passed away in the prime of his life; her grief felt unbearable.

Six weeks later, after Simchas Torah, Stacy called me to say that, since her husband's passing, the only time she felt some measure of comfort was during the visit to the Ohel before Rosh Hashanah; she wished to visit the Ohel again, to seek the Rebbe's reassurance in her ongoing grief. During the first trip, there were so many visitors at the Ohel, and she wanted to visit at a quieter time. She planned to bring her two sons and her

brother along, and she asked me to accompany them. I readily agreed to chaperone the trip, but it would need to happen after Chanukah.

Stacy suggested that Thursday, December 25, would be a good time for her family, as it was during midwinter vacation, a quiet day for air travel, and perhaps a time when fewer visitors would be at the Ohel. I agreed, and she booked the flights for all of us.

On the final day of Chanukah, I realized that, since December 25 coincided with Hei Teves this year, the Ohel would be very crowded, contrary to Stacy's stated preference to visit the Ohel at a quieter time, and I felt bad about this mistake. It was too late to change the

trip date, but I needed to notify her of what to expect beforehand.

I called Stacy and explained what Hei Teves was all about and why we could expect the Ohel to be very full when we went. While she was impressed at the significance of the day, she was considerably disappointed that it would be full, but there was no choice; the trip went forward as planned.

On Thursday morning, Hei Teves, we flew to New York and went straight to the Ohel. There were so many *bochurim* and *anash* at the Ohel when we arrived that the only place I could find a table with enough open seats for our group was in the last tent, which had inadequate heating. There was also a line to enter the Ohel. The crowds were much bigger than they had been on our Elul trip, and I felt terrible for disappointing Stacy by not realizing the dates beforehand. Still, I was determined to make the best of the situation.

To prepare them for writing to the Rebbe and entering the Ohel, I prepared a few short *sichos* to learn with them, as well as stories about the Ohel I had read in the Chassidisher Derher. On the preceding Shabbos, I had read the story in the Derher magazine for the month of Kislev, written by my friend and classmate, Rabbi Shmuly Haskelevich, whose daughter experienced a devastating medical crisis. When he and his wife needed to make a monumental decision regarding her healthcare, his friend insisted he write to the Rebbe at the Ohel for guidance, which he did. I was very moved by the story and planned to share it with them.

As we sat learning in the tent, I glanced around to find someone who could share a meaningful message with my small group, and after a few minutes, I was delighted to see Rabbi Shmuly Haskelevich preparing to daven Shacharis! I rushed over to him and, after greeting him, said how moved I was by the story he had shared in the Derher, asking if he would share it with my group so they could hear it directly from him. He graciously agreed.

For the next half hour, Shmuly spoke with our small group, and they connected very strongly. They hung on to his every word, and the atmosphere was very special. By the end of the conversation, Stacy asked for Shmuly's daughter's name to include in her letter to the Rebbe, and Shmuly asked for their names. The rest of the visit was charged with a special energy. When we



RABBI SHMULY HASKELEVICH FARBRENGING AT THE OHEL ON 5 TEVES WITH RABBI SUSKIND'S GROUP.

visited 770, the Rebbe's room was open to some groups who had made arrangements in advance. I asked Rabbi Halberstam for permission for our group to enter, and he graciously allowed us to do so.

The next day, Stacy called to thank me for joining them on this trip and shared that the highlight was the conversation with Shmuly.

"Rabbi, if it was not such a special day on the Chabad calendar, Rabbi Shmuly would probably not have been there," Stacy marveled. "I thought I was going to engineer a moving experience by going at a quiet time, and it turned out that going specifically on one of the most overcrowded times was the perfect time for me to be there, so I could meet Rabbi Shmuly and hear his story directly from him. Just like he felt very alone in the decision-making for his daughter, I also feel very alone in my grief. I felt as though the Rebbe was telling me through Rabbi Shmuly's story, 'I hear you, and I feel your pain.' Also, because it was a special day, we were able to pray in the Rebbe's room!"

Everything about a trip to the Rebbe is meaningful. Even an apparent scheduling mishap can be the catalyst for the Rebbe to respond to each person in the perfect manner. **T**

## YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher by emailing [stories@derher.org](mailto:stories@derher.org).



בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל  
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיינא ומשפחתם  
חי' מושקא, לוי יצחק, רבקה,  
מאריאשא, ברכה, יקותיאל  
זוסמאן וגיטה שיחיו גנזבורג  
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר  
לטאראנטא, קאנאדא

By: Rabbi Shneur Itzinger

# Step Inside

## Farbrengen with the Rebbe — A Companion

A guide to the Farbrengen of  
Yud-Aleph Nissan 5733



Toras Menachem  
vol. 72, pg. 3ff.



Sources

This guide is designed to assist in experiencing the farbrengen on video or audio recording. Timestamps correspond to the video of the farbrengen, linked above.

“One act has the potential to tip the scales of the entire world in favor and bring redemption.” The Rebbe taught this familiar Rambam hundreds of times. Here, on the Rebbe’s 71st birthday, he goes deeper into how it truly works. Why is every moment precious? How far does one deed reach in terms of the *kavanah* for which the entire world was created? And what is the real demand of *bechol derachecha da’ehu*, serving Hashem at every single moment?

## Sicha 2: Nothing is for Nothing

The weight of every moment, the necessity for *yegia*, and Dovid Hamelech’s words on behalf of every Jew.

### 1. A Time for Introspection

[31:10]

Every farbrengen has a specific lesson it points to. Today’s is a *cheshbon hanefesh*.

- Today’s farbrengen marks a **birthday**, a time for a *cheshbon hanefesh*.<sup>1</sup>
  - A *cheshbon hanefesh* exists on many levels:
    - General: Yom Kippur.
    - Individual: Birthday.
    - Daily: *Krias Shema she’al hamita*.
      - Each 24-hour period has its own *avoda*.
      - Time is counted in years, months, and days; each has its own *avoda*.<sup>2</sup>
- **What is a *cheshbon hanefesh*?**
- At the end of each period, examining whether **I fulfilled the *avoda* I was meant to** during that time.
- While there are **many** diverse *avodos* to do –
  - Hashem gave us **many *mitzvos***.
  - Torah is **unlimited**.<sup>3</sup>

- Serving Hashem must be done with **all we have**.
- – the **common denominator** is: did **I exert myself** with *yegia*?
  - It is not possible to serve Hashem without effort: *al ta’amin*.

### EVERY DAY A DAY

In the previous *sicha*, the Rebbe mentioned the concept of “*mesyamim b’tov*”—always concluding on a positive note. Now, the Rebbe applies this to every day of a person’s life, proving from the laws of a *nazir* that each day exists as its own entity. Here, the Rebbe further applies it to finding a specific mission and, therefore, to a separate *cheshbon hanefesh* every day.

### 2. Created to Toil

[36:30]

*Yegia* is not incidental to our *avoda*; it defines it.



Step  
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Farbrengen  
with the Rebbe  
— A Companion



For man is born to toil...	איוב ה:ז כי אדם לעמל יולד...
Rabbi Elazar said: man is born to toil. Is it “toil of speech” or “toil of labor”? The <i>possuk</i> clarifies it means speech. Still, is it toil of regular speech, or specifically Torah? The <i>possuk</i> clarifies that it means “toil of Torah”.	<b>סנהדרין צט:</b> אמר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם לעמל נברא, שנאמר "כי אדם לעמל יולד". איני יודע אם לעמל פה נברא אם לעמל מלאכה נברא? כשהוא אומר "כי אכף עליו פיהו", הוי אומר לעמל פה נברא. ועדיין איני יודע אם לעמל תורה אם לעמל שיחה? כשהוא אומר "לא ימוש ספר התורה הזה מפיר", הוי אומר לעמל תורה נברא.

- *Yegia*, effort, is our **basic purpose**.
- “*Adam le’amal yulad*”: man was **created** to toil.
  - The Gemara<sup>4</sup> offers three possibilities: toil in work, speech, or Torah. The *maskana* is Torah.
  - Why not begin with the *maskana*? To teach that **all three are necessary steps** to fully appreciate the “toil of Torah.”
- Only through toil do **we appreciate Torah as our own**.
- *Elokei avi*: When one relates to Hashem only as exalted, it is **not personal**.
- *Zeh Keili*: When Hashem is yours, then you truly honor Him by **beautifying a mitzvah**.<sup>5</sup>
- The general theme of our *avoda* is *amal*, **toil**.

Why is *amal* so important? The Rebbe will explain another point and then answer this.

### 3. Every Moment Matters

[38:45]

A question about a cornerstone principle: *bechol derachecha da’ehu*.

### GET TO WORK!

At the previous year’s Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, 5732, the Rebbe explained at length the idea of *adam le’amal yulad*. From the creation of Adam, our job in the world is to work—to toil in making the world a home for Hashem. This is not a punishment or an afterthought; it is the whole purpose of our being from the onset. The Rebbe showed how all the opinions in the Gemara as to the nature of this *amal* are really in agreement—toil in Torah is our purpose. Throughout the year, in farbrengens and letters, the Rebbe returned to the subject, elaborating on various aspects. One idea, mentioned later in this sicha, is how *amal* applies even on Shabbos.

Bar Kappara taught: what is a brief Torah passage upon which all the fundamental principles of Torah rely? “Know Him in all your ways...”	<b>ברכות סג.</b> דרש בר קפרא: איזוהי פרשה קטנה שכל גופי תורה תלויין בה? ”בכל דרכיך דעהו...”
One should direct his heart and all his behavior to one goal: becoming aware of Hashem. Resting, rising, and speaking should all be directed to this end...	<b>רמב"ם הלכות דעות ג:</b> צריך האדם שיכוון לבו וכל מעשיו כלם לידע את השם ברוך הוא בלבד, ויהיה שבתו וקומו ודבורו הכל לעמדת זה הדבר...
...all your actions should be for the sake of Heaven.	<b>אבות ב:ב.</b> כל מעשיך יהיו לשם שמים



- **Why is it so important** to live by *bechol derachecha da'ehu*?
  - The Rambam emphasizes its **centrality**,
  - as does the *Shulchan Aruch*,
    - in *Orach Chayim*, studied by **all**,
    - devoting an entire *siman* to this,
  - teaching that it extends to **all areas of life**: eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, and more.

Why the emphasis on making **every moment** part of *avodas Hashem*? Perhaps it would be enough to —

- Serve Hashem with *mesirus nefesh* during *Shema* and *bittul* in *Shemoneh Esreh*.
- Learn Torah with awareness of the **Giver of the Torah**,

- thereby ruling according to *halacha* without being swayed by bias.

Is that not enough to ensure proper action? Yet the Torah requires that **everything** be *lesheim Shamayim* and *bechol derachecha da'ehu*.

- *Emunah* alone is not enough. **Every individual aspect** of the day must be **infused with *da'as*** of Hashem. **Why?**
- The explanation must be **accessible to all**.
  - Even a simple person must understand why **every moment** is part of *avodas Hashem*.
  - While the need for *amal* is more intuitive to the simpleton than to the scholar, explaining *bechol derachecha da'ehu* presents a deeper challenge.

## 4. Nothing is for Nothing

[44:20]

The explanation: everything was created for a purpose, and every moment must live up to that purpose.

[Of] everything that Hashem created in His world, He did not create anything for naught.

He created a snail [as a remedy] for a sore, a fly [as a remedy] on a wasp sting, a mosquito [as a remedy] for a snake bite, the snake [as a remedy] for a skin rash, and a gecko [as a remedy] for a scorpion bite.

שבת עז:

כל מה שברא הקדוש ברוך הוא בעוֹלָמוֹ לֹא בְרָא דְבַר אֶחָד לְבַטְלָהּ.  
בְּרָא שְׂבִיל לְכַתִּיב — בְּרָא זָבוּב — לְצִיִּי  
רָעָה. יְתוּשׁ — לְנִחָשׁ. וְנִחָשׁ — לְחֶרֶב  
פְּפִית. וְסַמְמִית — לְעַקְרָב.

The concept:

- In Torah's fashion, the deep answer lies in a short sentence: ***lo bara HaKadosh Baruch Hu davar echad le'vatalah***: each of Hashem's creations has a **purpose**.
  - Even dangerous creatures.
- This idea is intuitive, because man acts the same way:
- A person has a **purpose**, and **acts only to further that purpose**.

The *mashal*:

- A *baleboste*—homemaker—has **exactly** what she needs to run her home efficiently: **no less, and also no more**.

## SAY NO MORE!

The Rebbe mentions here a distinct Torah style of teaching: a short *pisgam* that contains within it endless meaning. Unpack one line of Torah—in our case, *lo bara davar echad l'vatalah*—and you will find the entire answer to the question, up to and including its practical application.

- All the more so with Hashem: **whatever He gives us has a purpose**—nothing is without reason.

An application:

- You were **created for a reason**. You were given **another day**, with **new opportunities**, again **for a reason**.
- Just as a person uses every moment to further his goals, so too does Hashem.
- This applies to **every detail**.

A further application:

- Not fulfilling the purpose of a moment is **more than a missed opportunity**; it affects Hashem's **entire plan** for creation!
- Like a careful *baleboste*, **every detail** of Hashem's plan is necessary. One missed moment affects the whole plan.
- As the Frieddiker Rebbe explains regarding *hashgacha pratis*, **every detail is part of Hashem's overall kavana**.
- This is intuitive, as mentioned.

## 5. The Redeeming Factor

[50:35]

In light of the above, we can understand the well-known teaching of the Rambam.

One should always see himself, and the world, as half meritorious and half liable.

One sin tips himself and the whole world to guilt, bringing destruction.

One *mitzvah* tips himself and the whole world to merit, bringing salvation and deliverance.

רמב"ם הלכות תשובה ג:ד צריך כל אדם שיראה עצמו... כאילו חציו זכאי וחציו חייב. וכן כל העולם... חטא חטא אחד, הרי הכריע את עצמו ואת כל העולם כולו לכף חובה וגרם לו השחתה. עשה מצוה אחת, הרי הכריע את עצמו ואת כל העולם כולו לכף זכות וגרם לו ולהם תשועה והצלה.

- What if I know I **am not truly balanced** between good and bad? Why should I view each decision as so significant?
- Based on the above, we understand: **Every action matters to the greater kavana**. Every positive deed **elevates the entire world**.

- When faced with an opportunity to do good, the past is irrelevant.
- Right now, you have an **equal opportunity**: either **fulfill the purpose for which this moment was created**, or not.

## 6. Questions answered

[53:20]

We can now answer the earlier question: why is *yegia* so important?

- To **constantly live with this awareness**, never wasting a moment, requires effort—*adam le'amal yulad*.
- This explains how *amal* is allowed on Shabbos.<sup>6</sup>

## 7. Cleaning up the Kitchen

[54:40]

Part of accounting for every action is allowing for *teshuva*.



Returning to the *baleboste mashal*:

- A good **homemaker anticipates mistakes and plans accordingly.**

## 8. Leaving Mitzrayim

[55:50]

Yetzias Mitzrayim gives us strength.

- One will ask: I am limited, and **the world is constantly changing.**
- How can I remain **steadfast** in *bechol derachecha da'ehu* throughout life?
- **Yetzias Mitzrayim provides the answer:** true, you have limitations – *metzarim*,
- which were placed upon you by Hashem – just like every *galus*.

- So too, Hashem allows for *teshuva*.
  - However, one may not *plan* to let an opportunity pass.

## 9. The King's Son

[59:00]

The Rebbe connects the above to his new *Kapitel*.

- But just as **Hashem places us into galus, He also takes us out.**
- We therefore recall *Yetzias Mitzrayim* in Shema twice daily,
  - not merely verbally, but as a **lived reminder** and re-experiencing.
- This gives **strength to overcome boundaries.** Hashem provides the ability, once we decide that we want to.

<p>Concerning Shlomo: Hashem, give Your judgments to a king and Your righteousness to a king's son.</p>	<p>תהילים, ע"ב:א. לשלמה אלקים משפטִיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תֵּן וְצִדְקֹתֶיךָ לְבִן מֶלֶךְ.</p>
<p>The Jewish people are called kings...</p>	<p>תקו"ז הקדמה ומתמן אתקריאו ישךאל מלכים...</p>
<p>Royal princes may smear rose oil on their wounds on Shabbos, as is the manner of princes. Rabbi Shimon says: All the Jewish people are princes.</p>	<p>שבת קכ"ח. בני מלכים סכיו על גבי מכותיהן שמן ונרד, שכן דרכן של בני מלכים לסוך בחול. רבי שמעון אומר: כל ישךאל בני מלכים הם.</p>
<p>Even if one were to provide (hired workers) a feast fit for Shlomo HaMelech, it would not suffice, because they are children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.  Rashi: Avraham's meal surpassed Shlomo's.</p>	<p>בבא מציעא פ"ג. אפילו אם אתה עושה להם כסעודת שלמה בשעתו - לא יצאת ידי חובתך עמהו, שהו בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב. רש"י: וסעודתו של אברהם גדולה משל שלמה</p>

The order of the *possuk*:

- The *minhag* to say Tehillim corresponding to one's age is transmitted from *Achiya Hashiloni*.<sup>7</sup>
- In the first *possuk* of *kapitel* 72, Dovid calls Shlomo ***melech*** and only then ***ben melech***.
- **Should this not be reversed?** Shlomo was a king's son before he became king.
- Answer: **Dovid, the “sweet singer of Yidden,”** says Tehillim on **behalf of all Yidden**,<sup>8</sup> and **Yidden are called both** (see sources above) —
  - In halacha, *ben melech* is rejected. Specifically, *melech* is used.
- — ***Melech*** refers to the state of the *neshama* above. ***Ben Melech*** refers to the *neshama* as it descends below.

Why the descent?

- **What is the purpose of this *yerida*** from king to king's son?
- ***Mishpatecha... tzidkascha***: in order to **give Yidden Torah and *mitzvos***.
- Hashem **wants to give** us Torah because we are *melachim*, intrinsically one with Him.
- The **way He gives** it is by sending us down to become ***b'nei melachim***: only souls within physical bodies can fulfill Torah and *mitzvos*.
  - Even in the physical world, we can maintain our identity as *b'nei melachim*.

Two more *diyukim* in the *kapitel*:

- ***Le'Shlomo***: alluding to the ultimate **peace** that will be revealed with Moshiach.
- ***Kalu tefilos Dovid***: *kilayon* means when the *avoda* is fulfilled in its entirety.

## FIT FOR A KING

The Rebbe cites various sources that refer to all Yidden as *melachim* and *b'nei melachim*. One oft-quoted source is the Gemara's story of Reb Yochanan ben Masya, who sent his son to hire workers. When he later discovered that his son had promised them “a meal” without specifying what or how much, he instructed him to immediately clarify that the meal would consist of bread and legumes. He explained that a fitting meal for a Jew is one fit for a king, and unless otherwise specified, it would be impossible to provide what they truly deserve.

1. Igros Kodesh of the Frierdiker Rebbe, sourcesheet source

2. See previous sicha of this Farbrengen, sourcesheet source

3. See sourcesheet, sources 4–5.

4. Sanhedrin 99b, sourcesheet sources 7.

5. Shaloh, sourcesheet source 8.

6. See Michtav Klali 18 Elul 5732, sourcesheet source 9.

7. Igros Kodesh of the Frierdiker Rebbe, sourcesheet source

8. Midrash Rabbah, sourcesheet source 10.