

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

## "Soon, soon"



## AS TOLD BY **RABBI SHNEOR ASHKENAZI** (RISHON LETZIYON, ERETZ YISROEL)

Over thirteen years ago I started broadcasting a weekly *shiur* on YouTube and, *baruch Hashem*, with time it grew to become one of the most-watched weekly *shiurim* in the world, with more than 50,000 viewers.

At the conclusion of the *shiur* I gave before Gimmel Tammuz 5782\*, I shared with the viewers that I will be traveling to New York to be at the Rebbe's Ohel for Gimmel Tammuz and welcomed them to post in the comments section of the video or to privately send me their names and any requests they would like me to bring to the Rebbe.

Among the hundreds of messages I received that week, this is one that a Jew I never met, an astrophysicist named Daniel, sent to me on WhatsApp.

Rabbi, this is something I wanted to share with you for a long time, but now that I understand you are at the Rebbe's Ohel, this seems to be the right time for it. I am not from a Chabad family. I watch your classes often, so you are my connection to Chabad and here is my story.

I am my parents' eldest son and after my birth, they tried very hard to have more children. After seven years, the doctors told them there was no chance they would have any more children and that they should strongly consider adoption.

We lived in New York at the time (1990) and my father's friend who was a Lubavitcher suggested he go to the Rebbe



for dollars to ask for a bracha. My father took me with him to Brooklyn and I vividly remember waiting for a very long time in the line and thinking to ask the Rebbe for twins. But when we finally stood before the Rebbe all I could say was, "I want two brothers."

The Rebbe gave us a bracha. My father then asked when it would happen, to which the Rebbe replied, in English, "soon."

*My father asked again, "When will it happen?" and the Rebbe said again, in English, "Soon, soon."* 

That month (!) my mother became pregnant, and my brother Eli Menachem was born on 21 Cheshvan 5751\*. My second brother, Yonatan Mendel, was born on 23 Iyar 5752\*.

We moved back to Eretz Yisroel and life was good, until tragedy struck. When Yonatan Mendel was 21 years old he was killed in a terrifying bus accident on his way to yeshiva. Baruch Hashem the family managed to cope with our grief through doing many good things in his memory.

Two-and-a-half years ago my brother Eli Menachem finally got married, but he and his wife have not yet been blessed with children. They are going through treatments but nothing is working. If I were able to, I would beg the Rebbe with the same words as the Shunamis woman did to Elisha Hanavi: "אַל אָדני אִישׁ הָאֲלהים אַל-הְרַזַב בְּשָׁפְחָתָר — O man of G-d, do not fail your maidservant." I asked the Rebbe for a bracha for two brothers and now one of them was killed and the remaining one cannot have any children.

*Rabbi, please mention my brother and his wife at the Ohel for a bracha for children!* 

On Erev Shabbos Gimmel Tammuz I brought Daniel's request together with the hundreds I received to the Ohel.

I had completely forgotten about this story until I received the following text on Friday, 20 Sivan 5783\*:

Baruch Hashem, there is good news: My brother and his wife gave birth to a sweet baby boy and he was named Beerii Yehonatan.

Thank you so much for davening on their behalf at the Rebbe's Ohel.

We should merit the final geulah "soon!" 🗊

## YOUR STORY

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