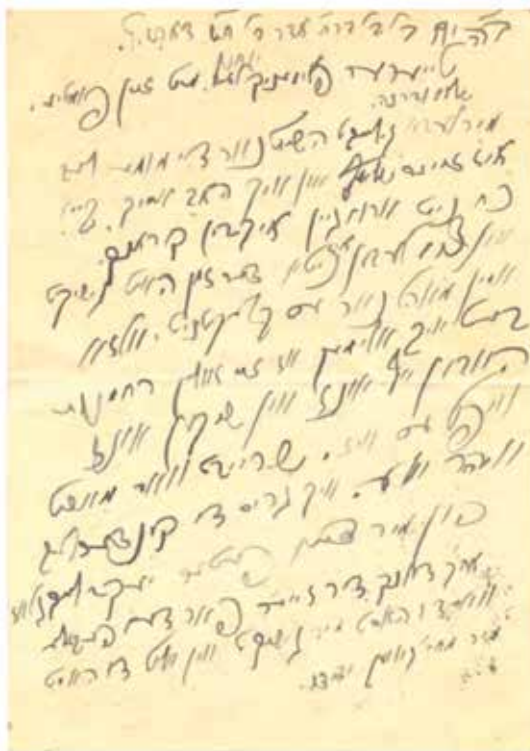


מבית הגזרים TREASURES FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY



REB LEIB
SHEINEN'S
LETTER

“WHAT I SAW, HEARD, AND FELT...”

This beautiful letter was written by 770's legendary gabbai, Reb Yochanan Gordon to the Frierdiker Rebbe. It contains a fond mention of his participation in the Rebbe's and Rebbetzin's wedding.

THE BACKGROUND:

Before emigrating to the United States in 5692, Reb Yochanan lived in Dokshitz, whose rav was the venerable Chossid, Reb Arye Leib Sheinin הי"ד.

When World War II broke out, Reb Leib was still in Dokshitz, where he was ultimately killed. At the beginning of the war in the winter of 5700, Reb Leib wrote a postcard to Reb Yochanan in the United States, posing as his uncle and asking for help.¹

Reb Yochanan gave the postcard to the Frierdiker Rebbe, who had just arrived in the United States, along with this letter of explanation.



WRITTEN BY:

RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

B”H

Erev Shabbos Kodesh [Parshas] Kedoshim

Brooklyn, NY

To the Rebbe *Shlita*,

From the time that the Rebbe sent our friend, Harav Arye Leib Sheinin to serve as rav of our city, Dokshitz, he has been etched into the walls of my heart, for we have found within him all forty-eight qualities enumerated in the Mishnah of *Shanu Chachomim*.² Most importantly, he possesses purity of heart and sincere *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe *shlita*; in his mind there is not an iota of difference between the holy Baal Shem Tov and the Rebbe *shlita*.

With the Rebbe’s permission, I would like to relate an incident that occurred in 5689: When the Rebbe was celebrating the marriage of his daughter Mrs. Mussia on 15 Kislev³ in Warsaw.

[Before the wedding] I discussed with him the possibility of traveling [to the wedding], and I told him that I was not planning to go, since I had already been [with the Rebbe] in Riga for Rosh Hashanah. At that moment, he didn’t push me to go. But with time, as I would frequent his residence (I would visit him almost every day), he said to me, “Imagine what is bound to happen at such a wedding! The Rebbe [Rashab, our Rebbe’s] father, the Rebbe Maharash, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe, and maybe even the Baal Shem Tov [will all be there]. Imagine missing such an opportunity!”

Sensing that he really meant it, I immediately went to borrow money (in a halachically permissible manner) for the trip, 100 gold coins.

What I saw, heard, and felt at that wedding, will never, ever, I hope, leave my memory.

During these eight years that I am here in America, I’ve kept an ongoing correspondence with him. But from when the war broke out until now, I haven’t heard anything from him. In my home [everyone is concerned about his well being], my sons and my wife constantly mention him, saying, “Only Hashem knows what’s going on with Reb Leib...”

Yesterday, thank G-d, I received a postcard from him. He signed it with my uncle’s name (I have an elderly aunt in Dokshitz, my mother’s sister). [Before the war] I was sending a monthly stipend to them [my aunt and Reb Leib] addressed to Reb Arye Leib, and he would respond [acknowledging receipt]. But now he is obviously afraid to write to me in his own name, so he signs with my uncle’s name. However, on the bottom of this postcard he added a special thank you for the parcel I had sent.

[He was referring to] something I had sent two weeks before the war; a copy of the Rebbe’s letter to his grandson about the Tanya.⁴ (Our friend Reb Avraham Pariz made

REB YOCHANAN GORDON’S LETTER TO THE FRIEDIKER REBBE



a copy of it, right when he started his project of copying [letters and sichos].) I also included the small pamphlet “Shema Yisroel”⁵ printed by the elder Chossid Reb Dovid Shifrin.

He [Reb Leib] thanks me for these [copies] and writes, “You have literally given me new life...” (האסט מיר ממש מחי). (געווען).

I know how much the Rebbe loves every Jew, especially the *Temimim*, and even more specifically, him [Reb Leib]. I am therefore giving this postcard to the Rebbe. You will see that it is indeed his very handwriting. May Hashem help that we will soon hear the news of the salvation of all the Jewish people.

Your servant,
Yochanan Gordon the Shochet

MiBeis Hagnazim, article 152, p. 370.

1. The postcard in its entirety appears in *Mibeis Hagnazim*, p. 369.
2. Avos ch. 6.
3. Since the wedding took place after nightfall on 14 Kislev, the anniversary is also marked on the 15th.
4. *Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz*, vol. 4, p. 259.
5. A maamar from the Tzemach Tzedek delivered to the Cantonists. See “*We Want to see the Rebbe*,” *Derher Cheshvan* 5782.