

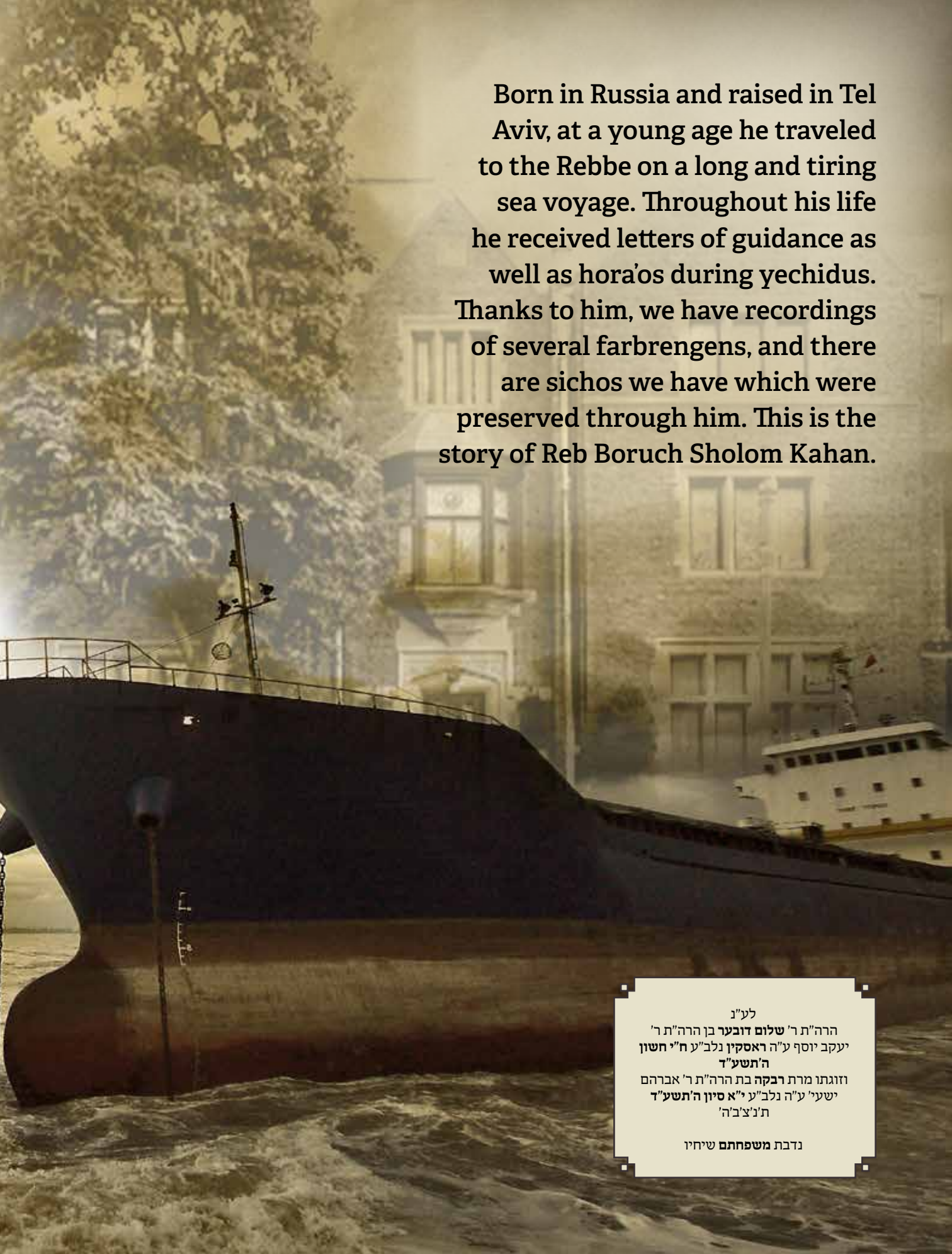


PIONEER

THE STORY OF A YOUNG BOCHUR'S JOURNEY TO THE REBBE

Written by: Rabbi Mendel Vogel

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Born in Russia and raised in Tel Aviv, at a young age he traveled to the Rebbe on a long and tiring sea voyage. Throughout his life he received letters of guidance as well as hora'os during yechidus. Thanks to him, we have recordings of several farbrengens, and there are sichos we have which were preserved through him. This is the story of Reb Boruch Sholom Kahan.

לע"נ

הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער בן הרה"ת ר'
יעקב יוסף ע"ה ראסקין נלב"ע ח"י חשון
ה'תשע"ד

וזוגתו מרת רבקה בת הרה"ת ר' אברהם
ישעי' ע"ה נלב"ע י"א סיון ה'תשע"ד
ת"נצ"ב'ה

נדבת משפחתם שיחיו

Childhood

Reb Boruch Sholom Kahan was born in the city of Kharkov in 5694* to his parents Reb Michael Yehuda Arye Leib (brother of Reb Foleh) and Chaya Kahan. (Chaya was the daughter of Reb Aharon Tumarkin, a Chabad Chossid and rav of the Chabad community in Kharkov, and one of the first students of Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch.)

When he was two years old, his family immigrated to Eretz Yisroel and settled in Tel Aviv. "A number of years after we and additional families from *anash* settled in Tel Aviv, the *cheder* "B'nei Temimim" was established. But in the beginning there was no Chabad *cheder*, so my father sent me to learn with a *melamed* (his last name was Berman) who had also emigrated from Kharkov.

"When 'B'nei Temimim' opened, my father sent me there. Reb Chaim Shaul Brook taught us Gemara, Reb Nissen Eber taught us Chumash, and Reb Dovid Chanzin taught the older *bochurim*."

Yeshiva Years

After concluding his years in *cheder*, Boruch Sholom went to learn in the yeshiva "Achei Temimim" in Tel Aviv, headed by the *mashpia* Reb Chaim Shaul Brook. In the summer of 5710*, he continued his studies in the *yeshiva gedola*, which was under the leadership of the *mashpia* Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman. Throughout his years in Tel Aviv, Boruch Sholom soaked up the *chassidische* lifestyle around him, exemplified by the great Chassidic personalities in the vicinity. One such individual was the *mashpia*, Reb Zalman Moshe Hayitzchaki, a neighbor of the Kahan family, who Boruch Sholom used to see davening at length. Moshe Gourarie, Shmerel Gourarie, Nochum Goldshmid, Chaim Yosef Rosenblum and Pinye Althaus are the names of other Chassidim who Boruch Sholom had the opportunity to observe during *farbrengens*, in their learning, their singing of *niggunim* and their general *avodas Hashem*.

The years of his youth are rich with memorable experiences, some of which are unforgettable. One such

memory is receiving the news of the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus* which, incidentally, arrived on the very same day that his cousin, Yoel Kahan, had boarded a ship to travel to New York to be with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The news of the Rebbe's official acceptance of the *nesius* on Yud Shevat 5711* left a very strong impression on Boruch Sholom. Even many years later, the memory remains vivid in his mind:

"In those days, there was no [easy access to a] telephone. It took about a week after the *farbreng* of Yud Shevat for a letter to reach us in the yeshiva informing us of the news. It was in the middle of the day when we found out. Reb Shlomo Chaim made an announcement for everyone to stop their learning, and he sat down to *farbreng*. His joy was so tremendous, that he began to dance on a table—and then on top of the *bima*—all the while singing the *niggun*: איז דער רבי איז דא, איז דער רבי איז דא, איז דער רבי איז דא... "האדרת והאמונה" אוואדי דא... again and again... This went on for hours."

Around Pesach time of 5711*, the yeshiva transferred from Tel Aviv to Lod, where he continued to study until 5717*.



THE BOCHURIM AND HANHALA OF YESHIVAS ACHEI TEMIMIM, CIRCA 5715*. REB BORUCH SHOLOM KAHAN IS SITTING ON THE BOTTOM ROW SECOND TO THE LEFT.

Traveling To The Rebbe

Ahead of Yud Shevat 5717*, Boruch Sholom made the long trip to New York to be with the Rebbe. It was very difficult to procure the exit visa needed to leave the country, but somehow he succeeded. Due to the Suez Crisis in the Sinai Peninsula, his journey was longer and more arduous than usual. He first had to make the trip to Paris, France, and there he boarded a ship traveling to New York. The transatlantic sea voyage brought with it its own difficulties. The wintry weather caused the sea to become

extremely turbulent. The raging waves were large and powerful, and at one point the ship began to tilt on its side.

Finally, after a lengthy and exhausting trip, the ship reached the shores of the United States on the eve of 7 Shevat 5717*. Boruch Sholom had his very first glimpse of the Rebbe the next day at Mincha, and his first *yechidus* took place about a month after he arrived. During the *yechidus*, he asked the Rebbe if as part of his continued studies in 770 he should continue learning *Yoreh De'ah*, being that he had already begun. The Rebbe replied that it was up to the *hanhala* of the yeshiva to decide such matters.

Morning Maamarim

In those early years, the Rebbe displayed unique warmth and attention towards the *bochurim*. The *bochurim* learned in the small *zal* across from the Rebbe's room, and more than once, the Rebbe stepped into the *zal* on his way in and out of 770 to watch the *bochurim* learning. Reb Boruch Sholom later recalled a unique privilege the *bochurim* merited to have:

“In the summer days, the heat was unbearable. There was no air conditioning in the yeshiva dorm, and it was simply impossible to fall asleep because of the heat and humidity. At 3–4 o'clock in the morning it would become cooler and then it was possible to go to sleep. This had a negative impact on the *bochurim's* attendance for *seder Chassidus* in the morning, and it happened more than once when the Rebbe came into *zal* at 8:00 a.m. that there were only a few *bochurim* present.

It seems that this was the impetus for the new practice which the Rebbe began thereafter, to occasionally recite a *maamar* on Shabbos morning. Only



REB BORUCH SHOLOM PICTURED WITH HIS PARENTS AT THE LOD AIRPORT ON HIS WAY TO THE REBBE IN 5717*.

the *bochurim* who had come on time to *seder* merited to be present on these occasions. The Rebbe would recite the *maamar* in his room and once the *maamar* started the door would be locked. On one such occasion, Shabbos *parshas Balak* 5718*, the Rebbe instructed Reb Dovid Raskin to tell the *bochurim* to enter the Rebbe's room—we were a total of 7 or 8 *bochurim*—and the Rebbe said then the *maamar* ד"ה והי שארית יעקב, which was a continuation of the *maamar* that was said on Yud-Beis Tammuz (ד"ה מי מנה עפר יעקב). I remember how the Rebbe wept while saying the *maamar*. Since Reb Yoel was not present, the *chazara* and the preparation of the *hanacha* of the *maamar* was performed by Reb Yisroel Friedman, one of the *bochurim* present at the *maamar*, with the assistance of other *bochurim*.”

Shivas Kanei Hamenorah

“During the years of the ‘yuds’ (5710*–5720*) the Rebbe spoke about the *bochurim* writing *chidushei* Torah, and encouraged it. It was then that the Rebbe introduced the concept of

the “*shivas kanei hamenorah*” (lit. the seven branches of the menorah). The idea was to designate 14 *bochurim* whose job it would be to dedicate themselves completely to a specific area; seven *bochurim* in Chassidus and seven *bochurim* in *nigleh*.

“They were to deliver *shiurim* and *pilpulim* on their respective topics in front of the whole yeshiva. The Rebbe wanted their presentations to be written up to be printed and distributed in the form of a pamphlet titled ‘*Pilpul HaTalmidim*’. Since then, it has become standard for Lubavitcher yeshivos all over to publish such *kovtzim*, but back then this was a *chiddush*.

“In those years, the yeshiva in 770 was relatively small, and there were some *bochurim* who did not take their learning as seriously as they should have. I remember once the Rebbe said: ‘*Farvos fargint men mir nisht hoben Chassidim lomdim*—Why do people not indulge me to have Chassidim who are scholars?’ The Rebbe especially encouraged us in this regard.

“There was a *bochur* by the name of Yitzchok Raitport who was one of the ‘*kanim*,’ and I remember how extremely dedicated he was to his studies. Every day, he would remain in the *zal* two hours after *seder* to write

down his *chiddushei Torah*. I remember how once during a farbrengen, the Rebbe suddenly said: “There is a *bochur* here, Reb Yitzchok Raitport—he should say *lchaim*.” Then the Rebbe said that in his honor, he will now discuss an *inyan* in *nigleh*. The Rebbe wanted us to know of the satisfaction and joy he derived when we were committed to our learning and wrote *chiddushei Torah*.”

A Bochur's Memories

On Shabbos *parshas Metzora* 5717*, the Rebbe held a special farbrengen in honor of the *ufruf* of Dovid Schochet. After Shacharis the chosson's father, Harav Dov Yehuda Schochet, asked the Rebbe to farbreng. Even though ordinarily there would not have been a farbrengen that Shabbos (it was not a Shabbos Mevarchim), the Rebbe agreed and a short while later came out to farbreng. It was a remarkable farbrengen; it was when the Rebbe said the extraordinary *biur* on the concept of the “*chamisha kolos*,” which is printed in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 6. I was standing not far from the Rebbe, and at one point I heard the Rebbe talking—it was almost as if he was talking to himself. His eyes gazed ahead, not towards anyone in particular. The Rebbe began to relate how there is a *yungerman* who was involved in business, and the Rebbe asked him why he does not have fixed times for learning. He replied that he does not have the time because he is too occupied with his business. After some time, his profits started to decline and his business took a turn for the worse. The Rebbe continued to relate how he had tried again to get through to him, telling him that since he has more time now, he can learn... “He did not listen to me,” the Rebbe continued,

“and now he is bankrupt and in very dire straits—and I am unable to help him...”

In those years, the Rebbe would go to and from 770 by foot. The *bochurim* set up a rotation amongst themselves, taking turns escorting the Rebbe home every night. They would follow at a distance until the Rebbe arrived at his house. One night, it was my turn to walk the Rebbe home. I went together with another *bochur* and when the Rebbe reached his house, he opened the door and went inside. Having accomplished our mission, we turned around and went back to 770. After a while, the public pay phone in 770 began to ring, and one of the *bochurim*, Avremel Shemtov, picked it up: “*Duh redt Mrs. Schneerson fun President Street*—This is Mrs. Schneerson from President Street speaking”—it was the Rebbetzin! The Rebbetzin wanted to know where the Rebbe was; we explained that we had walked the Rebbe home and had seen the Rebbe going into the house—but the Rebbetzin said that the Rebbe is not home. It is easy to imagine how we felt at that moment... Avremel figured that the Rebbe must have immediately turned around and walked back to 770, which meant that the Rebbe must have been walking behind us the whole way back... It wasn't possible to call the phone in the Rebbe's room directly, so, usually, when the Rebbetzin wanted to reach the Rebbe she would call the *mazkirus* office, and they would transfer the call to the Rebbe's room. However, the *mazkirus* office was closed for the night, and nobody was there to take her call. What were we to do? Avremel took action and proceeded to write on a piece of paper that the Rebbetzin was trying to reach the Rebbe, and he slipped the note under the door to the Rebbe's room. The Rebbetzin did not call 770 again, so we understood that she successfully reached the Rebbe.

Each morning, the Rebbetzin would prepare a thermos of hot tea for the Rebbe. Before he got married, Nachman Sudak would come to the house every morning to pick up the thermos, which the Rebbetzin would leave for him in the foyer, and deliver it to 770. After Rabbi Sudak got married, the *zechus* of picking up and delivering the thermos became mine. One morning, as I was nearing the house, I saw the Rebbetzin sitting outside on the porch. When I came closer, she asked me what I needed, and I answered that I am the one who picks up the thermos. She told me to return in about a half-hour, and the thermos would be ready.

Typing The Sichos

As a *bochur*, Boruch Sholom was involved in the first-of-its-kind publication of *sichos* which the Rebbe himself edited, and which would later become the first four volumes of *Likkutei Sichos*.

It all began when he was still a *bochur* in Lod. Reb Berel Kesselman had received a typewriter as a gift, and he announced in yeshiva that whoever will learn how to type with it will get



ONE OF THE FIRST KUNTREISIM תוכן עניינים בדא"ח לחזור בבתי כנסיות
CONTAINING THE REBBE'S EDITED SICHS
TO BE CHAZZERED IN SHULS.

to keep the typewriter, on condition that he will also type the Rebbe's *sichos* and bring him a copy. "I accepted the task and went out to buy a manual explaining how to work the machine. For two weeks I learnt how to type on a typewriter and became somewhat of a professional typist. I was able to type up *sichos*, and with time my expertise grew.

"When I got to New York, I wanted to purchase a typewriter. So I asked for a loan from the Rebbe's secretary at the time, Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein (who was my mother's uncle and who, in general, kept an eye out for me), and I purchased a typewriter (which I still have to this day). I typed up *sichos* and sold copies, and in a relatively short time I was able to pay back the loan. Due to my expertise, I became a repository for many valuable and rare manuscripts, since everyone who had in their possession a *ksav yad* or *reshima* made use of my services and brought them to me to get a typed

copy. Because of this, I had in my possession for a period of time some rare *reshimos* from the Frieddiker Rebbe—including the famous and lengthy letter about Tisha B'Av that the Frieddiker Rebbe had sent to his daughter, the Rebbetzin, amongst others."

In the days leading up to Shavuot 5718*, a major breakthrough occurred—the Rebbe finally agreed to edit and publish a *sicha* every week in an official manner. Until that point, the Rebbe had not allowed his *sichos* to be published in print. Rabbi Yehuda Leib Raskin and Rabbi Nachman Sudak, who were then *bochurim*, wrote to the Rebbe and asked for permission to publish the Rebbe's *sichos*. They also urged Rabbi Hodakov to join in their efforts, and ultimately the Rebbe agreed. From then on, the Rebbe began to release a *sicha* each week to be printed in a special *kuntres*. The *sichos* were used by the *bochurim* who visited the neighborhood shuls each Shabbos to *chazer* Chassidus.

Appropriately, the *kuntres* was titled: "תוכן עניינים בדא"ח לחזור בבתי כנסיות—Topics in Chassidus to be delivered in shuls." Eventually, these *sichos* were compiled into a single volume, and the Rebbe gave it the title: "Likkutei Sichos."

"When the whole initiative began," Reb Boruch Sholom relates, "I was asked to help out, as I was an experienced typist. My job was to type up the draft of the *sicha*, which would then be edited by the Rebbe. I would leave sufficient space between each line for the Rebbe to leave his comments. After the Rebbe finished editing the draft, Nachman Sudak would then retype the *sicha* including any edits the Rebbe might have made, and I took care of the formatting. We would work the whole Thursday night each week to produce 500 stencil copies of the *sicha*. At times, we would stay up working until 9 o'clock in the morning."

Boruch Sholom would also type up the transcripts of the Rebbe's



REB BORUCH SHOLOM SITTING TO THE REBBE'S LEFT (IN THE GRAY JACKET) AT A FARBRENGEN.

maamarim which Reb Yoel had written. “In those years, the Rebbe did not allow for the *maamarim* to be published. I would try to get Reb Yoel to let me keep copies of *maamarim* which I had typed for him, and sometimes I succeeded.” Following the farbrengen of Purim 5718*, Boruch Sholom asked Reb Leibel Groner if he could borrow his *hanacha* of the Purim *maamar* to make a copy. At first he refused, but eventually he agreed. A year later, around Purim time 5719*, the Rebbe requested the *hanacha* of the previous year’s Purim *maamar*. Rabbi Groner searched for his own *hanacha*, but he could not find it. Remembering that Boruch Sholom had made a copy of it for himself, he called him and asked him to bring his copy for the Rebbe to use. “I obviously did so, and it was brought to the Rebbe. After a couple of days, the *maamar* was returned to me.”

Recording Farbrengens

Reb Boruch Sholom was also involved in documenting the famous farbrengen of Purim 5718*: “I very much desired to own a recording device so I could record the farbrengens, and with some effort, I was able to purchase such a device. It was hidden in my clothing, and in my hand I held a tiny microphone which connected by wire to the device—thus, I was able to record the farbrengens.” The farbrengen of Purim 5718* was no different, and Boruch Sholom used his device to record it: “After the third *sicha*, someone brought in a larger recording device and proceeded to record the rest of the farbrengen, but

the first three *sichos* were missing from that recording. On the following Shabbos, the Rebbe called Reb Yoel and Reb Avrohom Shemtov into his room, and asked them to *chazer* for him the *sichos* of Purim. When I heard about that, I figured that I should let Reb Yoel know that I have a recording of the entire *farbrengen*. That is indeed what I did, and Reb Yoel was overjoyed when I informed him. He came to my room, closed the door and sat for hours listening to the recorded *sichos*. Later, the Rebbe instructed that those *sichos* should be printed, and I had the *zechus* of being the one to type them up.”

Yechidus

Throughout his years as a *bochur*, Reb Boruch Sholom merited to have *yechidus* with the Rebbe a number of



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 129656 (22 NISSAN 5743)

times. Mostly, they were on the occasion of his birthday, as was the custom in those days.

“One year, my birthday fell out on a Friday, and in my birthday *yechidus* the Rebbe asked me if I read שניים שנקראו מקרא ואחד תרגום every week. The truth is that up until that point, I had not been careful with this. The Rebbe instructed me to start doing so on my birthday, and that in general, I should make sure to finish it on Friday (and not push it off). Since then, I have always been careful about this.”

In another *yechidus*, he asked the Rebbe what he should do about the fact that his *hachlatos* do not last long. The Rebbe answered that *hachlatos* start in the mind and heart, but they can get stuck there. Therefore, immediately after one makes a *hachlata* he must express it in words, and then he should translate it right away into a tangible action.

Being a *kohen*, Reb Boruch Sholom would be asked from time to time to participate in a *pidyon haben*, and over time he collected a number of silver dollars. During one *yechidus* he presented 10 silver dollars to the Rebbe as a gift. “The Rebbe took one of the silver dollars, handed it back to me and said: *‘M’git nisht avek altz—One mustn’t give away everything.’*

“Years later, after I was already married, my wife and I together with our then young daughter merited to have a *yechidus*. Right in the beginning, the Rebbe turned to my daughter and asked her if she could recite *‘Shema yisroel.’* She responded affirmatively, and the Rebbe asked her to say it. She placed her hand over her eyes, but still was not saying the words. The Rebbe encouraged her, *‘Ye ye,’* and then she began to recite the *possuk*. The Rebbe then took a silver dollar out of his drawer and gave it to her. It is possible that it was one of the coins I had given the Rebbe years earlier.”

“On the same note, I remember



REB BORUCH SHOLOM IN CONVERSATION WITH A JEWISH BOY DURING AN EXHIBITION ON MIVTZOIM IN 5736*.

another *yechidus* we had when my daughter was younger and not yet able to talk. I wanted her to remain awake during the *yechidus*, so I put a big lollipop into her hand. After we had already entered the Rebbe’s room, she noticed that I had not removed the wrapper from the candy. So she promptly walked up to the Rebbe so he could open it for her, and, indeed, the Rebbe proceeded to do so.”

Shochet in New Haven

In 5720*, Reb Boruch Sholom was asked if he could move to New Haven, where there was a need for a *shochet*. He had learnt *shechita* under the tutelage of Reb Berel Junik, and was therefore qualified for the job. “I asked the Rebbe if I should accept the proposition and the Rebbe gave his consent but with the following conditions: I need to have more practice, and I should retake the exams required when becoming an ordained *shochet*.”

A Proper Shidduch

It was during that time that Reb Dovid Raskin suggested a *shidduch* for him. “I did not know the family, but the girl—who eventually became my wife—had given the Rebbe a list of six *bochurim* that had been suggested for her. The Rebbe looked through the names, stopped by mine and told her that this suggestion would be a good idea for her. *Baruch Hashem*, the *shidduch* materialized and on 27 Elul 5720* we got married.”

His wife’s older sister was still not married when they became engaged, and they asked the Rebbe what to do in that regard. The Rebbe instructed them to put aside a sum of money for her sister’s wedding, and it should meanwhile be held by a third party. In addition, they should ask her forgiveness for going ahead.

Mivtzolim

Following their wedding, the new couple lived in New Haven where



HANGING on the FENCE at YALE

At some point in every life comes a moment at the spiritual crossroads. Jonathan Rosenblum remembers his.

When I was in law school, Sunday was my favorite day. Sleep until 11:00, brunch and eating until 1:00, and then settle in in front of the TV with the day Times.

Sounds pretty leisurely, I know. But not suspect that such a day did not see its own careful planning or set its own special dilemmas. Only, every minute had to be carefully calibrated to achieve my day's

And what was that goal? Nothing momentous than maximizing the seat of football watched while leaving enough time to get in

sufficient warm-up shots for the law school basketball game. These warm-up shots held the key to glory in gymtown.

Only one fly in the ointment marred my weekly idyll. As freshman counselor, I then lived on a massive quadrangle, housing over 1,000 college freshmen. On Sundays, only one of the two main gates to the quadrangle was open, and parked directly in front of that gate was a Mitzvah Mobile.

Every week, as I passed by, I was asked, "Are you Jewish?" My physiognomy ruled out denial, and besides, I was always proud of being Jewish. Thus the first question led inevitably to a second: "Do you want to put on tefillin?"

Though the last time I put on tefillin was my bar mitzvah, I could not come up with a good reason not to comply. But as any beginner will tell you, it takes a while to get the hang of these straps, so my stint in the

Mitzvah Mobile never took less than 10 minutes. So I invariably missed some of my warm-up shots.

Finally, one Sunday, I decided I could take it no longer. Instead of going out the open gate, I climbed over the 10-foot fence topped by wrought iron spikes, on the opposite side of the quadrangle.

I managed to get one foot over the fence and onto a foothold on the other side. But as I started to lift the second foot over the spikes, my foot slipped on the icy crossbar and the spike shot up under my sweat suit jacket, stopping just short of the jugular.

I was left hanging, my feet flailing, my back to New Haven Green. It seemed like an eternity until I regained my footing, though it was probably less than 10 seconds.

Why, the reader will ask, am I sharing this tale of youthful humiliation? The truth is that that seemingly trivial incident was a turning point in my life. As I was dangling on the fence, I could not help but picture how ridiculous I

must appear to holiday shoppers.

And it occurred to me that if the simple question—"Are you Jewish?"—had led me to undertake something so ridiculous, perhaps I should inquire a little more deeply into what it means to be Jewish.

Nothing very logical about that, but are moments of spiritual arousal always completely logical?

No, I did not rush back to my room, pack my bags, and head off for Jerusalem to enroll in a yeshiva. That was still years away. But a seed was planted.

I suspect that every Jew will at some point experience a similar flash of possibilities not previously considered. If G-d granted us the privilege of being bearers of His Word, then no matter the ignorance in which we are raised, there comes a moment in which access to our tradition beckons.

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KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

THE ARTICLE THAT APPEARED IN THE JERUSALEM POST

Boruch Sholom continued to serve as a *shochet*. In 5736* he began working in the plastic factory run by Reb Dovid Deitch, also a resident of New Haven. Besides for his work, he also got involved in the mitzvah campaigns which the Rebbe initiated over the years.

"One year," he related, "a 'Shabbos with Chabad' program was arranged for a particular university in Pennsylvania. It was a big success (one product of that Shabbos was Professor Yaakov Hanoka), and I thought to myself that it might be a good idea to have something similar at Yale University in New Haven. I got in touch with the rabbi who served the students on campus and we became friendly. Eventually, we were able to arrange a Chanukah party for the students, and we brought down Rabbis Berel Baumgarten, Nissan Mindel and Moshe Feller to speak for the students. The event lasted late into the night, and the students asked many questions. From then on, whenever the Rebbe sent out a letter which was '*kloli-proti*,' I received one as well.

"When the idea of the mitzvah tanks began, the press picked up on

it and prestigious American newspapers began carrying stories about the 'synagogue on wheels,' leading to an increased awareness amongst American Jews of the importance of Yiddishkeit and Jewish pride. Seeing the phenomenon, I also wanted to utilize the mitzvah tank idea—at that time, no one outside of New York had done this. In the plastic factory where I worked at the time, there were a large number of truck drivers employed to deliver wares to customers. I approached one of the drivers who had a unique type of truck with a built-in seating arrangement, and I asked him if I could use it. He offered to rent it to me for \$800, a huge sum in those days—I was earning just \$100 a week... I recruited local *anash*, and on Chol Hamoed Sukkos we drove around in our 'tank,' offering Yidden the opportunity to shake *lulav*."

He also arranged shifts of *anash* to go out every Sunday with the tank to do *mitzvaim*. His first recruits were people who he had himself drawn in: Dr. Yosef Sandman, a professor of politics and government, Reb Leibel Haris, a professor of economics, and

Mr. Esterman, a journalist for one of the biggest magazines in the US. They would stand on the truck together with Reb Boruch Sholom and stop all Jewish passersby. "We were standing on the tank," he relates, "when suddenly we were approached by two Jewish fellows who introduced themselves as the editors of Yale University's magazine 'Yale News,' and they asked if they could interview us. We agreed, and they ended up publishing a front-page article talking about our tank and activities; then, this was a *chiddush*. It made a big *kiddush Hashem*, of course, and a greater sense of Jewish pride was felt amongst the students.

"Later, I received a photograph from the Jerusalem Post. A little background: At the time, there was something of a phenomenon happening where an unusually large number of *baalei teshuva* were coming through the doors of yeshivos. The Jerusalem Post had decided to do a series of interviews with these individuals, and one of the interviewees related how he had been a student at Yale University. Once, as he was walking on campus, he saw the mitzvah tank from Chabad in front of him and he had almost no choice but to walk past it. Although the other route was too long, he decided to climb over the fence to circumvent the tank. As he proceeded to climb the fence, his pants got caught. He took that as a sign and decided to go over to the tank despite his earlier feeling. Thanks to that encounter, he eventually returned to his Jewish roots. The article was accompanied by a humorous illustration of the fellow hanging from the fence by his pants... On one of the occasions when we recruited *bochurim* to help with various activities in New Haven, I showed them this article, and one of the *bochurim* tells me that the individual in the article is his uncle. Today, he is a rav in an *anash* community." 📌