



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

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טרייטעל





A REBBE'S CHINUCH

THE STORY OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S CHILDHOOD

“בוצין בוצין מקטפיה ידיע...”

The Gemara cites this “popular saying” in context of the childhood of Abaye and Rava.

“[The quality of] a cucumber is already discernible from its early blooming stage...”

The Frierdiker Rebbe's youth, much of which he himself recounts vividly in his writings and sichos, is full of Chassidishe life and warmth.

*In honor of the Frierdiker Rebbe's birthday and chag hageulah on **Yud-Beis Tammuz**, we present this overview of his earliest years, from birth until bar mitzvah.*

BIRTH

On Monday, Yud-Beis Tammuz 5640*, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara gave birth to a boy in the city of Lubavitch. The following Shabbos, Shiva Asar B'Tammuz, was the baby's *shalom zachor*, and it was attended by the Rebbe Maharash, the child's grandfather. The Rebbe Maharash joyfully recounted many stories at the meal and mentioned the fact that since the fast of Shiva Assar B'Tammuz was postponed until Sunday, it should be truly postponed—with the coming of Moshiach.

At the *bris*, the newborn child was given the name Yosef Yitzchak, after his maternal grandfather, Harav Yosef Yitzchok of Ovruch, son of the Tzemach Tzedek.

At the *seudah* after the *bris*, the Rebbe Maharash was very joyous as he told stories, delivered a *maamar*, and sang both joyous and somber *niggunim*.

REB CHANUCH HENDEL

Among the Chassidim the Frierdiker Rebbe would speak fondly about, was the Chossid Reb Chanoch Hendel. When describing Reb Chanoch Hendel, the Frierdiker Rebbe used an example of a funnel—a tool through which a lot of liquid can be concentrated into one area, in a way that nothing goes to waste. “A *mashpia* is supposed to be like a funnel,” the Frierdiker Rebbe said.

“Reb Chanoch Hendel was a *mechanech*. He didn't suffice with working on himself but he worked with devotion to teach and affect others, and everything by him was with a fiery *ahavas Yisroel* with the sweetness of Chassidus Chabad.”

“At my *bris*,” related the Frierdiker Rebbe, “I cried, as would be expected. My grandfather [the Rebbe Maharash] said: ‘Why are you crying? When you grow up you will be a Chossid (another version: ‘You will be a Rebbe’) and you will speak Chassidus clearly.”

As a young boy, the Frierdiker Rebbe would sleep in the study of his father, the Rebbe Rashab. One night when he was about three years old, the Rebbe Rashab was learning with

Reb Yaakov Mordechai Bezpalov. Reb Yaakov Mordechai looked at the young child lying in the cot and told the Rebbe Rashab that the radiance emanating from the Frierdiker Rebbe's face shows the purity of thought.

The Rebbe Rashab was overcome with a great desire to give his young son a kiss. He then remembered about the *korbanos* that were offered in the *Beis Hamikdash*, and how aside from the actual *korbanos*, people would donate gold and silver for the upkeep of the *Beis Hamikdash*. The Rebbe Rashab decided to exchange the kiss for a “*chassidisher kush*”—a *maamar*. That was when he wrote the *maamar* “*Ma Rabu Maasecha*.”

Eight years later, in 5652*, the Rebbe Rashab gave the Frierdiker Rebbe as a gift the *maamar* he had written then, telling him that he will explain the significance of the *maamar* “when the time comes.” Four years later, in 5656*, the Rebbe Rashab related the story.¹

CHINUCH

The Frierdiker Rebbe spoke a lot about his childhood years, often relating in *sichos* rich memories of the elder Chassidim who would teach him and impart Chassidishe values.

“My father educated me in my youth about the stories of Chumash



THE REBBE'S EDITS ON A SICHA RELATING THE STORY OF THE “CHASSIDISHE KISS” FROM THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S CHILDHOOD. IT LATER APPEARED IN LIKKUTEI SICHOV VOL. 2.

and Nevi'im, and the tales in Ein Yaakov," related the Frierdiker Rebbe. "As I grew older, he began telling me about the Baal Shem Tov, the Mezritcher Maggid and the Alter Rebbe. At times he would tell me a story with lessons in *avodas Hashem* and character refinement in a way that it would be ingrained in my mind. He would finish off almost every time: 'This is how the Chassidim *baalei avodah* would educate their young children and grandchildren.'"

In the year 5644*, at the age of three, the Frierdiker Rebbe was brought for the traditional *hachnasa l'cheder* accompanied by his father, the Rebbe Rashab, and his uncle, Reb Zalman Aharon (the "Raza"). As is customary, the assembled threw candies at the Frierdiker Rebbe, saying that these candies were being thrown by Malach Michoel. The Rebbe Rashab recalled his *hachnasa l'cheder*, when candies were thrown at him with a similar explanation.

The Frierdiker Rebbe's first teacher was a 70-year-old Chossid and master educator named Reb Yekusiel. With his kindness and loving heart, Reb Yekusiel was an expert at engaging young children. Aside from the education he gave in reading and writing *Lashon Kodesh*, he would enrich the young students and stir their imagination as he related stories from Tanach enhanced with his own explanations.

The Frierdiker Rebbe related that the education Reb Yekusiel gave was so real and tangible, that after he would give a *mashal*, they would remember the idea he was trying to bring out so strongly—to the extent that when seeing the item or idea expressed in the *mashal* it would remind them of that topic.²

In the year 5644*, the Frierdiker Rebbe began learning with the teacher Reb Zushe. One episode that the Frierdiker Rebbe related took place on



REBBETZIN CHAYA MUSHKA EXPRESSED HER DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE FAMOUS PHOTOGRAPH OF HER GRANDFATHER, THE REBBE RASHAB, DOES NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT THE WAY HE LOOKED. WHEN RABBI NOCHEM KAPLAN DREW THIS PORTRAIT, THE REBBETZIN CORRECTED CERTAIN DETAILS OF THE DRAWING AND WAS SATISFIED WITH THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

Erev Shavuot 5644*. Reb Zushe had taught his class about *matan Torah*, and he invited them to come early to a certain *beis midrash* the next morning to experience *matan Torah*. The next morning the Frierdiker Rebbe awoke early, and when his mother offered him some food, he refused: "In no way will I eat before *matan Torah*," he said. When they gathered at the *beis midrash*, they davened together and Reb Zushe took them out on a walk³.

Another teacher of the Frierdiker Rebbe was Reb Shimshon, an educator known for his particular tough demeanor. Reb Shimshon

had merited a *bracha* from the Tzemach Tzedek for success in his role of educating youth, and this *bracha* had ultimately materialized.

Reb Dovber also taught the Frierdiker Rebbe for some time. He was a grandson of the "*melamed* of Liozna" (a Chossid who educated the children of the Alter Rebbe and a recipient of the Alter Rebbe's *bracha* for education). The Frierdiker Rebbe recalled learning under Reb Dovber's tutelage with much diligence.

In the year 5649*, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was nine years old, he began studying with Reb

* 5644-1884, 5649-1889

Nissan Skabla, a gifted educator with a tremendous knowledge of Chassidishe stories.

“Reb Nissan was a מוֹפֶלֶא with exceptional devotion [to his students],” related the Frierdiker Rebbe. “He imbued within me an internal *chayus* for the stories I had heard from Chassidim.”

Another important part of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *chinuch* was studying *Mishnayos baal peh*. The Rebbe Rashab always made sure that the Frierdiker Rebbe was proficient in his *Mishnayos baal peh*, and in 5651* even hired a special tutor, the Chossid Reb Moshe Binyomin, to test him.

The special *koch* in *Mishnayos baal peh* came to light the first time the Frierdiker Rebbe was jailed, as a child of 11 years old, for his care for fellow Yidden:

From a young age the Rebbe Rashab educated the Frierdiker Rebbe to use the money he earned from studying *Mishnayos baal peh* to help other Yidden, by giving them interest-free loans for their day-

to-day necessities. A regular at the *gemach* was Reb Dovid the butcher, a 50-year-old simple Chossid, who despite his extreme poverty never complained about his situation.

One summer afternoon in 5651*, the Frierdiker Rebbe was with a friend in the market speaking with Reb Dovid when a police officer suddenly approached and hit Reb Dovid, causing blood to gush from his nose.

“You despicable drunk!” the Frierdiker Rebbe cried, pushing the police officer forcefully.

The police officer arrested the Frierdiker Rebbe on account of disrupting the duty of the police officer and ripping his badge.

While sitting in the prison cell, the Frierdiker Rebbe began *chazering Mishnayos baal peh*. He suddenly heard from a corner a soft animal-like sound. Using a match he had in his pocket, the Frierdiker Rebbe saw a small calf in the corner of the cell.

A few hours later, the Frierdiker Rebbe was freed by the commanding police officer of that station as he



THE EARLIEST EXTANT PHOTO OF REBBETZIN SHTERNA SARA, TAKEN AROUND THE TIME OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE’S CHILDHOOD.

apologized profusely. “I didn’t know you were the nephew of Reb Zalman Aharon,” he excused himself.

The Frierdiker Rebbe left the cell and entered a room where Reb Dovid the butcher was attempting to refute an accusation that he had stolen a calf from another *Chassidishe* butcher, Reb Meir.

As this case was being discussed, the Frierdiker Rebbe was picked up by Reb Mordechai Zilberbored, Raza’s assistant, and made his way back home. On the way he told Reb Mordechai the details of his short imprisonment. When he related the part about the calf in his cell, Reb Mordechai suddenly hurried to report to the butcher Reb Meir. Reb Meir hurried to the police station and told the assembled that the “stolen” calf that Reb Dovid the butcher had supposedly stolen was lying in a jail cell. The calf was found and the police officer who had hit Reb Dovid was exposed as the thief.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe returned home the Rebbe Rashab told him: “It has been demonstrated to you how good it is that you are fluent in *Mishnayos baal peh*. If not for this knowledge, in what way were you any

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YALTA

It was in the beginning of Elul 5646*, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was informed that his family would be departing on an extended trip to an oceanside city, called Yalta. The warmer climate there would be extremely conducive for the Rebbe Rashab's health.

As a young boy of six, the Frierdiker Rebbe cried to his mother: "Who will teach me Chumash? Who will tell me nice stories? Who will I be able to play with like here, where I have my friends in *cheder*?"

The Rebbe Rashab heard the commotion and came out of his room. "Don't cry," he told his son. "Reb Shneur Slonim will be coming with us and he will teach you and tell you stories. And if you behave nicely, I will also tell you stories from time to time."

Comforted, the Frierdiker Rebbe calmed down.

The appointed day arrived, and the Rebbe Rashab and his immediate family set out on the journey to Yalta. They were escorted by many Chassidim, as well as the Frierdiker Rebbe's grandmother, Rebbetzin Rivkah.

A few days into the journey, as they were approaching their destination, the Rebbe Rashab stopped to daven Shacharis in a certain area surrounded by tall rocks. A few years earlier on a similar journey, the Rebbe Rashab had also stopped to daven there. The Rebbe Rashab showed his son words inscribed on the stone: "I davened Shacharis, studied Mishnayos *perek 23* (of *Maseches Keilim*), Thursday Shoftim, 4 Elul 5643*." The inscription finished with the initials of the Rebbe Rashab.

The days in Yalta were spent studying with Reb Shneur and reviewing the material. The Rebbe Rashab would take the Frierdiker Rebbe on walks in the mountains and on the shore and tell him stories of *tzadikim*, *geonim* and Chassidim.

The Rebbe Rashab kept his identity a secret but the community sensed that the visitor was no ordinary person:

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe Rashab davened a lengthy Maariv. Before the *shamash* left the shul he instructed the non-Jewish caretaker not to extinguish the lights in the shul but to let the Rebbe Rashab continue davening.

A few hours later the *shamash* returned to the shul. To his amazement he found the non-Jewish caretaker

weeping at the entrance. The non-Jewish caretaker exclaimed: "I am used to seeing people praying with joy and happiness, but this *rav* is shaking like a candle! He reminded me of all the troubles in my life." The *shamash* went to investigate, and when hearing the tune of the Rebbe Rashab, began weeping as well.

On Yom Kippur, after seeing his *hanhagos* at davening, they honored the Rebbe Rashab with *Maftir Yona*.

Many fascinating stories and anecdotes are told from the trip to Yalta. One particularly interesting episode happened on Yom Kippur, as the Rebbe Rashab was studying with Reb Shneur, the teacher of the Frierdiker Rebbe:

The Rebbe Rashab told the Frierdiker Rebbe: "One that holds unto the Rebbe's 'door handle' will see success in all his endeavors."

"I want to hold onto the Rebbe's door handle," replied the Frierdiker Rebbe. "Where is it?"

The Rebbe Rashab answered: "Daven with the Rebbe's *nusach* from the siddur, and without mistakes—this is the Rebbe's door handle."

The Frierdiker Rebbe later explained that as a child he was taught how to read at a young age and his *melamed* was not careful, so he would say the words of davening by heart. This was the meaning of his father's remark.

The stay in Yalta lasted until after Pesach, and after a stop in Kharkov for a few weeks, they made it back to Lubavitch in time for Shavuot.

The Frierdiker Rebbe later related his fond memories from Kharkov: "It was there that I saw for the first time Chassidim gathering together, their way of speech, their singing, their energy, their joy and their cheerfulness."



THE CITY OF YALTA IN THE REGION OF CRIMEA AS IT APPEARS TODAY.

better than—*lehavdil*—the calf of Meir the butcher, which also sat in prison? But because you knew *Mishnayos* and you reviewed them *baal peh* there, the hours of imprisonment passed with words of Torah and *tefillah*. This is the *yisron ha'adam al hachai*—the advantage of man over an animal.”

Another lesson that can be gleaned from this story is the Frierdiker Rebbe’s immense *ahavas Yisroel* already from a young age. Indeed at the young age of 11 he was jailed for standing up for a fellow Yid!

FATHER AND SON

An integral part of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s childhood was his deep and close connection with his father, the Rebbe Rashab.

“My father began educating me when I was a young child,” related the Frierdiker Rebbe. “He would watch me with an open eye and used every method of guidance and education to develop my talents and my mental capabilities, instilling within me good *middos* and upstanding behavior.”

The attention the Rebbe Rashab gave the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *chinuch* is evident throughout his childhood. When the Frierdiker Rebbe was six years old, the Rebbe Rashab called him in and told him to make a *bracha* on his tzitzis. The Frierdiker Rebbe answered that he already made a *bracha* that day. The Rebbe Rashab insisted, and gave him a light slap on his cheek: “When I tell you to do something, you should listen.”

The Frierdiker Rebbe responded: “If I have to make a *bracha* for Hashem—I already made the *bracha*. But if I must make a *bracha* because you told me to...”

The Rebbe Rashab answered:

VOSS GEDEINKSTU?

In my diary from my childhood there is a section called “*Voss Gedeinkstu*—What do you remember?”

My father would ask me from time to time throughout my childhood: “What do you remember?” The purpose was to refresh my memory from what I saw and heard in my younger years.

When I would describe to my father what I saw, for example the memory of a meal on Shabbos, Yom Tov, or a Chassidishe Yom Tov, my father would explain to me what I saw in a way that I would be able to grasp the idea on my level. My father would then prompt me to regularly think about those events so that I remember my youth and ultimately understand everything as I grew older. At times my father would explain to me clearly my childhood memories.

The question “*Voss gedeinkstu*—What do you remember?” was asked so I would remember what I saw in my childhood and that the images of what I saw remain etched in me. Because those memories were from times when I was too young to understand the meaning of what I saw, later it was explained to me clearly.

Purim 5709

“You must make a *bracha* because Hashem said, but a father must supervise his child and therefore his words must be heeded.”

This deep father-son connection is evident not only from the education of the Rebbe Rashab, but also from the Frierdiker Rebbe cherishing the time they studied together and showing much care for his father’s health.

When the Rebbe Rashab traveled to the city of Yalta for health reasons (see sidebar), he would study every day with his son, the Frierdiker Rebbe. At a certain point the doctors told the Rebbe Rashab to minimize his speech, so the Rebbe Rashab hired a *melamed* to teach the Frierdiker Rebbe.

“I already understood then the obligation a son has to worry about his father’s health,” related the Frierdiker Rebbe, “and I was very pained about my father’s poor state of health. The yearning for my father to study with me overcame anything else. I thought that through my good behavior my father’s condition would improve.

“And I behaved excellently.

From when we left Kharkov, there was not one thing I did not first ask myself how to perform it in the most helpful way.”

As the Rebbe Rashab would often travel for health reasons, sometimes for long periods of time, the Frierdiker Rebbe would occasionally not see his father for very lengthy periods at a time. Nevertheless, the care that the Rebbe Rashab invested in him upon returning “uprooted from my heart any semblance of the pain I had while being alone.”

As the Frierdiker Rebbe grew older, the Rebbe Rashab invested more into his *chinuch*: “In the summer of 5649* [when the Frierdiker Rebbe was nine years old], I became a new boy. My father was *mekarev* me in a way that I felt all the warmth of a father, all the love of a merciful father.”

Growing up in the court of Lubavitch was an additional influence on the childhood of the Frierdiker Rebbe. He would recall the Chassidishe environment the resident and visiting Chassidim



1. THE EARLIEST “RESHIMA” BY THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, WRITTEN IN LASHON HAKODESH AT THE AGE OF 11.
2. A SPECIAL KUNTRES PRINTED ON THE OCCASION OF THE 120TH BIRTHDAY OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, CONTAINING THE MAAMARIM THAT HE RECITED ON THE OCCASION OF HIS BAR MITZVAH AND STORIES HE RELATED ABOUT THAT TIME PERIOD.
3. IN 5648*, IN VIEW OF HIS POOR HEALTH, THE REBBE RASHAB WROTE HIS FIRST TZAVA'AH, ADDRESSED TO HIS REBBETZIN ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CHINUCH OF THEIR SON, THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, WHO WAS ONLY SEVEN YEARS OLD. IT WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY KEHOT IN 5703*.

and guests would bring.

On one particular Sukkos, while sitting by a farbrengen of older Chassidim late at night, the Frierdiker Rebbe fell asleep in the sukkah.

Seeing her son sleeping in the sukkah, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara entered to take the Frierdiker Rebbe home. The Rebbe Rashab countered that the Frierdiker Rebbe be left sleeping. Rebbetzin Shterna Sara answered: “Is this the meaning of the words ‘*Keracheim av al banim*—as a father has mercy on son? It doesn’t say ‘*Keracheim eim*—as a mother has mercy,’ but focuses on the father.”

The Rebbe Rashab answered:

“Yes, this is the real mercy of a father to his son.”

“But the weather is bound to make him fall ill,” Rebbetzin Shterna Sara responded.

“He won’t get a cold. Let him sleep between Chassidim, and the warmth will last for generations.”

CHASSIDISHE STORIES

One aspect of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Torah that stands out is the many

stories that he related throughout the years, both in the letters he wrote and in the *sichos* he said.

In fact, the early education of the Frierdiker Rebbe was permeated with Chassidishe stories, and he would fondly recall the excitement in the class when the *melamed* would share with them a rich Chassidishe tale.

Another source of these stories was from the Frierdiker Rebbe’s grandmother, Rebbetzin Rivkah, as the Frierdiker Rebbe once said: “My grandmother’s stories are worthy of a full chapter in my memories.”

Every day after returning from

GREATER AFTER THEIR HISTALKUS

When I was a child I enjoyed going after *cheder* to the study of my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash, to sit in one of the big chairs in the room and think deeply about a story I heard from my *melamed* Reb Yekusiel or Reb Chanoch Hendel.

... One day, in the summer of 5647*, I was sitting deep in thought, thinking about a story I had heard from Reb Hendel about Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi—[the story was about how] after his *histalkus* he would visit his family every Shabbos.

... As I envisioned this story—how Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi visited his family on Shabbos, I thought to myself: “Surely my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash comes to visit his room every Shabbos or every day.”

I also reminded myself of something I had

heard from Reb Chanoch Hendel, that “גדולים צדיקים במיתתן יותר מבחייהם—*Tzaddikim* are greater after their *histalkus* than during their lifetime.” I envisioned the lives of the *tzaddikim* in Gan Eden, and how high the *neshamah* of my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash is now after his *histalkus*.

As I was sitting in the big chair with closed eyes deep in the above thoughts, I suddenly heard a soft voice of crying and heartfelt whispers. I opened my eyes and was shocked to see the following scene:

My father was standing across from the desk of his father the Rebbe Maharash, dressed in Shabbos clothing, a *shtreimel* on his head and with a *gartel* around his waist as by davening. He was reading from a note he held in his hands, reading and crying softly. Shocked, I quietly left the room.

Sefer Hasichos 5704, pg. 6

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE EVENTUALLY BEGAN TO TRANSCRIBE THE MANY STORIES HE HEARD AS A CHILD AND WITH THE INSPIRATION OF HIS MELAMED, REB NISSAN SKABLA, THE FRIERDIKER REBBE BEGAN WRITING A DIARY FOR HIMSELF

cheder, the Frierdiker Rebbe would go to his grandmother Rebbetzin Rivkah and request that she tell him a story. “My grandmother Rebbetzin Rivkah was a *baalas shemuah* and every story of hers was precise, including when and from whom she heard the story,” he related. “[Aside from telling the actual story,] she would also describe the atmosphere and the background to the story.”

The Frierdiker Rebbe continued this daily tradition until the passing of Rebbetzin Rivka on Yud Shevat 5674*.

In addition to educating her grandchild with many Chassidishe tales, Rebbetzin Rivka played a large role in teaching him how to write. The Frierdiker Rebbe himself recorded in his diary that once,

before the Rebbe Rashab departed on a trip out of the country, Rebbetzin Rivkah told the Frierdiker Rebbe to write a farewell note for his parents. Although this first note was written in “broken and sprawling curved letters,” within a year the Frierdiker Rebbe’s handwriting improved so much that it looked like the writing of an experienced older person.

The Frierdiker Rebbe eventually began to transcribe the many stories he heard as a child and with the inspiration of his *melamed*, Reb Nissan Skabla, the Frierdiker Rebbe began writing a diary for himself:

“Today I was with my teacher Reb Nissan ben Reb Binyomin Skabla, who lives on Petersburg St.

“... My teacher Reb Nissan

showed me notebooks filled with stories he heard from his father, *eltere Chassidim* and his father-in-law. The notebooks were written in small but elegant handwriting.

“He allowed me to look at one entry . . . when I finished reading Reb Nissan told me:

“You see how much is written in this notebook—which is thicker than the siddur Torah Ohr Hashalem—I have several of such notebooks and many additional pages.

“Listen to my voice and may Hashem help you. Reb Moshe the *melamed* taught you how to write well, so from today begin transcribing the *hanhagos* of your father, the Rebbe. And if you hear any stories of the Rabbeim or Chassidim, transcribe them as well, together with your father’s comments on the story.”

“When I got home I fulfilled what my teacher had told me, and I made a good start on the abovementioned.”

BAR MITZVAH

The Frierdiker Rebbe began putting on *tefillin* two years before his bar mitzvah, on 11 Tammuz 5651*⁴. His public *hanachas tefillin*, though, was two months before his bar mitzvah, on Sunday 11 Iyar 5653*. The Rebbe Rashab said the *maamar* “*V’chazakta v’hayisa l’ish*,” a *maamar* that discusses the four titles of a person: “*adam*,” “*enosh*,” “*ish*” and “*gever*.” The local Chassidim *farbrenge*d on the *maamar*, each explaining it their own way.

The Rebbe Rashab instructed the Frierdiker Rebbe to learn and master three *maamarim* by heart for his bar mitzvah: one short *maamar* and two longer ones. The Frierdiker Rebbe repeated one of the longer *maamarim* at the Ohel of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash and the shorter one at his bar mitzvah celebration. The second longer



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

EARLIEST EXTANT PHOTO OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AT APPROXIMATELY THIRTY YEARS OLD. CIRCA 5670*

maamar that the Frierdiker Rebbe repeated, was to be kept confidential.

Several days before his bar mitzvah the Frierdiker Rebbe recited a *maamar* by heart for his father, the Rebbe Rashab. When he finished, he sensed that his father had a question for him. At that moment someone walked in and began speaking with the Rebbe Rashab. After he left the Frierdiker Rebbe asked: "Father, what did you want to ask me?" but he received no

response. Soon, after the Frierdiker Rebbe continued *chazering* another *maamar*, the Rebbe Rashab began trembling, and asked: "When did you see my father, the Rebbe Maharash?"

"On Erev Shabbos, while awake," the Frierdiker Rebbe answered, and continued saying the *maamar*.

After this event, the Rebbe Rashab went to the Ohel of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash together with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The actual bar mitzvah celebration took place on Monday, Yud-Beis Tammuz 5653*. Many Chassidim streamed to Lubavitch from communities as far as Ukraine to participate in the bar mitzvah celebration of the Rebbe Rashab's only son, and joyous farbrengens accompanied their arrival.

On the actual day of the bar mitzvah, the Rebbe Rashab said the *maamar* "*Tefillin d'marei alma*," and continued the *maamar* on the next Shabbos, Parshas Balak.

During the bar mitzvah *seudah* the Rebbe Rashab turned to the Frierdiker Rebbe and told him how at the Mitteler Rebbe's bar mitzvah, his father, the Alter Rebbe, told him "ask something." At the Tzemach Tzedek's bar mitzvah, the Alter Rebbe, his grandfather, turned to him and told him the same thing. Similarly, at the bar mitzvah of the Rebbe Maharash, the Tzemach Tzedek told him that, and so too at the bar mitzvah of the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe Maharash asked this.

"Yosef Yitzchok," finished the Rebbe Rashab, "ask something."

The young Frierdiker Rebbe asked about the line that is customarily said before davening, "*Hareini mekabel*," why do we say it before davening specifically? And a conversation about *ahavas Yisroel* ensued.

After the bar mitzvah, the Rebbe Rashab began saying *maamarim* privately for the Frierdiker Rebbe in his room. The *maamarim* were generally not connected to the *maamarim* said in public on Shabbos, and the Rebbe Rashab would usually explain an *inyan* in *avodah* with detailed *meshalim*. T

1. Sefer Hasichos Kayitz 5700 p. 3-4. See Toras Menachem 5710 p. 10.
2. Sichas 12 Tammuz 5708.
3. Sichas Leil Shavous 5705.
4. Reshimas Hayoman p. 189.