



תשנ"ב

נפלאות

A Wondrous Year In
THE REBBE'S PRESENCE

בבלי!

5752*

From the start of the year 5752, it was clear that it would be an exponentially unique one. Many recall the amount of hours the Rebbe spent in the public eye, distributing things and reciting sichos in numbers that far surpassed anything seen in the years prior, and the extraordinary focus on Moshach.

Over the course of the year, especially reaching the month of Adar, it seemed clear that the Rebbe was working tirelessly to counterbalance something, as he demanded an increase in joy to nullify all negative things, as well as strongly stressing the need for every Jew to be physically healthy and strong. These would end up being the final few special months spent with the Rebbe in his full health and glory, before 27 Adar.

In connection with Gimmel Tammuz, we present a special extended edition of Moments; a pictorial overview highlighting daily life in 770 during this unique era, together with the precious memories of many who merited to be there.

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Shacharis

“After being in 770 practically every day of Tishrei 5752, I suddenly felt deeply compelled to take on a *hachlatah* that I would not go to work in the morning before seeing the Rebbe.

“I’m just a regular guy, but I grew up in the heyday of life in 770, it was my home. As I grew older, despite the fact that I would be there fairly often, I still felt this intense yearning to be near the Rebbe as much as I could, and I felt that the time had come to act on it.

“From then on, every morning before heading to work, I would wait in 770 before 10:00 a.m. watch as the Rebbe would enter for Shacharis, and that would give me *chizzuk* for the day. The good days, the bad days, it simply made my day.”

Reb Aharon Blesofsky



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Heading to The Ohel

During this period, the Rebbe changed his regular practice of visiting the Ohel twice a month, to twice a week, and at times during the weeks leading up to 27 Adar, this even became daily. There, the Rebbe would spend hours on his feet, in all climates, davening and reading letters.

As the Rebbe entered the car before the trip, he would often hand out coins for tzedakah to those standing nearby.

“When the Rebbe would give us children coins, he would never drop it into your hand, rather he would always place it securely in your grasp. I can still vividly recall the feeling of the Rebbe's fingernails on my palm.

“As a child, I was not old enough to notice this, only years later when reminiscing on these little details did it begin to overwhelm me. I've come to recognize how each one of these interactions permeated my entire being and made me the person I am today.

“I find it difficult to describe or define the warm, close bond I felt with the Rebbe and how powerfully impactful these moments were in my life. They weren't necessarily dramatic, but every single interaction, even a glance from the Rebbe, was infinitely significant.”

Rabbi Mendel Scharf



TISHREI 5752

TISHREI 5752

Mincha

“As thousands flocked to 770 for Sunday dollars, the line continued to grow longer and longer. The Rebbe would be standing on his feet handing out dollars for more than four hours straight. At times this would extend past sunset hours, and therefore, in the winter of 5752, a small minyan was arranged for the Rebbe to daven Mincha in Gan Eden Hatachton before the start of the distribution.

“On 14 Shevat, being a guest from Israel where I was a shliach in Yeshiva Toras Emes, I merited to be included in the select few present at one of these especially unique occasions. It was one of the closest, most intimate moments I have ever experienced with the Rebbe.

“There were exactly ten of us crammed into the small space, standing only a few feet away from the Rebbe. It was completely silent, one could hear a pin drop. I was able to hear the Rebbe saying the words of davening. It was very special.

“Shortly after the *tefillah*, the Rebbe entered the main entrance room for dollars. As he took his place at the special *shtender*, he suddenly began an unexpected short *sicha* regarding Erev Rosh Hashanah L'Ilanos, which was totally out of the ordinary.

“As the year progressed, the daily scene in 770 noticeably became more unpredictable.”

Rabbi Eliezer Zaklikovsky



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Sunday Dollars

Every Sunday, 770 was packed with thousands of people of all ages and walks of life, standing in line for a short moment with the Rebbe near the entrance of his room, where he stood for hours on end distributing dollars for Tzedakah.

Over the week, word spread about some of the conversations the Rebbe had that Sunday, and there would be discussions amongst the *bochurim* about them. We would wait for transcripts in the weekly "Beis Chayainu" to be printed and the highlight videos from WLCC. Sometimes there were things said that we didn't understand, only later did we have the "Aha" moment, where we saw the Rebbe's foresight.

With each dollar, to each person the Rebbe would wish a "*Bracha V'hatzlacha*," then some would ask for a specific *bracha* or advice. At times, I was fortunate to be behind someone who spoke to the Rebbe, and I watched from up close as the Rebbe conversed with them.



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As *bochurim*, we wouldn't speak to the Rebbe or expect to receive a smile; the relationship we felt was one of expectations. That itself was a *kiruv*, as we felt we were part of the Rebbe's "close circle" of Chassidim, the *bracha* and the Rebbe's holy gaze was enough to accomplish what it needed to. It was a serious moment, usually reserved for your birthday or before traveling.

There was *eima v'yirah* every time we went by. Even before you reached the Rebbe's *shtender*, the Rebbe already began looking at you, and through you. Many recall how the moment itself could have felt like a few long minutes, only to realize when seeing the video that the whole episode took under 30 seconds. That's how powerful it was.

When the Rebbe started distributing dollars after Mincha and Maariv more frequently during the week, I wasn't sure if or how often I should go by. I remember my *mashpia* telling me that a moment with the Rebbe should be a meaningful one, and he suggested that each time I go by I should undertake a *hachlata* to solidify its impact, and that's what I did. Whenever I went by the Rebbe, I took upon myself to learn a *maamar* or Tanya by heart.

Rabbi Yitzi Lowenthal





“I got married on 23 Adar I 5752. That morning I was the only chosson waiting near the Rebbe's room to receive and use his siddur.

“While I waited, Reb Leibel Groner briefly went inside the Rebbe's room. As the door opened and closed in a quick moment, I witnessed something I will never forget. Even at the time, it took me a few seconds to process what I had just seen.

“I saw the Rebbe in the corner of the room, sitting back on a small chair, without a kapota or a hat, wearing his glasses. His holy hand was holding up a large sefer, either a Gemara or a Shulchan Aruch, that was leaning on the table in front of him and he was completely involved in the sefer.

“The Rebbe was in a totally different realm, as if at that moment there was nothing else in the world. The best word I can use to describe it is pure ‘taanug.’ My feeling was that I had just witnessed the Rebbe's pleasure and enjoyment. It was truly indescribable and I wish that all Chassidim could have seen the Rebbe like that because until this day I have never seen anything like it.”

Rabbi Zev Weinstein



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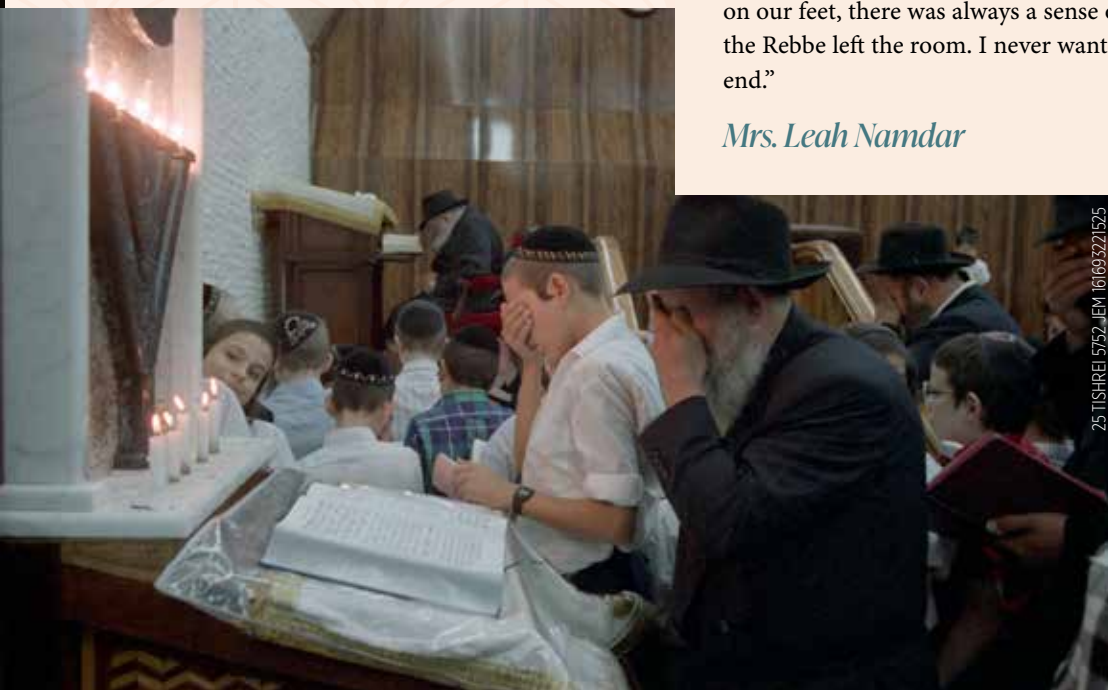
Maariv

"Our lives and schedules revolved around the Rebbe. There was a hotline to call that would update us on if the Rebbe had returned from the Ohel and when Mincha/ Maariv would take place. Many times we would just wait in 770. The atmosphere was always filled with excitement and anticipation, nothing else mattered to us other than seeing and hearing the pure holiness that shone in the Rebbe's presence.

"Sometimes, especially when the Rebbe would return from the Ohel later in the evening, there was only a small crowd present for Maariv. These were such sweet, intimate moments with our Rebbe. We all felt such a closeness, and that the Rebbe recognized and knew us each personally.

"No matter how many long hours we would be standing on our feet, there was always a sense of longing everytime the Rebbe left the room. I never wanted the moment to end."

Mrs. Leah Namdar



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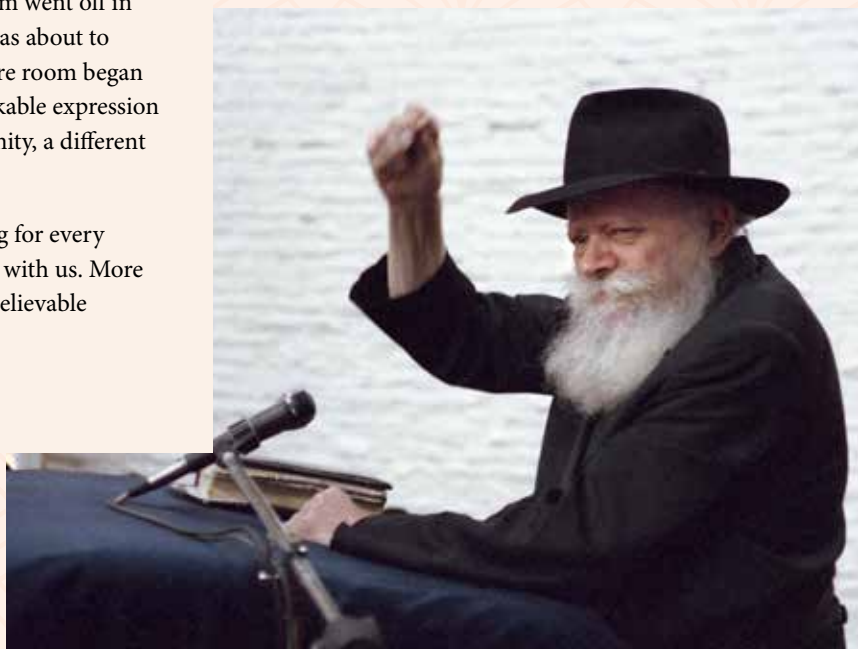
Sichos & Dollars

“A major factor in the unique energy felt that year was the gradual increase in weekday sichos after Mincha-Maariv followed by dollars, until it quite literally became a nightly occurrence.

“It is hard to explain the energy that spread at the time. One could be at any sort of event—wedding, sheva brachos, etc.; the second the alarm went off in the streets, indicating that the Rebbe was about to speak, the chosson, kallah and the entire room began running to 770. This was such a remarkable expression of hiskashrus felt in the whole community, a different reality entirely!

“It felt as though the Rebbe was looking for every single opportunity to spend more time with us. More and more, giving and giving, to an unbelievable extent.”

Rabbi Yosef Greenberg





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Kuntreisim

“Another example of this was the increase in the distribution of kuntreisim. A few times over the year (long after Tishrei) the Rebbe also requested that they be packed together with a piece of lekach, which was extremely unique.

“Something special I recall from these distributions is how the Rebbe interacted with children, clearly wanting each child to notice and acknowledge the interaction. Many times he would even wave the kuntres or dollar in front of the child’s eyes to gain their attention and make eye contact before handing it.

“Looking back, it is clear to me that during these last precious moments, the Rebbe was physically and spiritually pouring and investing every drop of his energy into all of us, including the youngest child, to give them kochos that would impact them for the rest of their lives.”

Rabbi Yosef Greenberg



22 SHEVAT 5752 JEM 22760



At times, *bochurim* may have felt that the opportunities for a personal relationship with the Rebbe, the likes of which were common in earlier years with private *yechidus*, seemed lost due to the enormous growth of the Lubavitch community. But when the Rebbe started distributing dollars weekly, every person again had the opportunity for a one-on-one personal moment with the Rebbe every single week. From that point on, especially into the year 5752, the amount of distributions of this kind, public appearances, as well as *sichos* and edited Torah from the Rebbe doubled and tripled from anything we'd ever seen before.

Just the simple Shacharis with the Rebbe every morning was incredible; and the whole week I'd be counting the days left until Shabbos, for the Farbrengen. The *sichos* said that year were absolutely remarkable, some of my appreciation for this is in hindsight, but the Rebbe spoke of incredibly powerful, novel ideas and showed us how to open our eyes to see the world in a new way. It was extraordinary how much the Rebbe poured and invested in us.

As someone who didn't grow up in Crown Heights, when I finally came to 770 I did not take these moments for granted and I can't think of anything greater in this world.

Rabbi Yitzi Lowenthal

Shabbos Farbrengens

“At approximately 1:30 p.m. on Shabbos afternoon, the Rebbe would come down for the farbrengen. As he sat down at his place, he would glance through the crowd. He would then take a few pieces from the prepared plate of cake on the table, cover them with a napkin, open his siddur to Mizmor L'Dovid, and make kiddush. At that point we would begin singing ‘Zol Shoin Zayn Di Geulah.’ In the last few months we sang it with the words ‘Es Kumt Shoin Di Geulah.’

“Then the first sicha would begin with the topic generally being the parsha or the time of the year. That year there were some rare occasions like Parshas Mishpatim when the Rebbe spoke about the UN, or Parshas Vayeshev when the Rebbe spoke about France and actually said the beginning of the sicha in French. The style of the sichos were much more concise and had less of a structure than previous years, and at times it took extra effort to be able to follow along. A common phrase the Rebbe used was “as we’ve spoken about many times in the past” or “at a previous farbrengen,” always indicating that most of the in-depth explanations to the things he spoke of he had already given in the past.

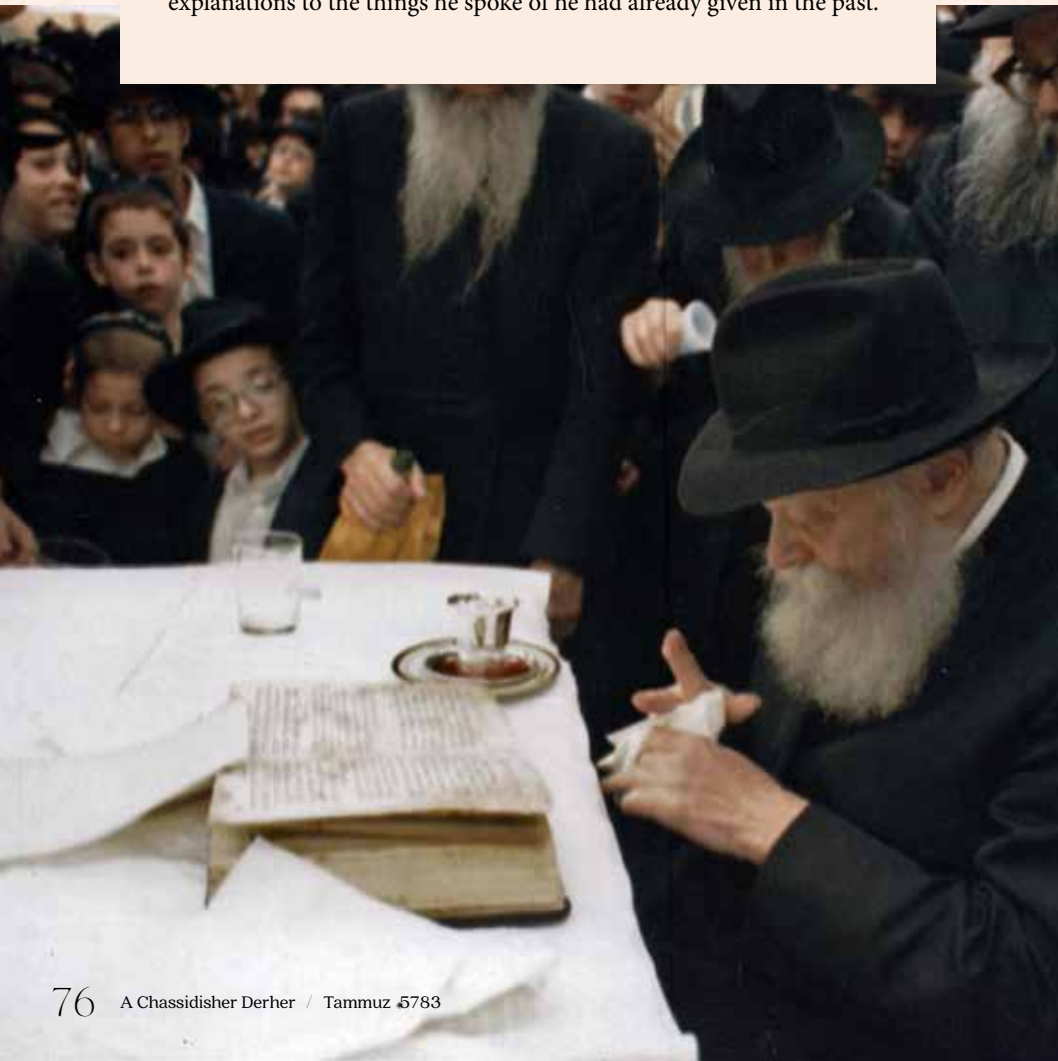


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“At the same time, the themes focused on were some of the deepest and most original ever revealed to us throughout all the years. The Rebbe constantly spoke of, gave brachos for, and connected everything to Moshiach. He introduced and taught us to breathe in and live with the consciousness of geulah, specifically the complete unity between creator and creation, Yidden and the Aibersther; it was very uplifting.

“I’ll never forget Parshas Vayakhel, the last farbrengen. That week the Rebbe spoke much louder and longer than he usually did that year, and the sichos had some of the structure and expressive expounding reminiscent of the previous years. I remember noticing this then, it was a beautiful farbrengen. Two days later was 27 Adar I.

“As someone who would chazer and write the farbrengens, the sichos were my life, especially the ones I heard directly from the Rebbe. They put me on my feet in many ways and until this day continue to impact me and all of my work.”

Rabbi Yosef Y. Jacobson

On Purim Katan thousands received the maamar “Ve’ata Tetzaveh” edited by the Rebbe, and distributed in a special kuntres together with a dollar and lekach.

The maamar speaks at length about the function of a Rebbe to connect Yidden with Hashem, and the need for mesiras nefesh even when Jews are free from prosecution but find themselves in a different kind of exile, a time when G-dliness is not visible. As it would turn out, this maamar was the last one we would merit to receive from the Rebbe.



Less than two weeks later, on Monday 27 Adar I, the Rebbe visited the Ohel. After standing on his holy feet davening for the Jewish people, reading the letters of thousands requesting his *brachos* and advice, the Rebbe had a stroke, to the shock and pain of the entire world.

The day marks the onset of *he'elem vheheter* that continues to this day, where we no longer see and hear the Rebbe. This is a time when the words in *Ve'ata Tetzaveh*, how the *nossi hador* gives us the strength to carry on and fulfill our mission even in the darkest *galus*, take on a whole new meaning, as we stand firm in our *hiskashrus* and follow the path the Rebbe set out for us in these *sichos* and *maamarim*.

May we merit the coming of Moshiach, when we will be reunited with the Rebbe, and experience these precious moments once more, תיכף ומיד ממש!