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Perspectives

TWENTY ONE

FLASHBACK

LUBAVITCH RELIVED
in the Diary of
R. ZALMAN DUCHMAN

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The Rebbe Rashab

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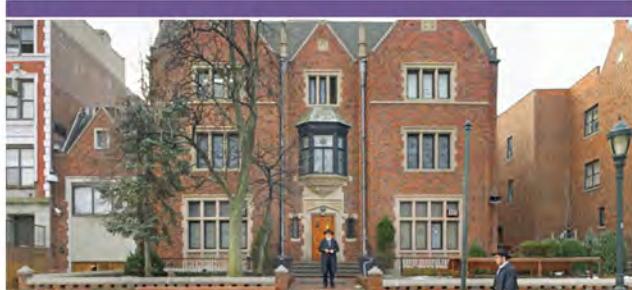
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R. Zalman Duchman surrounded by images from his diary.

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FOREWORD

Chinuch is Not a Democracy



*One who seeks
G-dliness will find
it as he digs through
material pursuits,
but one who is after
materialism will be
stuck with just that.*

Looking to go into a new line of work, a veteran *melamed* sought out the counsel of the Alter Rebbe and another one of the Mezritch Maggid's students. While the Alter Rebbe advised him to remain a *melamed*, the other *tzadik* advised him to go into business.

When the man told the *tzadik* of the Alter Rebbe's advice, the *tzadik* explained:

"Zalmen'yu doesn't know the true *kavana*. One must not behave in a manner of 'no world,' rather, while being involved in worldly matters, one must stay 'above the world' (*Nit 'nit velt,' nor 'velt un ois velt'*)."

When the *melamed* later repeated this exchange to the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe replied:

"That would have been true if you were in business and you wanted to become a *melamed*. That would demonstrate that even in worldly matters you recognize that there is 'no world,' which is why you want to dedicate yourself to *chinuch*.

"But in your case – you *want* to go into business..."

Why in fact does it matter what the *melamed* wants? If the G-dly purpose is to work within the world, what difference does it make what the person thinks?

The answer is that a person will find what he is looking for. One who seeks G-dliness will find it as he digs through material pursuits, but one who is after materialism will be stuck with just that.

Applying Chassidus

to one's personal life can also stem from contrasting motivations:

One person recognizes that the world is essentially one with Hashem and that his own challenges and discomforts are insignificant. At the same time, he realizes that for a reason that he cannot fathom, Hashem wants us to bring His light into the petty things that make up our life. To do so, he must concentrate on bringing that infinite G-dly light into his puny mind and heart.

Another person, however, is immersed in his personal comfort and satisfaction. Realizing that man cannot be satisfied with materialism alone, he looks for values to fill his void. He discovers Torah and Chassidus to be the highest forms of meaning.

Though the cases above look similar, they are diametrically opposite. The first person is interested in Hashem, the second is interested in himself (making "my life meaningful"). And one who doesn't make this distinction can continue on an illusory path for all of his life.



Rather than aiming towards incorporating a greater truth into the child's life, he caters to the child's wants and whims.

The discussion above is especially pertinent to *chinuch* and parenting.

Here too, we are told that the objective is not to preach lofty ideas, but to bring them down to the children's level. Yet, this could be taken in one of two ways:

One educator has developed a clear concept of moral values and upstanding conduct by which a Jew should live. Then, recognizing that "man is born a wild foal" and that his young child or pupil is untamed and untrained, he considers how to best convey his values in a way that the student can apply them. He doesn't make unreasonable demands, rather he guides his student step-by-step in achieving his individual purpose.

Another educator also emphasizes personal treatment, but with another perspective. Rather than aiming towards incorporating a greater truth into the child's life, he caters to the child's wants and whims. This well-meaning parent or teacher inadvertently employs "*al pi darko*" to be accepting of impolite behavior or to play along with silliness.

Again, to the undiscerning eye, the two may seem alike, but in truth they are far apart. The first educator imparts solid values, while the second reinforces the child's selfish instinct. Instead of raising the child up, the latter educator drops the bar of ethical conduct to the child's comfort zone.

Our children deserve more. Let's not do them a disservice.

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger
General Editor

FREEDOM FROM MATERIAL BONDAGE

Sicha of Yud Shevat 5718 (1958)

Likutei Sichos vol. 1, pp. 140-143

With excerpts from Pesach 5712 (1952) and 5714 (1954)

Likutei Sichos, vol. 1, pp. 111-113

We strive to raise our children be capable adults. They are expected to provide a livelihood for their households, and in today's society people commonly think that education should focus on the skills needed to make a living. Should this end be the primary goal of education? Is this the way to ensure our children's success?

WOULD YOU THROW YOUR CHILD IN THE RIVER?

[The Nile River was worshipped by the Egyptians, being the source of their livelihood, providing the essential irrigation for their fields. The decree to cast Jewish boys into the Nile was not only a physical *galus*, but a spiritual form of *galus* as well, immersing the children in Egyptian idolatry and hedonism (water symbolizes pleasure).]

The ideology behind the Egyptian decree to throw every baby boy into the river exists in every generation and every place.

Traditionally, a Jewish child is educated from birth in the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*. However, the trend of society ("Paroah") argues that since in due time a boy will have to provide for his household, at a young

age he should be cast into the source of livelihood (the "Nile River").

In truth, a child must be raised from infancy with a pure connection to Hashem, Who sustains the entire world in an honorable and peaceful way. Non-Jews may depend on the Nile and its set of laws, but a Jew's livelihood depends on his bond with Hashem, as it says, "You who cleave to Hashem are alive." Casting the child into the river tears him away not only from spiritual life, but also from his practical livelihood.

THE NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR'S ARGUMENT

Just as in the Egyptian *galus*, the most severe decree was the casting of the baby boys in the river, similarly,

Casting the child into the river tears him away not only from spiritual life, but also from his practical livelihood.



Stop worrying about a child's career when he is five, seven, thirteen or eighteen years old, and have faith and trust in Hashem.

in the present *galus*, the most threatening entrapments of the *yetzer hara* relate specifically to young children. The next-door neighbors ("Paraoh") might argue: "How can you send your child to a *cheder* or *yeshiva* to be taught a Torah that is some 3500 years old, that was given in a desolate desert and in a time when there was no radio or telephone, and not even a morning paper to start the day! In those primitive days it was alright to pursue that kind of education. In the twentieth century, however, endowed with progress and culture, we can't afford to be 'old-fashioned'!"

Sometimes this argument can be guised in righteous intentions: "Surely you want your child to contribute large sums to *tzedaka*, especially to *yeshivos*, thus you must see to it that he be wealthy. Cast him into the river of sustenance, and then there's a chance that he'll contribute generously!" (In the long run, the Jewish nation ends up gaining nothing from wealth earned in this manner.)

HOLY PRETEXTS

One must be aware that we are dealing with one and the same Paraoh. He realizes that any outright demand

to commit a transgression will not be obeyed, so he disguises himself in saintly garments (a "zeidene zupitze") and claims to have a large *yeshiva* for which he needs funds. This is but Paraoh's ruse who desires that there remain no residue, Heaven forbid, of *Yiddishkeit* and Jewish souls, and consequently not of Jewish bodies either.

One must detect Paraoh's strategy in time and react with Jewish determination to annul the edict: stop worrying about a child's career when he is five, seven, thirteen or eighteen years old, and have faith and trust in Hashem. Hashem controls not only the heavens but also the earth below.

With this mindset, one will not be influenced by the neighbors, but on the contrary, one will influence them to save their own children. In this way, tens of thousands of children will be raised to march towards our righteous Moshiach, speedily in our own days. We should not be influenced by the "next-door" neighbor and rather immerse our sons entirely in a pure Torah education.



IN SUMMARY:

- Jewish children should be oblivious to a country's cultures. From when a child is born, his parents' job is to imbue him with an unadulterated connection to Hashem.
- *Parnassa* of a Jew is supplied directly by Hashem and does not require complying with the rules of societal norms. Raising children with this attitude will bring them the livelihood that they need.
- Our neighbors may not always see the value of the education we choose for our children. However, we must remain faithful and not be swayed by "holy" arguments to compromise their pure education. **P**

FLASHBACK

LUBAVITCH RELIVED

in the Diary of

R. ZALMAN DUCHMAN

BY RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER



THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF STORYTELLERS.

Some are historical storytellers who have a remarkable memory for facts. They recall occurrences they experienced or stories that they heard years earlier, down to the intricate details. If you need an exact date or figure, ask these people.

Others are fanciful storytellers who mesmerize their listeners with whimsical tales. They bring their stories to life, and fill in any missing details with their creative imagination. Their stories are fascinating, but don't entirely reflect what actually transpired in that time and place.

R. Zalman Duchman wasn't either of these; in fact, he wasn't much of a storyteller at all. R. Zalman lived and breathed precious memories of the Rebbeim and their chassidim, sharing their lives with his listeners.

When R. Zalman told a story, he relived the moment and aroused the emotion he felt at the time. As R. Zalman writes of himself, "I usually remember the Rebbe's appearance, and the place — but I don't remember the date very well."

For someone looking for academic precision or a charming story, other storytellers may have done a better job. But for someone seeking a glimpse into Lubavitch of yesteryear, R. Zalman was the man. His stories, thoughts and manner of speech were straight out of the Lubavitch he had left many decades earlier.

BORN A CHOSSID

Schneur Zalman HaLevi Duchman

was born on 11 Elul 5651 (1891) to Dovber Menachem Mendel and Chaya Feiga Risha in the town of Chometz, not far from the city of Homil in Belarus. His *bris* took place on Chai Elul, the Alter Rebbe birthday, and the boy was thus named Schneur Zalman.

At a young age, the family relocated to Homil. Zalman spent his formative years in the presence of his paternal grandfather, R. Mordechai Yoel Duchman, a third-generation Chabad chossid who had studied in the Tzemach Tzedek's court, had been a prize student of R. Aizel Homiler – one of the Alter Rebbe's most outstanding chassidim – and was himself a leading chassidic personality in Homil.

Homil was a major industrial city, and at the time it numbered well over 100,000 inhabitants, some 55% being Jewish. Almost all of the Jewish residents were Chabad chassidim, and the city *rav* for many years had been R. Aizel Homiler. The Lubavitcher *shul* had a “*Chabad'nitze*,” (a second room for *ovdim*), and the regular *minyan* *davened* nearly two hours, in accord with the Alter Rebbe's instructions in *Iggeres HaKodesh*.

LIFE IN LUBAVITCH

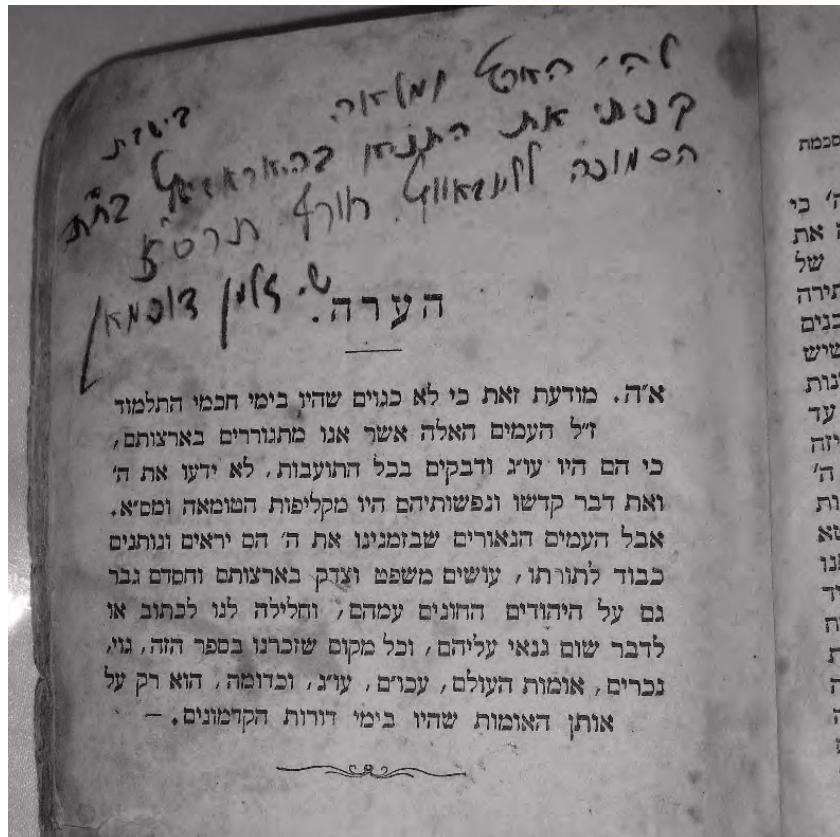
Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Zalman left for Lubavitch at the age of fifteen. He arrived on Lag B'Omer 5666 (1906) and joined the branch of Tomchei Temimim in Horoditch. A year later, at age sixteen, he transferred to the *yeshivah* in Lubavitch, in close proximity of the Rebbe Rashab.

Zalman soaked in the surreal atmosphere of Lubavitch and its memories remained with him for life. Describing those times in Lubavitch, he writes, “To record one's memories of Lubavitch one must have the talent to paint on a canvas – to be an artist.”

After overcoming his initial apprehension of nearing the Rebbe, he sought out opportunities to spend time in the Rebbe's presence and to absorb his holy visage. As he related:



“TO RECORD ONE'S MEMORIES OF
LUBAVITCH ONE MUST HAVE THE
TALENT TO PAINT ON A CANVAS – TO BE
AN ARTIST.”



THE REBBE'S BEAUTY,
THE RADIANCE OF HIS
EXPRESSION... FROM
HIS SHOULDERS AND
UPWARDS HE WAS TALLER
THAN ANY OF THE PEOPLE.

אה' מודעת זאת כי לא כנוי היה בימי חכמי התלמוד
זיל העמים האלה אשר אנו מתגוררים בארץות,
כי הם היו עז ולבקים בכל הרצונות, לא ידע את זה
ואת דבר קדשו ונפשותיהם היו מקילות הפטורה ומס'א.
אבל העמים הנאורים שבזמנינו את זה הם יראים ונונתנים
כבד לתרותנו, עושים משפט וצדק בארץות והסדר גבר
גם על היהודים החוננים עליהם, וחיללה לנו לבחוב או
לדבר שום נגאי עליהם, וכל מקום שוכרנו בספר הזה, נוי
נכרים, אומות העולם, עברים, עז, ובdomה, הוא רק על
אותן האומות שהיו בימי דורות הקדושים. —

Tanya that he bought while in Tomchei Temimim of Horoditch - Winter 5667 (1907).

The Rebbe was particular to have a *kohen* and a *levi* present for the Torah reading. The *kohen* was R. Nachman, the Rebbe's attendant, but it was necessary to look for a *levi* outside in the courtyard. Initially I was afraid to be called up to the Torah in the Rebbe's presence, but when the children would call out, "Here's a *levi*," I would go inside.

For *mincha* on Shabbos, people would *daven* with the Rebbe in the room where *yechidus* was held. The first time I was called up to the Torah my hands and legs were trembling, but afterwards — in the few weeks before the Rebbe left to go to the country — I looked for the opportunity to be called up. The Rebbe's beauty, the radiance of his expression... From his shoulders and upwards he was taller than any of the people. When they lifted the Torah at *hagba* and he gazed at it, voicing the words “*Yagdil Torah veya'adir – G-d magnifies the Torah and strengthens it,*” the pleasure we felt can surely never be written.”

His immense yearning to watch the Rebbe's service motivated him to take audacious steps, as he records:

On *erev* Rosh Hashanah — 5667 (1906) or 5668 (1907) — when we were at the *ohel* of the Tzemach Tzedek and his son, the Rebbe Maharash, some children said to me: “Do you want to see how the Rebbe is standing in the *ohel*? Climb up on the wall!” (since the *ohel* was open to the sky).

The Rebbe stood wearing his silk hat and a black coat; a white silk scarf was visible on his neck. In one hand he held a *pidyon*, a large, long sheet of paper; his second hand held a large bundle of additional requests. His countenance was extraordinarily pale. Terror seized me and I leaped down to the ground.

(I always regretted my action, but when the Rebbe Rayatz' notes arrived — printed in *Kuntres Beis Nissan*, 5710 — in which he extolled the merit of gazing at his father at the *ohel*, I was filled with joy.)

His profound perception and feeling towards what he witnessed in Lubavitch are apparent in this depiction:

While the Rebbe Rashab said a *maamar*, the Rebbe Rayatz would stand opposite him. In the middle of the *maamar* the Rebbe would stop and they would look into each other's eyes.

On *Shabbos Teshuvah* 5673 (1912), the *maamar* was extraordinary. The Rebbe paused frequently and rapped on the table, and at each pause they would look into each other's eyes. It is similar to what I wrote in the name of my *zeide* — regarding his description of the Tzemach Tzedek and R. Aizel of Homil — that he saw how two souls were talking with one another. I can only say the same, for each pause lasted a while and was extraordinary. Thank G-d that my memory retains this as though I saw it yesterday.

CLOSE CONFIDANT

Zalman quickly became close to the Rebbe's household and was often present at smaller, more private occasions.

The Rebbe Rashab was accustomed to break his fast *motzaei Yom Kippur* at the house of his mother, Rebbetzin Rivkah. On one occasion the Rebbe sat at the head of the table. On a small bureau near the door there was a samovar. The Rebbe stood up — and all the chassidim stood — walked over to the samovar, poured a glass of tea and served it to his mother.

"Starting the new year with a *mitzvah*," she said.

And sometimes he saw things that no one else did:

It was very late on *motzaei Yom Kippur*, 5675 (1914); the Rebbe was in the dining room. The *Neilah* prayer had been late, followed by *Maariv* and *Kiddush Levanah*. I was standing near the wall

when Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah came in and spoke to the Rebbe about the Rebbe Rayatz — she was accustomed to call him by his first name, Yosef — that he had not yet ended the fast. When he came into the room the Rebbe said to him: "What are you doing?"

"I drank a glass of cold water," he answered. "We finished *davening* so late that there was time enough for Yechiel the *chazan*" — who traveled around, raising funds for *Tomchei Tmimim* — "to have visited several villages already."

"I already said long ago that hurrying comes from a soul's lowliness," said the Rebbe. "Sit down."

But he didn't want to.

"*You're starting already in the new year?!*" the Rebbe gently scolded.

Still an eighteen-year-old *bochur*, he was entrusted with helping arrange a conference of chassidic *rebbe*s from Poland headed by the Rebbe Rashab. Before leaving for Warsaw, the Rebbe gave Zalman instructions in a *yechidus* at his vacation home in Babinovitch. Upon exiting, he had an interesting conversation with the Rebbe's son — the Frierdiker Rebbe:

It was after Shavuos in the summer of 5669 (1909), when the Rebbe Rashab was vacationing in Babinovitch. I came out from *yechidus* and the Rebbe's son called to me from the woods around the house. "What did my father talk to you about?" he asked.

"The trip to Warsaw," I answered.

The Rebbe's son walked with me and spoke at length. The focus was not to be influenced by the world, and to carry on the same as in Lubavitch. "We see how the Chinese who come here walk around the same as they do at home, for they know that at home everyone conducts himself the same way."

WHILE THE REBBE RASHAB SAID A MAAMAR, THE REBBE RAYATZ WOULD STAND
OPPOSITE HIM. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MAAMAR THE REBBE WOULD STOP AND THEY
WOULD LOOK INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES.

"I ALREADY SAID LONG AGO THAT HURRYING COMES FROM A SOUL'S LOWLINESS. SIT DOWN."

BACK IN HOMIL

After several years of learning in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, Zalman returned to Homil. The little information we have from this time period is gleaned from allusions in his stories.

Zalman always thirsted to be in Lubavitch. He would travel at least once a year – for Rosh Hashanah – and whenever else he could. But when another opportunity arose to go to Lubavitch, he didn't pass on it.

In the summer of 5674 (1914) the railroad added a fourth class that was half the cost. Normally from

Homil to Krasnoye one paid four rubles and five kopeks, but now it was only half as much.

I had wanted to go for Shavuos. Taking my *tefillin* and heading for the train, I told my brother that that evening he should say that I left for Lubavitch. [Apparently, he was afraid he would be chastised for running off to Lubavitch unnecessarily – Ed.]

When I returned from Lubavitch, my *zeide* told me: "You acted correctly; sometimes you have to do things that way. But *me* – you should have told! I would have given you a three-ruble note for the way!"



R. Zalman Duchman (center wearing glasses) looks on as the Rebbe is mesader kidushin at the wedding of Mendel and Sara Shemtov, 10 Teves 5716 (1956).

From Krasnoye I went on foot to Lubavitch. The spiritual pleasure of that Shavuos was extraordinary. The Rebbe — it was the mourning period for his mother, Rebbetzin Rivkah — led the *davening* [during the weekdays].

Such a *baal mochin*, such a wondrous mind he possessed! Yet, one time, while reciting the *Shema* and saying *Echad* in deep thought — he snapped his fingers.

In the winter of 5673 (1913), a new project of the Rebbe Rashab excited Homil:

The immense tumult that took place in Homil in the winter of 5673 (1913) is fresh in my memory, thank G-d, as well as what I heard through my brother Baruch, of blessed memory, of the events in Lubavitch. The Rebbe established *Orach LeTzaddik* (Way of the Tzaddik) in order for people to travel to Haditch every year on *Chof-Daled Teves*, the Alter Rebbe's *yahrzeit*.

There were people from Homil — my *zeide*, my father, and two wealthy men, Alter Shur and Moshe Leviant, as well as other chassidim — who joined the Rebbe's two *shluchim* passing through Homil by train. It was a *minyan*, I think. They established the tradition that every year people would learn a chapter of *Tanya* in Haditch.

In the summer of 5673 (1913), he traveled with his *zeide* to Petersburg for a wedding of a cousin, and he records exchanges with various chassidim there. His father R. Ber Mendel visited the Rebbe Rashab at the *datche* in Zalsha in summer of 5674 (1914) in support of Colel Chabad.

In the summer of 5674 (1914) his brother, Boruch, fell ill with tuberculosis and Zalman accompanied him to Kiev for surgery. Zalman sent the Rebbe a request for

a *bracha*, and he had a miraculous recovery. For Rosh Hashanah 5675 (1914) the two of them traveled to Lubavitch. Due to the influx of refugees from World War I they could not have *yechidus*, but the Rebbetzin allowed them to enter through a back door. Zalman introduced his brother and the Rebbe straight away recalled how four months earlier a *bracha* had been requested for his leg.

In the summer of 5674 (1914) my brother became ill with tuberculosis. We brought him from Homil to Kiev for surgery, and a year later he underwent another operation. Following a third operation he was very weak. (People were given sedatives to drink before operations in those times.) I wrote a *pidyon* and sent it to the Rebbe's summer home (*datche*) in Zalsha. Hashem helped; an opening developed there and the phlegm gradually drained. When the doctor — Kostritzky was his name — observed this, he said it was the first time he ever saw this.

I brought him to Lubavitch for Rosh Hashanah 5675 (1914). The war had begun on Tisha B'Av, 5674 and the flow of guests was immense. We were unable to have *yechidus*, and at the end of Yom Kippur we had to leave since we lacked funds to remain through Sukkos. As mentioned earlier, I was in the Rebbe's dining room to break the fast, and afterwards — when the Rebbe left the room — I told the Rebbetzin that we had to leave. She let me wait in the small room between the dining room and the room where the Rebbe held *yechidus*, and when the Rebbe came out of his room very late, I said to him — for the Rebbe knew me quite well — "This is my brother."

"This is the one whose leg hurt?" the Rebbe asked.

SUCH A BAAL MOCHIN, SUCH A WONDROUS MIND HE POSSESSED! YET,
ONE TIME, WHILE RECITING THE SHEMA AND SAYING ECHAD IN DEEP
THOUGHT — HE SNAPPED HIS FINGERS.



The Rebbe in conversation with Reb Zalman

In his classic style, R. Zalman concludes with his own impressions:

Isn't this extraordinary? — there is no way to estimate how many people passed through that year from after Shavuos until *motzaei Yom Kippur*!

In the summer of 5675 (1915), we find R. Zalman in Pinsk. He relates how he lodged with R. Yisroel Yitzchak Lubinsky ("the celebrated chossid known for *davening* every word of the *ketores* in Yiddish translation") and he records a story he heard from him there.

TRYING TIMES

At the beginning of 5676 (1915), the Rebbe Rashab decided to leave Lubavitch, as the German army approached the area during World War I. On 16 Cheshvan, the *Beis Harav* (the Rebbe's family) traveled for a few weeks and arrived in Rostov. R. Zalman would continue to travel to the Rebbe in Rostov, and the last occasion he merited to see the Rebbe Rashab was on Simchas Torah 5679 (1918), a year-and-a-half before the Rebbe's passing.

After that Simchas Torah he returned to Homil. On *erev Shabbos* 5 Cheshvan, at four a.m., his *zeide* R. Mordechai Yoel passed away at age 83. R. Zalman describes his *zeide's* passing and the intense mourning that followed:

We stood there throughout the night as he turned from side to side, holding his *yarmulke* on his head, not letting it fall. As his soul departed my

father cried out to us, '*The crown of our head has fallen*,' and so he wailed in anguish for six hours uninterruptedly.

R. Zalman records how, before his passing, his *zeide* asked one of his friends to place a *Tanya* in his burial place; they placed only the title page (*shaar blett*).

Soon after, the deadly disease of typhus raged in Homil and the Duchman family was stricken. R. Ber Mendel loyally nursed his family back to health, but that dedication and courage cost him his life. Having just completed saying *kadish* for his father, R. Ber Mendel returned his soul to its maker.

Half-a-year later, on 2 Nissan 5680 (1920), the Rebbe Rashab passed away in Rostov. Understandably, this was a difficult period for R. Zalman, who had been so connected to the Rebbe.

R. Zalman's intense love for the Rebbe Rashab drove him to make the long and arduous trip to the Ohel for the Rebbe's *yahrtzeit* each year. Before Beis Nissan, R. Zalman would board the train to Rostov, without knowing what lay ahead of him. Communist spies roamed the train looking out for "suspicious persons," and anti-Semitic thugs would regularly attack anyone they recognized as Jewish. But R. Zalman's burning desire to be by his Rebbe on that special day made him ignore those fears.

In 5680 (1920) R. Zalman married Chaya Grunya Minkowitz and for the first year of marriage the couple lived in Homil. On Shavuos 5681 (1921), they were blessed with a daughter, who they named Beila Rochel (Lipskar).

WE STOOD THERE THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT AS HE TURNED FROM SIDE TO SIDE,
HOLDING HIS YARMULKE ON HIS HEAD, NOT LETTING IT FALL.

IN THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S COURT

A NEW REBBE

Having had such a soulful connection to the Rebbe Rashab, R. Zalman found it difficult to assume another Rebbe in his place. Although he had immense respect for the Friediker Rebbe, he couldn't manage to bind himself to him. Yet, after consideration and effort, he became the Friediker Rebbe's dedicated chossid.

As he wrote:

Sometime after the passing of our Rebbe, I would say: 'If my father is not here, can I take another father?' But only afterwards I understood: it is the same father, but with greater strength.

This element of continuity is further illustrated in this story:

In the winter of 5683 (1923), I was in Nevel on business and hearing that the Friediker Rebbe was in Leningrad, I traveled there. The Rebbe was staying at the home of the prominent chassidic *gvir* R. Shmuel Michel Treinin.

We were sitting in the dining room at Rizenska Prospect and R. Shmuel Michel was speaking with R. Meir Simcha of Nevel: 'He gave his son everything; there are even matters where בָּן כָּחֵה אֶבֶן – *the son's strength is greater than the father's*.'

I was a young man then, but I could 'lean on a sturdy tree' – my *zeide*, R. Mordechai Yoel – and I said: 'I heard a story from my *zeide* that something occurred with the Mitteler Rebbe for which they told him that *the son's strength is greater than the father's*. And the Mitteler Rebbe cried out: "But it all comes בָּן כָּחֵה אֶבֶן – *from the father's strength*."'

LIFE IN LENINGRAD

Soon after the Friediker Rebbe relocated from Rostov to Leningrad (in Iyar 5684 [1914]), R. Zalman and his family relocated there as well, to be near the Rebbe. For the next three years, R. Zalman observed and absorbed whatever happened in the Friediker

Rebbe's court, and his memories of those times fill many pages in his book.

At one point during *Simchas Torah*, 5685 (1924), in Leningrad, the Rebbe Rayatz exclaimed passionately: "What sort of chossid sleeps until nine in the morning and, already by ten, has finished *davening*, eaten breakfast, and is strolling along Nevesky Street (Leningrad's main thoroughfare), directing his eyes at the wrong places? With the notion that by wearing a *kapotah* and *gartel* he is a chossid. Or, he imagines, by giving three rubles [to the Rebbe], he is a chossid. Now three rubles are three rubles – but that won't do it..."

It was then that the Rebbe gave instructions to learn a portion of *Chumash* every day with Rashi. And on *Yud-Tes Kislev*, 5685 (1924), he gave instructions to learn an *amud* (page) of *Gemara*, and commented: "Tomorrow we will already be able to count the pages of *Gemara*...and by whom will it be felt? – the person who made it happen."

Sometimes R. Zalman records also the story behind the story:

One *Yud-Tes Kislev* the Rebbe lifted his holy head, looked up at the people standing, and said:

"He was in Lubavitch, in *Tomchei Tmimim*, and nowadays it's a question whether he put on *tefillin* at the appropriate time. He may be the steward of a train carriage, but at the brakes he will do *teshuva* and melt like a candle."

(The young man was already in Tashkent, critically ill, and they amputated his foot. He told me: "You know how I became someone very different a few years ago? The Rebbe (Rashab) came to me and said, 'Moshe, enough!'")

Or when he personally observed another dimension to something that he heard:

In 5685 (1925) the *tomim*, R. Yisroel Zuravitzer – my friend, R. Yisroel Jacobson, who was living in Homil – was in Leningrad. The Rebbe Rayatz sent him to Rostov for *Beis Nissan* (the Rebbe Rashab's *yahrtzeit*), and when he came out of *yechidus* he told me:

AS I HEARD THEM

The collection of stories by R. Zalman Duchman is unique among the various volumes of Chabad stories – both in content and in style.

Many of the stories in his collection are exclusive and not recorded elsewhere. R. Zalman drew his stories from a variety of sources: his grandfather R. Mordechai Yoel Duchman, a close student of R. Aizik Homiler and other early chassidim; happenings that he witnessed himself; tales shared by the mashpi'im and chassidim in Lubavitch; personal incidents that fellow chassidim shared with him.

What's even more unique is his raw and authentic style. He shares with us many short recollections and quotes that made an impact on him. His own impressions and commentary lend insight into the mindset of a warm, uncomplicated tovim. Sometimes he will trail off midsentence, expressing a feeling or thought that can't be captured in words.

The following are selected stories.

NOT BLOCKED BY A DOOR

They told the story in Lubavitch of the time when the Rebbe came to the *ohel*. There was a *shul* there, and a small door opened from the *shul* into the *ohel*. One of the *ohel*'s four walls was the *shul*'s wall and it had no roof. On that occasion the door was locked and the *shamash*, unnerved, came running with the key.

"If a pile of earth doesn't obstruct [their presence]," the Rebbe asked him, "will such a thin door?"

THE REBBETZIN'S CONTEMPLATION

My uncle, R. Yehudah Leib Chasdan — the *shochet* from Homil (they called him the Sebezesher *shochet*) — told me the event he witnessed: when he was in Rebbetzin Rivkah's home he heard her *davening* in the next room. When she reached *Kriyas Shema* he saw on his watch that her meditation on *Echad* lasted 20 minutes.

"I BARELY SURVIVED!"

I heard from the *gvir*, R. Yosef Yozik Gurevitch of Warsaw, that — together with his son-in-law, R. Feivel Zalmanov (may G-d avenge his blood) — when he traveled to the Rebbe outside of Russia, the Rebbe instructed them to *mekabel shalom* (shake the Rebbe's hand).

When they were invited to come to the Rebbe on Shabbos evening and there wasn't any wine available, the Rebbe said: "It doesn't feel right to hold a knife while reciting *Kiddush*," and instructed them to make *Kiddush* over liquor, although he personally recited *Kiddush* using *challah*.

When they returned Shabbos morning the Rebbetzin asked them: "Have you *davened*?"

"Yes," they answered.

"Ah! How he *davened!*" she said about the Rebbe. "I barely survived!"

SEVEN NIGHTS OF STUDY

My brother Baruch, of blessed memory, told me in Homil over a couple of *LeChaims* that when he was studying in *Tomchei Tmimim* in Lubavitch, the Rebbe Rashab instructed him in *yechidus* to stay up (and study, “*zitzen*”) seven nights. *How?* “For example: when you awaken on Thursday morning, you must not lie down that entire day; then stay awake the whole night and — for the entire next day — not lie down until the evening.”

Each time he was apprehensive: perhaps he had dozed off? So he would do it again. In short, he stayed awake in such a fashion for 15 nights.

“HE PUT HIS HAND ON MY HEAD AND WE CRIED...”

One *erev* Yom Kippur in Lubavitch, after *Mincha*, I saw the venerable chossid R. Pesach Kuper of Taganrog come out of the Rebbe’s room wearing a *tallis* and *kittel* and saw that he had been crying. He had gone inside, he told me, to ask the Rebbe for his *erev* Yom Kippur blessing, and the Rebbe wanted to *bentch* him.

“I was privileged,” he told the Rebbe, “that your grandfather and your father placed their hand on my head when *bentching* me, and I ask you also to place your hand on my head when you *bentch* me. He put his hand on my head and burst into tears; both of us wept.”

“WHAT WAS SAID – WAS SAID”

In the time of the First World War, R. Zalman Havlin passed through Homil with his brother Lipa from Postov, near Kiev, whom he had gotten released from his regiment for a half year. He related that when he asked the Rebbe about his brother’s draft notice, the Rebbe replied that he should think about obtaining a passport. Now R. Zalman was quite well-versed in these matters, and he raised some other ideas.

“Listen, Zalman,” the Rebbe told him, “there’s a life at stake. *What was said – was said*. But when you start [reasoning] with me this way, I don’t know what to say.”

TO SING WHILE DAVENING

A *yungerman* came to the Rebbe for *yechidus* one summer day in the large *zal* in Rostov. The Rebbe’s face was radiant. “I am accustomed to sing while *davening*,” he had asked, “would it be better to hold myself back?”

“No... no,” answered the Rebbe, “these are the G-dly soul’s powers revealing themselves.”

JUST OPEN A TANYA

When R. Yosef Lipschitz of Kariokovka was being treated by Dr. Brook, the eye doctor in the hospital in Homil, I went with my *zeide* to visit him. R. Yosef recounted what he had heard from the Rebbe: “When something happens to a *Yid*, every *Yid* has the power to open up the *Tanya* and say: *Rebbe, help me!*”

(This seems to be where the custom of placing a *pidyon* inside the *Tanya* came from – S.Z.)

AT LEAST YOU WON’T BE ELSEWHERE...

Yekusiel Golodetz told me in Leningrad of an occasion when the Rebbe was in Petersburg.

The renowned *gvir*, R. Shmuel Gurary, was staying in a room there, and one of the Rebbe’s relatives — his Uncle Zalman’s wealthy son, Alexander — dropped by to visit. R. Shmuel Gurary began to chastise him for not coming to the Rebbe more often. When the Rebbe passed by the room where they were sitting, Alexander, who was quite self-assured, told him how he was being browbeaten.

“Regarding your presence here,” answered the Rebbe, “I don’t know. As long as you’re here, though — you won’t be somewhere else!”

"YOU KNOW HOW I BECAME SOMEONE
VERY DIFFERENT A FEW YEARS AGO? THE
REBBE (RASHAB) CAME TO ME AND SAID,
'MOSHE, ENOUGH!'"



R' Zalman Duchman

IT BOthered me then: how could
THE GREAT MEKUBAL R. LEIVIK OF
YEKATRINOSLAV NOT HAVE BROUGHT
SUCH SPECIAL CHILDREN TO LUBAVITCH
OR TO ROSTOV?

"The Rebbe said to me, 'You were with my father in *yechidus*; you should speak to him now as you would in *yechidus*: "Rebbe, I am a *shliach* of my mother — you know her name — and me..."' (i.e. Rebbetzin Shterna Sara and the Rebbe Rayatz). And you should go to the *ohel* early — for you it will be after *davening*; for me it will be before *davening*. Maybe as a result I will *daven* better."

I'm no authority but I can testify that on that *Beis Nissan* after *davening Shemoneh Esrei* — before reciting *chazaras hashatz* (the Rebbe Rayatz served as *chazan* for the *yahrtzeit*) — the Rebbe signaled me to bring him his chair. Exhausted from his efforts, he had to sit.

He also had the opportunity to *farbreng* with the many chassidim who visited Leningrad, and he heard from them many unknown stories.

During that time R. Zalman came to know the Frierdiker Rebbe's future son-in-law, our Rebbe. The Rebbe would visit the Frierdiker Rebbe in Leningrad and R. Zalman had the opportunity to observe him. As he recounts:

It was *Yud-Tes Kislev*, 5685 or 5686 (1924 or 1925). The table was standing near the dining room door. On the Rebbe's left side stood the one designated to become the Rebbe's son-in-law, the *gaon* R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson (the Rebbe); his brother R. Yisroel Aryeh Leib was on the other side. The Rebbe said to him: 'Aye, how regretful you should be that my father didn't see you.'

[Years later, after the Frierdiker Rebbe's passing, R. Zalman shared his inner thoughts about this incident with the Rebbe. In his candid style he wrote in his letter:

It bothered me then: how could the great *mekubal* R. Leivik of Yekatrinoslav not have brought such special children to Lubavitch or to Rostov? Yet as the Rebbe Rayatz made it quite clear in a talk, the Baal Shem Tov did not give instructions for the Alter Rebbe to be brought to him, for he belonged to his disciple, the Maggid.]

Life in Leningrad was far from easy. One small sewing machine provided a minimal income for him to feed his family. Owning one of these machines proved very critical for the *frum* Yidden at that time, for it enabled them to work their own schedules without worrying about taking off on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Those who observed him

working pleasantly recall the noble sight. There he was, dressed in his full Chassidic garb, with one hand turning the machine and the other clutching a Tehillim, lovingly reciting its comforting words.

THE ARREST

On the 15th of Sivan 5687 (1927), the NKVD entered the Frierdiker Rebbe's home to arrest him, and immediately set about searching the home for incriminating evidence. Our Rebbe, who was not in the home at the time, went straightaway to hide whatever documents could be used against the Frierdiker Rebbe. R. Zalman was around that evening, and the Rebbe deposited a trunk of manuscripts for safekeeping with him.

[In a letter he received from our Rebbe in 5709 (1908) the Rebbe wrote in a postscript, "If I'm not mistaken, during the time when the Rebbe was arrested you were among those I entrusted with the sacred documents?"

To which he responded in his letter, "Indeed, you gave me a large box of manuscripts. With Divine providence on the 12th of Tammuz, while you were sitting on the west side of the study hall, I returned the manuscripts. It was then that you told me that for my efforts you would give me good news – that the Rebbe will return [from exile] in time for Shabbos."

Once at a Yud-Beis Tammuz *farbrengen* in 770, he stood up and said that if the chassidim would know of the Rebbe's involvement in the Frierdiker Rebbe's

release, their celebration would be much greater. The Rebbe turned to him and said, "Shai!" and he never disclosed any additional information.]

On Tuesday, Yud-Beis Tammuz, our Rebbe was sitting in the *beis midrash* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's home, and R. Zalman brought him the trunk of manuscripts that he had been holding. As gratitude for holding the box, the Rebbe disclosed to him the fresh news that the Frierdiker Rebbe would be returning from exile before Shabbos.

After spending a few days in Leningrad, the Frierdiker Rebbe received threats of being arrested again and he decided to relocate to Malachovka, a quiet suburb of Moscow. Though chassidim were cautioned not to visit the Rebbe, R. Zalman and his family vacationed there for the summer to assist him. Many of the stories known from the time of the arrest and the release originate from R. Zalman.

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S DEPARTURE

In Malachovka the Rebbe continued to suffer from constant surveillance. The Rebbe decided that he had no choice but to leave Russia entirely, and was scheduled to leave on *Isru Chag* of Sukkos 5688 (1927).

That Tishrei was a very emotional time for the chassidim. For many this would be the last time they would see the Frierdiker Rebbe. For Simchas Torah, Chassidim traveled from all across the Soviet Union to be with the Frierdiker Rebbe before he left.



ON TUESDAY, YUD-BEIS TAMMUZ, OUR REBBE WAS SITTING IN THE BEIS MIDRASH IN THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S HOME, AND R. ZALMAN BROUGHT HIM THE TRUNK OF MANUSCRIPTS THAT HE HAD BEEN HOLDING.

R. Zalman was with the Rebbe for Tishrei and he recounts his memory of that historic day:

The last dance [with the Frierdiker Rebbe] engraved in my memory took place on the last Simchas Torah during the day. The Rebbe held his holy hands up high and sang *Nye Zhuritze Chloptzi* ['Friends, don't worry about what will become of us...'].

On *Isru Chag*, all of the chassidim gathered to bid the Rebbe farewell. R. Zalman brought his eight-year-old daughter Rochel to the Rebbe's house where the Rebbe gave her a warm *bracha*. He would later say that it was this *bracha* that protected her throughout the war. He then accompanied the Rebbe to the train station. He records how before departing the Frierdiker Rebbe handed over a farewell letter and said, "I didn't write this letter *with* my heart — it *is* my heart."

Rochel later recalled what it was like at the train station:

"The platform was black from the crowd, not only Jews, but all kinds of people were there, hundreds and hundreds of people. Yet, my father was right near the train. In those days, you had to go up 3 or 4 stairs to the train. I remember the Rebbe standing on top of those steps with his hands holding the handles, he may have been blessing the people or telling them something.

"When the train started going, it was going very slowly, and all the people were walking after the train. Then the train started going faster, and the whole crowd of people started running, we ran too, alongside the train. Everybody at the station was crying, you see tears just falling, not one dry eye."

The period after the Rebbe's departure was particularly tough for the chassidim, yet they found the strength to endure the hardships. As R. Zalman records:

On Purim 5695 (1935) in Leningrad, R. Elchanan Morozov told me and my friend Pinchas Altthoiz:

'The posuk states: *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.* How can we understand this? It was darkness; how could they "see a great light?" Rather: *How can one possibly go through darkness?* Only when — earlier — "they saw a great light."

Likewise, when they felt dejected by their difficult state, it was a *vort* from the Rebbe that uplifted them:

R. Michoel Dvorkin came in once when I was working at the machine. Noticing my expression which, in all likelihood was gloomy, he said: 'Serve G-d with joy!' — mirroring the Rebbe Rayatz's words: 'Six days you shall work — is a mitzvah.'

WITH THE REBBE'S FATHER

Even after the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, Leningrad remained a center of chassidic life. It was there that R. Zalman met and spent time with the Rebbe's father, Rav Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, *rav* of Yekatrinoslav.

In his first letter to our Rebbe, R. Zalman writes:

I met your father in Leningrad in the winter of 5688 (1928), and saw him in Lubavitch in 5666 or 5667 (1906 or 1907). And in Lubavitch, I heard that the Rebbe Rashab said that he will pride himself with three *yungeleit* both in this world and in the World to Come: *HaRav* Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, *HaRav* Menachem Mendel Chein and *HaRav* Shneur Zalman Schneerson.

He continues to describe the time they spend together in Leningrad:

The pleasure, the delight we had then in Leningrad is beyond description. We went to visit him nearly every night and he explained *midrashim* according to Chassidus. 'Nu, Zalman,' Pinya [Altthoiz] would ask me, 'are you overwhelmed already?' R. Michoel Dvorkin once mustered the courage to ask him,

BEFORE DEPARTING THE FRIERDIKER REBBE HANDED OVER A FAREWELL LETTER AND SAID,

"I DIDN'T WRITE THIS LETTER WITH MY HEART — IT IS MY HEART."



"THE TRAIN STARTED GOING FASTER, AND THE WHOLE CROWD OF PEOPLE STARTED RUNNING, WE RAN TOO, ALONGSIDE THE TRAIN. EVERYBODY AT THE STATION WAS CRYING, YOU SEE TEARS JUST FALLING, NOT ONE DRY EYE."

'How do you know all this?' 'He [the Rebbe Rashab] gave me the basic rules,' R. Leivik answered.

Shabbos in wintertime Leningrad begins at three in the afternoon, and after the Shabbos dinner we — R. Michoel Dvorkin, both *Pinyas*, Menashe [Altthoiz] and I — would come to him. When we came once and saw him resting on a small sofa, he told us that the Rebbe Rashab had said to him: 'Above all, one must always be engaged in thought, even when resting for a while.'

Elsewhere, he speaks of R. Leivik's genius:

Once when R. Leivik finished speaking, R. Michoel asked him: 'Where does all this come from?' 'In such-and-such *sefer*, on such-and-such page,' he replied. (It was from *Eitz Chaim* [a work of *kabala* by the Arizal].) Now Pinya was quite sharp. 'Zalman,'

he said to me, 'open another page.' R. Leivik was a gentle person, and he proceeded to recite a number of pages in the way a *Yid* recites *Ashrei*.

(I once noted that before becoming fluent in *Eitz Chaim*, one becomes fluent in other works — S.Z.)

Finally, he tells of R. Leivik's emotional departure from Leningrad:

When he left Leningrad, we accompanied him to the platform for Moscow-bound trains. A young student was there as well, and R. Leivik told him: 'Remember: *וחזק והיית לאיש* — *Strengthen yourself, become a man!*' (This young man later went through a spiritual decline, but is today doing well in a distant country.) When the train was about to depart, R. Michoel Dvorkin burst into a joyous dance with us.

DIFFICULT TIMES

COMMUNIST RUSSIA

As a dedicated chossid, R. Zalman opened his home for Torah study despite the communist threat. He knew that the building's superintendent had been placed there by the government to keep tabs on its occupants, and that the traffic of visiting chassidim was certainly being watched, yet he was determined to continue teaching Torah in his home.

At last, the inevitable occurred and the Yevsektzia targeted R. Zalman. Most people brought in for questioning did not return quickly, but R. Zalman was subject to a different arrangement. At the end of his grueling interrogation he was released, only to return the following morning. Day after day he was forced to come to the NKVD headquarters for long and painful interrogations. The interrogators demanded that he hand over the names and addresses of all of his "accomplices" in spreading Torah, but R. Zalman kept his lips sealed.

While his family knew why he was absent each long and frightful day, they didn't know of the tortures he was enduring, since R. Zalman was careful not to alarm his family. His daughter Rochel, around seventeen years old at the time, would accompany him to the Yevsektzia offices, and faithfully wait outside until her father was done. Yet, even to her, he never said a word about what had transpired. R. Zalman's physical pain was intensified by the burden of keeping it all to himself, but he was resolute not to pain his family. Only years later did he briefly mention some of the suffering he experienced.

ESCAPING THE WAR

After the war ended, R. Zalman and his family left Russia with forged passports, eventually settling in a Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Germany. While

waiting for the necessary documents to leave Europe R. Zalman did not sit idly. He gave regular *shiurim*, especially in Tanya, and began writing regularly to the Frierdiker Rebbe. He would copy the letters he received and would share them with his fellow chassidim.

In one letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe, R. Zalman asked to be sent recent *sichos* and *maamorim* of which he had not yet received a copy. In a letter from Cheshvan 5709 (1948), our Rebbe replied that although the policy was to send one packet for all the chassidim in the camp, he was nonetheless sending a separate copy to R. Zalman on two conditions: that he shared its contents with others, and that he send recollections of his grandfather and great-uncle, as per the Frierdiker Rebbe's wish to collect all known details of elder chassidim, ultimately to benefit the community at large.

THE BEGINNING OF A VOLUME

At the Rebbe's request and prodding, R. Zalman began transcribing his memories, sending them to the Rebbe a page at a time. The Rebbe would thank him for the stories and sometimes include comments and suggestions.

In a letter from Teves 5709 (1949), the Rebbe thanks him for installments 7 and 8 and adds, "It is self-understood that my father-in-law, the Rebbe, knows that you are sending me your recollections, and about which he said, 'It's a very good endeavor.' From time to time I relate some of the stories to him, and each time he derives satisfaction."

A few months into the project, the Frierdiker Rebbe himself wrote to R. Zalman. "I have great satisfaction from this; it is important to diligently record whatever you remember and know. You should also correspond regularly with the elder chassidim – the gifted

storytellers – to encourage them to record the many Chassidic stories that they heard and received from previous generations. For those who find it difficult to write in the *Lashon Hakodesh*, they should record the stories in Yiddish and my son-in-law, the Ramash, will G-d willing organize all the stories correctly and with precision.”

After the Friediker Rebbe’s passing, the Rebbe continued to encourage R. Zalman to record and send his stories. In a letter written shortly after the *histalkus*, the Rebbe is quick to remind R. Zalman to carry on with his mission, and in another letter from that time period, the Rebbe highlights the importance of the stories in light of the *histalkus*.

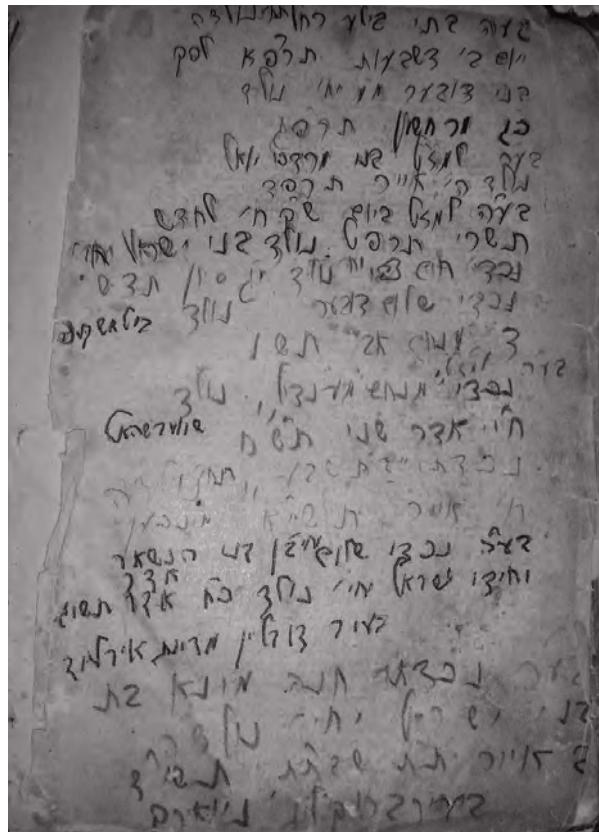
For close to 25 years, the Rebbe prompted R. Zalman to record his memories, and R. Zalman on his part continued to send the pages. In almost every letter to R. Zalman, the Rebbe would express his thanks and praise for the stories.

A LIVING REBBE

Shortly after the Friediker Rebbe passing, R. Zalman wrote our Rebbe a long letter accepting the Rebbe as his successor, though the Rebbe would not accept the mantle of leadership until a year later.

Several months after the *histalkus*, R. Zalman wrote to the Rebbe, “Nu... we need to update the honorific titles...” meaning to replace the wishes for health with a mention of his righteous memory. Then R. Zalman added, “Although my grandfather R. Yoel Mordechai of Homil, when he would talk about the Tzemach Tzedek – even years after his passing – would say ‘the Rebbe, zol gezunt zein (may he be well),’ and then, realizing his mistake, he would add ‘in Gan Eden.’”

In his response, the Rebbe addressed this point, “You write that you are afraid to say ‘zol gezunt zein’ [about the Friediker Rebbe after his passing] since it is not customary to do so. Why the fear? It is explained in [Tanya] Epistle Twenty-Eight, that the real life of a *tzaddik* is faith, love, and fear. In that case he is very healthy.”



Opening page of R. Zalman's Tanya where he inscribed the names of his children and grandchildren.

LUBAVITCH TRANSPLANTED

REUNITED WITH THE REBBE

After four years in the DP camp, R. Zalman and his family received visas for entry to the United States. On Wednesday, 4 Elul 5711 (1951), they arrived in New York and settled in Crown Heights near the Rebbe, where R. Zalman lived until his last day. Having been through so much suffering, the death of his two sons, and just narrowly escaping the NKVD, R. Zalman decided to dedicate the rest of his life to serving Hashem in Torah, *davening* and acts of kindness.

The day after he arrived in New York, R. Zalman went in to the Rebbe for *yechidus*. When he entered the room, the Rebbe rose from his place and said, “So, if one is persistent enough, one succeeds!”

It was more than a standard *yechidus* between Rebbe and chossid; it was a sort of reunion from days gone by in Leningrad with the Friediker Rebbe. The Rebbe spent a considerable amount of time with R. Zalman reminiscing about those special times.

In his diary entry about this monumental event Reb Zalman writes:

“On the fifth of Elul I went into *yechidus* and almost immediately the Rebbe asked me, ‘Do you remember the *farbrengen* on the staircase?’ Clearly referring to an event that had taken place with both of us present.”

DAILY SCHEDULE

Though he lived in the US for over twenty years, R. Zalman could not speak English, living all the while as he had back in Lubavitch.

R. Zalman would go to bed at 11 pm and rise before 3 am. He had a set program of daily study: *Zohar* on the *parsha*, *Torah Ohr* or *Likutei Torah* on the *parsha*, and the portion of *Tehillim* as divided for the days of the week. No matter what, R. Zalman made sure to complete the entire *parsha* of *Zohar*, the *parsha* of *Torah Ohr* or *Likutei Torah*, and the entire book of *Tehillim* by the end of the week. At the conclusion of his regimen, R. Zalman would immerse in the *mikvah*, and then after a little more study, he would head to *shul* for *shacharis*.

R. Zalman had a corner in the original 770 *shul* where he would *daven* each day. He would wait to hear *kaddish*, *chazoras hashatz* (repetition of the *amida*), and *krias haTorah*, and then, wrapped in his *talis*, he would pour out his soul for hours. How much more so on Shabbos, when he wouldn’t finish until two or three in the afternoon.

Chassidic discourses – whether from copies of handwritten manuscripts of earlier Rebbeim or the Rebbe’s most recent *maamorim* – took up an important part of his day. He also had a special delight in the Rebbe’s *sichos*; he attended R. Mentlik’s

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Reb Zalman Duchman dancing at a simcha with his son-in-law Reb Eliyahu Akiva Lipskar.

weekly *sicha shiur* and would toil to understand each footnote.

Even in his advanced age, R. Zalman had a youthful energy to him, and he enjoyed spending time in the company of the *bochurim*. He wouldn't hesitate to ask a *bochur* fifty years his junior to repeat a *sicha* of the Rebbe for him or to learn together with him as a *chavrusa*.

TRAVELING SHLIACH

Though he had been through a lot, R. Zalman wasn't looking to take it easy. The Rebbe chose him to be a *shadar* [messenger and collector of funds], and twice a year he would travel across the country to collect for Colel Chabad. Shortly before setting out on each trip, R. Zalman would go into the Rebbe to receive a *bracha*, and upon returning, he would again be admitted to report on how the trip went.

The trips were challenging for R. Zalman, who could not speak English and did not have many contacts. He did not bring in a great amount of money, and he wanted to put an end to his travels. But the Rebbe insisted that he continue, for his mere presence in

those places was accomplishing great things. The Rebbe told R. Zalman that he was sending him to Chattanooga, TN, "*az men zol zen aza hadras ponim* – that they should see his remarkable countenance."

In truth, the purpose of such trips by travelling chassidim had always been to "sow spirituality and reap material fortune." The objective wasn't simply to return with funds, but also to leave a lasting impression of *Yiddishkeit*. With his warmth and genuine care, he connected with so many *Yidden* and guided them to the Rebbe.

UNTIL THE END

Even in his final years, R. Zalman remained steadfastly dedicated to the ideals of Chassidus. As his son-in-law R. Eliyahu Lipskier *a"h* related:

During his last days, his situation was not good, and we came in from Toronto to be with him. I visited him in the hospital on a Friday morning, and as soon as he saw me he said, "I'm glad you came since I have an important question to ask the Rebbe, and I want you to ask it. Try to ask today, and if there is time, please relay to me the Rebbe's answer. Please do it



yourself, since this is something that is causing me much agony.

"I have been careful for some many years to go to the *mikvah* each day and always remain in a state of purity. However, here in the hospital, at a time when purity is so important – you know what I mean – I have non-Jewish nurses, and this causes me great pain."

Honestly, I was uncomfortable asking the Rebbe this question, since I didn't think it was a big deal, but when I saw how important it was to him, I decided to go right away. I arrived at 770 and stood near the Rebbe's door, and when the Rebbe came out I relayed the question. The Rebbe considered the question seriously and responded. When I told the answer to my father-in-law, his face shone.

On the 8th of Adar I 5730 (1970), R. Zalman's soul ascended to Heaven, and he was buried in the Old Montefiore Cemetery, near the Ohel.

A BOOK FOR ETERNITY

At the Rebbe's instructions, R. Zalman organized his stories for print in book form. The Rebbe advised him to have the stories reviewed for accuracy, but instructed him not to delay the printing.

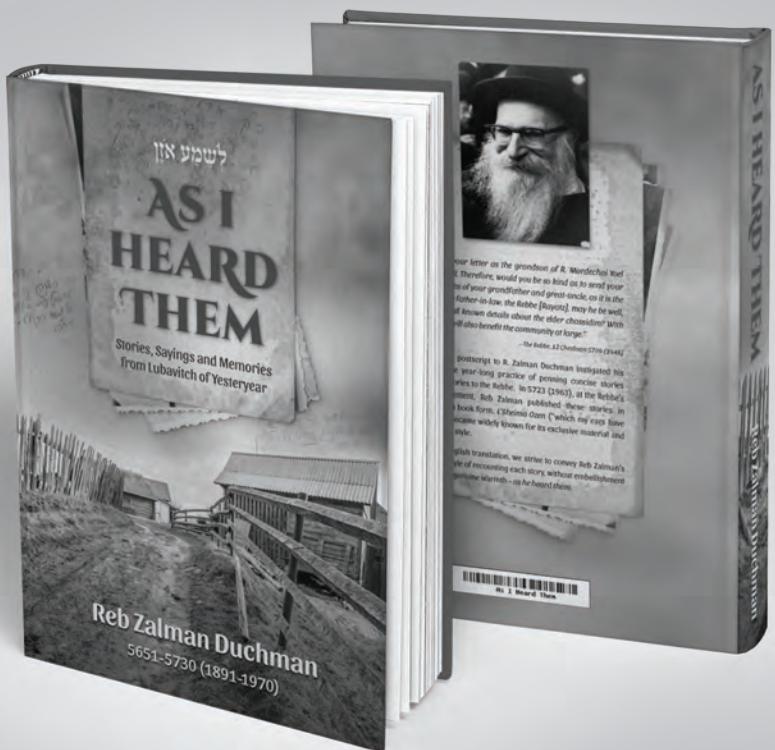
[The Rebbe later urged R. Zalman to publish a second volume of stories. On *erev Pesach* 5727 (1967), as R. Zalman came by to receive *matzah*, the Rebbe said to him humorously, "If you publish another volume of *Leshema Ozen*, I'll give you a full *matzah*. If not, you'll get broken pieces!"

When Reb Zalman asked what was the importance of another book would be, the Rebbe replied, "From when the gates of wisdom were opened in the year 5600, as described in Zohar, every book of *kedusha* that is printed withholds the publication of another kind of book!"]

When R. Zalman asked the Rebbe for a letter to print in the book, the Rebbe replied, "You already have *several* such letters. You can choose one of them or print them all." R. Zalman followed the Rebbe's advice and included excerpts of 33 letters (!) in which the Rebbe praises the stories.

The book, published in Elul 5723 (1963), under the name *L'Sheima Ozen* ("The Ear's Hearing" – Tehillim 18:45), became a popular source of Lubavitch stories. The book became widely known for its exclusive material, and moreover, for its authentic unedited style which offers a glimpse into Lubavitch of old. **P**

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As I Heard Them:
*A newly published
volume of stories,
sayings and memories
from Lubavitch of
yesteryear by
R. Zalman Duchman*

NOW AVAILABLE
Prepared by
Wellspring
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Guardian - OF - Jewish Education

THE REBBE RASHAB'S MISSION TO UPHOLD AUTHENTIC
JEWISH EDUCATION IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS

Prepared by Rabbi Yakov Gershon

GIVE THEM A CHANCE!

When the undercurrents of *Haskala* sprang up in Russia, the *maskilim* made considerable efforts to revise the mode of education in the traditional *chadorim*. Sacred stories of the Torah were taught as characters in a history book, and whatever the *maskilim* didn't see fit was omitted, thus sapping the *cheder* of its sanctity and injecting it with the apathy of Secularism.

When these modern schools began popping up in the Holy Land, the Rebbe Rashab wrote a letter to his followers there, clarifying the subtle danger and encouraging them to take action:

I received your letter, and I see that the enemy has arrived in your camp. He has set up traps to, G-d forbid, cut off the young children from the house of our life, Torah and mitzvos, with poisonous new study methods which are extremely detrimental to instilling the sanctity of Torah in the hearts of the children.

They talk smoothly and convince the people of the city,¹ saying: "The old method of study is outdated, and those who graduate that system do not even know the Jews' holy language. Now, lovers of the Jewish language have brought to us new methods that do not contain "*alef*" or "*beis*," omitting the Divine origin of Torah and its stories that are above the children's comprehension. Instead, they learn the sounds of the letters, together with some plucked stories, and in this way, the child learns how to read, write and speak the Jewish language all at once, becoming a 'good Jew' in a flash."

This is how the destructive modernists, who despise the religion and trample anything holy, speak to the parents. The mothers in particular are easily swayed by new things and are seduced to surrender their children to the inferno.

Experience has shown, that if one doesn't embed within the heart of a child when he is yet very young and innocent, the light and sanctity of Torah through its words and stories as they are firmly established upon holy sources – and instead, one gorges them with stories and absurdities contrived by free-thinkers and deceivers –

Why, in this manner the child will be innocently educated sacrilegiously, and the influence of those books and stories will destroy the sanctity of his soul. What can you expect of such a child?...

One who wishes that his child proceed on the righteous path and wishes to set him on the way of truth and preserve it for life, should flee and escape from these new methods unprecedented by our forefathers.

It is a positive commandment of the Torah, incumbent upon each father, to teach his son Torah. In fact, our sages (*Sukah* 42a) tell us, "When a child learns to speak, his father teaches him Torah and *Krias Shema*." The nature of this obligation is to implant within the child, faith in Hashem and a love of Torah.

After bemoaning the destructive education given by the *maskilic* teachers – the study of Hebrew language unrelated to holiness and Torah content, secularization of our *chachomim*, and the teaching of Torah as a story – the Rebbe Rashab implores upon the parents to act for the sake of their children:

The virtues of sanctity and faith cannot be simply bought at the market or store, and one must invest much labor and toil to achieve their instalment. In addition, they can only be conveyed by G-d-fearing people, and through teaching the children holy studies.

In this generation, in spite of all the labor and effort parents invest, children disobey their parents, and are swept away in the surging tides of modernism, to their parents' great sorrow. In such trying times, it is essential to at least *endeavor* to implant within them the sense of the Torah's sanctity while they are still young. This will assist them in their progress, and there will still be hope. Then, a father can say, "I have protected myself, and I tried to do what I could."

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¹ Based on *Devorim* 13:14 regarding people who lead a city to serve idolatry.



IF AT THE ONSET OF THE CHILD'S GROWTH, ONE IMPLANTS POISONOUS ROOTS, HEAVEN FORBID,
WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR THIS CHILD?

But if at the onset of the child's growth, one implants poisonous roots, Heaven forbid, what hope is there for this child?

Fathers will be brought to justice on this account, for it is certainly within their power to teach their children in the traditional way – at least at the onset of their education – by employing G-d-fearing *melamdim*. If they do that, there is, conceivably, still hope.

You ought to give the children at least the *chance* to grow as G-d-fearing Jews, with the help of the Almighty. You must gather the strength to resist the breach of tradition and not permit the spiritual foe and enemy to enter your vicinity. Then, you will gain esteem from your children, for the Almighty will grant you assistance in achieving the noble ways of life. The Source of all life will bestow upon you good and pleasant life, with all good, both spiritually and materially.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 2, pp. 483-485)

SHELTERING UNTainted YOUNGSTERS

In 5623 (1863), *Chevra Marbei Haskalah* was established in Russia, which later became known as *Chevra Mefitzei Haskalah* ("Society for the Promotion of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia").

Their stated agenda was "To promote culture among the Russian Jews and to infuse into them love therefor. To this end, the society will endeavor to spread the knowledge of the Russian language among them; it will publish and assist others in publishing useful works and journals in Russian, as well as in Hebrew, that will aid in carrying out the purposes of the society; and it will, further, assist the young in devoting themselves to the pursuit of knowledge and of the sciences."

At a certain point, it became part of their agenda to open Jewish schools in every city, including the town of Lubavitch, where secular studies would be

taught. In this letter, the Rebbe Rashab addresses Baron Naftali Hertz (Horace) Günzburg, who became president of this society following the passing of his father, Joseph Günzburg, the former president.²

The words that you spoke to me regarding *haskala* (intellectual enlightenment) in general gave me the strength to tell you some things about the matter as a whole.

Experience has shown that the study of secular subjects ruins and undermines the foundation of our religion. This is because the nature of this study is to create a strong sense of self which leads to feeling “unrestrained” – the opposite of humility and altruism. The beginning of this “freedom” is freedom from religion, to be “free” from accepting Hashem’s kingship and *mitzvos*. On top of that, many of these subjects are essentially opposed to the foundations of our belief (primarily due to the originators of these wisdoms), and it is virtually impossible for one who studies these subjects not to come to deny some or all of the foundations of the religion, G-d forbid.

² Though the existent copy of the letter isn’t dated, the editors of *Igros Kodesh* speculate it at 26 Adar 5657 (1897). In this letter, the Rebbe Rashab mentions a meeting he had with the young Baron Günzburg, and in a letter of Av 5660 (vol. 3, p. 141) he records a meeting with him in Peterberg the past winter, at which he pleaded with him to spare the children. Yet, that meeting might have been some time after this letter.

Now, I know that there are a select few whose study didn’t affect their faith and steadfast observance of Torah and *mitzvos*. There are always exceptions to the rule, but they are very few. It is only possible for one who makes his faith in Hashem the central point of his intellectual exploration, so that it serves as a strong pillar to support him against the waves of his intellectual exploration. His unwavering faith in Hashem will help him find ways to rationally reconcile the ideas so that they don’t oppose his faith. His attitude is that no matter what, he will not budge from his faith an iota. However, these types of people are extremely rare, and usually, even those with steadfast faith in Hashem cannot withstand the test of intellectual exploration and free thinking, and even more so, stand against the secular waves that come upon him.

Our great Rabbis have rightfully written that even the Rambam’s “liberal exploration” in *Moreh Nevuchim* defiles the pure. It also has the power to purify the defiled, since it was authored by a righteous individual, with intense faith in Hashem, and who was devoted to Hashem and His Torah with his heart and soul. This enabled him to reconcile and unite the intellectual inquiry with faith in Hashem, and thus his work has the ability to purify the impure. However, this is not the case regarding the philosophical exploration and wisdom that was concocted by those who deny Hashem and His Torah, and demonstrate their intellectual prowess in their inquiry against the pure faith and fundamentals of our religion. Even in



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DESPITE THIS, RABBI YISROEL SALANTER
DECIDED TO TRY, AND HE PERMITTED TWO OF
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HAPPENED TO THEM.

the neutral parts of their philosophy, their impure influence is recognizable, and they often contain matters in complete opposition to Yiddishkeit. Thus, the faith of those who study these books becomes completely ruined, Heaven forfend.

It is therefore clear why the great *rabbonim*, whose entire life and delight was faith in Hashem and the pure knowledge of Torah, could not agree to head a yeshiva where such subjects were given significance, and the spreading of such studies gave them severe heart ache.³

Despite this, Rabbi Yisroel Salanter⁴ decided to try, and he permitted two of his students, Einhorn⁵ and Zuckerman, to study medicine. Though he was certain that they would maintain their faith in Hashem and religious observance, it is well known what happened to them.⁶

³ See following note.

⁴ R. Yisroel Lipkin (5570-5643/1809-1883), also known as Yisroel Salanter, is considered the founder of the Musar movement. He studied in Salant where he came under the influence of Rabbi Yosef Zundel of Salant. In 1848, the Czarist government, influenced by the *maskilim*, created the Vilna Rabbinical School and Teachers' Seminary, and Rabbi Lipkin was identified as a candidate to head the school. He refused the position, and when he was being pressured by the government, he left Vilna and moved to Kovno, Lithuania, where he established another yeshiva.

⁵ Yisrael Isar Einhorn was one of the prize students of R. Yisroel Salanter.

⁶ "R. Israel endeavored to eradicate this popular misconception and to produce secularly educated, G-d fearing Torah scholars.

We must therefore consider: Why should we Jews expend efforts that our youth study secular subjects, when it is clear as day that this will bring them to deny Hashem? We ought to dissuade them from doing so, and certainly not assist them, for that is like bringing an offering to idol-worship, G-d forbid.

I am very taken aback by the campaign of the Chevras Mefitzei Haskala to open their schools in every city—especially the small towns. In these schools, precious time of the day is used for study of language and similar subjects. With this, they sap the children of their G-dly feeling for Torah, *davening* and everything sacred, and they implant within them poisonous roots.

A child of seven or eight years old is malleable, unlike an older student who was already molded and will continue on his own in the direction he was taught. The fate of a young child, however, is in the hands of his educator. One must implant a strong foundation of faith in Hashem, and fan the spark of Yiddishkeit within him for Torah, *davening* and *mitzvos*, so that

This would be the weapon against the specious *maskilim* who considered the fear of G-d and enlightenment to be mutually exclusive, and who looked with contempt on Judaism. He conducted an experiment—extremely audacious for the climate of opinion of those days. Choosing one of his outstanding disciples, Isar Einhorn by name, R. Israel sent him off to study in a secular institution. The student was most successful and in a short time was graduated from the St. Petersburg Military Medical Institute. As a physician he was truly outstanding. But he succumbed to temptation. Having attained high military rank, he abandoned his Judaism and converted to Christianity. He was the well-known Gen. Einhorn." (*Tenuas Hamusar*, vol. 1, p. 178; translated by Rabbi D. Katz in *The Mussar Movement*, vol. 1, part 1, pp. 239-240) See also below by note 7.

ANYONE WITH A HEART WILL BE EXTREMELY GRIEVED BY THE SIGHT OF THESE CHILDREN'S SOULS BEING DESTROYED

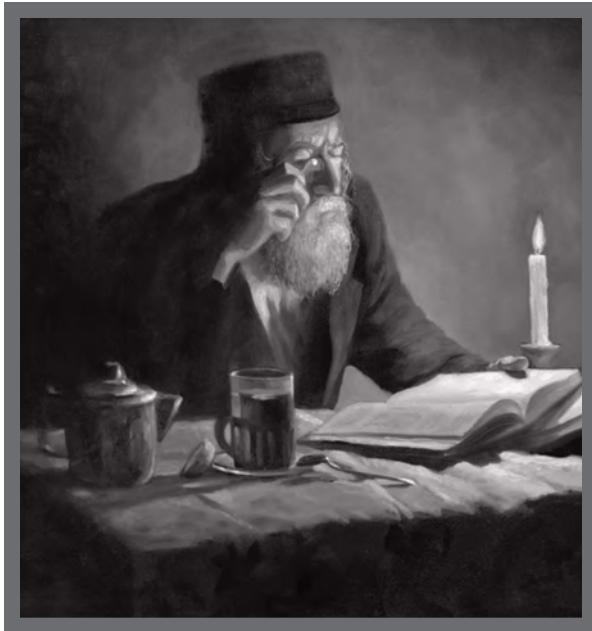
he should become molded in this manner and not veer from it even when he grows older. On the other hand, when he is taught secular subjects, his soul is molded with an inclination to free himself from religion, a feeling that is engendered by these studies. Furthermore, the teachers are not G-d fearing, and most of them openly deny Hashem. The teachers' conduct has a profound effect on the character of the students, and with their immature intellect, the students will begin laughing at anything religious. The disrespectful statements of the teachers also contribute to the instilment of secularism in the students' souls.

The Chevras Mefitzei Haskala was founded at a time when knowledge of the local language was completely foreign, and the goal was to assist study of the language. Presently, however, a child can easily learn the language either at home or with a tutor at designated times, while his primary ambition is Torah study. Since he is under the father's supervision, the tutor strives to find favor in the eyes of the father, and watches over both himself and the child. Conversely, when this study takes place in school, it gains a priority in the eyes of the student, both in time and importance. He is not under his father's supervision, and this actually causes him to break loose from his father's authority.

Anyone with a heart will be extremely grieved by the sight of these children's souls being destroyed and their freeing themselves from the yoke of Hashem's kingship, the yoke of *mitzvos* (and the yoke of *derekh eretz*), proceeding waywardly in the path of their evil inclinations. This is a direct result of their study in those schools and the influence of their teachers.

My great pain and sorrow prompted me to write you regarding this matter. I pray to Hashem that my words, originating from the depths of my heart, should find a path into your pure heart.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 1, pp. 190-192)



SPARE MY TOWN!

After a *maskilic* school was opened in the town of Lubavitch, the Rebbe Rashab once again beseeched Baron Naftali Hertz (Horace) Günzburg to desist his support, and describes the spiritual destruction that would definitely result from the school.

When I was in Petersburg this past winter, on 26 Adar, I wrote a lengthy letter to you explaining how detrimental the *haskala* is on our youth's souls. I beseeched you, as head of the Chevra Mefitzei Haskala, that the organization should abstain from establishing schools, and particularly regarding opening such a school in my town.

Although my words had no effect, I am beseeching you again, for this matter touches my innermost soul. I foresee very clearly that this school will transform the city to heresy, G-d forbid. Freedom from religion, as well as promiscuity, will take root in a large manner, and even the small amount of good that it possesses will be transformed. It is self-understood what will be the case with the subsequent generations.

You cannot imagine the tremendous pain of those who knew this city in its former times, and how it is

now, G-d forbid, being turned over from one extreme to the other. The pain is indescribable, and certainly can't be expressed in writing. Anyone with a heart that feels will further ache at the spiritual decay of the youth, especially to see it with his eyes constantly. Therefore, from the depths of my heart I call out to you: "Please have mercy on us and on the youth of our city. Desist supporting the school in our city, neither from the Chevras Mefitzei Haskala, nor from the committee of Baron Hirsch."⁷

Please judge me favorably for my excessive writing, for I am writing this with the actual blood of my heart. I pray to Hashem, who desires life—the life of Torah and *mitzvos*, that my heartfelt words should enter your heart and have a positive effect.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 1, pp. 192-193)

AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Soon, news reached the Rebbe Rashab that several parents in Yerushalayim transferred their children to the *haskala* school with the excuse that their children must be prepared for the real world. The Rebbe Rashab was deeply pained, and in a pointed letter to the leaders of the Chabad community in Yerushalayim, he instructs that these families mustn't be provided any financial support from the Colel Chabad funds until they reverse their actions.

⁷ The Jewish Colonization Association (JCA or נ"ג) was founded in 1891 by Baron Maurice (Tzvi) de Hirsch to facilitate the settlement of Jews in agricultural colonies on lands purchased by the committee. In another letter (vol. 2, p. 810), the Rebbe Rashab bemoans the fact that the members of the committee deviated from the intended cause (i.e. food and sustenance for impoverished Jews) and used money from the fund to establish secular academies instead.

I was deeply pained to hear that some members of our *colel*⁸ have breached the fence of G-d's vineyard and began sending their sons and daughters to the [Haskala] school. They are sinning with the souls of their sons and daughters, and affecting the entire community as well, G-d forbid, as in the parable of the boat described in the *midrash Vayikra* §4.⁹ Especially since this is a contagious disease that is prone to spread very quickly, G-d forbid.

One of the parents justified his conduct in a lengthy letter, arguing that he needs to prepare his children to go out into the world so that they won't be "schnorrers." If these parents are truly ignorant of the consequences of their actions—although this is highly unlikely, and they certainly know—we must tell them what they're doing to their children:

They're not causing them not to be schnorrers; they're causing them not to be Jews, G-d forbid.

It is well-known that secular education is the primary destructive force against religion and Yiddishkeit. It severs from Hashem those who study it, and firmly connects them with the opposite, G-d forbid. It draws the heart of the foolish one, and a mere sniff of its evil odor arouses a burning desire to study it. Commensurate to this desire, he will distance himself from Torah, *mitzvos* and all that is sacred to the Jewish people. Especially when he reads foreign books—romantic novels and heretical works—which completely destroy his soul, G-d forbid.

This is clearly apparent in the revolutions in our country that were caused by secular studies, and particularly in the schools with heretical teachers who have cast away the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos* and transgress publicly. This alone has a strong impact on

⁸ Colel Chabad was established by the Alter Rebbe to support the poor Torah scholars in Eretz Yisroel.

⁹ Vayikra Rabbah 4:6 offers a parable of a group of people sitting in a boat and one decides to drill a hole in the floor. When his friends protested, he said, "Why do you care? I am drilling only under me." They retorted that water will enter the boat through this hole and drown them all.

THEY'RE NOT CAUSING THEM NOT TO BE SCHNORRERS;
THEY'RE CAUSING THEM NOT TO BE JEWS, G-D FORBID.

THIS IS SO IN OUR COUNTRY, AND WOULD OSTENSIBLY BE TO A GREATER EXTENT IN THE HOLY LAND, WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR YEARS AGAINST ITS HOLINESS.

the children's character traits, and especially since the teachers invest much effort in pushing them away from Hashem and Torah.

This is so in our country, and would ostensibly be to a greater extent in the Holy Land, where they have been fighting for years against its holiness. They wish to bring the idol specifically into the holy places, and their success has been vast.

We have strong hope in Hashem that the holy side will ultimately be victorious and the opposition will cease. However, we are pained over the souls that are meanwhile descending to destruction, and who knows how they will ascend. May Hashem inspire them to leave their evil ways and may we have a speedy salvation.

Even if these parents won't consider the results of their actions, how can they disobey the bans and excommunications against sending children to schools that include secular studies, as instituted by the *rabbonim* of previous generations? This was accepted by all of the Ashkenazic communities for all generations, and also for those that will settle in the Holy Land in the future.¹⁰ One who transgresses

is banned from the Jewish congregation, and who isn't frightened by this to transgress and sin with his soul? The forces of impurity must have blinded these parents' eyes for them to be able to transgress such a serious matter. Contemplating this alone is sufficient to open their eyes to realize their wrong-doing and regret their actions.

With regard to the *colel*, it was established by the Rebbeim to support those involved in Torah and service of Hashem in the Holy Land. Although presently many of our brethren in the Holy Land are not so involved in Torah and *avoda*, they are still G-d fearing and complete with Hashem and His Torah. We can't, however, support the destruction of Yiddishkeit in Hashem's Holy Land. Thus, anyone who sends his son or daughter to the [*Haskala*] school will not be provided any support from the funds of the *colel* for his family.

You, honorable appointees, should stand strong and not acquiesce to the cries of these families. Do not give them any financial support until they return from their evil path. Let us trust in Hashem who will guard and assist us.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 1, pp. 282-284)

10 Around the year 5616 (1856), Ludwig Frankel from Vienna arrived in Yerushalayim with a mission to open the "Lemel school," which would include classes in foreign languages and vocational skills in addition to Torah studies. It would be free of charge, and the children would receive food and clothing. Amongst the leaders of the community, the Sefardim generally supported the idea while the Ashkenazim opposed it. The Ashkenazim, headed by Rav Bardaky, could not agree to both Torah and secular subjects being taught under the same roof, and pointed to the assimilation resulting from the Haskala in Europe.

After much discussion back and forth, a *cherem* was issued on 9 Sivan 5616 (1856), which read, in part, "Every Jew from the Ashkenazim, both those that are here now and those that will come later, mustn't approach such a school..." This *cherem*

was renewed multiple times, including in 5622 (with head signatory as R. Moshe Yehuda Leib of Kotna), 5633, 5638, and additional times.

In 5638, R. Moshe Montefiore designated funds to enable some of the students in Talmud Torah Eitz Chaim, who weren't as successful in their *Limudei Kodesh*, to be taught the languages of Arabic and Turkish (in a separate location by a teacher hired for this purpose). R. Yehoshua Leib Diskin, led opposition to this plan, and the leaders in Yerushalayim issued a *cherem* to this effect.



WHO NEEDS ENLIGHTENMENT?

As World War I was raging, the Rebbe Rashab penned the following letter in response to the continued efforts to infiltrate secular studies into the education of Jewish children.

My heart grieves that... specifically at this time [of war], the misguided ones saw it fit to establish institutions that cause the children of our brethren to go astray, and along with them the entire city. At this time, it is incumbent upon us to awaken the hidden love of Hashem and His holy Torah bequeathed to us by our holy ancestors. It is a time to strengthen the schools where children study Torah, for we exist in

their merit and live off the breath of their mouths. We must set up rotating watches for prayer and Torah study so that we return to Hashem and He will have compassion on us.

Instead, at this time they are doing the exact opposite, destroying, G-d forbid, the ‘vineyard of Hashem.’ Oh Hashem, until when will these lions prey, and plunder sincere, innocent souls who know no evil and are unblemished; plucking them when they are yet young. Why don’t they learn a lesson from all the troubles that befall us one after the other, no day without a curse? ...

Who among the nations are thinking now about study and enlightenment? Every individual and community is worried only for survival. They are

establishing places for people to eat and other forms of assistance for the wanderers. Conversely, our communal activists found it urgent to establish schools for enlightenment...

At this point, the Rebbe Rashab turns to the program itself:

Regarding the matter itself, it is sufficient to look at who the teachers will be, and the course of study. Even if they guarantee a thousand times that the teachers will be the original [G-d-fearing] ones, or of similar caliber, they will surely not fulfill their promise, and within a short time they will switch the teachers to their own constituents, besides for those teachers of their own that they include from the start. These people are almost all complete heretics, who sin with spite, and transgress publicly in front of the children.

A child is a living mirror, in which is imprinted and pictured the image of their educator. The educator's wayward conduct causes the inborn qualities of the children's souls to be transformed, and with their teaching they poison these souls, Heaven forfend. The children become distanced from their fathers, eventually being disgusted with their fathers' conduct and foreign to the whole of Yiddishkeit.

What will they teach the children? Torah that they tore into fragments, favoring some passages over others. With smooth talk, they will say that it isn't suitable for children to learn certain parts of Torah (while at the same time, they give the children

booklets of hideous and loathsome material¹¹). If only their students would be as distanced from abomination as are the cheder students who study all that is written in the Torah. The fragmented Torah that they study rips the students' hearts away from their Father in Heaven, as we see in all their schools.

In addition, their teachers meddle with all communal affairs – especially in smaller towns – and destroy everything. Despite their promises that devout individuals will remain in charge, it is guaranteed that within a short time those individuals will resign, after finding themselves beset with obstacles at every turn and feeling strongly unappreciated. Unable to constantly be at war and to deal with all the troubles set out for them, they will discontinue their involvement, and leave the entire leadership to the secular management.

Regarding their promises of financial assistance, we don't desire them or their assistance. In fact, R. Eliyahu Yosef Rivlin,¹² in his *sefer Oholei Yosef*, authored a lengthy responsum on this matter in

11 See *Igros Kodesh Rashab*, vol. 3, p. 42, that they would give *yeshiva bochurim* romance novels and other inflammatory materials to fire their lust for a carefree irreligious life.

12 R. Eliyahu Yosef Rivlin (5565-5625/1805-1865) was a *chossid* of the Mittler Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek. He served as Rav in Polotsk, and later moved to Eretz Yisroel. He authored a *sefer Oholei Yosef* (published posthumously by his sons) that deals with the laws of *Kidush Hashem*, *vestos* and *shaatnez*. It also contains a lengthy responsum regarding accepting *tzedaka* from non-Jews and apostates.



A CHILD IS A LIVING
MIRROR, IN WHICH
IS IMPRINTED AND
PICTURED THE IMAGE OF
THEIR EDUCATOR.

which he prohibits accepting any financial support from them.

In conclusion, I say openly that they are rabble-rousers, and do not listen to them, for they will lead the entire city astray, Heaven forfend. Hashem only asks of you to fear Him and walk in His ways, the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*, as bequeathed to us by our forefathers. Whoever possesses fear of G-d must stand firmly to prevent this affliction from entering their houses and cities, and place his trust in Hashem who will help.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 2, pp. 809-811)

OLD-STYLE CHINUCH

Following World War I, there was a resurgence of Jewish political youth movements. These groups preached ideals of freedom and nationalism, and cast away Torah observance.

During that time period, the Rebbe Rashab penned a public letter in which he called for Jews everywhere to unite to strengthen Judaism. For just as the Jews accepted the Torah after being spared from Egypt, so too, having just been spared from a war, Jews ought to strengthen their adherence to Torah. Most importantly, the Torah study of Jewish children must be sustained and reinforced, and specifically in the traditional Jewish manner.

The study in the schools should be the “old” style, in the traditional manner as received from the great Rishonim. There mustn’t be even the slightest adulteration, as Chazal teach on the *posuk*, “Do not touch My anointed ones” – “These are the school children.”

The Torah study of these children is the foundation for Yiddishkeit in the next generation. Moreover, it is vital for upholding even the present state of Yiddishkeit, for parents maintain a staunch Torah observance through their children’s study. The rule says that when one moves something else, he must move as well. Thus, if one guides his children in the straight Torah-true path, he will also follow suit.

The opposite, G-d forbid, is true as well. For experience has shown what negative effect the children can have on their parents, completely

transforming their semblance. Many quills have been broken and much ink has been spilled on this topic.

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab* vol. 2, pp. 835-836)

LEAVE THE CURRICULUM ALONE!

Nikolayev was a *chassidische* town – home to the Rebbe’s parents – where the Rebbe was young and where the Rebbe’s grandfather served as the *rov*. Yet, given the currents of the time, local activists sought to fit the new *cheder* which they were opening with an updated and structured curriculum.

In this letter, the Rebbe Rashab objected to any change to the old method of study, and he warned that what is perceived to be a “minute change” might cause serious consequences down the line.

I received your letter regarding the proposed curriculum for the *cheder* which you are founding.

What type of curriculum do you need, after Hashem has inspired you to do what is righteous in His eyes, and to teach the children in the traditional manner as sanctioned by the great sages of old?

The *cheder* ought to be conducted in the ‘old’ style without deviating from it even one iota. For a major component of the *chadorim*, particularly during the primary years of study (besides for the academic aspect *per se*), is instilling a devout faith and awe of the Almighty, as well as a sensitivity for the Torah’s sanctity, which should naturally follow from the study itself. Any change to the manner of study serves to weaken its standard, and one can often fail to foresee the results. There are various issues perceived to be of minimal significance, but in truth, ‘great mountains’ are dependent on them.

If you will educate your children in the manner in which you yourselves have been raised, your children will follow suit and emulate you.

May the Almighty help that the parents as well as their children be sincere in fulfilling the true Divine intention, and succeed in imbuing the children with faith in the Almighty, the sanctity of the Torah and true reverence for the Torah... **P**

(*Igros Kodesh Rashab*, vol. 2, p. 925)



HANDS

ON

RABBI BINYOMIN COHEN

ROSH YESHIVA - YESHIVA GEDOLA OF MELBOURNE

From about the year 1880, the East End of London was home to a large and continually-growing Jewish community. Composed mainly of Eastern European immigrants who were fleeing the increasingly-frequent pogroms and grinding poverty of their birthplaces, the newly-arrived populace spread itself over a large area. At the center of their habitat were streets like Whitechapel, Brick Lane, Fieldgate St. and Petticoat Lane – all names which have since become immortalized in the annals of Anglo-Jewish history.

As was the case with the East Side of New York, the immigrant Jews of London did not remain in the one place forever. There was, in fact, a major population shift directly before and after the Second World War as the inhabitants of the East End discovered other areas which were considerably more attractive than the crowded tenements of Whitechapel. In the early nineteen-twenties, however, the district was still home to the largest concentration of Jews ever seen on English shores, and it was there that my mother נ"י was born and raised. Not surprisingly, she sometimes shared with us her recollections of things which she had seen as she grew up. These stories provide us with an insight into the attitudes of a large section of Jewry at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Given the enormous Jewish population, there were a predictably large number of kosher butcher shops supplying the needs of the local residents. Not that most people were particularly religious; they had other things to think about. The majority worked on Shabbos in order to make ends meet. Jewish education for the children was not well organized and of an extremely low standard. Shuls were poorly attended and socially insignificant. There were, of

course, Rabbis, teachers and *shochtim*, but, by and large, Yiddishkeit was nowhere near the top of most people's agenda.

Despite all of this, there was no shortage of kosher meat. After all, people had to eat, and while they may not have been the greatest *tzaddikim*, they still had a natural aversion to pork, bacon or any other type of *treife* meat. Thus kosher butchers were everywhere, and all of them seemed to be doing a roaring trade.

One day the unthinkable happened. It emerged that Mr. S. – one of the more prominent kosher butchers – had apparently entered into an arrangement with a wholesaler in the Smithfield Meat Market (the major source of non-kosher meat in London) whereby meat was delivered to his shop in the middle of the night, and subsequently sold to his unsuspecting Jewish customers as kosher. He had thus deceived the community for months and years into eating *treife* meat, whilst they naively trusted him and assumed that anything supplied by him must be kosher.

The news spread like wildfire, and most people were, naturally, shocked and dismayed. What really stood out, however, in my mother's memory was the recollection of walking past Mr. S.'s store in Whitechapel and seeing to her surprise that a few well-aimed bricks had smashed and effectively removed most of its large front window.

Who had thrown the bricks? Nowadays we would no doubt be assured that this was the work of right-wing fanatics and ultra-orthodox zealots. Given, however, that there were none of these among the Jews of the East End, one would be well advised to put away the labels and to look elsewhere for the perpetrators. These were, almost certainly, simple and straightforward Jews who found themselves



devastated by the realization that they had been systematically and intentionally misled and deceived by an unscrupulous, avaricious and dishonest man, who was quite prepared to liquidate their Yiddishkeit in order to put a few extra dollars into his own pocket. True, throwing bricks achieves nothing, and physical violence is never a solution, but one can still understand the outrage felt by the butcher's customers, and sympathize with, rather than condone, the vehemence of their reaction.

It would be comforting for us to assure ourselves that no such thing could happen nowadays in our highly-organised religious communities. Unlike the East End of a century ago, we have professional Kashrus organisations, any number of experienced rabbis and *mashgichim*, and, most importantly, butchers who are themselves totally committed, religious Jews.

Unfortunately, the occurrence a few years ago in a major American orthodox religious centre of a treife meat fraud almost identical to the one mentioned above, should serve to dispel the myth that the really religious communities are somehow immune to such disasters.

The simple fact of life is that greed is a challenge for all Jews (and non-Jews) regardless of their degree of religious affiliation or commitment. We would indeed hope and expect that a devotion to religious principles will considerably assist a person to resist various forms of temptation, but, at the end of the day,

we cannot be sure. We are told (*Pirkei Avos* 2, 4): **לֹא תַּתְּמִין בְּעַצְמָךְ** – do not overly trust even yourself. One would assume that the same rule must, to a certain extent, apply with regard to trusting others. We can never be certain that even the finest people are going to stand firm in face of the various tests which Hashem may place in their path.

Having said all of this, it is still reassuring to know that there will always be certain Rabbis and leaders whose boundless energy and devotion, coupled with a keen understanding of human nature, will enable them to exercise a high degree of control over all that transpires in their community. Such a person was Rabbi Yaakov Landau *z”l* who served as Rov (Rabbi) of Bnei Brak in Eretz Yisroel for over half a century (1935-1986).

Rav Landau deservedly enjoyed a reputation as a Rov who stood for no nonsense. Totally devoid of any personal or political interests, he ruled with an iron hand over a city which probably contained a greater concentration of Torah scholars and pious Jews than any other place on earth. He was proudly and unashamedly a *chossid* of the Rebbe Rashab, the fifth Rebbe of Lubavitch, which automatically ensured that his religious and philosophical outlook was markedly different from that of almost all the other Jews in Bnei Brak. None of this, however, affected his standing as a Rov, and he was accorded the highest respect even by those who were ideologically opposed to Chassidus and its adherents.

I well remember hearing stories, whilst studying in Yeshivah in Eretz Yisroel, about the intensity of the Rov's kashrus supervision. It was said that he often decided in the middle of the night to make a spot-check on a food store bearing his hechsher. He would then immediately proceed to implement his decision, much to the total surprise of the store's owner. There may be an element of exaggeration in some of these stories, but the undeniable fact was that Rav Landau's hechsher was widely recognized as the most reliable in existence. Everyone knew that this was a 'hands-on' Rov who made it his business to be aware of everything taking place in the city for which he had accepted responsibility, and who would not hesitate to become personally involved in any matter requiring improvement.

In this context, two interesting stories are related by Reb Shmuel Gurewicz, the principal of Beth Rivka in Melbourne, who was personally involved in both of them, even though they took place many years apart. They both serve to illustrate Rav Landau's personality and outlook, as well as his modus operandi in discharging his duties as Rov of Bnei Brak.

The first encounter Reb Shmuel had with Rav Landau was when he moved, shortly after his marriage, to live in Bnei Brak. A young man

wants to know where his wife should purchase her meat, and who better to consult than the Rov who supervised every single butcher shop in the city?

At first, Rav Landau was extremely reluctant to single out any one butcher for recommendation. "They are **all** under my supervision," he protested.

"Nevertheless," replied Reb Shmuel, "since you were my grandfather's *chavrusa* in the Yeshiva in Lubavitch (fifty years earlier), I am permitting myself to ask you to make a personal recommendation."

Rav Landau thought for a minute and then asked where Reb. Shmuel was living.

"Rechov R. Akiva," replied Reb Shmuel.

"If so," said the Rov, "buy your meat by Margolis."

Reb Shmuel was quite surprised. He knew Mr. Margolis's butcher shop which was not far from his home. He also knew, however, that next door to Margolis was another butcher's shop owned by a chassidic Jew who had what must have been one of the largest beards in Bnei Brak. Given that both shops were under identical supervision by the same Rov, why on earth had Rav Landau chosen to recommend that he, Reb Shmuel – a chossid who would not dream of touching his beard – should buy his meat specifically from a clean-shaven Mr. Margolis, who, while he was a fine, Torah-observant Jew, was in no sense a chossid?



R. Landau inspecting in a meat store

THE UNDENIABLE
FACT WAS THAT RAV
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WAS WIDELY
RECOGNIZED AS THE
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EXISTENCE.

There was, after all, no halachic issue in this matter. Both butchers were under the same Rov, and both were definitely Halachically acceptable. The whole point of the original question, and the answer to it, had been based on the closeness of two chassidim fifty years earlier in the chassidic Yeshivah of Lubavitch. Under the circumstances one would have imagined that the chassidic Rov would have advised the younger *chossid* to buy his meat from a person who conducted himself in the ways of chassidim, especially since refraining from cutting one's beard is something which is high on the list of priorities of all chassidim without exception.

Some time later, Reb Shmuel discovered what made Mr. Margolis the Rov's first choice. Meat was expensive in Eretz Yisroel and had to be weighed

carefully and exactly. Mr. Margolis would first put in the scale the exact amount of meat which the customer had ordered, and would then add an extra few grams of meat for which he did not charge. He explained that this was because the meat was moist and he was therefore afraid that if he charged full price for the exact amount of meat requested, the customer might in fact be paying a rather high price for several grams of water. He would therefore add some meat to compensate for any water content in the meat being purchased.

A person who is extremely careful about matters of *בין אדם לחבריו* – between man and his fellow – will probably be similarly scrupulous in other areas, and hence becomes the first choice for kashrus reliability. Rav Landau, whose approach was formed totally by Chassidus and its teachings, apparently knew how to measure a Jew by something other than the size of his beard.

So much for the Rov's ability to size up a person and estimate his degree of reliability. The keenest perception, however, is useless unless it is coupled with practical involvement. Which brings us to the second story which took place some twenty-five years later when Rav Landau was already ninety-two years old.

The year was 5745 (1985) and Reb. Shmuel was marrying off his oldest son to a girl from Bnei Brak on the last day of Chanukah. Rav Landau agreed to be the *mesader kiddushin* (the Rov in charge of the actual marriage ceremony) and asked that the two fathers should come, with the *chosson* to his home at 4p.m. on the actual day of the *chupah*, in order to write the *kesubah*.

They arrived at the Rov's house at the appointed time, but, despite repeated knocking on the door and ringing the bell, they were unable to gain entry. Apparently, no one was home. Given that the Rov himself had fixed the time, this was quite surprising. Not knowing what exactly was going on or what they should do, they waited outside the house. About half an hour later, Rav Laundau's younger son Eliyahu arrived at the house with a message that his father had gone to the hospital at Tel Hashomer and had sent him (Eliyahu) to take care of the writing of the *kesubah*. This he did, and the *chupah* itself took place later that evening when Rav Landau arrived



RAV LANDAU, APPARENTLY KNEW HOW TO
MEASURE A JEW BY SOMETHING OTHER
THAN THE SIZE OF HIS BEARD.

at 8.45p.m., despite the *chupah* having been called for 7.30p.m.

Why had Rav Landau found it necessary to put everything aside and run to the hospital?

Apparently Reb Zalman Leib Estulin had something of a problem with kidney stones and had been taken to hospital suffering from a particularly large stone. At that time the technology used nowadays to break up a stone was not yet available, and the doctors had therefore recommended that an operation he performed to remove the stone. Given that Reb Zalman Leib had heart problems, his family were concerned about performing an operation and therefore sought the advice of the Rebbe in New York as to what they should do. The Rebbe answered that they should consult the local Rov and act in accordance with his decision.

The family had conveyed the Rebbe's answer to Rav Landau and now sought his guidance. Rav Landau had decided that he had to go to the hospital in Tel Hashomer (to which Reb Zalman Leib had been admitted) in order to speak to the doctors about the details of the case. That was where he had been during the afternoon. He had spoken to the doctors and subsequently expressed his opinion that there was no need to operate. The next day the problem was solved when the stone, which the doctors said was too large to go out of the body on its own, did in fact leave the body naturally without any need for an operation.

When I heard the above story, I was rather surprised. I could not understand why Rav Landau didn't just phone the hospital and speak to Reb Zalman Leib's doctors. The case may have been fairly serious, and it is not always so easy to talk to all the various doctor's involved in a patient's case, but that would just mean spending more time on the phone. If he didn't want to rely on the phone, he could have sent his son Eliyahu to speak to the doctors and to come back and tell him what each one of them said. Why on earth did a man who was ninety-two years old and not himself in the best of health, have to make a fairly long journey to a hospital and then spend hours looking into all the details? Why did a Rov who had already made a previous arrangement regarding a *chupah* and a *kesubah*, have to put aside everything and everybody in order to deal with a particular issue?

There will be those who will say that this was because the Rebbe had instructed that a Rov be consulted, and

AS ONE OF THE FAMOUS ROSHEI YESHIVAH IS REPUTED TO HAVE SAID ABOUT HIM: "LOOK AT RAV LANDAU, AND YOU WILL KNOW WHAT A ROV WAS LIKE IN EASTERN EUROPE."



Rabbi Yaakov Landau z'l

Rav Landau therefore felt that this had an importance to the virtual exclusion of all else. Whether he, in fact, took that approach I do not know. What we **do** know is that he never did things by halves. He was meticulously thorough in his consideration of every *shailah* (halachic question) and invariably demanded of himself at least as much as he demanded of others. If this meant considerable inconvenience for him, so be it. If it sometimes caused others to be irritated, too bad. This Rov knew of no path other than the straight one.

As one of the famous (non-Chassidic) Roshei Yeshivah is reputed to have said about him: "Look at Rav Landau, and you will know what a Rov was like in Eastern Europe." We might do well to remind ourselves of his particular qualities and possible try to emulate them. P



Torah Education *in* Halacha

HARAV EZRA SCHOCHET

ROSH YESHIVA OHR ELCHONON CHABAD, LOS ANGELES

THE OBLIGATION OF CHINUCH

A rabbinic *mitzva*¹ rests upon a father² to educate his son in the performance of all *mitzvos* that he will become obligated in when he reaches maturity.³ This is in order that he become accustomed to doing them when he grows older.⁴ With regard to positive commandments, the obligation of *chinuch* (training) begins for each child individually according to his sharpness and knowledge in relation to that particular *mitzva*. For example, a child that knows about Shabbos is obligated to hear *kiddush* and *havdala*, and if he knows how to wrap himself in a *tallis*, he is obligated in *tzitzis*.⁵ With regard to prohibitions,⁶ *chinuch* applies to a child who is old enough to understand when told that this action or activity is forbidden.⁷

The *mitzva* of Torah study is unique in that a father is biblically obligated to teach his son himself, or hire a teacher to teach him in his stead, the entire corpus of the Written and Oral Torah,⁸ as the *posuk* says,⁹ “You shall teach them to your children to discuss them.” This *mitzva* is fundamentally different in nature than the *mitzva* of *chinuch*. Whereas *chinuch* is a means

1 *Chagiga* 6a, amongst other sources.

2 With regards to the obligation of the mother, there is dispute amongst the *Rishonim*. See *Nazir* 29a and commentaries; *Rashi*, *Chagiga* 2a, s.v. *eizehu katan*; *Tosafos*, *Eruvin* 82a, s.v. *katan*; *Yoma* 82a, *Tosafos Yeshanim* s.v. *ben*; *Terumas Hadeshen* §94; *Magen Avraham* 343:1 and *Machatzis Hashekel* loc. cit.; *Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch* 343:4, 616:4, 640:4, and in the beginning of *Hilchos Talmud Torah* he rules that the mother is not obligated in the *mitzva* of *chinuch*.

3 *Chagiga* 6a.

4 *Rashi*, loc. cit., s.v. *katan*.

5 *Sukah* 42a; *Erchin* 2b, and *Tosafos*, s.v. *shehigia*; *Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch* 343:3, 474:25, and other places. This is in contrast to *Rashi*, *Erchin* 2b, s.v. *shehigia*, and *Megilah* 19b, s.v. *bameh devarim amurim*.

6 *Rambam*, *Maachalos Asuros* 17:28; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 343; *Alter Rebbe* 2-3. Not like *Tosafos* there.

7 *Alter Rebbe*, ibid.

8 *Kidushin* 29b; *Rambam*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:1, 7; *Alter Rebbe*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:1, 4 and see *Kuntres Acharon*.

9 *Devarim* 11:19.

to an end—that the child should observe Torah and *mitzvos* when he grows older¹⁰—teaching him Torah is the goal in itself, that the child should know the entire Torah.¹¹ Moreover, the father’s biblical¹² obligation to compel his son to study Torah even if the son doesn’t want isn’t merely so that his son be guided in the proper path, rather is a derivative of the *mitzva* to teach his son the entire Torah.¹³

Another fundamental difference between Torah education and *chinuch* for all other *mitzvos* is that while by other *mitzvos* the obligation of *chinuch* begins when the child reaches an age where he has an understanding in the *mitzva* (as explained above), by Torah study, the father is biblically¹⁴ obligated to begin teaching his son as soon as his son begins to speak.¹⁵

In light of the above, we must understand the teaching of *Chazal*:¹⁶

“When a child knows how to shake, he is obligated in *lulav*; to wrap himself, he is obligated in *tzitzis*; to watch over his *tefillin*, his father should buy him *tefillin*; when he knows how to speak, his father

10 As referenced above in fn. 4. There is also an explicit *posuk* (*Mishlei* 22:6): “Educate the youth according to his path so that even when he grows older...” See also the *sicha* of Shabbos Bereishis 5731, sec. 8.

11 See *Alter Rebbe*, ibid., 1:6-7.

12 *Alter Rebbe*, ibid.

13 *Alter Rebbe*, ibid.

14 *Rambam*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:1, 6; *Alter Rebbe* 1:1. Unlike *Turei Even* on *Rambam* ibid.

15 The wording of the *posuk* “לדבר בם” (“to speak in them”) implies that the child should learn how to speak with words of Torah – *Sifri*, *Devarim* 11:19 and *Rashi* there. (See also *Sukah* 42a; *Yerushalmi* there 3:12; *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 33, fn. 3; p. 81 (end of sec. 4) and footnotes; *Sichos of Shabbos Eikev* 5728). *Rambam* ibid.; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh Deiah* 245:4; *Alter Rebbe* there.

According to this, it is understood why *Rambam* and *Alter Rebbe* added the words “לדבר בם” that are not found in *Kidushin* 29b, for the *Gemara* is bringing proof for the essential obligation, while the *Rambam* and *Alter Rebbe* wanted to also prove that this obligation applies even to his small children.

16 *Sukah* 42a.



WHEREAS CHINUCH IS A MEANS TO
AN END—THAT THE CHILD SHOULD
OBSERVE TORAH AND MITZVOS
WHEN HE GROWS OLDER—TEACHING
HIM TORAH IS THE GOAL IN ITSELF,
THAT THE CHILD SHOULD KNOW THE
ENTIRE TORAH

should teach him Torah and *krias shema*. What is ‘Torah’? Rav Hamnuna said, ‘*Torah tziva lanu Moshe morasha kehilas Yaakov*.’¹⁷ What is *krias shema*? The first *posuk*.¹⁸”

What is the relation between the father’s obligation to teach his son Torah and the *mitzva* of educating his son in performance of *mitzvos* that they should be taught together?¹⁹

THE PROPER APPROACH TO TORAH

It seems²⁰ that with this teaching, Chazal did not intend to inform us of the essential obligation to teach one’s son Torah; rather, that at the beginning of their study, the father²¹ should teach him specifically the *pesukim* of *Torah tziva* and *shema yisrael*. In this way, the son is initiated from the very start with the proper outlook and approach to Torah study.

“*Torah tziva lanu Moshe*” expresses the idea that the Torah was passed down in a direct chain originating from Moshe Rabbeinu who received the Torah from Hashem.²² It follows that whatever is derived and understood from the Torah in later generations was also included in the Torah that Moshe commanded us.²³ This leads to an appreciation of how wondrous the Torah is, and its never-ending depth.²⁴ Similarly, the first *posuk* of *shema* expresses faith in Hashem and acceptance of His kingship,²⁵ which are prerequisites for achieving an acquisition in Torah.²⁶

17 Devarim 33:4.

18 Devarim 6:2.

19 This question was raised by the *Turei Even* referenced above in note 14.

20 See also *Torah Temima* on Devarim 33:4.

21 Specifically the father – see *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 33, in the marginal note to fn. 3, and *Alter Rebbe* in *Hilchos Talmud Torah*, ch. 1, *Kuntres Acharon*.

22 Avos 1:1.

23 Whatever a student will eventually innovate in Torah was already given to Moshe by Sinai (see note of the Rebbe in *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1088).

24 See Alter Rebbe’s *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:5; 3:1 in *Kuntres Acharon*; and *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1164.

25 Mishna, *Berachos* 2:2, amongst other sources.

26 Rambam, *Yesodei Hatorah* 1:1; *Talmud Torah* 3:9, 12; *Alter Rebbe* 4:9.

THE OBVIOUS QUESTION IS THAT A CHILD AT THIS AGE IS NOT CAPABLE OF COMPREHENDING THESE CONCEPTS, AND IF SO, WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF TEACHING HIM THESE PESUKIM?

FROM A YOUNG AGE

The obvious question is that a child at this age is not capable of comprehending these concepts, and if so, what is the benefit of teaching him these *pesukim*?

The explanation is: A person is only obligated to grasp the part of Torah that is graspable;²⁷ the essence of Torah, however, transcends intellectual grasp. Every Jew must have the mindset that Torah is not an intellectual concept, rather it is Hashem's wisdom which is one with Him.²⁸

Furthermore, when one reflects on the fact that it was specifically Moshe, the humblest man, who transmitted the Torah to us, it is understood that the first step to receiving the Torah is total dedication to the Torah with self-nullification.²⁹

Knowing this is not a mere detail in studying and understanding the Torah; it is the core of the entire Torah. It is necessary to first have the foundation (humility) before it is possible to begin building the structure (the understanding of Torah).

If knowledge of this point is left for later, besides that all his study until that time will lack this foundation, he will become accustomed to approaching Torah as an intellectual pursuit and it will be difficult for him later to appreciate how Torah transcends intellect entirely. This mindset must be instilled when the child is very young, and then, "even when he grows older, he will not veer from it."³⁰ Then later, when he studies Torah with intellectual grasp, his intellectual grasp will be permeated with the *yiras Shamayim* and *kabalas ol* that this mindset engenders.³¹

27 See *Tanya*, ch. 4; *Iggeres HaKodesh*, *Kuntres Acharon*, s.v. *Dovid zemiro*s, and other places.

28 Rambam, *Yesodei Hatorah* 2:10; *Tanya*, *Likutei Amarim*, ch. 2 and *Shaar Hayichud Vehaemuna*, ch. 7.

29 *Taanis* 7a. The above concept is explained in *Likutei Sichos*, ibid, p. 1176ff.

30 Mishlei 22:6.

31 See *Likutei Sichos*, ibid, p. 1165ff; *Sicha of Acharon shel Pesach* 5731, sec. 7.

"An inheritance for the congregation of Yaakov" teaches that Torah is an inheritance belonging to every single Jew³² and whoever wants can acquire it.³³ In summary, at the outset one must instill within his son the correct mindset and approach to Torah study. Simultaneously, one must cultivate his love for Torah study by offering him things that he likes, until he matures and can be guided to study Torah for its own sake.³⁴

THE MITZVA OF TORAH STUDY

The obligation to educate a child in a *mitzva* begins when he is old enough to understand the idea of the *mitzva*. Thus, before getting into the detailed laws regarding educating a child to study Torah, we must preface an explanation regarding the *mitzva* of Torah study.

The *mitzva* of Torah study includes two general parts, each of which are further subdivided in two:³⁵

Knowing Torah:

"Learn them and be careful to perform them."³⁶ This is a positive commandment³⁷ upon each individual to study the entire Written and Oral Torah.³⁸ One who is able to study more but doesn't is liable of death.³⁹ This applies even if he continues to study Torah but

32 *Pesachim* 91b; *Sanhedrin* 59a.

33 Rambam, *Hilchos Talmud Torah*, 3:1; Alter Rebbe 4:1. See also *Likutei Sichos* ibid pp. 1166-1167.

34 Rambam, *Hilchos Teshuva*, 10:1; *Shelah*, *Shaar Haosiyos*, *Derech Eretz*. See also *Rokeach*, *Hilchos Shavuos*, §296.

35 Alter Rebbe's *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 3:1 in *Kuntres Acharon*; 4:6; and other places there.

36 Devarim 5:1.

37 *Kidushin* 29b; Rambam, *Talmud Torah* 1:3; Alter Rebbe 2:1.

38 The *posuk* (Devarim 11:22) says, "For if you will observe this entire commandment." Chazal interpret this (Sifri there), "Do not say 'I studied the *halachos* and that is sufficient for me.' Therefore the *posuk* says 'the entire commandment' – study *halachos*, *aggados* and *midrash*." See *Alter Rebbe* there and in 1:4.

39 *Avos* 1:13; *Alter Rebbe* 2:5.



only reviews what he already learned because it is easier to review instead of exerting himself to study new material (and not because he is concerned of forgetting his learning).

One is obligated to review his studies until he is fluent in them to the point that if he is asked regarding a *halacha* that he learned, he can answer without hesitation.⁴⁰ If one forgets something from his learning due to his lack of sufficient review, the Torah considers as if he is liable of death,⁴¹ and he transgresses a negative prohibition.⁴²

Study of Torah:

Even one who is permitted to engage in working for a living, or in order to support Torah scholars,⁴³ and will not be able to finish learning and knowing the entire Torah,⁴⁴ is still obligated to study Torah day and night whenever he is not engaged in work, as

40 As it says (Devarim 6:7), “You shall teach them thoroughly to your children.” The words of Torah should be fluent and sharp in your mouth so that if someone asks you about a Torah matter, you won’t hesitate rather you will tell him immediately. See *Kidushin* 30a; *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

41 *Avos* 3:8 and *Bartenura*. See also *Avoda Zara* 19a.

42 *Menachos* 99b; *Alter Rebbe* 2:4; see also the lengthy discussion there in ch. 3, *Kuntres Acharon* 1 explaining that there is a disagreement on this matter between the Rambam and Semak.

43 See *Alter Rebbe*, ch. 3, in *Kuntres Acharon* and *halachos* 2-4 regarding the parameters of this permit.

44 As referenced above in note 43.

the *posuk* says,⁴⁵ “You shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road...”⁴⁶ This teaches—as Chazal explain⁴⁷—that one must make Torah study his primary occupation and his work secondary, only as needed. Idle chatter is not permitted,⁴⁸ and to do so is a transgression of a positive precept.⁴⁹ One must study Torah whenever possible, even while traveling, as it says, “...when you walk on the road.”⁵⁰ One is prohibited from studying worldly wisdoms,⁵¹ even if one already mastered the entire⁵² Torah.⁵³ This is especially so for a Torah scholar who must fulfill “studying day and night” in a literal sense.⁵⁴

Even one who is preoccupied with earning a living must set times for Torah study in order to fulfill the

45 Devarim 6:7.

46 *Alter Rebbe* 3:5. Unlike *Shaagat Aryeh* §1. See also *Alter Rebbe* in *Kuntres Acharon* loc. cit. and in *Orach Chaim* 156:1.

47 *Sifri* ibid; *Yoma* 19b.

48 *Rabbeinu Yona, Berachos*, ch. 2, s.v. *vedibarta bam*.

49 As it says, “You shall speak in them” – and not in idle matters. See *Yoma* 19b and *Alter Rebbe* 3:5.

50 *Alter Rebbe* 3:6.

51 As it says, “You shall speak in them” – and not mix other matters with them. See *Sifri* ibid; *Alter Rebbe* 3:7.

52 See *Menachos* 99b.

53 As it says (*Vayikra* 18:2), “You shall observe My statutes to walk in them” – you do not have permission to depart from them. See *Sifri* ibid; *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

54 *Menachos* ibid; *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

posuk,⁵⁵ “You should study it day and night.”⁵⁶ Even one beset with tribulations, or one who is elderly and weakened to the point that he cannot study Torah constantly, must still set times for Torah study by day and by night according to his strength and ability.⁵⁷

Although the *mitzva* of knowing Torah involves and necessitates studying,⁵⁸ there is a fundamental difference between the *mitzva* of *knowing* Torah and the *mitzva* of *studying* Torah. In the former, the study is only a means to an end—the knowledge; in the latter, the study is a goal unto itself.⁵⁹

55 Yehoshua 1:8.

56 *Rambam, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:8; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deiah*, beginning of *siman* 246; *Alter Rebbe, Orach Chaim* 155:1 and in *Hilchos Talmud Torah* ibid.

57 As referenced above note 56. This is not the place to explain at length the differences between these four *mitzvos*.

58 As is clear from *Alter Rebbe* 2:12, see there. This is unlike the words of Rabbi Yechezkel Sarna in the article entitled *Mitzvas Talmud Torah* (printed in the *sefer Achar HeAsef*). There are a few additional points in which he misunderstood the words of the Alter Rebbe, but this is not the place to elaborate.

59 This evidenced from the sources referenced in notes 35-57.

FATHER TO SON

The father’s biblical obligation to teach his son Torah relates to the *mitzva* of **knowing** Torah.⁶⁰ Once the father has taught his son the entire Written and Oral Torah, and reviewed it with him many times until he knows and remembers all the laws of the Oral Torah along with their reasoning, the father has discharged his obligation and fulfilled the *mitzva* of “you shall teach your children.” This applies even if the son subsequently forgets it because he doesn’t wish to continue reviewing his studies.⁶¹

In this light, we can understand why this *mitzva* begins as soon as the son starts to speak, even though he doesn’t understand the concept of Torah study and is not capable of studying on his own. Once he is able to speak and recite *pesukim* of Torah, each letter and *posuk* that he knows how to recite is part of the *mitzva* of knowing Torah; particularly so by the Written Torah where understanding is not essential to fulfilling the *mitzva*.⁶²

60 As is clear from *Alter Rebbe* 1:6.

61 *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

62 See *Alter Rebbe* 2:12 and *Likutei Torah, Vayikra* 5a.



ONCE HE IS ABLE TO
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The father continues to gradually teach him *pesukim* by heart, and in the child's fifth year, the father gradually teaches him how to read the Written Torah at home, until he is six or seven. One year before this, in the child's fourth year, the father teaches him the letters of Torah in order that he will be ready to read *pesukim* of the Torah in his fifth year.⁶³ Here too, besides the study and knowledge of the letters, there is an important educational point that is instilled. The letters of Torah aren't taught as are, *lehavdil*, the letters of other languages, but in a specific manner, "kamatz alef ah..." This strengthens the child's *emuna* and instills within him the sanctity of the letters and vowels.⁶⁴

WHAT IS AN ALEF?

It is told that the *melamed* of the Alter Rebbe's son asked the Alter Rebbe how to teach, and the Alter

Rebbe responded that one begins by learning the *alef-beis*. What is an *alef*? A dot above and a dot below, this is an *alef*. A *yud* above and a *yud* below, and a line of *yiras Shamayim* in middle, this is an *alef*.

The Alter Rebbe explained that the *yud* above is the *neshama*, the *yud* below is the body, and the line of *yiras Shamayim* in between unites them to coexist in unison. The *yud* above also alludes to Hashem, who transcends all limitations and all we can grasp of Him is merely a *yud*, a dot. In order for the *yud* below, the Jew, to connect with Hashem, he requires self-nullification (symbolized by the tiny *yud*). This is accomplished through the connecting line of *yiras Shamayim*, the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*. This connects a Jew with Hashem, for the Jews are bound up with Hashem through the Torah. This is the *alef* of *Matan Torah*, the first letter, and this is how the child begins learning.⁶⁵

63 This is based on *Alter Rebbe* 1:1, and the sources referenced there. See also *Kuntres Acharon* there.

64 *Sefer Hasichos* 5701, p. 88; amongst other sources. See also note 85 there.

65 This explanation is based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p. 616.



THE SON SHOULD BE GUIDED HOW TO REACH THE PRACTICAL HALACHA, SO THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO DELVE ON HIS OWN INTO THE TOPIC AND REACH A HALACHIC DECISION BASED ON THE TALMUD AND POSKIM.

PREPARING THE CHILD FOR TORAH STUDY

Upon careful consideration, one will realize how throughout all the stages of teaching one's child Torah, there is also the idea of *chinuch*, preparation for the fulfillment of *mitzvos*.

In fact, the study inherently includes *chinuch* for the *mitzva* of Torah study,⁶⁶ since by teaching and compelling his son to study, the boy becomes accustomed to studying Torah. For this reason, even if the boy is sharp and can acquire the material in a short amount of time, the father must bring his son, when he is six or seven⁶⁷—depending on his health and stamina⁶⁸—to a teacher who will study with him all day long [i.e. the boy must be trained to study].⁶⁹ Actually, this is necessitated also by the obligation of *chinuch* of Torah study (*knowing* Torah),⁷⁰ for if the son doesn't study constantly, he will forget.⁷¹

Then,⁷² one must educate the child in the *mitzva* of *studying* Torah [constantly]. Thus, all *melamdim*, even those teaching *chumash*, and even free of charge, must study with the children throughout the day and somewhat into the night, so that the children are trained to study during the day and during the night.⁷³

66 Alter Rebbe in ch. 1, *Kuntres Acharon* 1. *Melo Haroim*, entry on *chinuch*, sec. 4.

67 *Bava Basra* 21a and *Tosafos* s.v. *bevatzir*; *Kesubos* 50a and *Tosafos* s.v. *bar shis*; *Rambam*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 2:2; *Alter Rebbe* 1:1 and *Kuntres Acharon*; unlike *Beis Yosef*, *Yoreh Dei'ah* 245:8.

68 *Bava Basra* ibid., in *Tosafos* s.v. *k'ven*; and see *Kesubos* ibid.; *Rambam*, *Tur*, *Shulchan Aruch* and *Alter Rebbe* referenced in previous note.

69 *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

70 Note of Rebbe on *Hilchos Talmud Torah* ibid.

71 *Rambam*, ibid., 1:10; and see *Alter Rebbe* in ch. 3, *Kuntres Acharon* 1.

72 Note of Rebbe there.

73 *Rambam*, ibid., 2:2; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh Dei'ah* 245:11-12; *Alter Rebbe* 1:10.

They must also not remain idle at all.⁷⁴ The obligation of *chinuch* in this aspect is incumbent also upon the teachers,⁷⁵ for the children are in their jurisdiction, and only the teachers can train them in this respect.⁷⁶

In the present age, when the entire Oral Torah is transcribed to writing, one is not obligated to hire a *melamed* to teach his son the entire Oral Torah. It is sufficient to teach the child how to thoroughly understand most parts of the Talmud, including the complex *sugyos* (Talmudic discussions) together with the decisions of the majority of the earlier and later *poskim* (halachic authorities). The son should be guided how to reach the practical *halacha*, so that he will be able to delve on his own into the topic and reach a halachic decision based on the Talmud and *poskim*.

In this way, the son will be able to study the entire Talmud with the *poskim* on his own. He will be able to achieve knowledge of all the *halachos* of the Oral Torah, which are an elaboration on the 613 *mitzvos* and their details along with their reasons and sources, as if he had been taught all this by his *melamed*. The same applies for the entire Tanach and the expositions of the *aggados*.

For this reason, it is not anymore common practice to teach the child all of Tanach, rather only the Chumash. We expect that he will learn the rest on his own when he grows older. However, in the times of Chazal this wasn't possible since the vowels and cantillation marks were not transcribed in writing, but transmitted orally.

74 *Shabbos* 119b; and sources in previous note.

75 As is evidenced from the fact that the Alter Rebbe rules that the same applies by teachers that are not being paid. However, this still requires further clarification, and see *Alter Rebbe* ch. 1, *Kuntres Acharon* 1.

76 An example for this can be seen in *Sukkah* 28a and the Alter Rebbe in the above-referenced *Kuntres Acharon*. See also *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 33, in marginal gloss to note 3.



R. Boruch Pariz teaching cheder boys in Kfar Chabad.



A FATHER IS ALSO
OBLIGATED TO GUIDE HIS
SON ALONG THE PATH OF
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YIRAS SHAMAYIM IN ALL
AREAS OF HIS CONDUCT
WHILE HE STILL HAS
A STRONG INFLUENCE
OVER HIM

Still, one must teach him all the sections of the Torah that contain the *mitzvos* and laws explained in the Talmud, along with the *pesukim*, words and letters that are regularly expounded in the Talmud, and review these with him many times.

If the child doesn't reach the point that he can study and understand on his own, without a *melamed*, all the *halachos* of the Oral Torah with their reasoning, or he doesn't want to learn on his own, the father must hire a *melamed* to compel him and learn with him the entire Written and Oral Torah. He must review this with his son many times until he remembers and knows at one time all the *halachos* of the Oral Torah with their reasoning.⁷⁷

Even once the father taught his son the entire Torah, if the son has the ability to continue studying and doesn't, and the father can compel him, the father is obligated (by Prophetic tradition) to compel his son to study Torah.

A father is also obligated to guide his son along the path of *mussar* (ethics) and *yiras Shamayim* in all areas of his conduct while he still has a strong influence over him; namely, until his son is 24 years

old.⁷⁸ This is enjoined by the *posuk*,⁷⁹ "Educate the lad according to his path," i.e., educate him in his youth in the path that he will follow throughout his entire life. This applies from age 16 to 24;⁸⁰ when the son is younger than 16, he lacks the maturity to accept reproof, thus one should not overly chastise and rebuke him,⁸¹ and when he is older than 24, there is concern that he may⁸² rebel.⁸³

This essay originally appeared in Hebrew in *B'Reshet Hachinuch*, Iyar 5733 (1973). □

78 *Kidushin* 30a.

79 *Mishlei* 22:6.

80 *Alter Rebbe* ibid.; see also *Meiri* on *Kidushin* ibid. *Rif* and *Rosh* quote both opinions without a definitive ruling. See also *Maharshal*, *Kidushin*, ch. 1, sec. 68. *Rema*, *Yoreh Deiah* 240:20.

81 *Rashi* and *Ran* on *Kidushin* ibid.; and see sources referenced by R. Akiva Eiger on *Yoreh Deiah* ibid. Further analysis is required how to reconcile this with *Kesubos* 50a; and see *Sefer Hamikna* on *Kidushin* ibid.

82 See *Kidushin* 32a; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh Deiah*, ibid.

83 Based on *Rashi* and *Ran* on *Kidushin* ibid; *Alter Rebbe* ibid.

77 This is based on *Alter Rebbe* 1:6.

A Different Kind Of **YESHIVA**

The Story and Vision of
TOMCHEI TEMIMIM *in* LUBAVITCH
MARKING 120 YEARS

PART TWO

PART TWO

EARLY YEARS

The *yeshiva* began in Elul 5657 (1897) with just eight handpicked *bochurim*. The first group of *bochurim* did not study in Lubavitch, but in the town of Zhebin, 150 miles away. They traveled there straight after Tishrei along with the legendary *mashpia* R. Shmuel Groinem Esterman, who was originally from that town. R. Groinem oversaw both the study of *nigleh* and that of Chassidus, as well as the general conduct of the *bochurim*.

In Lubavitch, the *yoshvim* continued to study freely as before. Only a year later, on Simchas Torah 5659 (1898), the Rebbe Rashab announced the opening of a *yeshiva* in the town of Lubavitch under the guidance of the *mashpia* R. Chanoch Hendel Kugel. Even then, the branch in Zhebin remained the primary division of the *yeshiva*, until it closed its doors in 5665 (1905).

In the beginning, the *yeshiva* attracted dedicated students who wished to study in the Rebbe's *yeshiva*, and they eagerly delved into the study of Chassidus. Some students in Lubavitch, which for the first year did not have a fixed schedule, studied Chassidus all

day long, without leaving ample time for the study of *nigleh*.

The Rebbe Rashab then penned a short essay in which he explained that *nigleh* is the "bread that gives man life," which must be studied and "digested" thoroughly. Moreover, he explained, the objective of Chassidus is that one should increase his study of the revealed portion of Torah and the observance of *mitzvos*. If one of those is deficient, it is an indication that his study of Chassidus is dishonest, similar to an invention which doesn't perform its designated task.

As time passed, the *yeshiva* earned itself a name as a scholarly *yeshiva* and *bochurim* traveled from across Russia for the high-level learning. Moreover, the *yeshiva* provided food and lodgings for students of the *beis midrash* free of charge, so they could learn without worry.

(The Rebbe Rashab is quoted as having said that supporting the *bochurim* will compel them to feel indebted towards the *yeshiva*. By giving a *bochur* all



of his needs, the *bochur* will in turn dedicate himself to the *yeshiva's* ideals.)

To give an idea of the *yeshiva*'s size, here are numbers of students from several years:

5659 (1899) – 67 total (37 in Zhebin, 30 in Lubavitch);
5660 – 105 *bochurim* and 5 married students (*kolel*);
5661 – 140 *bochurim*, 8 married students; 5663 – 200 total. (In 5672 (1911-1912) we find the *yeshiva* as having 350 students: 140 in the *chadorim*, 60 in the *shiurim* and 150 in the *zal*.)

Aside from the immense financial expense, it was becoming increasingly difficult to give all students the proper attention. In 5661 (1901), the Rebbe Rashab instructed the Frierdiker Rebbe not to accept any more *bochurim* to the *yeshiva*. Naturally, refusing students from Tomchei Temimim was a difficult choice, but the Rebbe Rashab insisted that it was essential for the well-being of those already in the *yeshiva*.

But what will be with those who were rejected? Said the Rebbe Rashab, "A person cannot take on the entire world. The One who possesses the world and its fill will guard them."

As he writes to the Frierdiker Rebbe in a letter:

It is critical to be strong not to accept any new students. Besides the tremendous expense that has become too much to bear, it is causing disorder in supervision (which is why we had to send a group to Horoditch)...

After all, our entire desire and unique objective is that the students be under proper supervision. How then can we do something that will ruin that *ch"v*? Although it is difficult to refuse those who come, nonetheless since it is against our primary objective, we must find the strength for it.

We must publicize in all the towns that *bochurim* should not come. Those who do come, should not be allowed to remain, but should be given a small sum to cover their travel back home. With Hashem's help they will remain whole.

A person cannot take on the entire world. The One who possesses the world and its fill will guard them.

As mentioned, a solution was contrived to limit the *yeshiva*'s size by sending a group of students with staff to a nearby town to study. Divisions of Tomchei Temimim were thus opened in Horoditch (5661), Nevil (5661), Dokshitz (5662), Schedrin (5669), and several other places.

YESHIVA HAPPENINGS

SHIURIM AND CHADORIM

The *yeshiva* originally began with students between 18 and 25 years of age who could learn on their own, and could grow in Chassidus and *avoda*. They learned in *der groiser zal*, the big hall, in the Rebbe's courtyard.

However, it was soon realized that to get the senior *bochurim*, it was necessary to draw them in at a younger age, before they were lost to the secular winds. Thus, a younger division was established for *bochurim* ages 13-17. This division was known as the "shiurim," since they were still taught in classes for a portion of the day. The *shiurim* were divided into four classes.

When even younger boys wanted to learn in Lubavitch, the "chadorim" were established for boys ages 8-12 who were taught in classrooms.

HOSTING STUDENTS

A standard form of meals for *yeshiva bochurim* in the European *shtetl* was the practice of *teg* ("days"). Students would have a schedule of meals they would eat at the homes of various householders who were honored to host these young *talmidei chachomim*.

While the *yeshiva* in Lubavitch had its own kitchen, the divisions in other towns relied on *teg* to feed the *bochurim*. In this letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe arouses the *baalei-batim* of Horoditch to take the students into their homes for the Shabbos meals, for their own benefit as well:

In general, this is the great *mitzva* of bringing benefit to a *talmid chochom*. Especially on Shabbos, that

it is a pleasure for a *baalabos* to sit at his Shabbos table with a precious *bochur*, knowledgeable in Torah and a *yerei Shomayim*. I therefore request ... to each take five *bochurim* for Shabbos.

A THRIVING ENVIRONMENT

With the passing of Rashbatz, in summer of 5665 (1905), a new *mashpia* was needed at the *yeshiva* in Lubavitch. R. Groinem was called from Zhebin, thus heralding in a new era of Chassidus study for the senior students of Lubavitch. As the Rebbe Rashab reported to the Frierdiker Rebbe who was traveling:

Tomchei Temimim is doing well. They are learning diligently and with delight, both *nigleh* and Chassidus, and the *mashgiach* says that they are learning Chassidus with even more delight than *nigleh*. The truth is that since R. Groinem came to Lubavitch, the study of Chassidus was elevated. Everyone attends the Tanya *shiur* without exception; not with *kabolas ol*, but with sheer pleasure. R. Michoel learns at that time with the students of the *chadorim*, and R. Yaakov Koppel Seligson says that they are very satisfied with him.

As the *menahel*, the Frierdiker Rebbe was very concerned regarding the looming danger of *haskala* infiltration. However, the Rebbe Rashab reassures him that there is no need for major concern – the *bochurim* are engrossed in learning, and everyone – even those who don't toil in *avoda* – are uplifted and impacted by Chassidus.

We will not lie to ourselves that they are all completely good. However, the truth is that they

"A PERSON CANNOT TAKE ON THE ENTIRE WORLD. THE ONE WHO POSSESSES THE WORLD AND ITS FILL WILL GUARD THEM."

are all absorbed in a good environment (*makif*). The light of Torah, and of Chassidus in particular, envelops them, and they are truly busy and dedicated to Torah and Chassidus without personal interest; their evil is asleep. In this environment, I believe all are absorbed, even those who don't practice *avoda* with the power of Chassidus within them. After a while when the evil is concealed and the great light shines upon it, it slowly becomes weaker, and the "good smell of the perfume" is automatically absorbed in him...

You fear for them more than is needed. When you hear or imagine that something is wrong, it's as if the world has turned over. It is not so. I firmly believe that the destroyers [*maskilim*] aren't in our territory at this time. Speaking of that which happened Pesach time and the start of the summer, *lo aleinu*, Hashem helped us to find out about it at the beginning, and we were able to nip it in the bud. And now, I firmly believe that the vineyard is clean, thanks to Hashem.

A CALL FOR DEPENDENCE

R. Alexander Sender Yudasin shared an occurrence that happened in Lubavitch in his days:

In the years 5665-5666 (1904-1906) there was an awakening amongst the *temimim* regarding the

study of Chassidus, and they established a *vaad* (group) of *bochurim* to maintain the inspiration. However, a short while later it cooled down. The Rebbe Rashab then called in 15 *temimim*, and told them that the reason it cooled was because they did not have *bitul* to the *mashpiim*. (In trying to build inspiration, they mixed into the *seder* of what should be learned, *chavreros*, and even regarding who should be allowed into *yechidus*.) The Rebbe then gave them a handwritten *maamar* to study.

The independent planning of Chassidus studies, and the lack of subservience to *mashpiim*, was also the subject of the Simchas Torah 5667 (1906) *farbrengen*. The Rebbe Rashab called the *temimim* to come close, and after sitting deep in thought for some time, he began speaking about the spiritual concept of *mashpia* and *mekabel*. After a few minutes, the Rebbe felt faint from the intense heat and had to leave the room, and after *Yom Tov*, he released a transcript of what he had wanted to say.

The crux of the *sicha* is that the way to attain enthusiasm is, not through independence, but on the contrary, through commitment to being a *mekabel*. The preference for personal study results from self-love. One must be a *mekabel* for a long while before being able to learn on one's own. Jumping ahead of one's true abilities can cause long term damage.

"IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, I BELIEVE ALL ARE ABSORBED, EVEN THOSE WHO DON'T PRACTICE AVODA WITH THE POWER OF CHASSIDUS WITHIN THEM."



LEFT:
R. Alexander Sender Yudasin
RIGHT:
R. Avrohom Drizin-Maiyor



PROGRAMS AND PROCEDURES

UNDER SUPERVISION

Interestingly, the *yeshiva*'s strict supervision and intolerance of secular infiltration was a draw for students looking for a spiritually-safe environment.

R. Avrohom Drizin-Maiyor related how as a young boy, he and his parents were undecided on whether he should attend the *yeshiva* in Lubavitch or one of the Lithuanian *yeshivos*. The decision to study in Lubavitch was made by his older brother – a G-d fearing and scholarly businessman. The reason: Other *yeshivos* lacked supervision and its students were influenced by *haskala*, but Lubavitch was organized and well-supervised.

R. Avrohom depicted the form of supervision:

In Tomchei Temimim, everything was astonishingly precise and orderly. The *mashgichim* and *maggidei shiur* were serious people who managed their time wisely. They were always punctual and didn't take their work lightly. We *talmidim* also had to be very particular about keeping to the learning schedule.

When a *talmid* was late by one minute, he could be punished. The *mashgichim* knew every single *bochur* and knew his material and spiritual state. Difficult tests were administered according to a schedule. Each student was under constant scrutiny.

Thanks to the excessive management, speed and precision became ingrained in us. This approach was maintained at all levels. Even in the *chadorim* where the young boys learned, there were set and precise *sedarim* and strict supervision.

An older *bochur*, who was like a counselor, received instructions from the *hanhala* to read the letters that the boys wrote home and the letters that the boys received.

During a search that was once conducted in the *yeshiva*, secular books were found among the possessions of several *bochurim*. The Rebbe Rashab was extremely disturbed and was upset with the *bochurim* for allowing such a thing to happen. The *mashpia* R. Groinem and the *chozer* R. Muhshe

"I INTEND WITH EVERY
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traveled to the Rebbe's *datche* to reconcile between the *bochurim* and the Rebbe.

They asked him, "Since only a few *bochurim* had these books, why then is the Rebbe so upset?"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the Rebbe. "They are being showered with Chassidus!"

DESERVING OF RESPECT

When it came to appointing a *mashpia* that would impact the students, there was an argument that the candidate should be publicly acclaimed by the *yeshiva* administration so that his words in turn would be highly regarded by the students.

The Rebbe Rashab, however, opposed this notion. He insisted that making the right impact stems from drawing out a genuine awe of the *mashpia's* stature and conduct.

Regarding the *bochurim*, surely it is necessary to appoint someone who will supervise their every detail. He will be the central pillar around whom they will gather and unite...

However, we must abstain from lauding and exalting him before the youths in order to endear him to them. Our Sages have laid down a great principle, "Your actions will draw you close..." for

true closeness and attachment comes from the innermost soul. Then, the students on their own will laud and exalt him.

We are only commanded to exalt a king since kingship is encompassing (*makif*) ... and exaltation insures that his awe is upon the nation. With a teacher by contrast, the awe is merely a preparation for the teacher's main task, namely to internalize his teachings, and the awe makes the student a vessel for this inner light. Being so, the awe cannot come about by someone else exalting the teacher, but rather the teacher himself must generate fear in his students, as our Sages say, "Cast bitterness upon the students."

EVERY STUDENT MATTERS

The personal care for each individual student was extraordinary. Each student was assessed and given special treatment according to his individual needs.

To R. Zalman Havlin. Horoditch.

We are sending you these four students, about which we will now explain their qualities and natures:

1) Yosef Tzvi Landau from Kabliak. In *nigleh* he is a true *lamdan* and a *masmid*. However, Chassidus

seems to him superfluous, and he doesn't see a need for it. It is thus necessary to guide him in Chassidus, and to supervise him carefully in this matter. It is appropriate that his lodgings be in your home.

2) Moshe from Slonim. He has no diligence in learning at all. The *menahel* [the Frierdiker Rebbe] has warned him, but it has yet to help. You should supervise him with "a left hand...and a right that brings close." The *mashgiach* says that he likes to waste time and cause mischief, and he isn't applied to learning.

3) Meir from Nikolayev. He wants to learn but knows little, and it's therefore necessary to learn together with him.

4) Zev from Botzeikov. He doesn't have much desire to learn, but he is talented...

In short, you should realize that we are giving you a class so that you should toil with them so that they become *mentchen* in accordance with our heart and will...

The letter was signed by the secretary of the *yeshiva* R. Yaakov Koppel Seligson, and is followed by a postscript from the Frierdiker Rebbe:

If you can keep them near you it would be best. The main thing is to supervise every detail as I instructed through the secretary. This cannot be done passively, rather you must work with them. Notify immediately in detail the conduct of each one. I hope to Hashem that you will do as instructed.

When the *mashpia* slacked off in hands-on supervision, the Rebbe Rashab penned this memo:

To my dear friend R. Zalman [Havlin] the *mashgiach*,

You have ascended in the high and lofty levels, but you are not watching what is happening below. The branch in Horoditch was founded for those who require special supervision and attention. And this is how it was when you put your heart and mind to it. Now this has discontinued, and the deficit is very noticeable. It is crucial to correct this and to maintain the true intent.



R. Zalman Havlin. Horoditch.

"THE FOUNDER OF THE YESHIVA – THE REBBE RASHAB – SET A RULE THAT ANY YOUNGSTER WHO CAN LEARN ON HIS OWN AND IS G-D FEARING WILL BE ACCEPTED INTO THE YESHIVA, REGARDLESS IF HE STEMS FROM CHASSIDIM OF CHABAD, CHASSIDIM OF POLAND OR UKRAINE, OR ASHKENAZ."

ה'תב'ז ינ' צ'צ'ו
פָּרְשָׁא דַּבְּרָא וְלִבְרָא
בְּעֵבֶר תְּמִימָן בְּבָבִילוֹן
הַכְּנָסָן כְּמַלְכָן הַגְּדוּלָה וְהַמְּנוּמָה
כְּבָבִילוֹן כְּבָבִילוֹן כְּבָבִילוֹן
עַד רְאֵבָן הַקָּדָשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא
אֲמִתָּה וְאֲמִתָּה וְאֲמִתָּה וְאֲמִתָּה



"THE YESHIVA IS CALLED TOMCHEI TEMIMIM AND THOSE STUDENTS WHO STUDY IN IT
AND CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN ITS SPIRIT ARE CALLED TEMIMIM."

BASTION OF PIETY

Sincere students and their parents were intent on getting accepted to the *yeshiva*, knowing how much the future of their *Yiddishkeit* depended on it. This story is well-remembered by the students of the time: A widow from Zhebin arrived in Lubavitch with her two sons to enroll them in the *chadorim*. The boys – ages twelve and thirteen – were tested. The older boy had a good mind and could understand a *Tosefos*. The younger one, however, was still undeveloped, and he needed practice in reading a *Gemara*, and his mind was average. Such a student was listed as "beginning of *Gemara*."

Given the levels of the classes at that time, it was decided that students who were still struggling with *Gemara* would not be accepted for that term. Thus, the older boy was accepted and the younger one was not. When the younger boy heard this he wept, crying for several days. One Tuesday, 4 Cheshvan [5670 (1909)], he walked into one of the rooms of the house where the Rebbe Rashab happened to enter, and the boy cried to the Rebbe, "I'm an orphan and I want to be an upstanding Jew. I even organized myself meals (*teg*). Have mercy upon me!"

A short while later the Rebbe Rashab sent a note to the Frierdiker Rebbe: "Since this happened unusually, I would like them to accept him."



SUPPLEMENTARY ORGANIZATIONS

There were several other organizations that branched out of the Tomchei Temimim *yeshiva*.

In 5670 (1910), a society was created for alumni of Tomchei Temimim, called Agudas Hatemimim. The objective was to preserve the spirit of Tomchei Temimim amongst its alumni after they married and moved on, to assist them with finding positions in *rabbonus*, *klei Kodesh* or business, and to endow them with more influence in their hometowns.

An inaugural meeting was held in Lubavitch, and was attended by 45 alumni. They decided on protocol, which they printed and sent to all of the 200 members. The society was temporarily interrupted four years later by the First World War, and then resumed until the Bolshevik revolution in 5677 (1917).

A Ladies' Auxiliary for Tomchei Temimim was founded and headed by Rebbetzin Shterna Sara to raise funds to provide meals and clothing for poor students. In a Yiddish appeal brochure, women were entreated to take part in the merit of Torah study by supporting "poor children who study under outstanding supervision and are very sincerely devout."

As part of the effort to further spread the spirit of Tomchei Temimim, a children's periodical was published. The publication was titled, *HaAch*, "the brother," since the intended audience consisted of brothers of the students in Tomchei Temimim. Its editor was R. Muhshe Rosenblum, the *yeshiva's* prestigious secretary, and its readership – estimated at twenty thousand – included our own Rebbe. P

Endnotes

¹ *Kerem Chabad*, Vol. 3, p. 264.

² *Igros Kodesh Rashab*, Vol. 4, p. 117.

³ *Igros Kodesh Rashab*, Vol. 4, p. 117.

⁴ *Toras Shalom*, p. 75-78.

⁵ *Reshimos Devarim* (New Edition), p. 175.

⁶ *Igros Kodesh Rashab*, Vol. 1, p. 219.

⁷ *Kerem Chabad*, Vol. 3, p. 184

⁸ As related by the Friediker Rebbe – *Igros Kodesh*

Rashab, Vol. 2, p. 489.

⁹ *Igros Kodesh Rayatz*, Vol. 14, p. 171.



SNAPSHOTS

16 SHORT STORIES

— OF THE REBBE ON —

SENSITIVITY

ONE TO SAVE A BOY EMBARRASSMENT

As a Crown Heights boy, Eliyahu Rivkin would routinely make his way to 770 to receive a nickel from the Rebbe's hand. Every day, as the Rebbe came out for *mincha*, the Rebbe would patiently hand out these precious coins exclusively to children.

Once during the winter of 5752 (1992), the Rebbe walked out on his way to *mincha* and began distributing coins to the children as usual. Eliyahu stood in the lobby of 770; however, he had just turned *bar mitzvah*, rendering him ineligible to receive a nickel. Without thinking and momentarily forgetting he had outgrown the privilege, Eliyahu stuck out his hand.

Reb Leibel Groner, noticing his *bar mitzvah* hat, informed the Rebbe that he is already *bar mitzvah*. Blushing to his collar as he realized his mistake, young Eliyahu was mortified. The Rebbe waved his hand, and gave the coin to the very embarrassed young lad.

The Rebbe, ever sensitive, covered up the boy's mistake. He began distributing coins to all the adults standing there, and continued doing so when he came downstairs in the main *shul*.



"The Rebbe waved his hand, and gave the coin to the very embarrassed young lad."

TWO MADE BELIEVE

Erev Rosh Hashana, the early 5710's.

It was the first Tishrei that Reb Avrohom a"h Mayor (Drizin) was spending with the Rebbe. He was not yet familiar with the schedule of events. Thus it happened that he missed the *kabbolas pa"nim* – when the Rebbe would receive a *pa"n* from every chossid.

The Rebbe had already packed up the *pa"nim*, and was on his way out to the car to go to the *Ohel*. Reb Leibel Groner informed the Rebbe that Reb Avrohom had just arrived.

The Rebbe went back into his room, placed the pile of *pa"nim* on the table, and stood by the table as if he was still in the process of accepting *pa"nim*.

Reb Avrohom came in and gave his *pa"n*. The Rebbe packed up again, and rushed to the *Ohel*.

The Rebbe's time was precious, but even more precious to him was the feelings of a *Yid*.



The Rebbe's time was precious, but even more precious to him was the feelings of a Yid.

THREE FATHERLY CARE

Reb Shabsai Slavatitzki relates the following anecdote:

"On one occasion when the Rebbe distributed nickels to the children, to be given to *tzedakah*, my family and I were *zoche* to be in 770 to take part. Our young daughter received a nickel. In the commotion, we found ourselves standing some distance from our daughter. The Rebbe noticed that our daughter was alone, and he himself bent down and picked her up. In the Rebbe's hands, she managed to reach the *pushka* and drop the penny inside."

"Immediately thereafter, the Rebbe continued towards the *beis midrash* for davening. Our daughter was stuck in the sea of Bochurim swarming to follow the Rebbe. Our daughter was unnoticed and in quite a predicament. Suddenly, the Rebbe turned around and pointed with his finger towards our daughter. Almost instantly, a path formed, allowing our daughter to rejoin the rest of the family."

"We have still kept the little coat in which the Rebbe held our daughter, as a memory of that special moment."



FOUR ON MY BILL...

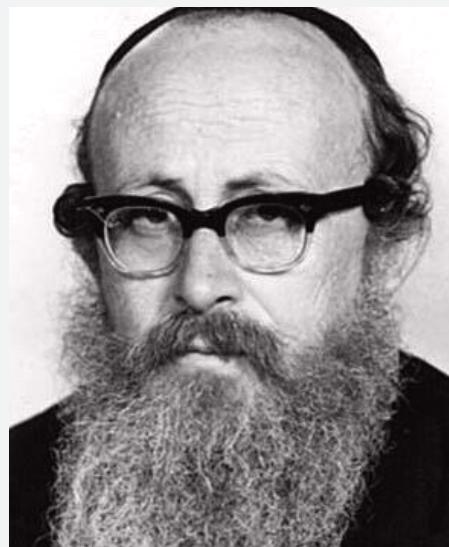
Yom Kippur, 5734: War broke out in *Eretz Yisroel*. Chaos erupted. In those first few days, *Am Yisroel* lost many men on the battlefield.

Mrs. Freiman was at the Rebbe for Tishrei. As soon as she heard that her husband Reb Meir had been drafted, she decided to return to *Eretz Yisroel*.

On the 11th of Tishrei, she stood at the Rebbe's door, accompanied by her father Reb Boruch Pariz. They were waiting for the Rebbe to go to *ma'ariv*, at which point Mrs. Freiman would be able to approach the Rebbe for parting *brochos*.

The Rebbe emerged from his room and immediately motioned with both hands to the two. Reb Boruch began crying as he told the Rebbe that his son-in-law, Mrs. Freiman's husband, was on the Egyptian front.

The Rebbe listened intently as Reb Boruch spoke. When he finished, the Rebbe turned to Mrs. Freiman and said soothingly, "Return home in peace, and you will find everyone in good health. When you have good news to relate, make a collect call on my bill..."



Reb Boruch Pariz

"When you have good news to relate, make a collect call on my bill"

FIVE KREPLACH

Reb Chessed Halbershtam, an assistant in the Rebbetzin's home, remembers many instances where he saw the Rebbe's sensitivity to the Rebbetzin's feelings:

It happened once that as I served the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin soup at the *Purim seudah*, the Rebbe mentioned the *minhag* of eating *kreplach* on *Purim*. The Rebbetzin looked very upset. She hastily apologized, for she had forgotten to make the *kreplach*.

The Rebbe tasted from the soup, but stopped eating. After a while, I got up to serve the chicken course, and the Rebbe asked that I leave the soup on the table. When I brought the chicken, the Rebbe took a piece of the chicken, wrapped it in *challa*, and dropped it into the soup.

"Now we have *kreplach*," he said to the Rebbetzin with a smile...

SIX

THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S WORK

Reb Dovberish Shapiro, the son of the Rebbe of Norol, served as the principal of the Belzer *Cheder* of Williamsburg during the 5710's. Many of the students, as well as he himself, resided in Crown Heights.

Usually, the students would travel with the school bus to Williamsburg, but on this day, the bus broke down. Seeing no other way, Reb Dovberish was compelled to collect all the children, in order to take them with public transport. And so it was, a procession of little *yiddishe* children paraded through the streets of Crown Heights, with Reb Dovberish in the lead.

Suddenly, they saw the Rebbe walking on the sidewalk, in their direction. The Rebbe stopped, smiled a broad smile of satisfaction, and said to Reb Dovberish: "*Ir tut dem Baal Shem Tov's arbet!*" (You are doing the *Baal Shem Tov's* work!).

The day changed for Reb Dovberish. What had begun as a miserable failure of a morning, turned out to be a memory he will cherish forever.



"You are doing the Baal Shem Tov's work!"

SEVEN

THEY WILL NOT BE WITH THEIR FAMILIES

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

"One year, at the end of *Tishrei*, there was a list of one thousand five hundred guests, all awaiting their turn for *yechidus*, before their return trip home. *Yechidus* in those days was on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

That Tuesday night, the Rebbe sat from 8 pm until 10 am the following morning. Since we were worried for the Rebbe's health, I suggested postponing the next *yechidus* night to Thursday, so that the Rebbe may rest in between."

"The Rebbe replied: 'There are guests here from Eretz Yisroel and Europe. If we postpone their *yechidus* to Thursday, they will have to stay in New York for Shabbos, since they cannot travel on Friday. This means that they will not be with their families for another Shabbos, and the guests from Eretz Yisroel will lose another day's work, since they work on Sundays. And this will all be my fault...'"

That Wednesday night, the Rebbe sat from 8 pm until 11:30 am, Thursday morning."

EIGHT "WHY FRIGHTEN YIDDEN?"

Reb Itchke Ganzburg, the legendary *Chabad* activist of Eretz Yisroel, came up with an original method how to spread Torah messages throughout the land. He would supply a lightweight plane company with thousands of pamphlets, and before an upcoming *Yom Tov*, the planes would fly over the city and dispense the literature.

With the Rebbe's approval, this project took off, and showed much success, for a few years. But on the eve of *Purim* 5729, the Rebbe suddenly sent a message to *Tzeirei Chabad* in Eretz Yisroel, not to send these planes anymore.

In a *yechidus* with Reb Itchke, the Rebbe explained the directive:

"Due to the fragile security situation in Eretz Yisroel, when people hear the sound of airplanes, they may be struck with panic. So I thought to myself, why frighten *Yidden*?"

Reb Itchke left the *yechidus* awe inspired; the Rebbe, who had never been in Eretz Yisroel, was so sensitive to such a detail of life there, while none of the local activists had thought of it! "When you care," he said, "you really put yourself in their shoes".



Reb Itchke Ganzburg

*"Due to the fragile security situation in Eretz Yisroel, when people hear the sound of airplanes, they may be struck with panic. So I thought to myself, why frighten *Yidden*?"*

NINE POSTPONING THE MAIL

Yechidus had finished in the wee hours of the morning, and the Rebbe had asked Reb Leibel Groner to bring in the mail. After working through one pile, the Rebbe asked for another one. And then another.

Reb Leibel knew how exhausting *yechidus* is for the Rebbe, and he realized that these letters would keep the Rebbe awake until *shacharis*. But on the other hand, a *mazkir* must do as he is told. Not daring to suggest anything to the Rebbe outright, Reb Leibel

came up with a plan. He wrote a note suggesting postponing the mail for tomorrow, and placed it atop the next pile of letters that the Rebbe asked for.

When the Rebbe saw the note, the Rebbe looked up, smiled and commented, "Do you want me to put this letter off for tomorrow too?" And the Rebbe continued dealing with *Klal Yisroel's* needs all through the night.

TEN

UNDERSTANDING THEIR PLIGHT

For the *Shabbos* following *Shavuos* 5745, the *Aleph* institute brought a group of eighteen Jewish prisoners to Crown Heights for a *shabbaton*. Naturally, the Rebbe's *Shabbos farbrengen* was the weekend highlight.

Minutes before the *farbrengen* began, Reb Leibel Groner approached Reb Sholom Ber Lipskar, the *shabbaton* coordinator. He instructed him to disperse the group so that each person stands separately.

Reb Sholom Ber replied with a questioning look. He already made arrangements for everyone to stand as a group, and changing the plans would be a logistical

challenge. Reb Leibel explained that this was the Rebbe's explicit request. The Rebbe felt that if the prisoners seated as a group, it would attract attention and people may talk about them. The prisoners would certainly feel uncomfortable.

"For this reason," Reb Leibel continued, "the Rebbe has also said that he will not be giving them *mashkeh*, as was the Rebbe's practice to other groups. The Rebbe does not want to draw any extra attention to them, in order to prevent them from feeling embarrassed."

ELEVEN

SOFTENING HUMOR

A person once came for *yechidus*, and stayed in the Rebbe's room for more than forty minutes. To get the Rebbe's individual attention for such a long time was unheard of. The *mazkir*, seeing that the visitor would not leave by himself, knocked on the door and told him that it was time to go.

The guest, being that it was his first *yechidus*, was unfamiliar with the accepted protocol. He looked very offended. The Rebbe, ever sensitive to another *Yid*, saw his crestfallen face, and immediately explained to him in light humor, "The secretary does not want you to leave; he simply wishes to interrupt our meeting, so that we could meet up twice!"

The guest left with a smile.



"The secretary does not want you to leave; he simply wishes to interrupt our meeting, so that we could meet up twice!"

TWELVE THE REBBE ASKS PERMISSION

A *Yid* from Alaska became a *baal teshuva* through the efforts of the Seattle *Shliach*, Reb Chatzkel Kornfeld. A *shidduch* was found for him amongst the graduates of Machon Chana, and a date was set for the *chassuna*, two days before *Sukkos*.

On the day before the *chassuna*, Reb Chatzkel received an urgent phone call from the Rebbe's *mazkir*.

He was told to that the Rebbe wishes to *farbreng* the next night, since it was the *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe Maharash. But the Rebbe would not *farbreng*, before

he receives the permission of the *chosson* and *kallah*, who will as a result, feel the absence of many guests at their *simcha*.

When Reb Chatzkel brought their affirmative reply back to the *mazkir*, he was asked to pass on a message to them, inviting them to celebrate their *sheva brachos* at the *farbrengen*.

And so it was, the Yud Gimmel Tishrei *farbrengen* and the *chassuna* were celebrated simultaneously.

The Rebbe would not farbreng, before he receives the permission of the chosson and kallah, who will as a result, feel the absence of many guests at their simcha.



THIRTEEN SENSITIVELY INFLEXIBLE

It was a sunny Shabbos afternoon, and two little girls were playing in the courtyard of 770. Just then, the Rebbe had to pass through, on his way to the library, where the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would stay for Shabbos. However, the Rebbe could not walk in between the two girls, as *halacha* prescribes.

The Rebbe called over one of the girls, and said to her, "Please go over to your friend, and wish her *gut Shabbos*." The girl happily obliged, their feelings were not hurt, and the path was cleared for the Rebbe to walk.

On 20 Adar 5749, the Rebbe held a general yechidus with the supporters of the Machane Yisroel development fund. After the Rebbe's short *sicha*, each one of the supporter's families had the opportunity to talk to the Rebbe for a few moments.

One woman, unacquainted with the *halacha*, offered her hand in handshake to the Rebbe. The Rebbe raised his hand in the air, and said with a smile: "I already gave my hand to your husband, with you in mind..."

"I already gave my hand to your husband, with you in mind..."

When it was discovered in 5743 (1983) that Reb Mendel Vechter, a Williamsburg *rosh yeshivah*, was delivering *Chassidus shiurim*, he was immediately dismissed with animosity and threats. Ultimately it turned to violence. Before long, his wife was also fired from her teaching position, and they moved out of the neighborhood.

One summer day, Mrs. Vechter was summoned by the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Harav Chodakov. He transmitted the following message from the Rebbe to her:

"In every class, there are children who need extra attention due to their domestic or personal situations. Often, only the teacher is aware of them. Usually, the principal would arrange a meeting between the old and new teachers, but due to your unique situation, it is your responsibility as the former *mechaneches* to approach the new teachers yourself."

Mrs. Vechter was dumbstruck. "For the first time in my life," she says, "I grasped what a Rebbe is: to care even for a hostile community."

(As heard from Mrs. Vechter)



Reb Mendel Vechter (right) with Reb Yoel Kahn

*"For the first time in my life, I grasped what a Rebbe is:
to care even for a hostile community."*

FIFTEEN OTHER PEOPLE'S TIME

It was a long winter *yechidus* night, and the line of visitors was still long. The weather had affected the Rebbe, and strong coughing could be heard.

The *mazkir*, caring for the Rebbe's wellbeing, prepared a hot tea and brought it in to the Rebbe between audiences.

After the final visitor left, in the wee hours of the morning, the *mazkir* entered the Rebbe's room as was ritual. To his surprise, he found the tea still sitting on the table, cold and untouched.

Mystified, he broached the subject. The Rebbe simply explained that he didn't have an opportunity to drink it because there were people waiting, "And how could I take a minute of other people's time?"

(*Otzar Pisgomei Chabad*, vol. 2, p. 46)



"And how could I take a minute of other people's time?"

SIXTEEN CARING FOR A BULLIED BOY

When Tes Kislev, the *yom holedes* and *hilulah* of the Mitteler Rebbe, fell on Shabbos, the Rebbe would usually *farbreng*; since in 5735 (1974) it did, a *farbrengen* was expected. However, the *mazkirus* announced that a *farbrengen* would not take place.

The reasoning behind it was not given, but Reb Nachman Yosef Twersky, then a *bochur* in '770, relates what he heard:

Some years before, the Rebbe had told *Harav Chodakov* of a child whose mother had complained

that his classmates were bullying him. With *HaRav Chodakov*'s guidance, the matter was settled.

That Shabbos was the boy's *bar mitzvah kiddush*. The Rebbe remembered the story, and told *Harav Chodakov* that if there would be a *farbrengen*, the opportunity for the boy to spend positive time with his classmates may be lost...

Sunday Yud Kislev, despite it being the *chag hageula*, there was no *farbrengen* either. It was the time of the *bar mitzvah seudah*.

If there would be a farbrengen, the opportunity for the boy to spend positive time with his classmates may be lost...



In the World of
ANASH

JEWISH PARENTING MAGAZINE RELEASED

By Leah Goodman

Remember those parenting magazines stacked up at the doctor's office or piled in your parents' bathroom? The cute photos, enticing headlines splayed on the cover, and advice columns showed us that even though our parents knew a lot, they were still searching for answers, for guidance.

Not much has changed.

But as we age, and actually read those magazines ourselves, we realize how little is relevant to Jewish

parenting. So much of our lives as Jewish parents differ from those in the outside world.

These days, popular frum magazines have insightful chinuch sections. Here I feel more at home; the writers address parenting issues that resonate in a Jewish family. And yet, I don't think I'm alone when I say that some articles leave me wanting. As a Lubavitcher, I feel like we should read about and discuss our own unique brand of chinuch. We

"AS A LUBAVITCHER, I FEEL LIKE WE SHOULD READ ABOUT AND DISCUSS OUR OWN
UNIQUE BRAND OF CHINUCH."

certainly don't lack material: Chassidus is filled with beautiful insights and our Rebbeim have given us innumerable important directives.

While there are chassidishe chinuch messages available, I was taken aback when I recently saw a new magazine focusing *solely* on chinuch. I was holding my dream come true: the parenting magazine for Jewish parents!

My first impression was good. So was my second. I ripped the plastic right open and got lost in the richness of *30 Minutes*'s clean and modern pages. And its content. This is something my parents would have loved.

The issue, the magazine's first, opened with a moving story and inspiring thought from our Rebbe. In his first article, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gluckowsky of Rechovot addressed changing times, changing needs. Where it was once appropriate to educate with harshness, he explained, today's generation physically can't handle it. That makes sense. I have seen that to be true with my own son, time and time again. Instead of negating the nefesh habahamis, he stressed, it should be uplifted and made to realize its potential.

I, for one, feel uplifted and empowered.

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30 MINUTE'S CLEAN
AND MODERN PAGES.
AND ITS CONTENT. THIS
IS SOMETHING MY
PARENTS WOULD HAVE
LOVED.





Understanding Our Children

THE KEY TO CHINUCH

30 Minutes in Conversation with

RABBI ZALMAN LEIB MARKOWITZ

THOUGHTFUL EDUCATION

Some parents struggle to understand the words of the Rebbe found in the *Hagyon Yom Ba Ziv Tevez*:

"My Father [The Rebbe Rashab] proclaimed at a *farbrengung* [not as wearing tefillin every day is a mitzvah] how the Torah, encompassed upon every Jew regardless of how great or simple he may be in Torah learning, so too is it an absolute duty [*chay gomez*] for every Jew to think every day for a half-hour about the chinuch of their children."

It is interesting to note that the Rebbe doesn't write that parents should spend a half hour speaking with their children or learning with their children.

How so?

Of course, it is self-understood that parents must do those things too, but here the Rebbe specifically instructs parents to spend a half-hour simply thinking about the chinuch of their children.

Many parents are perplexed by the Rebbe's instructions "What exactly must I be thinking about?" they wonder: "And for a full thirty minutes?"

While the Rebbe's instructions may seem confusing to some, I often see how fulfilling this obligation can determine the life of a child, impacting the child's social, psychological or spiritual wellbeing.

Let's take a moment to consider the Frierdiker Rebbe's words: It is not enough to be well-versed in parenting techniques, or to have good intentions when raising our children. We must never forget the importance of taking

RECOGNIZING A CHILD'S ESSENCE

We can gain some clarity about the Rebbe's directive by looking in *Ktale HaChinuch Vehabavascha*, an essay by the Frierdiker Rebbe on the fundamentals of education. There, in Chapter 7, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes: "An educator and parent must measure the *mehila* [essence] of the one being educated and guided."

Let's take a moment to consider the Frierdiker Rebbe's words: It is not enough to be well-versed in parenting techniques, or to have good intentions when raising our children. We must never forget the importance of taking

Then there was Mrs. Sara Kaplan's piece about perfect parenting. I could actually feel myself relax as she described why that phrase just isn't possible in any realm.

Which of us hasn't kept their eyes glued to their phone a little more than necessary? I know I am to blame. In his enlightening piece, Rabbi Mordechai Lipskier addressed the topic of distraction by technology. That is an undeniable area in which I need to improve. For all of our sakes.

I am so uplifted to see that chinuch has taken such a central role in our community. Societal pressure, davening, pride in Yiddishkeit, expectations at different ages, and technology are only a few topics the magazine explored this issue. And it left the fluff on the printing press--though the articles were engaging and enjoyable, they were entirely substantive.

30 Minutes amazed me, by sending me such a quality magazine free of charge. And I know I wasn't the only one to receive it: my sisters and friends on various WhatsApp groups have been chatting about it as well.

I want to make sure I receive all future issues, so I signed up at gidulim.org/magazine. I also noticed that the magazine is looking to hire--a larger staff will mean more diverse content.

Lubavitch chinuch is what I'm looking for. And with *30 Minutes*, I know I finally have the means to achieve that. **P**

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TEACHERS SHOWN ROYAL APPRECIATION

By Dvora Lakein

Rabbi Mendel Schtroks finished his Pesach shopping in December.

When his wife picked up their order on Sunday, volunteers met her with a warm thank you and refreshments. After loading cases of wine, meat, and staples into her minivan, they passed her a gift bag with presents for her children. Minutes later, she was back in Brooklyn traffic, her vehicle loaded with some \$2500 worth of Pesach groceries. For which she paid \$275.

This is not your typical Pesach shopping experience. And that's exactly the point.

Ihud Hamelamdim has partnered with Chasdei Lev to provide 250 Crown Heights' rebbeim with below-cost groceries for the Pesach season. Chasdei Lev, whose goal is to support educators "in appreciation

for their tremendous devotion to our children," has been helping teachers in 10 communities for the last 12 years. But until now, Lubavitch was not on their map.

Ihud Hamelamdim changed that. The Crown Heights organization was founded last year to bolster educators from all angles. Farbrengens, training, and an evening kollel for teachers, are some of their recent accomplishments. And they recognize that in order for a rabbi to perform well in his influential position, his needs must be met at a practical level as well. For Rabbi Avraham Bluming, director, that meant rock-bottom prices at the most expensive time of year. "At Igud Hamelamdim, we believe that the best tool a melamed can bring to the classroom is himself," Bluming states, "and for that he needs happiness and peace of mind."



MINUTES LATER, SHE WAS BACK IN BROOKLYN TRAFFIC, HER VEHICLE LOADED WITH SOME \$2500 WORTH OF PESACH GROCERIES. FOR WHICH SHE PAID \$275.



ACTING AS THE "YESHIVA," IGUD HAMELAMDIM FUNDRAISED AND SUBSIDIZED THE COST OF TEACHERS' YOM TOV GROCERIES.

Acting as the "yeshiva," Igud Hamelamdim fundraised and subsidized the cost of teachers' yom tov groceries. Before Chanukah, teachers received a price list and were encouraged to order up to \$2500 worth of groceries, for \$275. Igud Hamelamdim contributed \$685 per teacher and the balance was met by Chasdei Lev's generous donors and steep manufacturer discounts. To help teachers in Crown Heights schools, Igud Hamelamdim raised an incredible \$170,000 this year, which resulted in giving the Crown Heights teachers a whopping \$556,000.

"My first thought was, 'I can't believe this is true,'" recalls Schtroks. "Am I reading right?" The Oholei Torah rabbi, who is making Pesach for the fourth time, compared prices. A case of wine he ordered is less than a single bottle of the same variety at a local store, he says. "I wouldn't be able to buy much of this or treats for my children without these discounts."

Pesach is expensive for everyone. Produce, meat, fish, matzah. There's a reason the old joke translates "lechem oni" as the bread that induces poverty. But for rebbeim with large families on tight budgets, the costs can be even more overwhelming. But this was

something else entirely. Forty pounds of chicken legs for \$16.50. Six pounds of whole wheat matzah for \$22.50. Twelve rolls of gefilte fish for a dollar a piece. A case of potatoes for less than the cost of a morning coffee.

The prices read like the shopping list of your dreams. Organizers of Igud Hamelamdim and Chasdei Lev agree that the primary goal is alleviating teachers' financial burdens at this expensive season. But there's a lot more at stake here, they insist. It's the reason businessmen, doctors, plumbers, and housewives gave up the busiest Sunday of the year to pack thousands of teachers' cars at parking lots across the tri-state area. Wearing t-shirts emblazoned with the words, "thank you" on their backs, the volunteers

snaked through the parking lot in an organized assembly line of boxes and cases.

Thank you, they told each rabbi and his family as they pulled up. Thank you for dedicating your days and nights to our children. Thank you for dedicating your lives to our people's future.

"I feel appreciated in a very real way," Schtrosk reflected after unloading his overfilled van. "You can see that the community appreciates melamdim. I'm used to the criticism, the negative feelings that people express about the educational system. It impacts you. But here, we teachers see that there are plenty of yidden who appreciate us. And that is everything." □



"I'M USED TO THE CRITICISM, THE NEGATIVE FEELINGS THAT PEOPLE EXPRESS ABOUT THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. IT IMPACTS YOU. BUT HERE, WE TEACHERS SEE THAT THERE ARE PLENTY OF YIDDEN WHO APPRECIATE US. AND THAT IS EVERYTHING."

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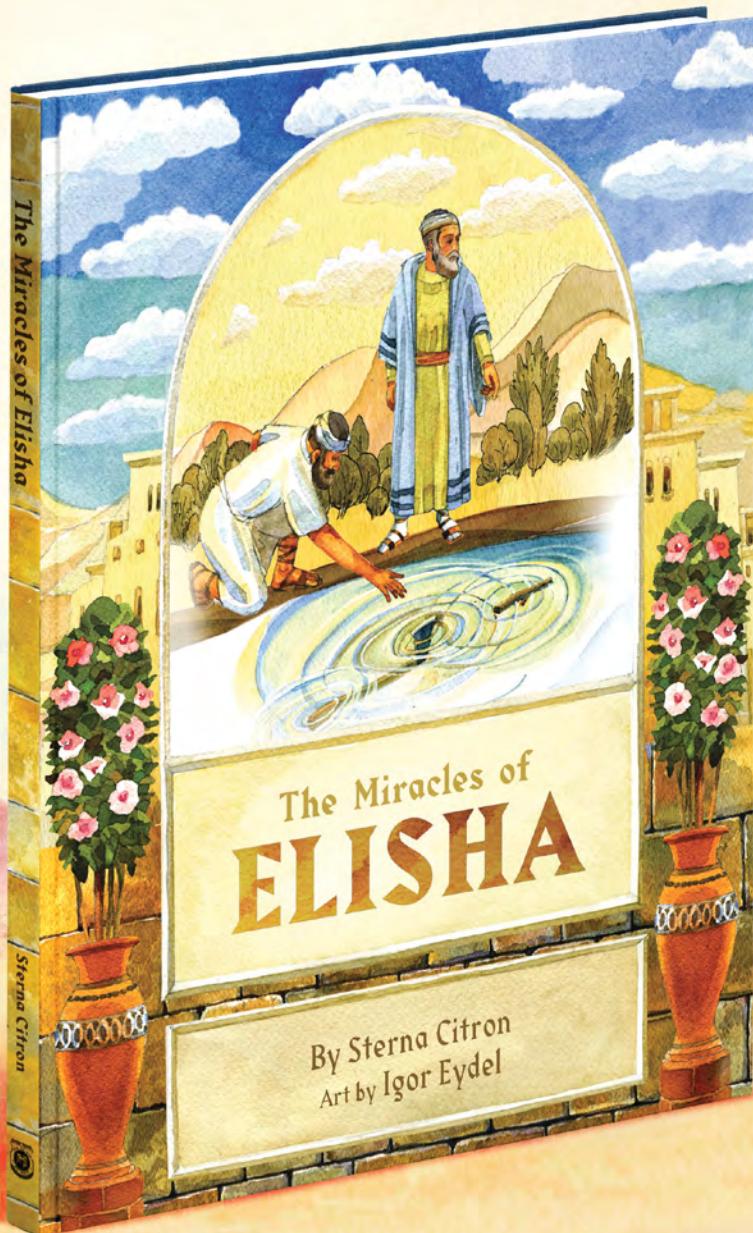
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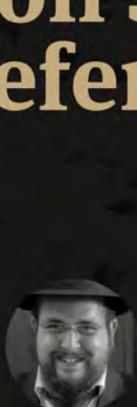
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