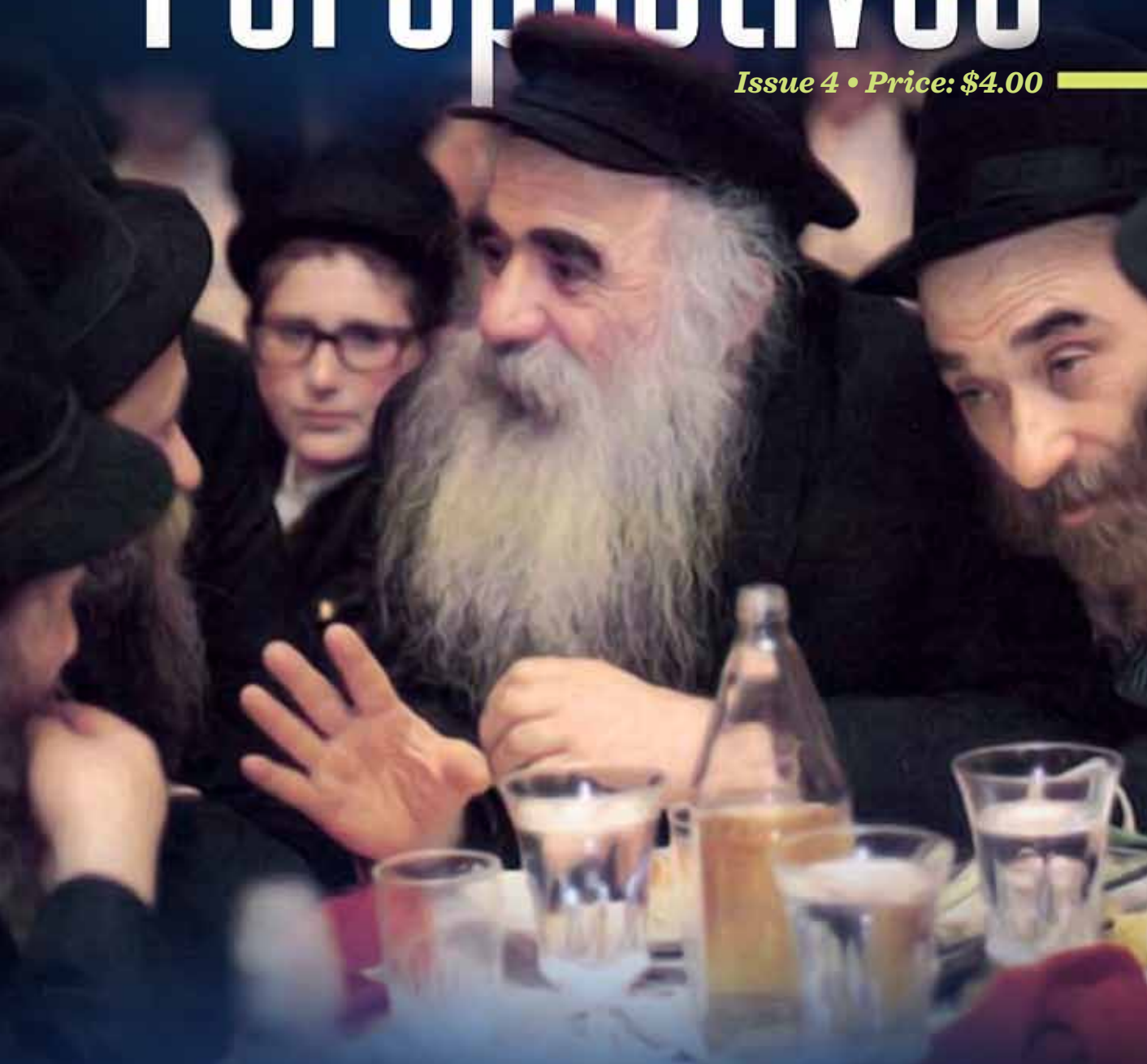


ב"ה | תשרי תשע"ד

# Perspectives

Issue 4 • Price: \$4.00



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHASSIDIC DANCING

*Rabbi Nissan Mindel*

## A JOYOUS SIMCHA

*Life Perspective*

## TO KEEP FOCUSED

*Simchas Beis Hashoeivah Farbrengen  
with Reb Mendel Futerfas*

## WHOM THE MIGHTY FIST COULD NOT SUBDUE

*Rabbi Daniel Goldberg*

# DAVENING.

## NOW AVAILABLE TO CHILDREN



- ❖ Innovative explanatory translation
- ❖ Intuitive layout with clear text and instructions
- ❖ Color-coded tabs mark davening sections
- ❖ Multiple placeholders
- ❖ Beautiful slipcase and choice of colors
- ❖ Embossed and silver stamped

**NEW!**



Available online at

**www.kehot.com**  
**877-4-MERKOS**

*Showroom:*

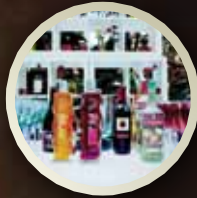
291 Kingston Avenue • Brooklyn, NY 11213

*Hours of operation:*

Sunday–Thursday: 10:00AM–7:00PM

Friday: 10:00AM–1:00PM (Summers until 2:00PM)

# BARUCH EZAGUI PHOTOGRAPHY



## Events

EVERY BEAUTIFUL DETAIL



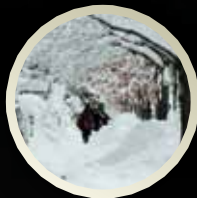
## Family

EVERY SMILE, EVERY MOMENT



## Celebrate!

BY EVERY EVENT



## Location

CAPTURING EVERY SEASON

917.740.3443 • [www.baruchezagui.com](http://www.baruchezagui.com)



# UNLEASH YOUR MILES

{Corporate accounts our specialty}



[www.sellmilesnow.com](http://www.sellmilesnow.com)

**732.987.7765**

All  
YEAR  
ROUND

## No more shaimos piling up...

Drop it off at the Shipping & Copy Center

478 Albany Avenue | 718.771.5000  
(Between Empire & Lefferts) | 8AM-7PM



1-5 lbs: \$1/lb

5-10 lb: 75c/lb

Shul/bulk pricing available

CROWN HEIGHTS  
**Shipping & Copy**  
CENTER



# Joseph Zagon





# ESROGIM CENTER

BY MENDY LIPSHER



ON THE WEB: [WWW.ESROGIMCENTER.COM](http://WWW.ESROGIMCENTER.COM)

WE ARE THE SOURCE FOR THE MOST RELIABLE  
AND HIGH QUALITY ESROGIM

**SHOP EARLY FOR BEST SELECTION**

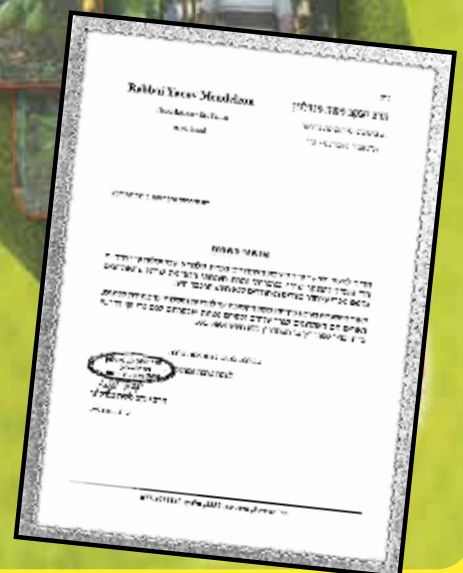
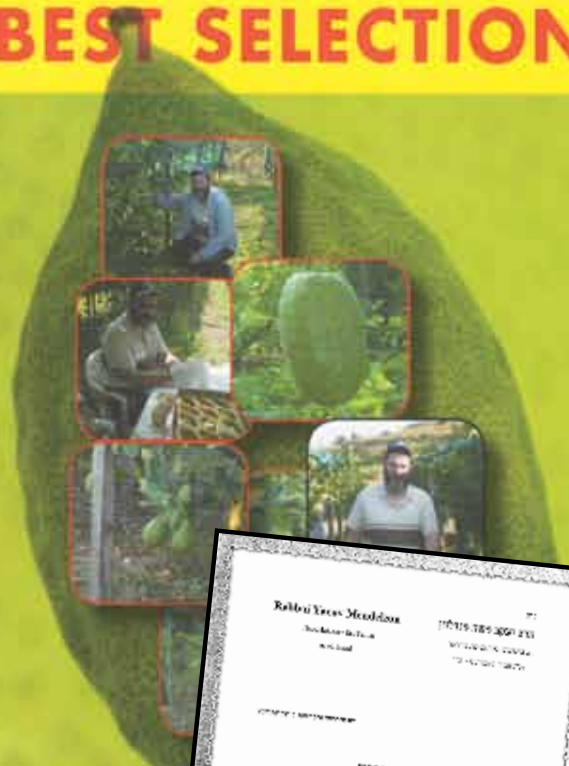
**Tel: 888 99-ESROG  
or 888-993-7764.**

**Address:**

**1558 Carroll Street  
Brooklyn, NY. 11213**

**Email:**

**[sales@esrogimcenter.com](mailto:sales@esrogimcenter.com)**



GREAT GIFT IDEA

# Have You Done Your M'Yom L'Yom Today?

*Daily Torah study for children  
of all ages, schools & camps*

**From Day to Day**  
Young Scholar's Daily  
Calendar & Encyclopedia

FROM DAY TO DAY-  
M'YOM L'YOM  
YOUNG SCHOLAR'S  
DAILY CALENDAR  
AND ENCYCLOPEDIA



**מיום ליום – לוח יומיו**  
by the Lubavitcher Rebbe,  
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson  
English Recitation by Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel

CHABAD IN AMERICA THROUGH THE FOLDERS OF NISSAN MINDEL  
Projected publication date, end of the Summer 5775

website: [www.nissanmindelpublications.com](http://www.nissanmindelpublications.com) / e-mail: [nmindelpublications@gmail.com](mailto:nmindelpublications@gmail.com)

IN STORES NOW

# THE LETTER & THE SPIRIT

ENGLISH LETTERS OF THE REBBE  
BY NISSAN MINDEL

VOLUME

B"H  
In Judaica Stores





# Sosover Seforim

Visit our newly expanded and renovated showroom!



- Back to School Books
- Expanded English Department
- Free Delivery in Crown Heights  
(minimum required)

524 Empire Blvd.  
*across from Empire Kosher*

**347-446-5884**

ש"ס • טור • שו"ע • משניות • רמב"ם • חומש • נ"ך

Shop online:

**[www.SeforimSets.com](http://www.SeforimSets.com)**



KITCHENTRADITION.COM  
35 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

**(845) 352-3725**

ALL MAJOR AND SMALL HOME  
APPLIANCES & ELECTRONICS



**75 ROUTE 59 • MONSEY, NY**

**WE DELIVER TO THE CATSKILLS AND TRI-STATE AREA**



WE HAVE THE BEST PRICES ON  
**APPLIANCES**

& WILL FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOU ON REBATES

**FREE DELIVERY • KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF AVAILABLE TO DESIGN YOUR KITCHEN • FREE FINANCING**



IMPORTERS of FINE SILVER

CROWN HEIGHTS  
321 KINGSTON AVENUE  
718-778-2161

BORO PARK  
4805 13TH AVENUE  
718-854-8833

**800-845-4670**

ELITESTERLING@GMAIL.COM  
FAX: 718-854-1348

- ❖ DISTINCTIVE COLLECTION
- ❖ 25 YEARS IN BUSINESS
- ❖ PROFESSIONAL REPAIRS





*"Afford it with Dignity"*

# MAZAL TOV!!!

DU MACHST CHASSUNEH?

Now, "The Ultimate Wedding Package", well into its third season, helps you make that special day into an AFFORDABLE and STRESS-FREE affair. You have choices from some of the finest vendors... caterers, halls, photographers, musicians, florists and videographers.



For your one-stop wedding planning contact:

Nechama Hackner

718-773-1234

[theultimateweddingpkg@gmail.com](mailto:theultimateweddingpkg@gmail.com)

She will arrange all the details with your favorite vendors.  
Many references available. You will be glad you called.

[www.theultimateweddingpkg.com](http://www.theultimateweddingpkg.com)

**ANY MAKE,  
ANY MODEL**  
*best price guaranteed.*



**718-493-0600**  
**LEASINGDIRECTNY.COM**

**LD**  
**LeasingDirect**





p: 347.471.1770

e: [info@MerkazAnash.com](mailto:info@MerkazAnash.com)

w: [www.MerkazAnash.com](http://www.MerkazAnash.com)

478 Albany Ave. Ste. 11

Brooklyn NY 11203

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger - Director

Rabbi Mendel Schtroks - Administrator

Rabbi Matisyahu Friedman - Editor

R' Uri Kaploun - Contributing Editor

Rabbi Schneur Zalman Rabin - Proofreader

Rabbi Shmuel Pevzner - Vaad Hamosifin

Rabbi Mendy Browd - Web Design

Rabbi Menachem Bronstein - Advertising

Miss. M. Schtroks - Layout

Design: [Dmm770@gmail.com](mailto:Dmm770@gmail.com)

## What's your perspective?

Your submission is welcome at:

[Perspectives@MerkazAnash.com](mailto:Perspectives@MerkazAnash.com)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 13 THE MINDEL ARCHIVES**  
*We Don't Want Your Money;  
Give Us Your Soul*
- 16 THE REBBE'S PERSPECTIVE**  
*Is a College Degree Necessary to  
Earn a Living?*
- 19 TO KEEP FOCUSED**  
*Simchas Beis Hashoeivah Farbrengen  
with Reb Mendel Futerfas*
- 29 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF  
CHASSIDIC DANCING**  
*Rabbi Nissan Mindel*
- 34 WHOM THE MIGHTY FIST  
COULD NOT SUBDUE**  
*Reb Levi Yitzchok Schneerson*
- 46 THOUGHT FOR FOOD**
- 50 A JOYOUS SIMCHA**  
*Life Perspective*
- 55 IN THE WORLD OF ANASH**
- 58 COUNTER PERSPECTIVE**
- 61 MY PERSPECTIVE**

# - FOREWORD -

As we begin a new year, it is most appropriate for us – individually and collectively – to remember and reassert our identity. As *Chassidus* explains, the *avoda* of Tishrei is more than merely performing certain *mitzvos* and celebrating the *yomim tovim*; the *avoda* is to reconnect to our *penimiyus haleiv*, reawakening our inner identity.

As *Yidden*, we know that ‘*Ata bechartanu mikal ho’amim.*’ HaShem has chosen us to serve Him and carry out His Will. He watches over us and derives tremendous pleasure from every good deed that we do.

As Chassidim, we are aware of this in a deeper manner. We realize that our *neshama* is a part of Him and has the infinite power of connecting to Him and serving Him no matter the challenges.

As Chassidim of the Rebbe, we personally experienced the inner vitality of *yiddishkeit*. At *farbrengens*, we merited an almost tangible awareness of *Elokus*, and we witnessed and participated in the unforgettable joy of *Yom Tov* as celebrated by the Rebbe. Through forty years of *farbrengens*, the Rebbe has gifted us with deeper appreciation for Torah and *mitzvos*, an unconditional love for another *yid* and total devotion to HaShem’s Will.

“*Ashreinu ma tov chelkeinu, uma na’im goraleinu, uma yafa yerushaseinu.*” This is a genuine expression of appreciation for what we have. Understanding and appreciating what we have is essential in driving us to embrace it with full enthusiasm.

Even if the inspiration is lacking in our personal lives, we have the ability to reconnect to the inner voice of our *neshama*, our ancestry, and our Rebbeim and experience once again the spirit of Lubavitch. Through learning *Chassidus* and the Rebbe’s *sichos*, following the Rebbes *ho’raos* and by living as Chassidim, we can appreciate what we have and who we really are. True Chassidim.

With wishes for a *kesivah vechasima tovah*,

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger

Editor-in-Chief



# *The* **MINDEL ARCHIVES**

## **We Don't Want Your Money; Give Us Your Soul**

We are privileged to present a letter from the Rebbe, from the archives of the Rebbe's personal secretary for over forty years, Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel. These precious archives were entrusted by Rabbi Mindel to his son-in-law Rabbi Shalom Ber Schapiro, whom he appointed to preserve, promote and spread Chassidus with this rich material. May Rabbi Schapiro continue to benefit the many with his work as director of Nissan Mindel Publications ([www.NissanMindelPublications.com](http://www.NissanMindelPublications.com)).

By the Grace of G-d

25 Sivan, 5740

Brooklyn N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleasantly surprised to receive a copy of your letter to Mr. S. Peres, together with the "Fields" publications.

As you no doubt expect some comment, let me say that your creative ideas are impressive in their sweep and ingenuity. However, I must add at once, as I have observed in previous correspondence, that we have to concern ourselves with utilizing our resources to meet the emergencies of the present, rather than with solutions that, at best, lie only in the future. I say "at best" because the ultimate solutions are not always in our hands, whereas there is much we can, and must, do to cope with pressing emergencies.



In light of the above, while I wholeheartedly agree with you that the potential of our Jewish people is limitless, our immediate concern must be to ensure the survival of our people. Surely, when a person who has an inordinate capacity to save the world is seriously ill, the first thing to do is to help him recover his health, so that he will indeed be able to realize his potential later on.

I am referring particularly to the state of our young Jewish generation, whose potential certainly is to move mountains, but at the moment is, by and large, overwhelmed by forces of assimilation and alienation and in danger of being lost to us.

---

■ ■ ■

*I must add at once  
... that we have to  
concern ourselves  
with utilizing our  
resources to meet the  
emergencies of the  
present, rather than  
with solutions that,  
at best, lie only in the  
future.*

---

■ ■ ■

As you know, only a small percentage of Jewish children in this day and age grow up with a Jewish education strong enough to preserve their Jewish identity in the face of the pressures of assimilation. The remainder are heading for the precipice. There is a vast field of action that has to be tackled in order to save thousands of Jewish young men and women from the cults and from intermarriage. It is an emergency situation that calls for an all-out effort in terms of well organized, planned, and amply funded programs. Many have to be taught starting literally from the Aleph-beth of Judaism; others must be given the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and experience of what it means to be truly Jewish.

To be sure, the human resource manpower – to meet these challenges fully is at present inadequate. Moreover, it suffers from attrition in that many dedicated young men engaged in Jewish Education in its broader sense – including teaching, administrative jobs, reach-out programs, etc. – come to a point in their family life, where their meager salaries can no longer support their growing families, and they must find Parnosso elsewhere. Yet all

these problems could not only be coped with, but also turned around – *if* the financial resources were available.

Having always been candid with you – on the basis of our mutual relationship, and being confident that you will not take my remarks amiss, I must say regretfully, that I have not noted in your correspondence, as yet, anything that would encourage me to think that you are using your capacities and influence in the direction indicated above, at any rate to the fullest extent.

Since, as mentioned, the basic problem is financial, there are surely many Jewish philanthropists, Endowment Funds and Foundations – to mention some of the more obvious sources – that could be tapped for the vital cause of Jewish survival. On the other hand, there are such national organizations as, e. g., Anti-Shemad, Committee For Furtherance of Jewish Education, Torah uMesorah, and others, which are eminently qualified and deserving of the utmost financial support, not only to keep them afloat,

but to enable them to expand dramatically in keeping with the drastic situation.

I trust you will not think for a moment that this letter is intended as a direct or indirect appeal for Lubavitch institutions, and will not embarrass me by responding with a check. To quote a familiar phrase in the Torah, "Give me the persons and keep the goods" – it is your personal Involvement in the cause of Jewish Education that I am after. However involved you may be with promulgating a global or holistic perception and perspective, etc., I am certain that there is ample room in your heart and mind to take a soulful interest in the cause of Jewish Education, not only to become personally involved, but also inspire others within the sphere of your influence to follow your example.

Please forgive me if any of the foregoing expressions have embarrassed you in any way; far be it from me.

Through mutual friends I occasionally receive regards from you and your son. My prayerful wishes are always with you both and yours for good health and Hatzlocho in all your affairs, materially and spiritually.

With esteem and blessing,

---

*I trust you will  
not think for a  
moment that this  
letter is intended as  
a direct or indirect  
appeal for Lubavitch  
institutions, and  
will not embarrass  
me by responding  
with a check.*

---



## The Rebbe's Perspective ■

*Prepared by Rabbi Shimon Hellinger*

**Why can't college be a prerequisite for earning a living?  
Do those who attend university earn a better living?  
What's the message for one who encounters difficulties  
in enrolling to college?**

In this sicha from Yud Beis Tammuz 5715 (1955) the Rebbe addressed these questions:

### ■ THE “ONLY SOLUTION”... ■

It is well known that the Frierdiker Rebbe strongly disapproved of the study of secular subjects, since the Alter Rebbe writes that this contaminates the intellect of one's *neshama*.

This does not contradict the fact that the Frierdiker Rebbe sent money to a group of university students in Switzerland to setup a *kosher* kitchen. If one encounters a *Yid* who limps with two feet and one can heal him to the point that he will limp with only one foot, one must expend every effort to do so.

Those who study secular subjects, though they have feet, are 'limping on one foot.' In spiritual terms, feet refer to *emunah*. 'Limping' means that although he believes in HaShem (he has feet), and he recites in *bentching* that HaShem is the one "who gives sustenance to all," yet his belief is 'limping.' He cannot imagine that HaShem can

---

1. Unedited – printed in Toras Menachem vol. 14 pp. 166-168.



provide *parnassa* in any other way than through his attending college and studying secular subjects!

When he makes a calculation that in another few years he will need to have *parnassa*, and therefore he studies secular subjects, thinking that his future *parnassa* will come from these studies, this is an indication that he has forgotten for a moment about HaShem "who gives sustenance to all."

Think for a moment:

---

■ ■ ■

*HaShem runs  
the world since  
he created it –  
five thousand,  
seven hundred  
and fifteen years  
ago ... long before  
college existed. Yet  
this person thinks  
that the only way  
that HaShem can  
support him is if he  
attends college...*

---

■ ■ ■

HaShem runs the world since he created it – five thousand, seven hundred and fifteen years ago, and he continuously sustained everything long before college existed. Yet this person thinks that the only way that HaShem can support him is if he attends college; otherwise HaShem will not be able to give him the hundred dollars a week that he needs! The only way *must* be college ...

The study of secular subjects contaminates the intellect of the *neshama*, an act that opposes Torah, and he believes that *it* is the only vessel through which HaShem can provide *parnassa*?!

#### ■ FACE THE FACTS! ■

The concealment is so great that not only are people lacking in *emunah*, they don't even look with their eyes at clearly apparent happenings:

We see clearly that among those who attend college, only a small percentile actually end up earning their livelihood in the field in which they studied. In fact, those who head the universities admit this.

On the other hand, we see clearly that those who continue learning in *yeshivah* and do not study secular subjects, HaShem provides for them in abundance!

It follows, that even from a logical perspective there is no room to consider college. The fact that one does consider it, is a result of the "spirit of folly" that causes a person to lose his mind!

However, besides making a mistaken calculation and overlooking readily apparent facts, he is also 'limping' in his *emunah*.

#### ■ WHEN THE DONKEY TALKS... ■

Because of the tremendous concealment, miracles are sent from Above, perhaps they will prevent the person from attending college:

A new law was passed which made it even more difficult to enter college, so that he should refrain from attending college and instead go to *yeshivah* and study Torah. However, due to the great concealment, he sees it as a natural occurrence and as nothing

---

■ ■ ■

*We see clearly that among those who attend college, only a small percentile actually end up earning their livelihood in the field in which they studied. In fact, those who head the universities admit this.*

---

■ ■ ■

to do with him.

So then an even greater miracle was sent: even after he met all their conditions and he prepared all that was necessary, he could not succeed for other reasons. They told him: "we won't accept you, go back to *yeshivah* and study Torah!"

He thinks that it is *they* who are telling it to him. The truth is that it is being said from Above; it is only passing through their mouths, like Bilaam's donkey. They aren't quite telling him, "Hear now! You are a *Yid* and you should be learning Torah. Why do you want to contaminate the intellect of your *neshama* with secular studies?" since a 'donkey' can't speak in such a manner. Instead they speak in 'donkey language.' The *Yid*, however, must know that it is *hashgacha pratis* and it is a lesson for him from Above that he should go back to *yeshivah* and stop thinking about secular studies.

■ ■ ■

#### ■ IN SUMMARY ■

- Since secular studies contaminate the *neshama*, it is impossible that one's *parnassa* is dependent on it.
- The facts show that college attendance seldom brings the expected career.
- One should recognize challenges as messages from above – possibly directing a person away from that activity.



# To Keep Focused

Simchas Beis HaShoeivah in Crown Heights  
with the Mashpia

**REB MENDEL FUTERFAS ע"ה**

**M**idnight has come and gone, unnoticed. The lively music, the throngs of chassidim and the festive atmosphere show no sign of fatigue.

I've been dancing for hours now. It started after the Rebbe's sicha, and it's continuing here outdoors in a circle of *bochurim*. Nothing in the world compares to the dancing of the *temimim*; the purity, the clarity, the inner life. A quiet younger *bochur* at the edge of the circle, whose plump red cheeks show no signs of a beard yet, is encouraged by an older *bochur* to get involved.

Out of the corner of my eye, while I turn in my circle, I notice a man of means dancing wildly with a simple vendor. Its YomTov, its Lubavitch, and these are the rules. Better said, there are no rules...

Wearing a Lubavitcher hat, a Yid with long *peyos* locks arms with the Lubavitcher opposite him who has donned his neighbor's *shtreimel*. Around and around they whiz, faster and faster, while a circle of merriment forms around them. Eventually they join the circle, to be replaced by a fire juggler who accelerates the joy with his tricks, just as in the times of the Beis HaMikdash.

On the stage, dressed in their *Yom-Tov'dikke* attire, the band has been at work all night. I noticed them dashing out of 770 immediately after the *sicha*. The *yungerman* at the microphone, leading the singing, is not merely doing a service; he's pumping life, blowing life through the loudspeakers. Every so often he is interrupted by the endearing raspy voice of the organizer, Reb Yisroel, who bellows into the microphone: "*Lebediker, lebediker!*"

The band begins to play *HoAderes veHoEmuna*, and suddenly the dancing is electrified. Out of nowhere, dozens of French *baalei teshuva* of all ages, some in chassidic dress, others still in their jeans, break into a dance of jubilation.

I observe one of them, from the original group that was here in 5734 (1973), when the Rebbe first transformed their anthem into a *chassidishe niggun*. His eyes are shut tight; glistening pearls of sweat appear on his forehead, as he waves his arms and feet in ecstasy. His gratitude for being here, for being *shlepped* out of the Sorbonne University, for discovering *Chassidus*, for being a chossid of the Rebbe - is all coming out... *Hanoi ve-hanetzach*,

*lechai oilomim*... He is celebrating victory – the triumph of *kedusha* over the Parisian culture he knows so well.

■ ■ ■

My feet are sending me urgent messages: they are begging respite. I leave the dancing circle in search of a *farbrengen*. Where to go? Naturally, almost without thought, I am drawn up Kingston Avenue towards 770.

As I pass President Street, I see a commotion outside 1414, the dorm of the 770 bochurim. A heated debate, reaching livid tones, is in session. Tonight's *sicha* is under dispute. Unlike a regular *Motzaei Shabbos* argument, when it's usually about the wording, tonight's *sicha* was recorded, has been typed up and is already hanging on the wall. This argument is on the content, on the connection between *Moshe Rabbeinu* and the *Mitteler Rebbe*.

Some, Reb Yoel's close *talmidim* among them, are arguing that tonight's explanation is an entirely new *vort*, while others maintain excitedly that it is actually a sequel to a *sicha* that we heard three years ago. Within the group which insists on distinguishing between the *sichos*, there is also some disagreement as to what exactly is tonight's *chiddush*.

I leave it to them. Tomorrow the veteran *chozrim* will *pasken*, and peace will reign. That is, until tomorrow night's *sicha*...

I pass a group of Crown Heights *Anash* affixing a sign to their *sukka*-mobile, and approach 770. An energetic contingent from *Eretz Yisroel* is dancing near the door. The Rebbe is inside, and they don't want to leave; they want to be close. Perhaps they want the Rebbe to hear some singing in his room.

They pull over a passerby, and without a word he is made to join the circle.

Suddenly, a warm *niggun* reaches my ears. Without too much effort, I trace the melody to the *sukka*.

"*Ver farbrengt?* Who's *farbrenging?*" I ask someone.

"Who do you think?" he responds, grinning to himself. "Reb Mendel's been sitting here since the *sicha*, four hours ago. And that's after finishing last night's *farbrengen* here at seven this morning, when the *sukka* was needed for the hundreds lining up to shake the Rebbe's *lulav*..."

It's impossible to imagine Sukkos without sitting at least one night with Reb Mendel. Indeed, I regretted not being there last night, but a friend convinced me that traveling to liven up the *Simchas Beis HaShoeiva* in the Bronx takes precedence. So tonight will be the night. I step in, clamber on top of a table, lean on a *sukka*

beam, and join the *niggun*.

■ ■ ■

Before me, surrounded by a few dozen *bochurim*, sits Reb Mendel, wearing his distinctive *kasket*. His right hand clutches his cup, and his left is wrapped around his neighbor's wrist. On the table in front of him, next to his cup, a few onion chops swim in a bowl of salted oil. As the *niggun* fades away, he dips a piece of bread, chews, swallows and begins to talk.

"My fellow chassidim, it's time to rejoice. We're chassidim, it's Yom-Tov, we're by the Rebbe; let's say a *LeChaim!*"

Reb Mendel is particular that someone else pours the *mashke*. "You don't help yourself," he explains, "This is a *chassidisher farbrengen*..."

“Nu, Dovid,” he turns to someone seated across from him. “So why don’t you say some *LeChaim*? You came to watch, or to participate?”

After Reb Dovid takes a sip, Reb Mendel doesn’t leave him be. “The question is not only about the *mashke*, or about our *farbrengen*. This is a fundamental question we must ask of ourselves: are we here to watch or to participate? Tonight we heard the Rebbe’s *sicha*, and the same question arises: are we hearing the Rebbe or are we listening to him? Are we onlookers or soldiers?”

“So Dovid, *farshteist*? You understand the question?”

Reb Dovid, a middle-aged *melamed*, with a clever twinkle in his eye, strokes his black-graying beard. “*Nein*. No, Reb Mendel. Please explain.”

“But first say some *LeChaim*. How do you expect to understand? Through your head?! Say some *LeChaim*, open your heart. Allow yourself to understand.”

■ ■ ■

## ■ FIT TO SERVE IN OUR FORCES ■

Reb Dovid sips from his cup, and Reb Mendel begins a story.

“I remember a scene from one labor camp in Siberia.

“The patrol in our camp was rigid. We were surrounded by a barbed wire fence, and the *natchalnik*, the chief of the camp, set up guards around the site lest we escape. In addition to them, a pack of trained dogs would circle the fence, guarding as only dogs could...”

“However, despite the strict watch, one wretched prisoner figured out a way of avoiding the sentry, and planned an escape. But how was he to evade the dogs? He patiently collected scraps of meat, which he planned to use to distract them. Eventually he amassed a nice amount of beef.

“The big day came. He scaled the barbed wire, slipped passed the guardhouse and took flight.





Then, as anticipated, the pack of dogs sniffed him out and charged after him. As planned, he dug into his pocket, and threw them chunks of meat.

“We had awakened from the noise, and were watching. Some of the dogs, tempted by the smell of the meat, stopped for a moment. For a second, they seemed to deliberate between their instinctive urge for the meat, and their vigorous training.

“At that moment, shots rang out from the guard post. The sentry shot the dogs!

“Later, one of the friendlier guards explained to us, ‘If a few scraps of meat could confuse these dogs, they’re not fit to serve in our forces...’”

“Do you understand, Reb Dovid? Someone who could be confused by some meat, however fat and appetizing, and could consider deserting his job, even for a split second, *is not fit to serve in our forces...*”

■ ■ ■

“There was a Yid by the name of Reb Yeine. Some called him Reb Yeine Poltaver, others called him Reb Yeine Kahan; we knew him simply as Reb Yeine.

“How to describe Reb Yeine? Reb Yeine was fierce. He was a fighter. During the most difficult of times, when most chassidim after serving their sentence understandably took backstage, Reb Yeine took the reins in his hands, and bore the financial responsibility as well as the spiritual leadership.

“Every day, our men, fellow chassidim, were being taken away, but Reb Yeine showed us what it means to scoff at *eilam hazeh* –to look him in the eye and not give in.

“But this same Reb Yeine, the same fearless general who sent us into battle against the most ruthless regime, had a heart like no one else. He would sit at home and say *Tehillim*, streams of tears flowing from

his eyes, for his troops on the battlefield.

“He was a person who saw the world with clarity, a person who wouldn’t pause to consider scraps of meat. I want to tell you a personal story about Reb Yeine. But first let’s sing another *niggun*; we’ll get back to Reb Yeine...”

■ ■ ■

## ■ LIKE A STURDY TOWER ■

As the *niggun* draws to a close, the weather takes a bad turn, and it begins to rain. Soon enough it penetrates the lean *s’chach*. We get drenched, yet no one seems to notice as Reb Mendel continues talking.

“During those tough times in Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe would send us short letters. They were short enough to copy and circulate among *Anash*, or to memorize verbatim and repeat to each other. These short letters would breathe life into us. I recall one letter saying, ‘Chassidim are people who remain steadfast, like a sturdy tower, despite the upheavals of the time!’

“*LeChaim*, chassidim! This world is a hollow place. I had a *mashpia* by the name of Reb Chatshe Feigin. Reb Chatshe would say, ‘*Och un vei!* Pity any poor fellow who is made happy by nothingness; pity any poor

fellow who is saddened by nothingness!’

“That’s the way it is. When we lose focus, trivial matters seem so big, and they take over our lives. The trick is to rise above it all, stand sturdy, and remember the *nekuda*. The purpose. The reason for which we were trained.

“And then, no meat, however appetizing, can confuse us. When we are focused, nothingness doesn’t make us happy, and nothingness doesn’t make us sad.”

■ ■ ■

*It dawned on me that this is the tactic of the nefesh habahamis. As long as you put up a fight, he will stay away. But as soon as you show weakness, as soon as you lose focus, that’s when he jumps.*

■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■

## ■ TO OUTWIT THE NEFESH HABAHAMIS ■

A short chossid with a thin gray beard, whom I recognize as a local Crown Heights merchant, walks in, pulling along a friend. The hour is late, they are both soaked to the bone, yet cheerful and vibrant. Reb Mendel notices the merchant, and breaks into a smile. “Ah, Itche! Remember those days in Samarkand? Remember the *Simchas Beis HaShoeivah farbrengen* that we held in the *shul sukka*, trembling with fear? *Oy*, was that was a good *farbrengen*!”

“But our *avoda* is here and now. Itche, we’re talking about keeping focused, and not getting caught up with trivialities. Let me share something with you.

“I remember one night, lying on my bunk in the barracks, watching a spider slowly and expertly spin his web on the wall. When he finished, he crawled to the side to await his prey.

“Sure enough, a passing fly was caught in his trap. Still, the spider did not approach. The fly began to buzz frantically; he tugged at the web and wrestled with its cords. All this while, the spider stood by watched, just as I did from my bunk.

“At one point the fly took a break from his battle. And at that moment, the spider pounced on his prey and devoured him.

“Lying there, it dawned on me that this is the tactic of the *nefesh habahamis*. As long as you put up a fight, he will stay away. But as soon as you show weakness, as soon as you lose focus, that’s when he jumps.”

■ ■ ■

“*Chassidim zainen kluge*: chassidim are clever. The Frierdiker Rebbe once remarked that it’s hard to imagine a chossid a fool.

“Now, we are obviously not discussing business savvy or social smartness. *Chassidus* doesn’t view those as true qualities, rather as developed survival

instincts of the *nefesh habahamis*. No, ‘clever’ in chassidic terms means just the opposite: the ability to **outwit** and overpower the *nefesh habahamis*.

“Just as we have to keep focused and disregard the glitter of the great world, the balloon called *eilam hazeh*, so too must we overcome our own self-imposed blocks. Sometimes we stumble, and the *nefesh habahamis* pounces on this. He’s sly, he’s shrewd, and he manipulates the situation, trying to convince us that this is who we truly are – that this slip is our true stature.

“However, my friends, chassidim are clever. We don’t let ourselves get lured into his trap. We know our true character, and we stay focused. To slip is normal; to get stuck in it is foolish. It’s certainly not *chassidish*, because a chossid is clever. And a clever, focused chossid doesn’t let his *nefesh habahamis* exploit his occasional downfalls to dictate his identity. We know we are better than that.

“The Rebbe Rashab once said, ‘There’s no solution to inappropriate thoughts. Just don’t think them.’ This is a deep *vort*, one we ought to appreciate. We are used to thinking that everything must be dealt with, but often this itself is a trick of the *yetzer hora*, to distract us from *avoda*. Don’t deal with him, just drive the evil away.

“My grandfather, Reb Chaim Futerfas, was a chossid of the *Tzemach Tzedek*. Once, when someone brought an inappropriate book into his house, he immediately decided to throw it out. However, since he didn’t want to touch it, he removed it from the table with his elbows... In the same way, when a clever chossid realizes that every



encounter with his evil side is a test, he doesn't get into discussions with it. He simply removes it, and moves ahead!

"It all boils down to persistence, to being focused."

### ■ DON'T GET STUCK ON THE BRANCH ■

"The townsfolk of a little village deep in White Russia made their livelihood from honey production. The beehives were perched on tall trees in the nearby forest, in order to protect them from thieves and from beasts in search of the sweet substance.

"However, they had one robber they couldn't beat. The bear. The bear just *loves* honey, and the

bear is an expert climber. His thick hide protects him from the bees, and with his great paws he reaches straight for the honey, and spoons it into his mouth.

"One such bear was troubling the townsfolk, until they came up with a plan. They chopped off one branch from the tree, affixed it near the hive and pulled it back at an angle. Should anyone reach for the honey, the branch would flip back and smack him in the face. The townsfolk rubbed their hands in anticipation, as they hid behind a tree to watch.

"Sure enough, the despised bear arrived. With confident steps, he approached the tree, clambered up and reached for the honey. The branch promptly sprang at him, snapping directly into his face.

"Now, bears are very strong and are fantastic



Before Reb Mendel's birth in 5667 (1907), his father Menachem Mendel passed away, and thus the baby was named after him. When he was still a child, his grandmother, who was a friend of *Rebbetzin* Shterna Sara, would take him to Lubavitch every year to see the Rebbe Rashab, and in 5680 (1920), when he was thirteen, he joined Tomchei Temimim. Under the tutelage of Reb Chatche Feigin, he became a staunch chossid of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

After studying in the clandestine *yeshivos* in Kremenchug, Nevl and Vitebsk, in 5690 (1930) he was appointed *mashpia* of the Yekaterinoslav and Odessa branches of Tomchei Temimim. In 5793 (1933) he married the daughter of Reb Bentzion Rubinson, and selflessly dedicated the fruits of his success in business to funding the work of the *temimim* throughout the country.

Reb Mendel was vigorously active in illegally assisting hundreds of *Anash* families to flee the USSR in 5706 (1946), and refused to leave until the project was through. He was caught, and was incarcerated in various labor camps for eight years. Immediately after his release, he picked up the pieces of a shattered *Yiddishkeit* in Tchernovitz and established a *cheder* and a *mikveh*. The younger Russian chassidim were very taken by him, and he was the major life-force in their education.

Thanks to diplomatic pressure from the British government in 5724 (1964), after eighteen years of separation, Reb Mendel was reunited with his wife and children in London. There he was active on behalf of his Russian brethren – until in 5732 (1972), after the passing of the legendary *mashpia* of *Eretz Yisroel*, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, the Rebbe appointed Reb Mendel as his successor. Reb Mendel reluctantly agreed, and moved to the Holy Land, where he became the leading figure of Chabad. He served in this position until his passing in 5755 (1995).

During his lifetime and since, Reb Mendel was—and has remained—the charismatic symbol of the utter dedication and raw self-sacrifice that empowers a chossid to outwit and overcome the formidable challenges of this materialistic world.

climbers, but bears are also foolish. This angry bear began hitting the branch with his powerful blows and bent it backwards. Since whenever a branch is stretched back it will inevitably spring forward, the frustrated bear was now hit a second time, squarely in his face.

“Infuriated, our foolish bear hit back again, only to get the same in return. The war between the bear and the branch continued for hours, until the exhausted bear lost footing, slipped and fell off the tree with a thud. This was what the townsfolk were waiting for. They immediately sprang into action, approached the fallen bear and killed him.

“And this foolish bear never realized that he had totally forgotten about the honey... He had been tricked into fighting with a *branch*. If only he would have ignored that first flick, reached past the branch, and taken the *honey*! After all, isn't that what he originally came for...?

“The same is true of the devious *yetzer hora*. He makes us fall once, and then keeps us distracted by that fall, until our energy is exhausted. If only we would look past it, pull ourselves up, and get on with serving *Hashem*...

“This is the whole point of *simcha* – to outwit and overpower the *nefesh habahamis*. To tell him: Despite my fall, I am a Yid, I am a chossid, and I'm focused on serving the *Eibershter*.

“Now, Itche, give us a *lebediker chassidisher niggun* from those days. Something that tells the *yetzer hora* where to go...

“And you,” Reb Mendel motions to a non-Lubavitch chossid, “why are you standing in the back? Perhaps take a seat

at the table...”

Space on a bench is made for the guest, and Reb Itche bursts into an uplifting *niggun*.

## ■ TO REFOCUS ■

“Dovid, for sure you remember my story about the tightrope walker. *Nisht giferlach*: not to worry, I also remember it...

“I spent so many years in prison surrounded by crooks, and there is much to learn from them. Reb Zusha famously derived seven lessons from a burglar. But let me tell you, if he would have known them from up close, he would have learned many more...

“Anyways, when I was in prison, I had a fellow inmate who boasted that he was a tightrope walker. Indeed, when an opportunity popped up one day, we tied a rope between two trees, and this individual performed his wonderful feat. He walked across the rope, balancing himself in the air with a stick, and reached the other tree. He then turned around, made his way back, and climbed down, to the applause of all assembled.

“After he had done it, he asked me, ‘What do you think is the secret?’ After some contemplation, I answered, ‘The eyes. I saw you kept focused on your goal, never removing your

gaze from the tree.’

---

■ ■ ■

*This is the whole  
point of simcha  
– to outwit and  
overpower the  
nefesh habahamis.  
To tell him:  
Despite my fall, I  
am a Yid, I am a  
chossid, and I'm  
focused on serving  
the Eibershter.*

---

■ ■ ■



“He was very impressed with my answer. Now he asked a harder question: ‘What do you think is the most difficult point?’ That was tricky.

How was I to know? I reviewed the scene in my mind, over and over, until I got it. I answered: "The most difficult phase is the second you had to turn around, lose sight of the first tree, and refocus for the way back..."

"That is the feat of life. This is what *Chassidus* teaches us. The secret lies in the eyes, to remain focused on the goal – not to let money, fame and social trends blind us. To stand like a sturdy tower; to remember the honey.

"And, in times of confusion, to learn how to swiftly refocus..."

■ ■ ■

### ■ HOW DO WE REFOCUS? ■

"But my friends, how do we refocus? For this, Dovid must first say *LeChaim*..."

Reb Mendel doesn't wait for Reb Dovid, and continues: "So how do we refocus? Through *davening*. As Reb Itche *der Masmid* used to say, "*Davening* is the time *ven m'treft-zich mit dem Eibershtn* [when one meets up with *HaShem*]. This is our daily opportunity to remind ourselves what is really important.

"Actually, I remember watching Reb Itche *daven*. In fact, I must confess that when I first saw him *davening*, with so much exuberance, I had the *chutza* to criticize him among my friends. I was disappointed that a Chabad chossid, who was surely expected to shy away from *chitzoniyus*, was pacing back and forth, clapping his hands, and crying out with emotion. From a venerable Chabad chossid I expected more *moichin*, (intellectual restraint).

"When my *mashpia* overheard me talking, he called me over and reprimanded me. He said, "Reb Itche has more self-control than any of us. It's just that the emotions he is experiencing are far more intense. If *you* experienced such inspiration, you would be dancing on the roof!"

"Reb Itche was a Yid of *davening*. Reb Itche would say that you can't repeat a *maamar* in public unless you've first *davened* with that *maamar*. If it's not *durch-gedavent* – if you haven't thoroughly digested it and internalized it in the course of your *davening* – it's not real *Chassidus*..."

"True, we aren't Reb Itche; far from it. But we too can *daven*. We could learn some *Chassidus*, have *kavana*, and allow ourselves to refocus."

■ ■ ■

### ■ TRUE PROPORTIONS ■

There's a sudden commotion, as a *shliach* brings in a large contingent of curious not-yet-*frum* people, wrapped in raincoats. Reb Mendel makes it clear that external garments will not suffice: they must warm themselves from the inside, and makes each one say a *LeChaim*. As the *mashpia* continues talking, the *shliach* provides them with a running translation.

"But sometimes we lose our focus to the extent that even *davening* doesn't help. We sink into the mundane world; materialism replaces idealism and we forget our true identity. We try to *daven*, but it doesn't get off the ground. *S'geit nisht*. For this we need to come here, to be with the Rebbe.

"*Ay, kinderlach!* You spent so much money, you exhausted your body so much, to travel to the





Rebbe. But did you really travel to the Rebbe? Did your *neshama* actually arrive?”

A thin voice is heard from the back. A *bochur* with a refined *chassidisher* face, in his late teens or early twenties, obviously a seasoned *talmid* of Reb Mendel, dares to interrupt. His voice has an edge, somewhat anxious. “You always talk about the *avoda* of traveling to the Rebbe. I don’t get it. What is this *avoda*, if we’re already here?”

Reb Mendel smiles broadly. He seems to appreciate the interruption. “*Ay ay, zisskeit*. Let me tell you, my dear Shneur. You ask well.

“It is all the same point. Traveling to the Rebbe means to refocus, to regain perspective.

“You know what? Let’s say it like this. The first stage of traveling to the Rebbe is the flight. Flight, literally as well as figuratively. You make your way through the airport, and see before you a vast network of offices and stores, buildings and terminals, and various classes of officials each with their own uniform, asserting their status and authority. You feel overwhelmed. You feel lost in the multitudes of people, humbled by the massive structure.

“Then there is the actual process of checking in. One official after the other tells you impersonally

what to do. You may be a respectable person, but here no one recognizes your stature. Your passport is scrutinized with distrust, you’re made to wait in line, follow instructions and be punctual. You feel humbled, out of your comfort zone, and perhaps somewhat intimidated. This is *eilam hazeh*, in full mast, with all its glitz and glamor, rattling your calm.

---

■ ■ ■

*Sometimes we  
sink into the  
mundane world;  
materialism  
replaces idealism  
and we forget our  
true identity. We  
try to daven, but it  
doesn’t get off the  
ground. For this  
we need to come  
here, to be with the  
Rebbe.*

---

■ ■ ■

“As you sit down for takeoff, you peer out of the window. You see before you another large terminal, and yet another. Hundreds of workers dart to and fro, operating heavy machinery, managing the greatest operation of the city, in an area spanning as far as your eye can see. Huge airplanes loom beside you; their rumbling engines remind you of their power, the power of *gashmiyus*.

“Then suddenly you take off. As the aircraft soars off the runway, takes wing and ascends, you glance through your window. Suddenly, the great building, with all of its impressive grandeur, shrinks. Those important-looking people become midgets, the trucks look like toy cars, and the expansive runway becomes a quickly-

disappearing strip of black.

“Within minutes, the entire airport shrivels into a speck in the distance, until it disappears entirely. In so short a time, the great *eilam hazeh* has lost its supremacy to the vast blue sky and its endless rolling white fleece.

“So now tell me Shneur: What changed? Ah? What made the sudden change in your perspective of the great airport?”

Reb Mendel pauses, plucks an onion chop out of the oil, chews and swallows. “Let me tell you what changed. You lifted yourself off the ground, you picked yourself up to travel to the Rebbe, and



suddenly you saw the world in context. You saw the world in its true proportions.

"This is the first step in traveling to the Rebbe: to elevate yourself, to rise off the ground, and to realize that all of *eilam hazeh* could disappear into the distance when compared with the truth of Heaven. And the higher you go, the smaller the world becomes..."

"And that, Shneur, is the *avoda* of traveling to the Rebbe. Being here physically is important, but it still doesn't mean you are *here*. To travel means to leave *eilam hazeh*, to ignore our own *nefesh habahamis*, and to rise, to charge forward to the Rebbe!"

"Nu, Shneur, start a *niggun*."

The thin voice, somewhat less anxious, begins a spirited melody. Everyone joins in, and *simchas Yom-Tov* vibrates through the *sukka* beams.

## ■ TILL THE END ■

In the midst of the *niggun*, the *mashpia* stops short. He needs to rest. "Five minutes," he says, and lies down on a hard, brown 770 bench. Exactly five minutes later, he awakens. This full control over his body, even over his sleep, is just another one of those inner strengths this individual possesses. Perhaps he was made to master this while still at work in some labor camp; today he has certainly harnessed it to his labor of love for his Creator.

As Reb Mendel retakes his seat, Reb Dovid leans over towards him. "Reb Mendel, you were in the middle of a story about Reb Yeine..."

"Oh yes, Reb Yeine! Where were we..."

"It was immediately after the war, when a window of opportunity opened to allow hundreds of *Anash* to flee the Soviet Union. A clandestine group formed, and we worked around the clock forging passports, amassing funds and arranging transport.

"There came a point, after most had already left, when I knew that the authorities were on my heels. I was drained physically and emotionally; it was clear that I had done my duty, and my time was up. I went over to Reb Yeine and informed him that

I was escaping with my family, using forged passports that had been set aside precisely for this phase.

"I will never forget how Reb Yeine reacted. He looked up, set his fiery eyes on mine, and stared straight through me. In a strained voice he said to me, "Look into my eyes, Mendel! Look me

straight in the eye. *Kumt ois, az tzu mesiras nefesh iz eich doh a gvul... mesiras nefesh hot eich a mos...*' [So you are saying that self-sacrifice also has its limits...]

"I was torn. It was an impossible decision."

Reb Mendel stops for a moment. "I didn't take the train. I sent my wife and children out, and I remained."

The *mashpia's* eyes are misty. "Yes, I owe a lot to Reb Yeine. Eight bitter years in labor camps, and another seven stuck behind the Iron Curtain. Ah... those dear years of clarity, of focused devotion to *the Eibershter*, when we were combat soldiers, not passive onlookers – when no meat scraps, or spider webs, or branches, could deter us. Those harsh, sweet years, when we saw *eilam hazeh* in its true proportions..."

Culled by Perspectives from recordings and transcriptions  
of farbrengens with Reb Mendel ע"ה



# The Significance of Chasidic Dancing

The following article is taken from the soon-to-be-published book "Chabad in America – Through the Folders of Nissan Mindel, Personal Secretary of the Chabad Rebbeim" – by NMP-Nissan Mindel Publications ([www.NissanMindelPublications.com](http://www.NissanMindelPublications.com)) headed by Rabbi Shalom Ber Schapiro, Director of NMP and of the Mindel archives.

This article "The Significance of Chasidic Dancing" was written by Rabbi Mindel and checked by the Rebbe. Articles, letters and talks which Rabbi Mindel produced under his own name – to be included in the forthcoming book – were often looked over by the Rebbe, who showed an interest in his personal secretary's general work.

## ■ DANCING: AN EXPRESSION OF EMOTION ■

It has been said that the face mirrors the heart. Inner feelings are portrayed in facial expressions. It is no coincidence that the Hebrew word for "face" *panim* also means "inwardness." All such feelings as pleasure, joy, anger, surprise, disappointment, and the like have their unmistakable facial expression. Such manifestations are spontaneous and involuntary, and hard to repress or control. Stronger emotions call forth additional manifestations, such as vocal emissions and clapping of the hands (or clasping of the hands, as the case may be). In the case of intense joy, even the feet are stimulated. People "dance for joy". Thus, dancing for joy is the highest manifestation of the most intense feeling of inner happiness, a feeling which permeates the entire body, from head to foot.

Chasidic dancing, that is, dancing as defined in Chasidic terminology and concept, is the outward manifestation of a most intense feeling of religious joy and ecstasy. Needless to say, Chasidic dancing is always done by males separately, as mixed dancing (or social dancing) is prohibited by Jewish Law. It is also needless to add that the Chasidic dance is not an "invention." There are many references to dancing in the T"NaCh. Miriam the prophetess danced and sang praises to G-d after the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea; King David whirled and skipped before the Ark of the Covenant. Most festivals, and particularly that of Succoth, the Season of Our Rejoicing, were accompanied by dancing from most ancient times. The Hebrew word for festival – *Chag* – connotes circle dancing, and it is significant that the most joyous festival of all – Succoth – was called simply The Chag.

## ■ TYPES OF DANCING ■

There are two frequently used terms in Hebrew for dancing: *machol* and *rikkud*. The first means circle dance, the second – jumping or skipping, up and down. Chasidic dance includes both varieties, each has a significance of its own, as will be explained later. Inasmuch as the circle-dance, may include also hopping and skipping, the *rikkud* is generic and includes all varieties of Chasidic dancing.

The Chasidic circle-dance is done in a closed circle, with one hand, or both, resting on the shoulders of the dancer in front. There is no limitation on the number of participants. The up-and-down dance is more often done in crowded quarters, where there is no room for a massive circle-dance. Individual Chasidim may come out in a solo-whirling, or hopping-dance, or it may be performed by a duet or more individuals. There is no set pattern of body movements in a solo or duet dance, though a duet usually involves “approach and retreat,” and the locking and unlocking of arms.

The dancing is done to the rhythm, or beat, of a lively Chasidic tune or melody. Certain tunes and melodies are particularly popular on certain occasions and festivals. Both tunes (without words) and melodies (with words) are significant, not only in the rhythm and movements they call forth, but also in their variety of inspiration. Usually, an animated Chasidic tune without words will stimulate a higher degree of ecstasy. Wordless tunes are considered in Chasidus on a higher plane of religious expression, since words are essentially limiting. (A person overcome by emotion is “speechless.”) Some tunes may inspire *Teshuvah* (contrition, etc.), others – a longing or yearning for the mystic union of the soul with its Source, etc.

Chasidic dancing is usually accompanied by hand clapping of the bystanders, who also join in the singing with gusto.

Chasidic dancing is practiced (at any rate by Chabad-Lubavitch Chasidim) on special occasions of Chasidic

---

■ ■ ■

*The mind is  
intrinsically  
too limited to  
serve as the  
exclusive vehicle  
of communion  
with G-d.  
Religious fervor,  
joy and ecstasy,  
transcend rational  
limitations; hence,  
they offer a much  
more gratifying  
vehicle of religious  
expression.*

---

■ ■ ■

get-togethers (“*Farbrengen*,” *Hisvaadus* in Hebrew). These (among Lubavitcher Chasidim) are especially at the terminations of the major Festivals, also on Purim; at the special Chasidic historic anniversaries (19th of Kislev, 12-13th of Tammuz, etc.); on festive celebrations, such as weddings; at meeting and departure of visiting Chasidic groups. It is hardly ever done during prayer, except during the Festival of Rejoicing (Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, particularly during *Hakofos*, when dancing with the scrolls of the Torah).

## ■ HISTORY OF CHASIDIC DANCE ■

The history of Chasidic dance recalls a controversy in the early period of the Chasidic movement. In the late 1760’S, when the movement flourished under the leadership of Rabbi Dov Ber, the Maggid of Miezeritz (d. 1772), successor to the Founder of Chasidus, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (d. 1760), some of the Maggid’s disciples, on their part, had large followings of Chasidim, eventually giving rise to various branches of Chasidus. One of the Maggid’s disciples was Rabbi Abraham of Kalisk, a person of a sensitive emotional nature. He was particularly responsive to that aspect of Chasidus which accentuated religious feeling (“G-d desires the heart”), and made this the mainspring of his Chasidic philosophy and manner of Divine service, and indoctrinated his followers accordingly.

To be sure, Chasidic doctrine recognizes that the mind – “cold reason” – is intrinsically too limited to serve as the *exclusive* vehicle of communion with G-d. Religious fervor, joy and ecstasy, transcend rational limitations; hence, they offer a much more gratifying vehicle of religious expression. Moreover, a purely rational approach to religion and religious experience, apart from the paradox inherent in such an approach, namely, of trying to grasp rationally that which is essentially above and beyond human reason, is, at best,

limited to intellectuals. They, too, must realize sooner or later that human reason often functions as a “brake” rather than “accelerator” to religious fulfillment. Be it as it may, the Baal Shem Tov wished to rehabilitate the ordinary Jew, as well as the scholarly, insofar as Divine service (*Avodas HaShem*) was concerned. Accordingly, he emphasized such qualities as sincerity, humility, and joy as the basic ingredients of true Divine service. Thus he breathed a new “life” into the practice of the repetitious daily Mitzvos, so that they should be fulfilled not as a matter of habit, but as a meaningful religious experience. Of course, this too, was no innovation. To “serve G-d with joy” – “*simcha shel mitzvah*,” was an important element in Lurianic Kabbala, on which Chasidus is based, and, in fact, has its origin in the Chumash itself.

However, as already noted, Rabbi Abraham Kalisker and his Chasidic followers exaggerated the point. In order to set for themselves the proper mood for the daily prayers, they felt the need of a lengthy period of inspirational preparation through dancing and singing. They were thus given to excessive emotional outbursts of religious fervor, such as exaggerated gesticulation, even turning somersaults in the street. This strange display reached its height in 1770, and it naturally added fuel to the already smoldering

opposition to the Chasidic movement which had been unjustly suspected of deviationist tendencies that might estrange Jews from Orthodox Judaism. Whatever reservations one may have against Chasidus, no one will now suspect Chasidim or Chasidus of heterodoxy; on the contrary, Chasidim are now universally regarded as “ultra-orthodox.” But in those early days, when the movement was young and largely unknown, it was the suspicion of heterodoxy that fed the opposition to Chasidus, and the highly charged emotionalism of the Kalisker Chasidim was not calculated to allay the suspicion, unwarranted as it was.

However, even among the Chasidim themselves, though they could better appreciate the religious feelings which prompted the said excesses, many frowned upon the Kalisker school, and the Maggid himself rebuked his said disciple for his lack of self-control. He pointed out to him that dancing should not become an end in itself, and that self-discipline was a *sine-qua-non* element in Chasidus.

## ■ THE CHABAD DANCE ■

While the excessive emotionalism of the Kalisker Chasidim eventually waned, and the whole episode

## ■ THE REBBE'S COMMENTS ■

that they should be fulfilled not as a matter of habit, but as a meaningful religious experience. Of course, this, too, was no innovation. To “serve G-d with joy” <sup>*Simcha shel Mitzvah*</sup> was an important element in Lurianic Kabbala, on which Chasidus is based, and, in fact, has its origin in the <sup>*Chumash*</sup> itself.

However, as already noted, Rabbi ~~Maim~~ Abraham Kalisker and his Chasidic followers exaggerated the point. In order to set for themselves the proper mood for the daily prayer, they felt the need of a lengthy period of inspirational preparation through dancing and singing. They were thus given to excessive emotional outbursts

As mentioned, this article was reviewed by the Rebbe. Here are a selection of comments which offer us unique insight into the Rebbe's view:

In the original article Rabbi Mindel wrote, “It [the Chasidic dance] usually, though not necessarily, moves counter clockwise.” The Rebbe crossed this out.

On the list of dates when *farbrengens* are held, the Rebbe added “especially.” [Implied that

*farbrengens* are not limited to those dates only.]

On the paragraph stating that the mind is “too limited to serve as the exclusive vehicle of communion with G-d,” the Rebbe emphasized “exclusive.” [Since the mind is also a vehicle for connecting to Hashem]

On the statement that “To “serve G-d with joy” was an important element in Lurianic Kabbala,” the Rebbe added “*simcha shel mitzvah*.”

On Rabbi Mindel's words that a Chabad chossid is characterized by “his complete mastery of himself,” the Rebbe crossed out the word “complete.”



turned out to be no more than a passing phase in the early development of the Chasidic movement, the doctrine of “serve G-d with joy” has remained germane to Chasidus, and religious fervor and enthusiasm are still characteristic aspects of Chasidus. Nevertheless, a distinction is sometimes made between “ChaBaD” (Chochma, Bina, Daas, hence “intellectual”) Chasidim and “ChaGaT” (Chesed, Gvura, Tiferes, hence “emotional”) Chasidim, by reason of the varying emphasis on the relative place of these faculties in the Chasidic philosophy and way of life.

In Chabad, reason and emotion are blended into a unified system, where the mind rules the heart. One of the doctrines of the elaborate psychology of Chabad, as outlined in the Tanya, is that the mind is intrinsically and by nature stronger than the heart. Consequently, it is possible, by a conscious effort, contemplation and so forth, to assert its mastery over the emotions. The Chabad Chosid is not taught to suppress feeling, but to use it sparingly and calculatedly. What most characterizes the true Chabadnik in his daily conduct is his mastery of himself; all outward manifestations are measured and calculated; everything has its time and place, and every human capacity must be fully placed in the service of G-d. But the emphasis is generally on *inwardness*. Even dancing, while obviously an external manifestation, has in Chabad a profound inner, even esoteric, quality.

In the vast literature of Chabad, which embraces every aspect of human conduct and deals with the esoteric as well as the exoteric, the significance of Chasidic dance also receives attention. Indeed, it is closely related to some very basic doctrines of Chasidus itself.

It would take us too far afield to discuss at length the various aspects of Chasidic dance in all its implications for the Chosid. Only salient points can be mentioned here, which, for the savant who is familiar with Chasidic literature, will at once strike a familiar ring.

## ■ SPIRITUAL DANCING ■

It is explained in Chabad that everything in the physical world has its counterpart in the spiritual realm.

---

■ ■ ■

*Whatever  
reservations one  
may have against  
Chasidus, no  
one will now  
suspect Chasidim  
or Chasidus of  
heterodoxy; on  
the contrary,  
Chasidim are  
now universally  
regarded as “ultra-  
orthodox.”*

---

■ ■ ■

In dancing the entire body moves. The whole body from head to foot is absorbed in the joy and exhilaration of the dance. However, it is the legs, of course, that play the principle part. The concept of “head” and “foot” is to be found not only in the physical body, but also in the soul. Moreover, this concept is found also in regard to the entire Jewish people, and *kavyachol* in the Shechina (Divine manifestation) itself.

In the physical body the head is supreme both in position and in quality, while the feet are the lowest part of the body. Yet there is a superiority in the feet over the head in that the feet serve as a base for the whole body and carry it about from place to place.

The head may decide where it wants to go, but it is the legs which must carry it to the desired destination. Without the power of locomotion which lies in the legs, the whole body, including the head, would be severely handicapped. Moreover, should the feet stumble even slightly, the whole body, including the head, could crash down with a large bang and be seriously hurt.

The analogy, as applied to the soul is that the soul also possesses a “head” and “feet”. The “head” of the soul is that aspect of it which has to do with the intellectual qualities, while the “feet” are represented by that quality of the soul which is the source of simple faith (*Emunah*). It is simple faith which is the basis of the Jew’s entire spiritual life. This is true of every Jew, without exception. Hence, Chasidic dance emphasizes the great quality of simple faith which, like the feet of the body, can lift the whole body, the head included.

Insofar as the Jewish people as a whole is concerned, it, too, constitutes a single organism (*Komah Shleima*). The Torah scholars, Rabbis and sages, are the “heads” of the people; the ordinary Jew — the “legs”. Obviously

the legs cannot be separated from the head, nor the head from the rest of the body. There must be complete unity and harmony within the organism. So must there be complete unity and harmony among all Jews, if the Jewish people is to be one healthy organism. Thus, Chasidic dance exemplifies this unity. For, in the dance all Chasidim participate and are linked together, both those who are the “heads” as well as those who are the “feet”.

### ■ DANCING ABOVE ■

As for the *Shechinah* – G-d’s manifestation in the world - there is also *kavyochol* “head” and “legs”, as it were, termed in Chasidic literature *Sovev* and *Memaleh*. The former is the transcendental aspect of G-d; the latter - the immanent. Both are, of course, completely unified into the Unity of G-d. The distinction is only valid in our human concept, but not in reality. It is we who distinguish between the Divine attribute as manifest in Nature and that which is over and above Nature. In other words, there are aspects of Divine manifestation which we can comprehend in some degree and those which are beyond the concept of man or angel. In professing the Unity of G-d, as we Jews do daily and repeatedly, we have to understand, as much as it is possible, what this Unity means, and in doing so, we cause the *Or Ein Sof* (Infinite Light) to irradiate our person, our soul, and the world about us. This is a profound and abstruse subject which cannot be discussed fully here; it is fully discussed in Chabad literature. But let it be said here that the Unity of G-d is symbolically represented by the circle, which has no beginning, nor end, though we can speak of the “upper” part of the circle and the “lower” part of it.

■ ■ ■

*The Maggid  
himself pointed  
out that dancing  
should not  
become an end  
in itself, and that  
self-discipline  
was a sine-qua-  
non element in  
Chasidus.*

■ ■ ■

The “mystic cycle” also recalls the famous saying of the founder of Chabad: “G-d converts the spiritual into the material, and the Jew converts the material into spiritual.” In other words, Creation is a “descent” of the spiritual into the material, while Divine service, particularly the fulfillment of the Mitzvoth with material objects (Tzitzis — wool; Tefillin — leather; Esrog — fruit, etc.) constitutes the “elevation” of the material into the realm of the spiritual and holy. Jews complete this “cycle” in the scheme of Creation, and make the Unity of G-d a reality also in our experience. Here, again, we have further significant meaning in the

Chasidic circle-dance.

The “advance and retreat” feature of the Chasidic dance is, of course, symbolic of the fundamental aspect of Divine service *Rotzoi veShuv* – a well-known and basic doctrine in Chabad, as in Kabbalah, and anyone who is familiar with the Chabad literature needs no further elaboration here.

The rhythm of the dance and the beat to which the dance is attuned, have also their particular significance in emphasizing the pulsating vitality that must animate Divine service.

The above by no means exhausts all that can be said about the significance of the Chasidic dance, at any rate to the Chabad Chosid. The inspirational quality of the Chasidic dance has been greatly emphasized by the heads of Chabad, since its inception. Though the occasions for Chasidic dance are few and far between in the course of the year, their inspirational effect is a lasting one, and their influence is felt in the daily life of the Chosid throughout the years.

### Bibliography

Letter by late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi J.I. Schneersohn, Adar II, 5698

Likkutei Diburim, Vol. IV, pp. 1416 ff.

Likkutei Torah, Dev. Nitz. p. 44a; *ibid*, R.H. 62c; 64d.

The Commadments, by Nissan Mindel

Rambam. End of Hilchot Lulav.



*Rabbi Daniel Goldberg*



# “WHOM THE MIGHTY FIST COULD NOT SUBDUE”

**REB LEVI YITZCHOK SCHNEERSON**

This year marks seventy years since the histalkus of the Rebbe's father, HaRav HaGaon HaMekubal Reb Levi Yitzchock a"h, on 20 Menachem-Av 5704 (1944). In commemoration, Rabbi Daniel Goldberg has provided us with a window into his great life.

Rabbi Daniel Goldberg was born in England, where he was attracted to Chassidus in his early teens. After studying several years in Kfar Chabad under the renowned Mashpia, Rabbi Shlomo Chayim Kesselman, he came to study at 770. For several decades, he served as an educator at the Lubavitcher Yeshiva, Brooklyn, NY, while also contributing regularly to “Di Yiddishe Heim,” “The Uforatzto Journal,” and other publications. He is now a full-time freelance writer, translator and editor on Jewish subjects, primarily concerning Chabad.

## ■ MIRACLE IN THE MIDST OF STALIN'S PURGES ■

1939. Soviet Russia was in the throes of Stalin's bloody purges, which were now sinking to new depths of savagery. Many thousands, possibly millions, had been executed, including Stalin's own fellow-revolutionaries who had fought to establish the Soviet Union in the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Military leaders, high Communist party and government officials, prominent personalities from all walks of life, perished miserably in jail and labor camps. Multitudes have been incarcerated, tortured to extract information about others, then condemned to long years in harsh labor camps under inhuman conditions that only the hardest could survive.

As throughout history, Jews suffered more than anyone. Observant Jews, especially dignitaries

such as *rabbanim*, *shoch'tim*, or Torah-teachers, were risking their lives if they didn't flee into hiding. Especially suspect was a beard, and the few who withstood the temptation to remove it feared to show their faces in public. Such Jews had already been arrested in great numbers, some never to be heard of again. Many would die under torture or the harsh prison conditions. Others emerged decades later, broken from their experiences and aged beyond recognition. Rabbis of Jewish communities had virtually ceased to exist: Either they had passed on to a better world, fled the country – a few of the luckier ones – or been arrested and exiled by the ruthless regime.

No one knew who might be arrested next, for everyone had good reason to suspect that neighbors and old friends might now have been forced to become government informers. In addition, there was strict rationing of even basic foods, with

rations often so meager as barely to suffice for staying alive. Trade and commerce among citizens had been outlawed and could incur arrest and the death penalty. For everyone, particularly the few Jews courageous enough to remain faithful to the Torah, life was miserable and full of terror.

In the midst of such depressing conditions, who could believe that the Soviet regime suddenly arranged to bake Pesach *matzos* under strict Rabbinic supervision? And unlike in the past, when some Rabbis had been forced to let their names be used as proof of *kashrus* – although the halachic rules for baking Pesach *matzos* were not followed, rendering the *matzos* leavened (*chometz*) and prohibited for Pesach use – this time, in 1939, nothing about it was false.

Orders were received from the highest levels of the Soviet regime that the *matza* baking must strictly follow all the supervising *Rav*'s instructions. After kosherizing his city's two largest flour mills, he insisted that expensive new sieves be installed, and appointed several full-time *kashrus* supervisors. A ten-paragraph list of rules for baking the *matzos*, which the *Rav* insisted must be observed to the letter, was referred by bakery officials to the local government office for authorization. Their reply: Whatever the Rabbi tells you, follow his instructions precisely, from the start of baking to the finish! The bakeries contacted the *Rav* constantly – for instructions on what to do in specific cases, for what time *Shabbos* begins and ends (to avoid baking on *Shabbos*), and numerous other questions of Torah law. He insisted that dough remaining even a moment beyond the specified time must be discarded. At a time when the ordinary Soviet citizen received just 30 grams (a little over one ounce) of black bread a day, the government actually supplied more expensive white flour for *matzos*, and, at the *Rav*'s insistence, in brand new sacks!

Was this the Soviet Union in 1939 – the revolution of the proletariat that had declared war on all religion? At the time, it surely seemed even more incredible than it does today. But it was the climax of a lifetime for one of Jewish history's most extraordinary personalities.

Giving supervision for the *matzos* was none other than Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, *Rav* of Dnepropetrovsk (formerly Yekatrinoslav) – whose son later became the Rebbe, the seventh leader of Chabad Chassidism.

---

■ ■ ■

*At a time when  
the ordinary  
Soviet citizen  
received just 30  
grams of black  
bread a day,  
the government  
actually supplied  
more expensive  
white flour for  
matzos, and,  
at the Rav's  
insistence, in  
brand new sacks!*

---

■ ■ ■

## ■ BACKGROUND AND EARLY YEARS ■

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was born on 18<sup>th</sup> Nissan, 1878, in the town of Podobranka (near Gomel), Belarus. His father, Rabbi Boruch Shneur, named his son after his own father, the *Rav* of that town, who had passed away at the age of 44 several months before the newborn's birth. Reb Boruch Shneur's grandfather, Rabbi Boruch Sholom, was the eldest son of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, the third Rebbe of Chabad (1789-1866, grandson of its founder, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, 1745-1812, known as "the Alter Rebbe," author of the *Tanya* and *Shulchan Aruch*).

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's mother, Rebbetzin Zelda Rachel, was a daughter of a wealthy resident of Podobranka, Reb Zalman Chaikin, renowned for his generosity. Reb Zalman's brother, Rabbi Yoel, became *Rav* of the town and head of its yeshiva. The brothers were prominent *chassidim* of the *Tzemach Tzedek* and of his son and successor, the Rebbe MaHaRaSh, and Rabbi Yoel had been an outstanding disciple of Reb Peisach Malastovker, one of the Alter Rebbe's leading *chassidim*.

Reb Leivik, as he was affectionately known, was taught in his youth by his great-uncle, Rabbi Yoel Chaikin. "From his earliest years," writes the



previous Rebbe (who was his cousin and later became his *mechutan*), “Rabbi Levi Yitzchak showed extraordinarily brilliant intellectual talents.” His published works – unfortunately only a tiny portion of his voluminous writings are extant – attest to the breadth of his erudition in all branches of Torah scholarship and to the profundity of his original Torah thought. Eventually, he received *semicha* (Rabbinic ordination) from twelve of the greatest Torah authorities of his time, including the renowned Rabbi Chayim Soloveitchik, *Rav* of Brisk, Lithuania, and Rabbi Eliyahu Chayim Meislisch, *Rav* of Lodz, Poland, who, in their *semicha* certificates, praised his scholarship and outstanding qualities in glowing terms.

In 1900, Reb Leivik married Rebbetzin Chana, daughter of Rabbi Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, who had succeeded his grandfather Rabbi Avrohom Dovid Lavut as *Rav* of Nikolayev, Ukraine. Nikolayev’s prominence as a thriving Chassidic community was due mainly to Rabbi Avrohom Dovid, a *chossid* of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, who was an outstanding halachic authority and author of several erudite and scholarly Torah works.

At his father-in-law’s home in Nikolayev, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok spent many years in intensive Torah study for 18 hours a day! After studying every night until 5:00 a.m., he would don *tefilin* (on weekday mornings) to read the *Shema* prayer, and then lie down for a brief rest before praying with the regular *minyan* in *shul*. By 9:00 a.m., he had concluded his prayers. It was in Nikolayev that his eldest son, the Rebbe, was born.

During that period, while Reb Leivik was still

in his twenties, the Rebbe RaShaB, of whom he was an outstanding disciple, drew him into his communal work on behalf of the Jewish people. Starting in 1902, Reb Leivik participated in all important meetings of Jewish communal leaders, and, for example, was active in the campaign to provide Pesach matzos for Jewish soldiers serving in the Czar’s forces during the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War.

The Rebbe RaShaB considered him one of his greatest *Chassidim*, about whom he would say, “In these three I can take pride in this world and the next.” (The other two were Rabbi Mendel Chein, *Rav* of Nezhin, who in 1919 died a martyr’s death at the hand of Denikin’s anti-Semitic “White” bands, and Rabbi Shneur Zalman Schneersohn, son of Rabbi Leib, the *Rav* of Velizh.) Considering the Rebbe RaShaB’s many outstanding *chassidim*, to be so singled out was a rare distinction. The Rebbe RaShaB thought so highly of him that, several years before Reb Leivik’s marriage, he sent him to

examine the halachic status of *mikvaos* in certain German cities. The prominent German Rabbis were so impressed with the young *Rav*’s sharp intellect and broad erudition that they presented him with a gold watch and chain as a token of their esteem.

## ■ THE RABBINATE OF YEKATRINOSLAV

■

The large industrial city of Yekatrinoslav, Ukraine, was founded in 1778. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, over a third of its residents

were Jews, including many *chassidim*. The *Rav* for many years was a renowned *chossid* of the *Tzemach Tzedek* and the Rebbe MaHaRaSh, Rabbi Dov Zev (“Bere-Volf”) Kuzhevnikov, an exalted and saintly



personality, who passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> Teves, 1908. The Jewish community now sought a successor of comparable caliber.

It was a critical era for Russian Jewry. Government-encouraged pogroms had killed and maimed hundreds of Jews and destroyed Jewish businesses and homes in many localities, ruining the Jews' mainstay of support. The persecutions, starting in 1881 and continuing periodically until World War I, provoked a mass emigration of Russian and Polish Jews to Western Europe and North America. It also brought the rapid spread of secular and revolutionary ideologies among young Jews seeking a panacea for the Jewish plight. Jewish communities at such a time needed strong leadership.

With the Rebbe RaShaB's active encouragement, Yekatrinoslav's community selected Reb Leivik for the post. In 1909, at the age of 31, he assumed his first and only rabbinic position, which he occupied for over 30 years.

Immediately, the new *Rav* became actively involved in the community's problems. Discovering that the women's *mikva* was no longer usable, he called an urgent meeting to discuss plans for constructing a new *mikva*. The community's leaders complained that funds were not available for such a costly project. On hearing this, the new *Rav* stood up, took off the expensive new coat he had bought in honor of his new position, and declared: "Take this coat to start the new *mikva* building fund!" Overwhelmed by his spontaneous gesture, which revealed how deeply he felt the urgency of this fundamental *mitzva*, the assembled leaders immediately agreed to find the necessary funding for constructing a fine *mikva*.

Reb Leivik was devoted to his community with all his heart and soul. He conducted communal affairs fearlessly, letting nothing interfere with fulfilling his duties. "An exceptionally good-natured person" (as the Previous Rebbe describes him),

he was also blessed with a rare talent for clearly analyzing any situation. These two qualities made

his adjudication of disputes (in accordance with Torah-law – *din Torah*) famous. Prominent businessmen and others from distant locations came to ask that he arbitrate their disputes, and his decisions were readily accepted by everyone.

He was respected and beloved by all city residents, Jew and non-Jew alike. When his erect, dignified figure walked through the street, his penetrating eyes reflecting deep wisdom and sagacity, everyone stopped to gaze at him and stand aside in respect. Many years later, under the Soviet regime, when it had become dangerous to show any regard for religion, Reb Leivik once entered a large store where hundreds of people, mostly

non-Jews, waited in line. A Jewish eyewitness was amazed to see how, when the *Rav* entered, the entire line moved aside out of respect to let him approach the counter without having to wait!

In Yekatrinoslav, some non-Chassidic Jews appointed a *Rav* of their own. But so popular did Reb Leivik become among all the city's Jews that when the non-Chassidic *Rav* passed away several years later, the whole city accepted Reb Leivik as their sole *Rav*.

During this period, he continued his activism in national Jewish affairs. As one "amazingly expert in the works of the *Kabbala*," as the Previous Rebbe writes, he was entrusted by the Rebbe RaShaB with a principal share of preparing material for the defense of Mendel Bailis in the notorious 1911 blood-libel trial. The priest responsible for the accusation claimed to have found support in the *Kabbala* for his base blood-libel, and the Rebbe RaShaB referred all queries on this point to Reb Leivik.

During World War I, he was active in organizing relief for refugees from Poland and Lithuania. The Russian commander-in-chief, Prince Nikolai

■ ■ ■

*On hearing this,  
the new Rav stood  
up, took off the  
expensive new  
coat he had bought  
in honor of his  
new position, and  
declared: "Take  
this coat to start  
the new mikva  
building fund!"*

■ ■ ■

Nikolevitch, the Czar's uncle, blamed Jews of these border regions for his ignominious defeat by the German forces, summarily evicting them from their homes near the battle zones. They were forced to evacuate into the Russian interior, and many arrived in Yekatrinoslav. Reb Leivik was personally involved in supplying them with food, shelter and other necessities, and opened his own home for refugees, among them Rabbi Menachem Mendel Kaminer, brother-in-law of the Gerer Rebbe.

### ▪ THE NEW REGIME ▪

Jewish troubles were only beginning. The October Revolution of 1917 opened a new and bloody era for the Jews of Russia, which lasted for over 70 years.

The Revolution introduced an era of domestic chaos and civil war, which began to stabilize only during the early 1920's. The new Soviet regime immediately proceeded to implement its war on religion. The Jewish masses, who had mostly been loyal to Jewish tradition, found it increasingly difficult to observe *mitzvos*. Jobs allowing observance of *Shabbos* simply didn't exist; religious articles and books became rare as their manufacture, publication and sale were banned. Especially prohibited was Jewish education for children under eighteen (in groups of three or more), and relatively few mustered enough courage to risk sending their children to underground *cheder*-schools established and funded by the Previous Rebbe, and his devoted Chassidim. Nevertheless, deep in their hearts, many Jews remained loyal to their faith.

Even as they tearfully saw the Marxist indoctrination tearing their children away from them, Jews still found time, for example, to pray

– even for the longer prayers of *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, which they would pray very early in the morning before leaving for work. Especially on *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, *shuls* were packed with thousands of Jews, with many more standing outside for lack of room. Each poured out before G-d his own bundle of woes – before hurrying off to work.

---

■ ■ ■

*After studying  
every night until  
5:00 a.m., he  
would don tefilin  
(on weekday  
mornings) to read  
the Shema prayer,  
and then lie down  
for a brief rest  
before praying  
with the regular  
minyan in shul.  
By 9:00 a.m., he  
had concluded his  
prayers.*

---

■ ■ ■

Of course, parents tried their best to inculcate their children with at least the fundamentals of *Yiddishkeit*, but their efforts were null and void under the onslaught of the ruthless systematic indoctrination students received at school and from their entire environment.

In such depressing times, when Jews also suffered extreme economic deprivation, Reb Leivik helped raise their spirits in the midst of their hardship. His efforts were impeded by continuous harassment of the *Yevseksia* (the Jewish section of the Communist Party), and by special penalties the government imposed on Rabbis. In view of how little they could accomplish, many Rabbis simply resigned their positions and took mundane livelihoods. One of the few to remain at his post until the end was Reb Leivik. Although he, too, officially resigned his

position, due to the prohibitive rent demanded of him as Rabbi (500 rubles instead of 50!), nevertheless he continued fulfilling his Rabbinic functions in secret. The government suspected him of doing so and tried to prove this in court. But the case was dismissed for lack of evidence, for the witnesses would not say a bad word against the beloved *Rav*!

The Jewish spark refused to be extinguished. Many Jews, even staunch party members, would still secretly approach the *Rav* to have their children

circumcised in secret or to perform clandestine marriages in accordance with Jewish tradition. On one such occasion, when a young couple came in the dead of night to request a *chupa* ceremony, Reb Leivik insisted on first assembling the required *minyan* of ten Jews. After finding seven Jews at that unearthly hour, in addition to the groom and himself, he requested the young Jewish government supervisor of his building, whose job it was to spy on his religious activities, to be the tenth! The man didn't refuse and thankfully didn't report it.

Sometimes Jews prominent in the regime or occupying important government posts would ask him to arrange traditional funerals for their departed parents.

One tragic case involved a college student who was friendly with the Rav's sons and gradually became religious. So strong did he become in his rediscovered faith that, even while working during his vacation on a *kolkhoz* (government collective farm), he would rise early every morning to don *tefilin* out in the fields, praying with deep devotion. On *Chanuka*, he even secretly lit candles. He managed even to supply local Jews with *tefilin*, *mezuzos*, *siddurim* and other religious articles, and was personally careful about the slightest Torah law. One Friday afternoon in the summer, while immersing himself in the river in preparation for *Shabbos*, he unfortunately drowned. His sister, who was very close to him, while not religious herself, knew that his last wish would be to have a strict Jewish burial. Secretly, she requested Reb Leivik to make all necessary arrangements for the funeral.

This student had been so highly regarded at his university that the authorities there wanted the

funeral to be well-attended, and all his fellow-students and professors were present, as were many friends and acquaintances. The tragic circumstances cast a pall of sadness over all the assembled. Reb Leivik decided it was his duty to utilize the presence of so many Jews usually inaccessible to proclaim the young man as a shining example of one who proudly remained steadfast in his religious faith, proving how one could be a faithful Jew even while attaining prominence in the secular world. The Rav's outspoken, heartfelt words left an indelible impression on his listeners.

Even years later, as Rebbitzin Chana noted in her diary, when she came to Moscow and later to Paris, she would meet old townsfolk from Yekatrinoslav who related, with tears in their eyes, how they could never erase that tragic scene from their memories, nor forget the Rav's fearless and immortal words. And this was at a time when NKVD (secret police) agents were ever-present, and such a public call for religious commitment risked the most severe retribution.

An even more outstanding example of his courage was at the

Rabbinic conference in Kharkov. As the Soviet war on religion peaked and its details began to seep out to the free world, the Vatican declared a crusade against the Soviet regime. Despite the Soviets' arrogance and ruthlessness, it was not in their best interests that world opinion be solidly against them, so they sought to weaken the Vatican declaration's damaging effect. Among other steps, they called a meeting of 32 Rabbis of Belarus in Minsk, and coerced them into signing a document denying that there was any religious persecution in the Soviet Union.





Intoxicated by this success, the Soviets called a similar meeting of all Ukrainian Rabbis in Kharkov. Realizing that Reb Leivik would be the hardest to convince, the local NKVD chief invited him for a private meeting to explain how such a document would benefit the national cause. After requesting him to participate in the meeting and to sign the document, the police chief tried handing him a first-class train ticket, compliments of the NKVD. But Reb Leivik wasn't flattered. Thanking the police chief, he politely refused to accept it, coolly informing him that he could pay for his own trip, thank you! Such a resounding slap in the face the police chief hadn't expected from a Rabbi; but he had no choice but to receive it in silence.

In Kharkov, the Rabbis immediately noticed a stranger – clearly a government agent – circulating among them. Consequently, everyone was afraid to utter a word. Not so Reb Leivik. In no uncertain terms, he expressed his firm opinion that it would be wrong for the Rabbis to sign such a false denial. Through the several days of the meeting, he continued to storm about the harmful effect such a document would have. Realizing that the meeting seemed doomed to failure, Ukraine's Minister of Culture invited Reb Leivik for a private meeting to censure his unpatriotic behavior. Stressing the urgency of this document for international advancement of the Soviet cause, he also warned that refusal to sign could be viewed as treason and counter-revolution – serious charges potentially punishable by the death-sentence. But Reb Leivik refused to budge. His firmness convinced his colleagues to support him and to resist the government pressure. The conference collapsed in utter failure for the Soviets.

Meanwhile, he had learned of someone who was about to leave the country. As yet unsure of the conference's outcome, Reb Leivik sent a special

messenger to implore him to inform the world press of the scandalous Soviet coercion of spiritual leaders. Within weeks, the front pages of the international press featured the sensational news – accompanied by a cartoon showing a secret-police agent pointing his revolver at a bearded Rabbi sitting at a desk, forcing him to sign the paper before him!

Another instance of Reb Leivik's unflinching heroism was shortly before his arrest in 1939. On an official questionnaire for a government census, one of the questions was whether or not one believed in G-d. Fearing to write the truth, many believing Jews were tempted to reply in the negative. But Reb Leivik stormed publicly that to do so was forbidden by the Torah, for belief in G-d is one of the three fundamental commandments for which one must rather give his life than transgress, and replying in the negative signified blatant denial of G-d's presence. One Jew was so affected by Reb Leivik's

words that, upon learning that his wife had filled out the form in his absence, replying on his behalf that he wasn't a believer, he immediately went to the census office to demand that they return his form, as it had been incorrectly filled out!

Later, after Reb Leivik was arrested, his public call not to sign in denial of G-d was included among the charges against him. He shrewdly justified his stand by explaining that he had simply urged Soviet citizens to be honest in replying to the government's questions.

A crowning achievement was the great *matza* baking project described above. The difficulties Jews had had in previous years in obtaining

kosher *matzos*, despite their strong desire to fulfill the *mitzvah* properly, prompted him to seek means for ensuring the *matzos*' kashrus in the future. He succeeded in reaching the highest echelons of the Soviet regime – Soviet President Kalinin himself!

---

■ ■ ■

*After finding  
seven Jews at that  
unearthly hour,  
he requested the  
young Jewish  
government  
supervisor of his  
building, whose  
job it was to spy  
on his religious  
activities, to be the  
tenth!*

---

■ ■ ■

As a result, the government agreed to supply *matzos* for all Soviet Jews who wanted them, baked according to the highest standards of kashrus, following Reb Leivik's exacting requirements. In that year, when persecution of religion reached its bloody climax, and few Rabbis or influential religious Jews were left who weren't dead or behind bars, it was an accomplishment nothing short of miraculous!

### ▪ ARREST ▪

That year, Jews throughout the Soviet Union did not have to go hungry on Pesach. One unfortunate Jew, though, barely managed to benefit from those valiant efforts.

At 3:00 a.m., on 9<sup>th</sup> Nissan (March 29), 1939, there were loud knocks at Reb Leivik's door. NKVD agents combed through the entire house, sifting through the books of his valuable library and his own manuscripts of original Torah insights, packing them all into large crates. By 6:00 a.m., they were through.

"Rabbi," they said, "put on your coat and follow us!"

Realizing he would likely not be home for Pesach, in less than a week's time, he requested and was permitted to take with him two kilos of *matza*.

So began the ten long months, 303 days, of the 61 year-old Rav's imprisonment in five different prisons: first in his home town of Dnepropetrovsk (Yekaterinoslav), then Kiev, followed by Kharkov and back to a different jail in Dnepropetrovsk. There, after six and a half months, he was informed that he had been sentenced to five years exile in Chi'ili, a primitive village in the remotest reaches of Kazakhstan, Central Asia.

It was several months before he began the month-long journey to the fifth jail at Alma Ata, capital of the Kazakhstan Soviet Republic, from

---

■ ■ ■

*In Kharkov,  
the Rabbis  
immediately  
noticed a  
stranger – clearly  
a government  
agent – circulating  
among them.  
Consequently,  
everyone was  
afraid to utter a  
word. Not so Reb  
Leivik.*

---

■ ■ ■

where he was finally released on 15 Shevat, 1940, so that he could proceed on his own to Chi'ili.

Reb Leivik was so broken physically by his harrowing experiences in jail that when Rebbitzin Chana finally was allowed to see him briefly some time before his departure for Alma Ata – after long, agonizing months of not knowing his fate – she could barely recognize the haggard figure greeting her. He had starved there for lack of kosher food, and was without medical care throughout that time. Yet his first wish was to learn how many days the month of Cheshvan had that year, 29 or 30, so that he would know when to light candles for *Chanuka*!

The following is translated from an account by a fellow prisoner, Rabbi A. Y. Diskin, revealing the profound impression Reb Leivik left on everyone – even non-Jewish prisoners:

"... Who could stand up to such trying conditions? Very few indeed! Among that handful was Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson. He refused to confess to any wrong! He refused to sign that he agreed to the charges! With amazing heroism, he bore the full brunt of torture and suffering to which he was subjected, but he wouldn't submit. He accepted with love the Divine judgment but wouldn't confess.

"He was brought to Kiev; perhaps the 'specialists' there could squeeze out his signature, employing all the notorious means at their disposal. They had here a choice catch, the renowned Rabbi, *mechutan* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe whom they so hated – they were still gnashing their teeth at how they had let him leave Russia. Here was a chance to make up for it, to conjure up an entire network of conspiracy, espionage and counter-revolutionary activity between Reb Leivik and his *mechutan* abroad. Such a network could be used to ensnare

all Rabbis left in the land.

“But even those ‘specialists’ were disappointed. Rabbi Schneerson bit his lips and wouldn’t sign, wouldn’t confess, although they unleashed upon him their full fury. This saved great numbers of Rabbis and religious Jews. In the entire terrible blood-race in which so many millions were ensnared, the Chief Rabbi of Yekatrinoslav remained almost alone as the only one whom the hell-fires could not overcome, whom the mighty fist could not subdue. His story was related from prisoner to prisoner as a legendary tale of wonder. In the Soviet jails they spoke of him as of one superhuman.

“This writer had to endure those same experiences... In January, 1940, they took me in a convoy-train to the great transit prison-camp at Kharkov. Through this jail passed tens of thousands of prisoners. Day by day, new contingents of prisoners and great convoys would arrive there and leave for various concentration-camps. I was imprisoned in cell #22, where over 400 men were crammed together on the floor. Next to me lay the elderly ex-minister of welfare of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic — a veteran Bolshevik who had been ‘purged.’ He was waiting to be taken away for five years exile, and would call the regime’s officials ‘Pharaohs.’ On the other side lay a middle-aged engineer — charged as a ‘saboteur,’ among thousands of prisoners from Kiev who had ‘confessed’ to plotting to blow up the Kiev bridge over the Dnieper river.

“I also met there two other engineers. One, who was very well-known, had been sent by the government to the United States several years before to arrange to acquire machinery, for which he had received a special award. Now, however, he had been caught up in the purges, accused of spying for America and condemned to ten years exile and hard labor. These two engineers spoke in utter amazement about Rabbi Schneerson. They were absolutely fascinated by his outstanding

qualities. They told how, while sitting with him in jail, they would pose him mathematical problems and highly involved engineering questions, which he would solve with lightning speed! But mainly they were impressed by his tremendous courage. He would not rise to go to an interrogation on Saturday night until he received two matches for the *havdala* ceremony! Once he was called to an interrogation while he stood in the middle of the *shemoneh esrei* prayer (the central prayer when we may not direct our thoughts from G-d or move from our place). He continued praying, and the guards — beasts in human form — dared not interrupt. He poured his heart out to G-d, and didn’t move. Only on concluding his prayers did he go with them, but under no circumstances would he sign the charges they set before him.



“I found out he was in cell #6. When the supervisor of our department — a huge, brawny ‘Amalekite’ — came to our cell, I asked to be transferred to cell #6. Sizing me up with a scathing look from top to bottom, he roared, ‘I know what you want. You can stay right here. You won’t have the luck to go to cell #6 — where Schneerson is!’ When I went back to my place, the ex-minister of welfare asked me, ‘What did you ask the Pharaoh?’ I told him I had requested a transfer to cell

#6. ‘That’s where the Rabbi is who won’t sign,’ said the minister. ‘It’s good that at least one man doesn’t give in to these executioners. This Rabbi is a really courageous man!’”

## ■ EXILE ■

The train journey to Alma Ata took a month. Reb Leivik was pained most by the lack of water for *negel vasser* (ritual hand-washing on awakening every morning)! For eleven days, only limited quantities of water were given to each prisoner for drinking purposes only. Reb Leivik used it for *negel vasser*, even giving most of his food rations away for a little extra water.

On arriving in Chi’ili, accompanied by another Jewish prisoner, they could barely have imagined

worse conditions. The primitive local folk were most unwilling to share their mud huts with these strangers. The winter was freezing, with no refuge from biting winds. The huts were full of stifling smoke, and mosquitoes were ever-present and absolutely unbearable. Food of any sort was difficult to obtain and Reb Leivik's health declined even further.

A telegram from Chi'ili informed Rebbitzen Chana where her husband now was. Immediately she decided that she had to be at his side. After sending off some food-parcels, she managed, with great difficulty, to obtain new kitchen utensils and other useful articles to make life a little more comfortable for her exiled husband, and set out on the long journey.

Arriving some time before Pesach, she did all she could in the wretched circumstances to alleviate his plight. Over half a year later, however, she decided to return home. The main reason was simply that it was twice as difficult to find food to feed two mouths. Now, at least, she could send him food-parcels.

Soon after arriving home, Rebbetzin Chana received a note from her husband – not to forget to celebrate *Yud-Tes Kislev* (19<sup>th</sup> Kislev, anniversary of the Alter Rebbe's 1798 release from Czarist imprisonment) in their home with a real *Yom Tov farbrengen* as in previous years!

Several months later, she returned to Chi'ili, with more utensils and food-supplies, some time before Pesach.

#### ■ RECORDING HIS TORAH INSIGHTS ■

Reb Leivik was pained most of all by his lack of Torah books, and of pen and paper to record his

ever-gushing stream of original Torah-insights. In addition to the rare scraps of paper coming his way, he utilized the page edges of the *Tanya* and *Zohar* that his wife had brought him, in order to write many brief commentaries in miniscule handwriting. The difficulty in obtaining ink was alleviated by Rebbitzen Chana manufacturing her own from local herbs and crushed pencil lead.

Lack of space precludes a detailed description here of Reb Leivik's brilliant writings. Suffice it to say that upon publication of the five volumes

of *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok* and *Toras Levi Yitzchok* in 1971-3, the Torah-world was amazed at the originality of Reb Leivik's new approach to Torah explanation, based on the intimate relationships between every single detail of Torah phraseology, even the most seemingly irrelevant, with its underlying Kabbalistic significance. They were further amazed at his incredible erudition that knew no bounds, quoting verbatim from every *parasha* of the Torah, every book of Scripture, every tractate of the Talmud, and numerous works of *Midrash*, *Halacha* and particularly *Kabbala*, all of which he did not have with him while in exile!

Sadly, most of his voluminous writings from before his imprisonment apparently were destroyed during the Nazi occupation of Dnepropetrovsk, when his second son, Berel, was also tragically murdered.

#### ■ ALMA ATA ■

As his five years of exile drew to a close in 1944, Reb Leivik was shocked to learn that the government planned to extend all expired terms of imprisonment and exile. Before an official order would be received by the local NKVD office to prolong his exile, it was essential somehow to

■■■  
*In addition to  
the rare scraps of  
paper coming his  
way, he utilized  
the page edges of  
the Tanya and  
Zohar that his  
wife had brought  
him, in order to  
write many brief  
commentaries  
in miniscule  
handwriting.*  
■■■



forestall it with an official release document. But how could that be obtained?

Since the Nazi invasion of Russia in June, 1941, thousands of Jews had fled before them deep into the Soviet Union. Many found their way to Tashkent and Samarkand, Uzbekistan, while others had come to Alma Ata, capital of Kazakhstan. They included several Chabad Chassidim acquainted with Reb Leivik. Hearing of his sorry plight, they imperiled their lives by bribing government officials with hefty sums to issue an order for his release. When it was finally brought to him on Pesach, 1944, he was at last free to leave Chi'ili.

He arrived in Alma Ata physically broken from his harsh imprisonment and the sufferings of exile. By then he was already afflicted by the illness that was soon to take his life. His devoted friends went out of their way to take care of all his needs, and to make at

at last were hundreds of Jews, refugees including Chabad Chassidim, Polish Chassidim, non-Chassidim – Jews with whom to *farbreng*. His joy knew no bounds. And the Jews finding temporary refuge in Alma Ata responded in similar vein. After experiencing hell on earth in their flight from the Nazi monsters, separated from family, friends and Torah-mentors, here at last they found a Torah-giant to whom they could look up for direction, advice and consolation. They expressed their love towards him in many ways, but it was all for too brief a time.

Although Reb Leivik had so suffered for encouraging observance of *Yiddishkeit*, and despite his deteriorating illness, he now fearlessly resumed his exhortations, even in public. He called for strengthening Torah observance, regardless of all difficulties and despite wicked people who sought seeking to prevent it. His fiery words on *Shovuos* were heard in astonishment and fright by those attending the *shul*;

they hadn't heard such words in many years, especially from one who had been a prominent Rabbi and had suffered terribly for it. The ever-present NKVD spies were in *shul*, too, and, as a result, Reb Leivik's home was visited frequently during coming weeks by NKVD agents, although they always found him confined to his sickbed.

As the end came near, many found excuses to miss work in order to spend time with him. They couldn't tear themselves away from his captivating personality, his wisdom and sage counsel, his staunch encouragement to remain strong in *Yiddishkeit* even in such tragic times. Sensing how they craved for his words, he too fought with his last strength to satisfy their desire.

The final hours approached. Already he barely spoke, only his lips murmured continuously. The

---

*His lips moved  
ceaselessly. Reb  
Hirshel Rabinovitz  
placed his ear  
close to hear  
what he was  
saying. He heard,  
“ve’ikvosecho lo  
nodo’u” – “oy,  
ikvos Meshicha,  
ikvos Meshicha.”*

---



least his last months as comfortable as possible.

Meanwhile, his spirits took an upward turn. Here

evening before he passed away, he suddenly opened his eyes and requested that his hands be washed. “It’s time to get over to the other side,” were his last spoken words. The next morning, 20<sup>th</sup> Menachem Av, his situation worsened sharply. His pains were unbearable and several times he signaled that he should be turned over onto his other side.

His lips moved ceaselessly. Reb Hirshel Rabinovitz, who had distinguished himself in his exertion to help the *Rav*, placed his ear close to hear what he was saying. He heard, “*ve’ikvosecho lo nodo’u*” [“Your footsteps, O G-d, are not

known,” Psalms 77:20] – “*oy, ikvos Meshicha, ikvos Meshicha.*” Reb Leivik was referring to “the footsteps of *Moshiach*,” the era of suffering, physical and spiritual, before *Moshiach*’s arrival, as foretold in the Talmud (*Sota* 49b).

So passed away the last great leader of Russian Jewry, a man of invincible courage in that bitter land, who stood head and shoulders above the storms swirling about him to inspire all with his bravery and fortitude.



## מצוה לפרסם עושי מצוה

Special thanks to  
Reb *Sholom Laine*  
of *The Print House*

for his ongoing support of printing words of Chassidus.  
May the merit of disseminating Chassidus bring him and  
his family much hatzlacha begashmiyus and beruchniyus  
and bring the coming of Moshiach now.



# Thought for Food

The following essay first appeared in Di Yiddishe Heim issue 70 from 5736 (1976).

The Talmud relates that when Rav came to Bavel, *beek'oh matza*—he found a hole (meaning a neglected area in Judaism), *v'godar geder* — and he made a fence; he corrected the problem.

Often, seemingly minor neglects in one generation become permanent lifestyles in later years. Leniencies in observance of *halachah* tolerated in a given period because of pressuring circumstances become automatically acceptable custom, the reason for the leniency long forgotten. Should an individual or a group question the universal acceptance of certain concepts or actions, that probing itself is met with astonishment, which is followed by obstinacy and finally anger if the questioning persists. We need only mention some commonly known examples: A generation or so ago, most married religious women did not cover their hair, with just a few rare exceptions, and nobody thought about it much one way or the other. And just a few years ago everybody, almost, accepted the fact that women and girls, even from the most observant of homes, wore their skirts higher than the knee, and that was that.

It is one of those “ticklish” accommodations to the times that we wish to discuss here, namely the kind of textbooks used in the secular departments of most *yeshivos*.

## ■ FEEDING YIDDISHE KEPELACH ■

When the Frierdiker Rebbe came to America, he was greeted by many people who were proud to have withstood the truly difficult trials and pressures of American life and remained committed Jews. “You can eat in our homes,” they proudly assured the Rebbe, who responded, “They worry what goes into Jewish *tepelach* (pots) but not what goes into Yiddishe *kepelach* (minds).”

This particular American *krenk* did not disappear. Despite the growth of authentic Yiddishkeit, the strong committed communities we have, the problem of what to feed the Jewish mind still remains a problem, with very diverse conclusions being reached by different groups.

*Chinuch* has many meanings. It can mean education, dedication; it can mean teaching and preparing the young for their future. But in the broadest sense, *chinuch* means ourselves, what we really are and what we therefore demand and expect from our children. By examining the schools of various elements of the orthodox community and their policies of feeding the young Jewish mind, we can learn a lot about them and how they view themselves and *Yiddishkeit*.

## ■ UNDERSTANDING GIRLS EDUCATION ■

The attitude of one group towards the education of girls is that it be minimal, story based and oriented, with no formal study of Chumash, Navi and other *seforim*. The arts of housekeeping are emphasized, and in the secular department they see no need to offer more than the absolute basics of the three Rs. This policy reflects their attitude not only about those particular subjects, but about the entire secular world. They feed their girls' *kepelach* sparingly and prepare them for the chores of homemaking in the same way as their grandmothers.

At the other extreme, we find girls' *yeshivos* which are completely "modernized". Their students are preparing for college; some complete only three years of *yeshiva* high school. Their Jewish curriculum may be stimulating, but there is little emphasis on day-to-day *halachic* behavior. The teachers, whose goal is to transmit as large an amount of knowledge as possible in every subject, Jewish or secular, cannot strongly suggest any mode of behavior, and must leave this to the discretion of the student. This is done, of course, to pacify the parents who insist that the students should not be forced or even meaningfully encouraged into any mode of *Yiddishkeit*.

Then we have the "in-between" *yeshivos*, which follow the basic principle of giving a maximum Jewish education in the morning hours with (and we hope not more time to) a secular program in the afternoon hours. Although there are many general suggestions an educator could offer to them, as well as positive criticism on an individual basis, we would like to consider only one general question: What do these *yeshivos* feed the minds of their students in the afternoon hours?

## ■ THE TRADITIONAL CHEDER ■

Traditionally, *yeshivos* and *chadorim* were completely and solely dedicated to the learning of Torah, of *Limudei Kodesh*. Secular studies were introduced into this system by the *Maskilim*, the assimilationists of a century or so ago. For centuries before this terrible break in our holy tradition, our people were content and intellectually productive within our own unique and superior system of Torah education. The cultures of our various lands of exile were of little moment for the majority of Jews.

---

*Leniencies in  
observance of  
halachah tolerated  
in a given  
period because  
of pressuring  
circumstances  
become  
automatically  
acceptable custom,  
the reason for  
the leniency long  
forgotten.*

---

When a certain *yeshivah* in Eastern Europe incorporated secular studies in its program in response to parents' requests, the Rebbe Rashab was moved to tears when he heard about it. In the United States, where secular education is compulsory, *yeshivos*, with very few exceptions, have as we know, secular studies in the afternoon (some, for reasons good and bad, offer the secular studies in the morning or "integrated" with the Jewish subjects throughout the day. This is a good theme for another article).

Our in-between *yeshivah*, wanting to attract parents of every degree of Jewish commitment, and aware that most Americans today feel a necessity to be knowledgeable about the world, feel obliged to offer a secular department equivalent to the public school system. But such a standard incurs sonic problems.

One of the major problems a truly orthodox *yeshivah* will face is the choice of text-books for its secular department. While the general problem of how English subjects should be presented to *yeshivah* students in a proper perspective has been on the agenda of many appropriate conventions, textbooks have been one of those "accepted things" that it is tacitly understood should not be



questioned because of “circumstances”.

We already know that we do not scrutinize too carefully what goes into other, or even our own Yiddishe *kepelach*. Do mothers ponder which magazine to read or forget about? Which book is really improper for themselves? We are of course talking here about Jewish standards. In the face of the answers to these questions, it naturally follows that our own attitudes and mindlessness in this area are reflected in our neglect about choice of books for our children, as we neglect it for Jews of any age.

#### ■ A HALACHIC ISSUE ■

But you can't run a secular department without text-books, right? Before we tackle that aspect, let us make principle number one crystal clear: Just as there are inviolate laws — *halacha* — about what goes into Jewish *tepelach* (pots), there are equally explicit laws about Jewish *kepelach*! Our sages have wisely pointed out that in certain ways “un-kosher food” that is fed the mind can prove more spiritually harmful and do more damage to the Jewish soul than actual non-kosher food in the stomach.

There are two pertinent *halachic* prohibitions about general literature. One, no book may be given to a Jewish child which contains any details of the beliefs of *avodah zara* — that which is contrary to our basic beliefs in Hashem and the Torah. And secondly, anything which is considered *sifrei chemed* — romantic literature which presents male-female relationships in ways contrary to our high Torah moral standards — is also prohibited. The two serve to disqualify the vast majority of text-books, obviously.

It is wrong according to *halacha* to let a child read such books and then explain why they are wrong.

For one thing, the book may be more appealing to a particular child than your explanation. Nor

is it a good idea to use the book and tell the child never to read pages so-and-so. We only arouse the child's curiosity, and forbidden fruits are sweetest. The book should not be given to the child at all. Some *yeshivos*, as a temporary emergency measure, tear out such pages before giving the book to children.

When it comes to fiction, there is hardly a novel without a theme of immoral romance, whether it is the central theme, or a side incident. Do we consult a *Rov* whether a specific book is permissible as readily as we would about a specific food product? If we think about it, we must be aware that the themes and

ideas that are presented in most such literature are thorns that can break the entire moral stature of our people, and distort its perception of family living, as has been the case in many instances.

#### ■ SEARCHING FOR A SOLUTION ■

A thoughtful person will realize that any disregard of the explicit *halachic* rules in any one instance, especially by those who are supposedly committed to uphold and teach Torah, such as *yeshivos* and other holy institutions, will engender cynicism at best, and at worst, serve as a negative example for others, especially students, who will conclude that it is perfectly all right to break Torah rules when they are inconvenient. I was once present when some high school girls were complaining to their Hebrew teacher that the secular department of their school gave them textbooks that were not in accordance with *halacha*.

So what to do? It is one thing to bemoan a problem. But English study is compulsory; we must think of constructive action. We must apply our intelligence and ingenuity and come up with

---

“You can eat  
in our homes,”  
they proudly  
assured the  
Frierdiker Rebbe,  
who responded,  
“They worry what  
goes into Jewish  
tepelach (pots) but  
not what goes into  
Yiddishe kepelach  
(minds).”

---

acceptable solutions. Some suggestions: Extensive use of copied excerpts from various books, and a little extra work (and extra pay) for teachers and experts to prepare proper material on their own.

Instead, most *yeshivos* try their best, and when confronted with something they have neglected or ignored because they don't know what else to do, they come up with some of these responses: "I can tell you about a lot of other *yeshivos* that do worse." (This is an answer?) Or, "When we were young, we read the same books and you can see they didn't do any harm." This may be an appealing answer, but it has no weight whatsoever in *halacha*, as we can realize after a moment's reflection. Because a *baal teshuvah* used to eat *treif* food, say, for his whole previous life, but is now on an exalted spiritual level superior to most people who have eaten *kosher* since birth, does that make it proper to eat *treif*? Can we be so sure we would not have reached far higher spiritual standards, especially in purity of thought, if we had not read such books? No, these responses have little validity.

#### ■ "REGENTS" ■

Another magic word to ward off criticism, in New York State at least, is 'Regents,' the state-wide examinations all high school students must pass in order to graduate. Other parts of the country may also be obliged to give special kinds of comprehensive tests.

A little research will reveal that it is certainly possible to pass the Regents without reading one *halachically* questionable book. There are only a small number of books that must be read to pass the English courses, and the list of choices is long, so that enough acceptable books can be found. One essay question on the Regents must be written about a book on the required list. This can be done with no problems. As for the biology, one can pass the Regents exam,

although it is true that you lose a few points by skipping the questions about evolution. This is a hard choice, but since when do we religious people have it always easy?

As for books chosen from the library, there is no vacation from *halacha* there; the same scrupulous supervision is called for as with text-books. And perhaps if *yeshivos* stressed the importance of being highly selective about our reading material, they would instill a life-long beneficial habit to serve as guidance when choosing books for our leisure hours.

#### ■ SUMMARY ■

May we sum up:

■ ■ ■  
*For centuries  
before this terrible  
break in our  
holy tradition,  
our people were  
content and  
intellectually  
productive within  
our own unique  
and superior  
system of Torah  
education.*  
■ ■ ■

(a) There are many chinuch problems for *yeshivos* in running their secular departments, such as which teachers to hire, the time and emphasis given there *vis-a-vis* the Torah hours, etc. On the top of the list should be the choice of *halachically* acceptable text-books.

(b) The excuses commonly given for the neglect in scrutinizing what goes into Yiddische *kepelach* that we are responsible for are superficial and unacceptable. A lot more effort, concern, and *mesiras nefesh* must be expended. We must begin to repair the hole, to mend the fence, as Rav did. Our innocent Yiddische *kepelach* should only know

and read and think of holy, good Torah matters. We must raise the standards of our holy people to what they always were, and should be.

Our sages tell us that G-d does not demand of a person or a community what he or they cannot really do. But anything that is our Torah Law is certainly within our powers to obey and follow. Let's give it a try.



# LIFE PERSPECTIVE

## A Joyous Simcha

Yanky Kesselman

The lively music reached my ears as I walked up the steps to the hall. As I made my way over to the father of the *kallah*, my old friend Mendel<sup>1</sup> from our *yeshiva* days, I called out “*mazal tov, ba'al hasimcha!*” He turned around, winked, and replied, “You want to speak to the *ba'al hasimcha*? Talk to him,” and points to the caterer. “Now you’re talking to the *ba'al chov*...”

Two weeks later, I met him in *shul* and he shared his all too familiar tale. “When Mushkie became a *kallah*, our joy was boundless. You know how long we had to wait for this day, and the long line of well-wishers, family and friends literally made me drunk with joy.

“After the *l'chaim*, the *chassunah* preparations began. Decisions had to be made about the hall, catering, musician, photographer, flowers, and more. My wife and I sat down with our daughter, to consider the various options, after all this is a once-in-lifetime occasion. We assured her that everything would be of the finest quality, nothing

less than what her friend had last year...

“Well, she got that. And got my first white hairs. I have no idea how it happened, but those vendors sure know what they’re doing. What am I supposed to answer to ‘do you want just a keyboard, or something livelier?’ Or ‘will you have just two hundred, or the standard three hundred seats?’ The florist was even smarter; she spoke directly to my wife...

“And during the *chassunah* itself, just as the *chosson's* friends were really getting into it, the musician tells me the time is up. If I want, he’ll stay for a bag-full of money. What was I supposed to say? No?!

“The pictures arrived today. I took one look and I felt nauseous. The gowns were indeed beautiful, but which normal person, with a normal income like myself, orders such splendid custom-made attire to be worn once?! As I look at a smiling Devorah Leah, my eighteen-year-old, I think, ‘there go your

---

1 Names have been changed.

seminary dreams...'

"Anyways," Mendel sighs, "I've no idea what I'm gonna do. I owe tens of thousands on three separate credit cards, and some more to my brother. He's making a *chassunah* in two months, so believe me; he'll need it back..."

"And let me tell you, the situation doesn't help the sholom *bayis* or my relationship with my children. I've become a nervous wreck. The debt is already being felt in what we considered necessities, and even our children's *chinuch* choices are being compromised. Besides, I've lost all my desire to look for a *shidduch* for my Dovber..."

### ■ A MEANINGFUL SIMCHA ■

Some weeks ago, I approached another classmate of ours, Shmuli, a man of means, and asked him to assist our friend Mendel.

"You know something?" Shmuli tells me, "I've been thinking a lot about this. Never mind the money thing; *Boruch Hashem* I am from the few who could afford it. But it still bothers me: was my own daughter's *chassunah* any more *freilach* or warm than my own? Or then that of my parents?

"I didn't have the cocktail or sushi bar that my

daughter did, or a 5-piece band. Still, I cannot imagine having better memories of the *lebedikeit* and joy from the friends and family at my *chassunah*.

"And my parents? Yes, they had simple food, less people, but *oy* was that *simcha* genuine; I grew up on the stories of my parent's *chassunah*. My mother's mother loved telling of how her friends got together to make the food, how everyone stayed from the afternoon until well past midnight, how the dancing evolved into an all-night *farbrengen*, and how sometime that night my uncle Pinchas decided to grow back his beard..."

"As a kid, my father always told us that the Rebbe doesn't like the exuberant *simchas* that *Anash* were making in America. I never understood the issue. But you know," Shmuli concluded, "I think I'm beginning to get it..."

And so, it was with Shmuli's encouragement, and the editorial work of PERSPECTIVES that I managed to put together the following collection of anecdotes with the Rebbe, pertaining to this issue<sup>2</sup>:

### ■ THE TUMULT OF TRIVIALITIES LEADS TO A LACK OF TRANQUILITY ■

During a *yechidus* in 5724 (1964), the Rebbe





explained his stance to one of *Anash*. "Chazal say that the *possuk* "walk humbly before Hashem" refers to the *kallah* going to the *chuppah*. This could be understood to mean that, although *chassunah* spending is necessary and indeed a *mitzvah*, it must be done in a humble manner.

"The tumult and hype that is made of trivial matters leads to turmoil and a lack of tranquility, and is therefore not a good thing. This is perhaps one of the fundamental reasons for the various enactments by *Gedolei Yisroel* to lessen the wedding expenses. Besides, "the Torah has compassion on the money of *yidden*," and we find certain standards made by *Chaz"al* "not to embarrass those who cannot afford."

"Lubavitch never embraced the notion of "decrees," but for the benefit of *chosson* and *kallah*, it would be very worthwhile to reduce expenses, especially those of sheer extravagance."<sup>2</sup>

## ■ A CONVERSATION WITH REB NISSAN ■

On numerous occasions, the Rebbe expressed his disapproval of the extravagant spending at *Anash simchas*. During a fascinating *yechidus* with the *mashpia* Reb Nissan Neminov, in 5719 (1959), the Rebbe bemoaned the character of American *simchas*:

In 5719, the Rebbe told Reb Nissan Neminov the following, in *yechidus*, and asked that he publicize it:

"I am unhappy with the lifestyle of chassidim

■■■  
*"Let me  
 tell you, the  
 situation doesn't  
 help the sholom  
 bayis or my  
 relationship with  
 my children.  
 I've become a  
 nervous wreck.  
 The debt is  
 already being  
 felt in what  
 we considered  
 necessities,  
 and even our  
 children's  
 chinuch choices  
 are being  
 compromised."*  
 ■■■

in America... A *chassunah* used to be a small, warm affair, where everyone would contribute, by making some food, and so everyone felt they were part of the *simcha*. Here, however, the *chassunah* must be held in a hall, which also adds financial strain on the host.

"Then there is the pressure on the guests to bring a gift, which puts pressure on the friend who cannot afford one to either go without a gift or to borrow the money. Even if a *chossid* is willing to swallow his pride and come without a gift, his wife will not hear of it. And so he's pulled into debt...

"Finally, there is the seating plan. Here, the host must seat everyone according to their social status, without offending anyone. This also adds extra strain on the host. One could well imagine what kind of *chassidishe farbrengen* could take place in such a setting...

The Rebbe raised the challenge of putting an end to this custom. "It is difficult for me to tell any one individual not to act in such a manner, for one cannot tell a person, 'You be the odd one out.' Yet, this conduct extends even to such trivial matters as paying extravagant sums for decorations..."<sup>3</sup>

## ■ YETZER HARA: BORROW MONEY TO OUTDO THE NEIGHBOR'S VANITY! ■

In the winter of 5739 (1979), one of *Anash* reported to the Rebbe that he would make the *vort* for his child in the appropriate manner. The Rebbe replied in a short note [emphasis in the original], "This is **contrary** to the recent custom of *Anash* to **waste** money just to outdo their neighbor, and however vain ("*pust*") the neighbor is, the *yetzer*

2 Some of these passages were borrowed from Eternal Joy (SIE) volume 2 pp. 117-127.

3 Simchas Olam, pp. 110-11.

*hara* incites them to go into debt just to show that they can be even more vain..."

In another handwritten note the Rebbe wrote, "There is **absolutely** no sense in squandering money on wedding expenses. If only you can demonstrate to other young *Anash* that a *chassidishe* wedding consists of abundance in spiritual matters. Precious *Yiddishe* money should not be utilized to demonstrate that you had nicer flowers than others, **and the same for other similar things...**"

#### ■ IT COULD SUPPORT A CLASS FOR SIX MONTHS ■

During the early 5720's, the Rebbe wrote a note to someone, bemoaning the costly *chassunos*: "You are correct in opposing the new *chassunah* 'minhogim' that our fathers did not imagine. The cost is a waste of *yiddishe* money. Moreover, even if it would be free of charge, many accepted practices are inappropriate. The trend has become to make the central aspects into minor features, and the undesirable has become the focal point..."

"Do I have to partake in these ceremonies? And so it will be documented in an album, for the gossipers to discuss the *chassunah's* cost? The expenses of one *chassunah* could cover the cost of a large class in a *yeshiva* in Morocco for more than

six months..."

This note quickly made waves among *Anash*. One *bochur* was prepared to make his *chassunah* in a *shul*, with a meal of bread and herring, forgoing the hot meal. In a letter dated 20 Teves, 5721, Reb Berel Baumgarten asked the Rebbe on this *bochur's* behalf if this is what the Rebbe wants. The Rebbe answered that he obviously does not oppose a hot meal...<sup>5</sup>

During this period, Reb Uriel Tzimmer requested that the Rebbe be *mesader kiddushin* for the *chassunah* of Reb Pinyeh Korf. The Rebbe replied that he had stopped being *mesader kiddushin* since he was unhappy about the extravagant spending for a photographer at the *chassunahs*. The Rebbe said, "With that amount of money it is possible to support a class in the *cheder* in Morocco for six months." When the *chosson* heard this, he hurried to send off the money to the Rebbe's *shliach* in Morocco...

#### ■ MINIMIZING THE EXPENSES INCREASES THE JOY ■

Unfortunately, there are many who truly believe that by cutting down on expenses, the *simcha* will be lessened. The Rebbe addressed this notion, saying, "He is preoccupied to get flowers and



color pictures for his *chassunah* so that he is no different than everyone else. At the first *chassunah* ever, that of *Odom Harishon*, there were no pictures, and yet it went successfully..."

The Rebbe wrote how minimizing the expense will **increase** the joy:

"We easily see that the greatest degree of joy results when the wedding is not made in a formal hall, costing an exorbitant amount, but rather when the wedding is made in as simple and unpretentious a manner as possible."

And on another occasion:

"I completely fail to understand why you find it necessary to place a strain upon yourself and spend elaborate sums of money to hold a large wedding, when what is really vital is for the wedding to be "large" in a qualitative sense..."

"That which the world considers to be "large" and "great" (which in chassidic terminology is termed *veltishe hanachos*, an entirely mundane approach to matters) with a hullabaloo and clamor, is not at all worthwhile for a number of reasons."<sup>6</sup>

#### ■ ABUNDANCE WITH RUCHNIYUS ■

In the year 5727, a father of a soon-to-be *bar mitzvah* was in *yechidus*. On a note he wrote prior to entering, he informed the Rebbe of his upcoming *simcha*. He added as an aside, that since Hashem has blessed him with the means, he plans to celebrate the *bar mitzvah* with great *harchovah* (abundance).

The Rebbe answered that the *harchovah* could

and should be with the *ruchniyus*. The Rebbe's answer made waves, and *Anash* throughout the world began being more particular with their spending on *simchas*.

Following this incident, one *bar mitzvah bochur* and his father informed the Rebbe at their *yechidus*, that in the light of the Rebbe's directive to have *harchovah beruchniyus*, the *bochur* will be saying two *ma'amorim*! The Rebbe awarded them with a broad smile of satisfaction<sup>7</sup>.

#### ■ IN CONCLUSION ■

In recent years, individuals have undertaken serious steps to deal with this issue. Wedding packages were set up to both significantly lower wedding costs through negotiations with the vendors, and to set reasonable social standards. Besides for the financial considerations, the packages also eases the decision-making process, and reduces the phone calls, arrangements, meetings, and headache.

One person involved says that more can be done to lower the expenses of a *simcha* in Crown Heights. "It's all a matter of demand," she told me. "If the vendors see that the consumer is interested in such a system, they will create it."

Indeed, the work is very commendable, and the community is grateful. Still though, we need more awareness. We need to talk about it at schools, in our seminaries, at *farbrengens* and gatherings. The Rebbe called the extensive spending habits 'the work of the *yetzer hara*'. I believe that with some more support and a little more structure, we could be seeing many more genuinely joyous *simchas* and genuinely happy *ba'alei simcha*.

4 Shidduchim V'Nisuin — Likkutei Horaois, Minhagim, U'Biurim, pp. 147-14.

5 Sefer Hatoldos Reb Berel Baumgarten, Iyar 5766, page 34.

6 Igros Kodesh, Vol. 16, p. 40.

7 Hiskashrus issue 361.



## Mivtzoim Revitalized

Rev Sukkos 5736. Reb Itche Meir Gurary entered the Rebbe's room to bring in the *lulavim*. A conversation ensued, during which the Rebbe said, **"When I speak of *mivtzoim*, I am not referring to the *bochurim*. I am [obviously] not excluding them, but my primary intention is for the *ba'alabatishe yungerlait* [=married men]."**

Indeed, when it was difficult for *Tzach's* Rabbi Kastel to recruit *Anash*, he enlisted *yeshiva bochurim*; the Rebbe told him that he actually wanted *Anash* to go.

With this mission statement in mind, Rabbi Betzalel (Tzali) Laufer recently undertook the task of strengthening *mivtzoim* among *Anash*.

"Often," Rabbi Laufer explains, "the reason why *Anash's* *mivtzoim* commitment could wane is because of technicalities. Whereas *bochurim* have arranged routes, literature provided, and a set time in the day for *mivtzoim*, *Anash* simply do not. Years may pass before a *yungerman* is approached to be encouraged to join the activities."

Rabbi Laufer comes to facilitate and encourage *mivtzoim* work, making it easier and more accessible than ever.

### ■ ACTIVE PARTICIPATION ■

The revitalization of *mivtzoim* among *Anash* began with the *Yom Tov mivtzoim*. For example,

this past Chanukah, hundreds of boxes containing *mivtzoim Menorahs* were placed in Crown Heights' *shuls*, so people could take them to their workplaces. Many *shuls* had to restock their supplies.

*Sukkos* comes around, and dozens of *Anash* set out, armed with *arba-minim* sets, brochures, and accurate directions to hospitals, schools, old-age homes, and office and residential buildings. The response is tremendous. People call in until minutes before *Yom Tov* to reserve their supplies and route.

Sometimes it's just a phone call. Before this Tishrei, hundreds of *Anash* contacted Rabbi Laufer with the addresses of business acquaintances, family, or friends throughout USA, to send them personalized *Shana Tova* cards and *Yom Tov* guides.

On civil holidays, with a day off work, many participants return to their *Yom Tov* routes, or pave new routes. With the *bochurim* being unavailable, *Anash* enjoy the day on *mivtzoim*. Of course, seeing the 'Friday boys' on a Sunday always brings out a surprised smile, which is an easy avenue to a *tefillin* laying.

Constantly on the lookout for ways of involving *Anash* and their families, Rabbi Laufer has set up a Mivtzoim Resource Center, at the LYO offices on Kingston Ave, where *mivtzoim* materials are readily available. Another service is the New York Mivtzoim Network. When *bochurim* or *Anash* get



a business card, they share the contact info with *bochurim* going to that area to help broaden the reach and maximize the results.

Rabbi Laufer sees the fruit. “I once called someone to visit a certain person near his *mivtzoim* route. I called again about a new contact in that place - and he had already established a whole new route there...!”



In addition, for a boost of inspiration, an annual *Pre Rosh Hashana Mivtzoim-Volunteers Farbrengen* connects all those who participated during the year, to share insight and motivation about fulfilling the Rebbe's directives. Boruch Hashem, the work pays off. Reb Shmuel Kesselman of *Mivtza Mezuzah* reports a growing participation of local businessmen, as well as an increase in the senior center visitations of *Tiferes Zkeinim Levi Yitzchak* organized by Reb Menachem Gerlitzky.

### ■ A FAMILY EXPERIENCE ■

Many of *Anash* bring their families along, as their children playing an essential role in the work. Many a locked door, and even more locked hearts, has been opened through the children's active participation.

“Besides for the enhancement to the actual *mivtzoim*,” Rabbi Laufer adds, “so many participants have told me of the affect it has had on their home. In many homes, this has become a regular *chol hamoed* activity, with the entire family piling into the car and setting off for their already set route, with the father in the lead.

“Everyone gets to spend positive time together, doing the Rebbe's work, and everyone can add something special. Some make conversation, some could sing, while others say a story. People often tell me that their entire *Yom Tov* experience has been transformed. As one person put it, 'Our Tishrei has become the Rebbe's Tishrei. Rather than focus only on ourselves, our family shared the Tishrei joy with other *yidden*.'”

In many cases, the *mivtzoim* evolves into more. New acquaintances develop into new friendships, and it doesn't take too long before invitations are extended for Shabbos and *Yom Tov* meals.

In conclusion, Rabbi Laufer says, “This is the best thing you could do for the Rebbe, for yourself, for your family, and for the hundreds of thousands of *yiddishe neshomos* waiting throughout New York City.”

# Hundreds Study the Beis HaMikdash

A unique *Kinus Torah*, centered around the *Beis HaMikdash*, attracted hundreds to the newly renovated Beis Medrash Chovevei Torah on Eastern Parkway.

On Wednesday evening, the event organizer Rabbi Shmuel Pevzner of Vaad Hamosifin - Merkaz Anash opened with an overview of the Rebbe's institution that the Three Weeks be filled with the study of the laws pertaining to the *Beis HaMikdash* and an overall increase in Torah and *tzedakah*.

The first speaker, Rabbi Avrohom Gerlitzky, *magid shiur* in Oholei Torah, discussed interesting aspects of *Techiyas Hameisim* as well as the nature of the performance of *mitzvos* in the times of *Moshiach*.

Next, Reb Yoel Kahn, chief *chozer* of the Rebbe and *marshpia* in the *yeshivah* in 770, shared an in-depth discussion of the difference between the first *Batei Mikdash* and the Third *Beis HaMikdash*, namely how the Third *Beis HaMikdash* will include the advantages of both of the previous two.

The evening continued with a *siyum Masechta Chulin* led by Rabbi Shimon Hellinger, director of

Merkaz Anash. The *siyum* incorporated thoughts from a *sicha* of Rebbe on the *masechta's* last *Mishna*.

The main attraction of the evening was a fascinating construction of a scale model of the *Beis HaMikdash* (scaled to size 1:50). Mr. Shimon Frankel of Machon Hamikdash in Yerushalayim, pieced together the 15 feet long and 6 feet wide model that incorporated many intricate details of the structure and *keilim* of the *Beis HaMikdash*. A similar model has been used in Eretz Yisroel for a number of years, and only recently a model was built for display in America.

At each step, Mr. Frankel explained the unique function of each component. He showed where each of the *keilim* was placed and the presented scale size figurines to help realize the enormous size of the actual *Beis HaMikdash*.

Mesmerized, the crowd lingered after the presentation to take photos and to learn more. The evening sure left everyone with a renewed yearning and hope for the Third *Beis HaMikdash*, may we merit seeing it very soon.



# COUNTER PERSPECTIVE

## RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS ARTICLES

### Under-Age Chinuch?

#### BRINGING CHILDREN TO SHUL

Dear editor,

Thanks for your wonderful publication. It is truly refreshing to have a magazine that deals with the issues facing *Anash* with real depth and wisdom. Keep up your good work, and I hope your magazine continues to grow with much *hatzlacha*. It is something that is very much needed.

In issue 3, Rabbi Gancz addressed the topic of bringing children to *shul*. He said that children who disturb *davening* should not be brought to *shul* because it is wrong to ruin the *davening* of the adults.

Although this is definitely a good enough reason for not bringing children who disturb to *shul*, I think it's important to point out that there's another reason for not doing so.

It is no secret that many of our *shuls* have a serious problem with people talking in *shul*, which we all know is a terrible thing that many *seforim* write very harshly about.

The fact is that many of the people who talk in *shul* are the same people who when attending a respectable ceremony wouldn't dare to talk because they understand that it's disrespectful. The reason they have no problem talking in *shul* is because they have been taught to believe that this is acceptable.

The only way we can correct this problem is by the *rabbonim*, *mechanchim* and *gabo'im* making it very clear that having complete silence during *davening* is the *kavod* of *Hashem* and is a non negotiable issue.

Someone who brings a child who disturbs to *shul* is making a clear statement that having complete silence during *davening* is not so important, and thereby causing people to disrespect the *davening*.

In addition, he is also teaching the child that making noise in *shul* is not such a bad thing. If the child will be taught from day one that a *shul* is a place where one must behave with the utmost respect, we can hope that this message will stay with him for the rest of his life.

*Hatzlacha,*

Yosef M.

■ ■ ■

#### THE PROS AND CONS OF A CHILDREN'S MINYAN

Dear Perspectives,

Thank you for such an informative magazine.

It was interesting that when Rabbi Gancz discussed the topic of bringing children to *shul* he did not mention anything about a "children's *minyan*", which lately has become a very popular

thing in Lubavitch *shuls*. I would be very interested to hear his opinion about this phenomenon.

I recently had a conversation with a very prominent Lubavitch *mechanech*, who shared his view with me that he seriously doubts whether attending a children's *minyan* has much educational benefit.

Attending a children's *minyan* is definitely a great help for the mother who can rest peacefully and doesn't need to take care of the child, and also has the benefit that the child says words of *tefilla* which has a spiritual effect on the world and the child. But we still need to ask ourselves whether all this has anything to do with *chinuch*.

*Chinuch* means to begin introducing and training the child to be a proper adult. Adults don't sing the davening on the top of their lungs with their eyes on the nosh. The question remains whether spending childhood years screaming the davening in order to get a prize is preparing a child for davening in *shul* as an adult.

According to the *mechanech* I spoke to, the best way to prepare a child for davening as an adult is through gradually introducing him to the adult way of davening. This is a bit challenging for the parent because it means that the parent must make sure to daven nicely and gradually bring the child to join in the davening.

The *mechanech* claimed that this point can be proven. He said to take a look at the young adults that are davening nicely and we will see that they are the ones who were gradually introduced to adult davening by an adult who was a good role model.

The *mechanech* went further and said that this

point is true about many other areas of *chinuch* as well. For example, he questions whether some of the teaching methods and learning contests that are organized by our schools and *yeshivos* are enough to actually drive the children to be *lomdai Torah* when they are adults.

In his opinion, in order to educate children to be proper *lomdai Torah* they must have educators that are true *lomdai Torah* and must gradually introduce the children to the adult way of learning. Computer or card games and contests and prizes can assist in the process, but if they become the main focus, there is little connection between what the child is doing and the life-long *limmud haTorah* for which we are preparing him.

The same is true with educating children to be *chassidim* and *mekusharim*; the best way to accomplish this is not thru "*hiskashrus* contests" and the like, but rather thru exposing them to true *chassidim* and *mekusharim* and gradually training them to the adult way of *chassidishkeit* and *hiskashrus*.

His point wasn't that there is something wrong with these games and contests, but that more attention must be given to true *chinuch*, because no contest or game can replace that.

I thought it was a very interesting idea which can be applied to many areas of *chinuch* and can be expanded on at length.

I would be interested to know what other educators think about this topic, and I would greatly appreciate if they share their view through this wonderful magazine.

Thank you again for your wonderful work.

C.T.

## The Torah - Our Life

Dear editor

Many thanks for the superb publication. We buy every *frum* magazine, yet none are as stimulating as PERSPECTIVES, which has sparked deep

(and sometimes strained) discussions around our Shabbos table.

Of particular interest to me was the talk of Harav Shochat on *limmud haTorah* in the light of Tanya.



I was amazed. I have learned Tanya and taught it for close to thirty years; yet I never saw what he showed me.

As a result, I have a newfound interest in this holy *sefer* and have begun a weekly *shiur* with my son in *Iggeres Hatshuvah* over the phone. If the

purpose of the article was to strengthen learning, it has certainly worked in our home.

Again, the quality of content is excellent, as is the design. Please keep them coming.

Yours,

Mr. B Davidson

## One Size Fits All (2)

Dear editorial

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your great magazine. Finally an informative and thought provoking magazine dealing with Lubavitch community matters.

However, there was one line in last issue that bothered me deeply. It was the part pertaining to “the system”. If I am not mistaken, this is not the first time this term has been used by the editor to describe the chinuch of our *bochurim* and girls.

This word says it all.

*Chinuch*, the Rebbe has taught us, is not a phase or a time to serve. Being in *yeshiva* is not a period in one’s life from which one graduates. The learning, the *davening*, and the values are to shape the student, so that they stay with him for life. Or as the saying goes, “Once a *tomim* always a *tomim*.”

Besides for being factually incorrect, since a *bochur* is under his *hanhola* until the day he is married, the message is terrible. Referring to the

years of Tomchei Temimim (or of girl’s education) as ‘a system’ through which one passes, smells of a secularist outlook. It is as if we are saying to the *bochur*, “Now that you have graduated, you are your own man, and have the right to your own decisions, not bound to the *hanhola* of the *yeshiva*.”

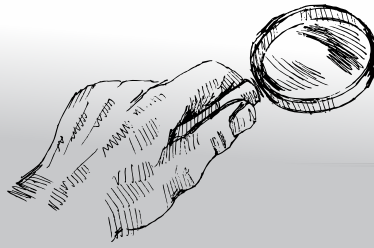
Although to some this may sound like a linguistic nuance, modern psychology has proven how much choice of wording could have a profound effect on the conscious or subconscious levels of both individuals as well as social trends.

The Rebbe has taught us to be particular with our speech to the most extreme extent. He refused to call a hospital a *beis cholim*, rather a *beis refuah*. I wonder how he would react if Tomchei Temimim were referred to as ‘the system’.

With wishes for much success,

D Goldman

Crown Heights



# *my* PERSPECTIVE

## The Yiddishe Home

Rabbi Y.M.

### ■ EVERY HOME A MIKDASH ME'AT ■

The Rov of a very *frum* community was asked, "Why is it that the other communities in town have such expensive and beautiful *shuls* while your community has a simple and cheap *shul*? If the members of your congregation are really as *frum* as they appear to be why can't their devotion to *Yiddishkeit* be seen in the way they built their *shul*?"

"The answer is simple," continued the Rov, "the members of the other *shuls* have mainly one place where they practice *Yiddishkeit*, therefore all the energy and money that they devote for *Yiddishkeit* is invested in beautifying the *shul*. However for the members of our congregation, the *shul* is only one of the many places where Hashem is served. When we build our private homes we build a special room filled with *seforim* which is designated for *davening* and learning. When we send our children to school, we spend extra money to ensure that they receive the best Torah education possible. The same is true with every area of our lives, and therefore there isn't much money left for the *shul*."

For this reason, when the Torah commands us "*v'asu li mikdash*," it adds, "*v'shachantee bisocham*," which means "*bisoch kol echad v'echad*." The Torah is telling us that although we are to build a special house for Hashem, we must not forget that every

*yiddishe* home must be a place of *avodas Hashem*, and that in truth every *yiddishe* home is a *mishkan* for Hashem.

### ■ THE MOST IMPORTANT INSTITUTION ■

What is the most important institution of *yiddishe* life? Is it the *shul*, the *yeshiva* or perhaps it is the *mikvah*?

It can definitely be argued that the most important institution in *Yiddishkeit* is the *yiddishe* home. *Yidden* have lived very strong *yiddishe* lives in villages that did not have a *shul* or other *mosdos*, and there where great *talmidei chachomim* who never went to *yeshiva*. While *shuls* and *yeshivos* contribute tremendously to *avodas Hashem*, the place where most of *avodas Hashem* actually takes place is the home. The home is the number one factor that determines a child's level of *avodas Hashem*.

Every woman who received a strong *chassidishe chinuch* knows that no matter how great her accomplishments outside the home are, the greatest accomplishment of her life, the one in which she truly takes pride, is being the director of the great institution which is the *yiddishe* home. Every *chassidishe* man knows that as busy as he may be

outside the home his number one responsibility is to his home, to be the best husband and father that he can be.

### ■ ARE OUR HOMES A TRUE *MIKDASH ME'AT*? ■

In recent years, it has become quite common for *bochurim*, and even girls, to go away from home for Pesach in order to help *shluchim* with their *sedorim*, or to make *sedorim* in places that don't have *shluchim*.

While this is definitely a worthy endeavor, it is sad that for many of these young people, instead of this being an act of *mesiras nefesh* that they need to give up the great experience of being home for Pesach, they are actually very happy that they have an excuse to be away for Pesach.

In a well functioning true *yiddishe* home, Pesach is such a special experience that no child wants to miss. In fact, in a real *yiddishe* home, every Shabbos *seuda* and even a weekday supper with the family is an experience that no one wants to miss.

If children are looking for places to go for Pesach because they don't want to be home, than our homes are not the *Mikdash Me'at* which they are meant to be.

The same is true with summer vacation. In some families, having children spend vacation with the family is seen as a tragedy, and if a child must spend some time with the family instead of going to camp, he is treated to special trips or the like to "compensate" for his "misfortune".

Anyone who grew up in a well functioning family will tell you that spending vacation with the family was the highlight of their year; it's a time for children to spend relaxing time with their parents and siblings.

If our children don't feel that way we must rethink the way we manage our *Mikdash Me'at*.

### ■ DIGNITY AND REFINEMENT ■

One of the first things the Shulchan Aruch tells us is that even when one is in the privacy of his own bedroom he must act with refinement and dignity

just the way he would act if he were in the presence of a great king, because we are always in front of Hashem.

Just as someone who works at a prestigious company has rules of conduct and must act in a refined and dignified manner, so must every *yid* always act in a refined and dignified way. This applies to the way of speaking, dress, the dealing with people, eating, and the like.

In addition we all know that "*derech eretz kadma litorah*," means that basic rules of manners that are accepted by society must be kept, even if they are not written clearly in Torah. These manners are "*kadma litorah*." They are things one must know before he learns Torah, and one doesn't need the Torah to teach them.

In order to make their home a true *Mikdash Me'at* it is the duty of the parents to behave in a very dignified and refined manner. In most cases, just doing so will cause the other members of the household to act in a similar way, thus causing the atmosphere of the home to reflect the royal palace that it is.

This includes talking and behaving with politeness, sensitivity, and friendliness, just as people behave in the presence of a king, like saying please and thank you, greeting people warmly, showing interest in other people, etc. In most cases, it will catch on and after a while, the rest of the family will be acting in the same refined manner.

In the ideal *yiddishe* home an effort is made that the house should be clean, organized, and comfortable. Among other reasons, this is because being in a nice place actually enhances ones *avodas Hashem*. Being in a clean organized room will cause a person to behave in a dignified and organized manner.

In the ideal *yiddishe* home every person, even a young child, is treated with respect and sensitivity. A father will ignore an important phone call in order not to keep his children waiting, and go out of his way in order to make a child more comfortable.

When parents behave in this manner there won't be much need for them to scream or argue with their children. When someone is in a respectable environment and is treated with respect it is natural

for them to act back with respect.

Of course, the ideal is not always easily attained. Maintaining a warm *yiddishe* home can be challenging and sometimes daunting. Yet, it is essential that we recognize the makeup of a true *yiddishe* home, so that will can work towards the correct ideal and understand how it is best reached.

### ■ WARMTH AND SIMCHA ■

Many *baalei teshuvah* describe how impressed they were the first time they visited a *chassidishe* home. What impressed them most was the warmth and *simcha* that they saw in *chassidishe* homes.

Every one who received a *chassidishe chinuch* knows that *simcha* is one of the basics of *Yiddishkeit*. Just as a soldier can only succeed in a war if he is *b'simcha*, so too a *yid* can only be successful in serving Hashem if he is *b'simcha*. For a chossid, being *b'simcha* is not something optional that depends on life's circumstances. Rather a chossid knows that regardless of his personal situation, he must be *b'simcha* every second of his life. A chossid knows that not being *b'simcha* comes from a lack of *emuna*, and from not properly understanding ones purpose in life.

Similarly, *ahavas yisroel* is one of the basics of *Yiddishkeit*. A chossid must truly care about other people, be excited when something good happens to someone else and feel bad when something not good happens.

True *simcha* and true *ahavas yisroel* shouldn't be hidden in the depth of one's heart. It must be expressed and shared with others. For this reason, when one enters a true *chassidishe* home, one

immediately senses the *simcha* and caring for other people in the air.

For a home to be a true *chassidishe* home it is crucial that the parents be expressive about their *simcha* and warmth towards other people. This may present a challenge for parents who are naturally more reserved, but they too must make an effort to infuse their home with warmth and happiness.

When parents ask their children and others how their day is going with warmth and interest, and express happiness when something good happens and show sympathy when something not good happens, they are causing their home to be a warm place.

For a Shabbos meal to be the special experience that it should, be both parents must show that they are in a good mood and happy to be there. Good moods are contagious and that will put everyone in to a good mood.

If a mother sees serving the Shabbos *seuda* as a burden, the children will sense this and have the same feeling, and no one will be interested in helping her serve. However if she shows that she's excited to serve the meal, the children will feel excited as well and they will be happy to help.

Parents who express warmth and happiness won't need to scream and argue with their children because people that are treated with positivity and warmth will usually act back in a similar manner.

*The writer is a mechanech in one of our mosdos in North America. His full name was withheld upon request.*

## Where Did You Get That From?

*Getzel Rubashkin*

A father, who was not so careful about talking in *shul*, was once talking to his *Rov* about his son. "I speak to him often about the sanctity of a *shul* and the importance of *davening*. When he talks in middle of *davening*, I remind him that we are in *shul*. He stops when I tell him, but overall he doesn't seem

to talk any less. I hope he will eventually internalize what I am teaching him."

"Ah, yes," the *Rov* replied, "I am sure he is internalizing exactly what you are teaching him. I am sure that when he grows up and has children of



his own, he will also tell them all about the sanctity of a *shul*."

*'Acharei hamaasim nimshachim halvovos'* - hearts are moved by actions. Not words; action. Of course, words can be very moving but only when they are not contradicted by the actions of the speaker.

What message, then, are our children receiving? The words we tell them about the importance of our ways, or the many compromises and adaptations we make based on the world around us?

Increasingly powerful technology finds its way into our homes and our pockets, bringing with it sludge and slime, while we tell our children about the beauty and purity of a *yiddishe neshomo*. We speak of the importance of a *Chassidisher chinuch* and send our teachers to be trained by secular academics and psychologists or in their methods.

Is it any wonder that so many of our children are confused and conflicted seeing how we value the contributions and handiwork of the "culture" around us, all while touting our heritage and its teachings?

We are *Chassidei Chabad*. We hold fast to the ways of our Rebbeim just like our fathers before us. Not only in classes and lectures, but also in our daily decisions. The Torah tells us *'Tomim tihiye im Hashem'*, we must not explore other paths, even if they seem impressive, effective or useful.

Many mistake our *Ahavas Yisroel* for every Jew regardless of his behavior or ideas, as "Lubavitcher tolerance." Nothing could be further from the truth. Our love for every Jew is based on his *neshomo*! We are not tolerant of every behavior or idea. If an idea or behavior is contrary to Torah or *darkei haChassidus*, we reject it in the strongest possible way. We simply recognize that when it comes to our connection with each other, behavior doesn't even

factor in. Our love is not a comment on, much less acceptance of, his behavior or ideas. It has nothing to do with it at all, one way or the other!

We teach our children to stay away from strangers, even and especially if they are offering candies. If you are approached, we tell them, run to an adult. This advice is equally valid for adults, especially *chassidim*. Stay away from strangers. Even and especially if they are offering "improvements" to our way of life.

In this time of *'choshech koful umichupol'*, when darkness can easily be confused with light, stay away from strangers. Just like we teach our children, if someone offers you an idea that you did not learn from your father, that you did not see in your home, even if he looks *frum* and dresses like you do, run to an adult.

We have a Rebbe, who was *moiser nefesh* to give us everything we need. As the Alter Rebbe promises in Tanya, in *Toras HaChassidus* we can find everything we need. And as the Alter Rebbe says in Tanya, if you are having a hard time finding it there, go to an *eltter chossid*, to a *mashpia*. His being *bottul* to the Rebbe and steeped only in Torah and *Chassidus*, will keep him from being confused by the *veltishe hanochos* and he will know what is truly good and what is truly bad.

Chanukah teaches us that the outcome does not determine if something is pure or not, even if it belongs in the *Beis Haikdash*. It can bring light and warmth and even made be from the same tree as *shemen tahor*, but before it can be used, we must ask, "Where did it come from and who touched it along the way?"

Especially in our times, if something does not have *chosomoi shel Kohen Godol*, the approval of the *Kohen Godol*, then it is not for you.

## My Wonder Full Experience

*Zalman Z.*

I'm wide awake, but I know the route so well I may as well still be sleeping. I walk quickly, I'm a bochur, no one walks faster. My lips murmur what I

remember by heart, anything to save a few minutes. I try not to look around and see what I should not.

As I walk I wonder, what will today be like at my

destination? Will my visit be short or long? Will I get a coveted aisle seat? Any seat at all? Will I meet an old friend?

I'm getting close, someone sticks out their hand while I wonder if money is the last of their problems. I try maneuvering around people standing about as I near the entrance.

I'm in.

I quickly adjust to the thick air and smell of melting wax. I recognize many faces but there's no time, most will be lucky to get just a nod. I make my way to a seat, too late, it's gone. I'll have to find another. I try to ignore the feelings of claustrophobia as I settle down. A fellow native mentions something to me in Hebrew, I answer without bothering to correct him. Hebrew rules here. I gaze towards the front, the light is on. I can't help but feel happy as I'm reminded of the mountain top torches used to signal celebration years ago. I wonder if they compare in their struggle to stay accurate.

We're starting, I strain to hear the Chazzan, the singing nearby doesn't make it any easier. I glance at my bench mate, will we get along or will I stand with my knees bent? Something is poking my back, but it's as if I'm immune. I try to focus and remember where I am. Someone is shouting in the distance but I don't hear. Out of the corner of my eye I see a friend struggling with his new *tallis*. I'm happy for him and can't help but wonder when that will be me. The sounds of a ringtone pierce the ear, it's left uninterrupted. I try not to judge.

I notice the crowd has gotten bigger as I try to catch up. Suddenly my hat is knocked off, I expect no apology and none is forthcoming. Yet I feel at home, I'm amongst my brothers and realize you can't choose family. I pull out my phone, only to be left wondering what made me do that. A loud conversation plays out behind me as I wonder if they realize their surroundings. Brochures and publications are all over, each grappling for my attention. The behavior of some nearby gives me a passing inspiration, especially from the young. Someone shows me a certificate; does it look like I work for a living? I wonder.

The crowd slowly starts to disperse; I myself grow impatient from the onslaught of *kaddeishim* as I wonder if somewhere there is a soul that's appreciating it. It dawns on me that although I've said the words my thoughts were elsewhere. I'm left wondering why the devotion that once was is today hard to find. I need to get out, I'll finish *tehillim* at home I decide. I wrap it up, climb over a few people and head straight for the door. I give a fleeting look at the *farbiesen* table, the table I like to think of as an altar, where people bring their gifts in the spirit of "*thou shall not leave any of it over*".

I open the door, a wave of second hand smoke makes me cringe as I distance myself from the building some stay away from. But I know I'll be back tomorrow, back to the place I find it easiest to picture my dear Rebbe giving me encouragement to do what I know is right.



ב"ה

# AVAILABLE NOW!

HIGH QUALITY DVD



At Local Judaica Stores  
or email: [info@MerkazAnash.com](mailto:info@MerkazAnash.com)

מרכז אנ"ש  
MERKAZ ANASH

# מאתיים שנה

להסתלקות אדמו"ר הזקן

בעל התניא והשו"ע

- עיונים במשנתו ודרכו בקודש -



MP3 או DVD



[www.merkazanash.com](http://www.merkazanash.com)

347.471.1770



# GOT TIME?

Boost your week  
with practical  
inspiration.



MP3



MP3



DVD / MP3



DVD / MP3

## In Local Judaica Stores

or online: [www.MerkazAnash.com/multimedia](http://www.MerkazAnash.com/multimedia)

מרכז אנ"ש  
**MERKAZ ANASH**

📞 347.471.1770

@ [info@MerkazAnash.com](mailto:info@MerkazAnash.com)



# The NEW Connection

*Chassidishe Inspiration at Your Fingertips*



# 347.498.0008

## Connection Highlights

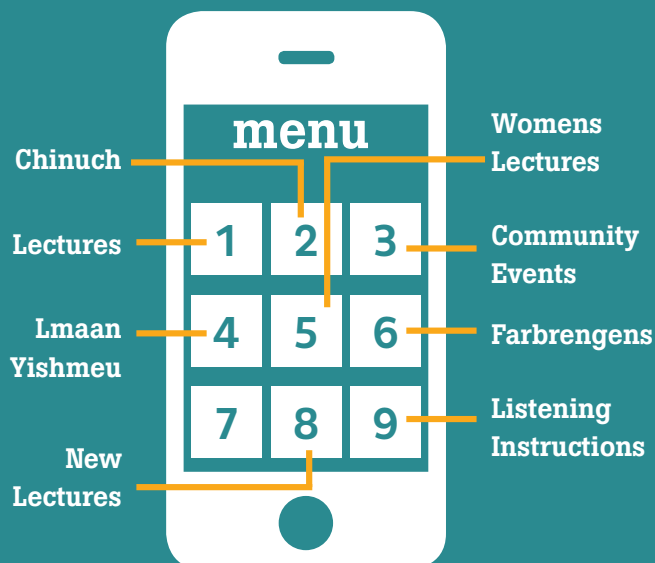
Why Tell Stories of Tzadikim? - Rabbi Leibel Schapiro - Dial » 1 » 1 » 1

Asai Lecha Rav - Rabbi Zalman Dubinsky - Dial » 1 » 1 » 2

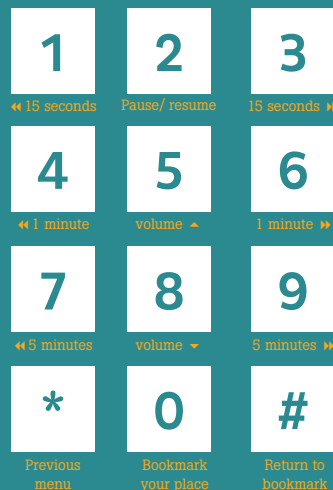
Keeping the Street Outside and Chinuch Inside - Dr. Shlomie Zimmerman - Dial » 2 » 3 » 1

Is Your Home Safe? - Rabbi Shlomo Sternberg - Dial » 3 » 1 » 4

The Meaning of the Twelve Psukim - Rabbi Ezra Schochet - Dial » 6 » 1 » 1



## controls



# New Website

Read, Listen, Watch,  
Download, Order and more!

Articles &  
Booklets

Lma'an Yishme'u

Perspective  
Magazine

[www.MerkazAnash.com](http://www.MerkazAnash.com)



# Place mezuzos correctly.

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger

Mezuzah Placement Service

347.422.7704

MishmeresHabayis@gmail.com

FOR ALL YOUR CRAFT, EDUCATIONAL TOYS, AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES AT  
**HEAD OF THE JEWISH CLASS**  
 THE TEACHERS' CENTER OF CROWN HEIGHTS

VISIT US AT: [WWW.HEADOFTHEJEWISHCLASS.COM](http://WWW.HEADOFTHEJEWISHCLASS.COM)

715 EMPIRE BLVD • BROOKLYN, NY (BETWEEN ALBANY & TROY / SIDE DOOR) PHONE 718-953-3755 • FAX 718-953-6527



EVERYONE  
WELCOME!!



UNBEATABLE  
PRICES



WE SHIP  
WORLDWIDE!!



HEAD OF THE JEWISH CLASS IS YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR ALL YOUR  
 JEWISH CLASSROOM NEEDS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS,  
 ARTS & CRAFT PROJECTS AND HOLIDAYS ITEMS...

*We put you...*



*...in the right frame of mind.*



ORDER CONTACTS ONLINE @  
[WWW.SEEVIEWOPTICAL.COM](http://WWW.SEEVIEWOPTICAL.COM)

EYE EXAMS ON SUNDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS BY APPOINTMENT

SEE VIEW OPTICAL  
T. 718.756.0361 • 311 KINGSTON AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11213



# CROWN KOSHER

We "Meat" Your Needs.

WE CARRY A FULL LINE  
OF MEAT & POULTRY

TRY OUR FRESH, READY TO EAT:

- FROM THE GRILL
- CHICKEN & MEAT
- KUGEL & KNISHES
- COLD CUTS
- SALADS
- SIDE DISHES
- SOUPS & FISH
- AND MUCH MORE

We make beautiful cold-cut  
platters for all your simchas!

Full Service/Self Service



**413 Kingston Avenue**  
(Bet. Empire & Montgomery)  
**(718) 774-9300**  
Fax: (718) 774-6292

Check out our website  
for a full menu and weekly specials  
**[www.CrownKosher.net](http://www.CrownKosher.net)**

*Special Discount for  
Kollel\* & Shluchim  
\*with Kollel Card*

We have  
a **full** line of  
**takeout** food  
made **FRESH**  
on premises without  
MSG or preservatives.

**Cholok -  
Beis Yosef  
Now  
Available**





# Get Lma'an Yishme'u *your way.*

## print



## email

Subscribe to [info@lmaanyishmeu.com](mailto:info@lmaanyishmeu.com).



Pick up a printout of Lma'an Yishme'u at your Shul.  
If your Shul would like to receive Lma'an Yishme'u, email us at:  
[info@LmaanYishmeu.com](mailto:info@LmaanYishmeu.com)



## web

Visit us online to read or print out the latest or back issue of Lma'an Yishme'u.

# lmaanyishmeu.com

# *Precious Moments Studios*



**Professional Video  
For All Occasions**

**By Zalman Tevel**

**917.803.6524**

*We keep your smiles alive forever!*



ב"ה



**KIRSH**  
**JEWELERS**

The Jewelry Store of Crown Heights

WELCOME to our new upscale showroom



718-771-3924

facebook.com/kirshjewelers



The smartphone is  
now a true sage.



Introducing the Mezuzah Guide app from Machon Stam

Free download for iOS and Android devices



בס"ד



Sifrei Torah · Tefillin · Mezuzas

Higher standards of kashrus and quality.



For more information:

718-778-STAM (7826)

**MachonStam.com**

415 Kingston Ave ■ Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213