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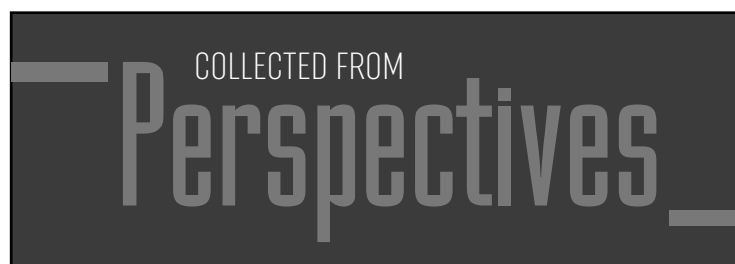
# SNAPSHOTS

## COLLECTION



MERKAZ  
ANASH  
מרכז אנש

COLLEGE



# CHASSIDUS

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- 12 STORIES -

ONE

## WHY LEARN CHASSIDUS?

Reb Berel Baumgarten of Argentina worked with many young people to help them learn Chassidus. On 2 Elul 5721 (1961), he wrote to the Rebbe regarding one young man with whom he was in contact, who had told Reb Berel that he does not enjoy learning Chassidus. He relayed that if it would be an imperative like *nigleh*, he would learn it anyways, but since it was not obligatory, he had decided to do without it.

The Rebbe responded in writing, directing Reb Berel what to say:

“He should be explained that he has played enough with Torah and *mitzvos*. Every *Yid* is obliged to think of Hashem’s greatness at least three times a day.

A *Yid* also has the *mitzvos* of unifying, loving and fearing Hashem.

“Unlike in loftier generations, these *mitzvos* can now only be performed through study and contemplation. If he does not learn Chassidus, tens of years could pass without him fulfilling these *mitzvos* even once.

“And concerning the lack of enjoyment from the learning,” the Rebbe concluded, “*mitzvos* were not given for our pleasure.”

*(Tadfis mitoch Sefer Hatoldos Reb Berel Baumgarten, Iyar 5766, p. 46)*

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

Prior to the first visit of the Toldos Aharon Rebbe of Yerushalayim in 5719 (1959), the Rebbe told me to be present in the room during the *yechidus*. At first I did not understand the reason.

During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked him if the *bochurim* learn Chassidus in his *yeshiva*. He replied, “Certainly.” The Rebbe asked which *sefer*, and he answered that every *bochur* learns whichever Chassidus he prefers.

Although the Rebbe accorded him great respect, the Rebbe stated his opinion firmly: “Just as in *nigleh* there is a structured learning, so must there be in Chassidus. It could be the Noam Elimelech, the Sfias Emes, or the Shomrei Emunim of Toldos Aharon, but it has to be structured.”

After the *yechidus*, the Rebbe told me to write it up, so it could be preserved. The Rebbe elaborated, “In every *chassidishe yeshiva*, there must be a serious study of Chassidus, even if only for half-an-hour. The Baal Shem Tov heard from Moshiach that this is the key to his coming; how can we ignore it?!”



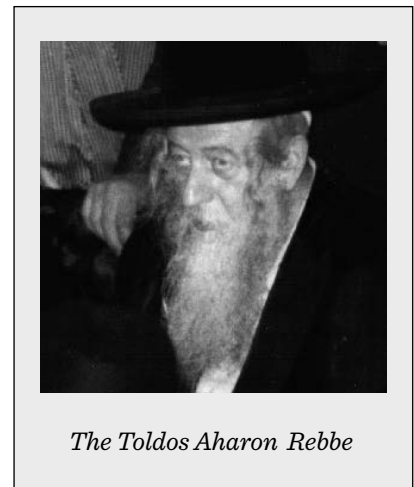
During the Toldos Aharon Rebbe's visit in 5721 (1961), a heated discussion ensued between the Rebbe and his guest. The Rebbe insisted that a *Yid* must prepare for *davening* by learning Chassidus, while the Toldos Aharon Rebbe maintained that having the simple *kavana* suffices. During the course of the conversation the Rebbe expounded, “*Davening* must be with all of one's limbs. This obviously does not only refer to the physical limbs, but also to the various facets of the person's character: his intellect and emotions.

“Now,” continued the Rebbe, “if a person does not understand the depth of his *tefilla*, he is utilizing only a shallow part of his mind, thereby relinquishing its depth. *Davening* must be with every facet of a *Yid's* being, including that depth.

“The only way to achieve this would be by learning and contemplating the inner meaning of the *tefilla*, through the study of Chassidus.

“It does not have to be Chabad Chassidus,” the Rebbe concluded, “but Chassidus it must be.”

(*Toras Menachem*, vol. 30, page 319)



*The Toldos Aharon Rebbe*



## FOUR STOLEN WATERS ARE SWEETER

When the current Belzer Rebbe was in *yechidus* with the Rebbe, 4 Adar 5741 (1981), the Rebbe inquired why the Belzer Chassidus had not been published. The Belzer Rebbe explained that Belzer tradition opposes the printing of rebbeim's *droshos* and writings.

The Rebbe became very serious. "*Halacha* dictates that if a sick person feels he needs medication, the patient's wishes are fulfilled even if doctors dispute the need. Only the patient himself can most accurately diagnose his own condition. *Am Yisroel* is crying for Chassidus. It is improper to withhold it from them."

The Belzer Rebbe complied. Despite Belzer tradition, Belzer Chassidus was published.

On another occasion, when the Rachemstrivker Rebbe had *yechidus* in Shevat of 5737 (1977), the Rebbe asked the Rachemstrivker to publish the Chassidus of his ancestors, the Chernobyler rebbeim. To his response that tradition frowns on this, the Rebbe replied, "*Aderabah!* This will only strengthen the learning of their Chassidus; stolen waters are always sweeter!"

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*Am Yisroel is crying for Chassidus. It is improper to withhold it from them.*

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*Reb Chatzkel Besser*

## FIVE 100-PERCENT OF THE REMEDY

"I have been *davening* in 770 for more than a year, and I see the Lubavitcher Chassidim. I also come from a *chassidishe* home of *Rodomske* chassidim. However, at home, while we learned the *Rodomske Tiferes Shlomo*, we also opened other *seforim* like *Noam Elimelech*. So why is it that the Lubavitchers study only Chabad Chassidus?"

This question was posed to the Rebbe by Reb Chatzkel Besser, vice president of Agudas Yisroel of America. The Rebbe's answer included a *moshol* from current events:

"Some years ago, Dr. Fleming's discovery of penicillin shook the medical world with its power to kill bacteria. In order not to harm the body, it was at first given in a low dosage. However, as the bacteria began resisting the penicillin, more had to be given. And later, more was added.

"Similarly with Chassidus. The Arizal taught some *pnimius HaTorah*, but the Baal Shem Tov's teachings included a larger dosage, due the needs of the generation. However, the worldly bacteria has begun resisting to that too. Now, we need the Alter Rebbe's potent Chassidus, which utilizes 100-percent of the remedy."

“Chassidus is for everyone,” the Rebbe would always say, “even for small children.”

Whenever the Rebbe would speak at Tzivos Hashem rallies, the *sichos* would always be designed for the young in their language. Nevertheless, they contained messages culled from the depths of Chassidus thought.

Reb Zusha Posner, *mashpia* of Tomchei Temimim Lod, relates:

“There was a teacher of nine and ten year olds boys who was in *yechidus*. The Rebbe told him that he should teach his pupils about *gadlus haBoreh* – the greatness of Hashem.

“The *melamed* was befuddled. ‘Gadlus haBoreh? How will these children understand?!’ he exclaimed.

“The Rebbe answered with a smile, ‘If Hashem has managed to be *metzamtzem* (condense) Himself so much that we are able to realize His greatness, surely He could be *metzamtzem* Himself just a little bit more so that a child will comprehend.’”

*Surely Hashem*

*could be*

*metzamtzem*

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Reb Mendel Dubrawsky, *shliach* to Dallas, Texas, relates the following personal story:

“I was turning fourteen and I went to the Rebbe for my birthday. In those days, we were only allowed to have a *yechidus* if we brought a detailed report from our teachers with us, which we had to hand to the Rebbe at the beginning of the *yechidus*. The Rebbe would look over the report and only then begin to speak.

“On my report, my teacher wrote that I was doing well in *nigleh* but that I did not have a *geshmak* in Chassidus.

“As soon as I walked in, I handed the Rebbe the report. The Rebbe read quickly, and within seconds reached the part about Chassidus. The Rebbe looked up, straight at me, and said, ‘*Ich farshtei nit, vi ken men nit hoben a gishmak in Chassidus?*’ (I don’t understand, how one could not have enjoyment while learning Chassidus?)

“Those words penetrated my heart and changed me forever.”



After reciting a *maamar* at the Yud Kislev *farbrengen* of 5722 (1961), the Rebbe began telling stories of the Mittlerer Rebbe. “During the times of the Mittlerer Rebbe, there was an outpouring of Chassidus. It happened sometimes that he recited Chassidus three times on one Shabbos, sometimes at four in the morning!”

“The lesson is clear,” the Rebbe continued. “One could study Chassidus three times a day, in the middle of the night, at four in the morning too...”

And then the Rebbe began saying a second *maamar*.

As the *farbrengen* continued, the Rebbe suddenly began preparing for third *maamar*! This is how the renowned *maamar* of *Padah Besholom 5722* came about.

Indeed, three *maamorim* on one Shabbos...

(*Toras Menachem*, Vol. 32, page 249)



*Reb Meilach Tzviel*

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*The Rebbe looked surprised, and responded, “Es ken nit zain!”*

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## NINE IT CAN'T BE!

The Rebbe urged chassidim to think about the Chassidus they learned and to make a routine out of this practice.

Reb Meilach Tzviel A”H related the following instances of the Rebbe’s involvement in this realm:

A *bochur* I knew asked the Rebbe for direction in his *avodas Hashem*. The Rebbe guided him to spend time contemplating on the Chassidus he learned that day, before he begins *davening*. Additionally, the Rebbe instructed him to recap “the *nekudah*” (a focused summary) of the idea before he begins *Birchos Krias Shema*.

Another *bochur*, who was diligent in his *avodas hatefila*, told the Rebbe that he spends ten minutes every day thinking over a chassidic concept, but he was frustrated since “he didn’t see any results”. The Rebbe looked surprised, and responded, “*Es ken nit zain!*” (It can’t be!)

When the *mashpia* Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman was in *yeichidus*, he reported that there was a *bochur* in Kfar Chabad who spent half-an-hour a day thinking Chassidus. The Rebbe lifted both hands in the air, expressing his delight.

*(As heard from Reb Meilach)*

## TEN TO THINK CHASSIDUS

“A chossid must set aside time, at least once a week, to detach himself from his surroundings, to forget about the world, to forget about himself, and to contemplate an *inyan* in Chassidus,” the Rebbe demanded at the *Acharon Shel Pesach* 5744 (1984) *farbrengen*. “Not for any purpose, such as to repeat it in public or to publish it, just purely as a purpose unto itself.”

Reb Nachman Sudak A”H shared what he heard from the Rebbe at his first *yeichidus*. The Rebbe guided him to think about the Chassidus he was involved in at the time, namely something he had learned that morning or the past week.

This was a deviation from what he was doing until then: to think over a specific *maamar* many times, irrespective of what he was learning then.

“I think the Rebbe was telling me that thinking Chassidus which is in the recesses of my mind doesn’t compare to something that’s fresh. Its impact on me will be more real,” Reb Nachman concluded.

*(Main Nachman, page 3)*



*Reb Nachman Sudak*





Reb Shmuel Levitin

## ELEVEN

## THE DOORS ARE OPEN

During one *yechidus* of the *hanholas hayeshiva*, on 5 Teves 5725 (1964), the *mashpia* Reb Shmuel Levitin reported that *bochurim* were active in *hafotza*, hoping the Rebbe would derive *nachas* from it.

The Rebbe replied, “This is a way comfort me?! Since 5715 the doors are open for Moshiach, through *hafotzas hamayonos*, yet there is a lack of vessels!”

Reb Shmuel didn’t give up. “Hundreds of *yungelait* stand at the Rebbe’s *farbrengens*!”

“If these two hundred *yungelait* would leave the *farbrengen* and spread Chassidus,” the Rebbe responded, “Moshiach would certainly already have arrived! This is feasible, since today there are no true opponents to Chassidus; one simply must learn Chassidus himself and disseminate it *chutzah*...

“The *niggun* ‘*Uforatzto*’ spread some years ago, but there is still work. The doors opened ten years ago - and they are still open!”

(*Otzar Hachassidim NY*, page 230)

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## TWELVE

## WHAT WILL BRING MOSHIACH?

When the Rebbe celebrated his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, he shared his personal *simchah* with the chassidim.

Referring to his marriage to the Friediker Rebbe’s daughter, the Rebbe said to the assembled, “This is the day that connected you to me and me to you; together we will toil to bring about the true and complete *geulah*.”

As the *farbrengen* came to a close, one of the elder chassidim rose and cried out, “We ask for a *bracha* that the Rebbe lead us towards Moshiach!”

The Rebbe responded, “Everyone can and must learn Chassidus – that’s how we will bring Moshiach!”

(*Toras Menachem*, Vol. 10, page 207) **P**

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# TORAH STUDY

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- 17 STORIES -

ONE

## TORAH IN AMERICA

At *Yud Shevat fabrengens*, the Rebbe would make an appeal for *Keren Torah*, which was first established at the *farbrengens* of 5715 (1955).

“There are two issues which must be battled in America,” the Rebbe began. “One is the culture to overemphasize *parnassa* concerns. Materialism is the norm; parents worry and children are fed *limmudei chol* - usually with little bearing on their actual future livelihood.

“Another issue is the obsession with publicity. In America, actual pleasure from anything is only derived from the fact that it is known!”

The Rebbe concluded that we must take these values head on. Any *bochurim* who are willing to dedicate their lives to Torah, and not think about their parents or their *parnassa* worries, should submit their names. Anyone wishing to financially support this endeavor, should do so on the condition that they receive no public acknowledgment. Thus the two *kelipos* were combated.

(See *Toras Menachem*, vol. 13, p. 244)



## TWO

## DAILY COMMITMENT

During one *yechidus* with Mr. Peter Kalms (*Teves*, 5737), a famous British philanthropist and activist, various world issues were discussed.

Suddenly, the Rebbe said, “I would like to change the topic. It would be a good idea for you to begin setting aside time to learn Torah.”

To this Mr. Kalms replied, “Certainly, Rebbe. I will set aside time twice a week for Torah study.” But the Rebbe was not satisfied with this. “No, it has to be every day. It could be for just a few minutes at a time, but it must be a daily study. It is not important that you learn from the original; many *seforim* have already been translated.”

“And,” the Rebbe added with a smile, “If you do it in public, without keeping it a secret, others may learn from you...”



*Mr. Peter Kalms*

### THREE

## "HOW COULD YOU PASS A DAY WITHOUT LEARNING?!"

The famous *mekubal* of *Yerushalaim*, Harav Bentzion Moshe Yair Vainshtok, took ill and was hospitalized in New York. His son, Reb Yosef Menachem, was at his side, assisting in all that he can.

"One day, in the year 5718," relates Reb Yosef Menachem, "the Rebbe, from whom I used to ask advice regarding my father's treatment, asked me what I am learning. I explained to the Rebbe that I am at my father's side from early morning until late at night, and so I simply don't have the time.

"The Rebbe would not let me go and said to me, 'Surely, you can learn three to four hours a day. How could you let a day go by without learning?! You could learn *Gemara*, *Mishnayos* or *Chassidus*, but I don't want to hear any excuses!'

"The Rebbe spoke with me for half an hour and did not relent, as if I was a *Lubavitcher chossid*, until I promised to learn every day. It was then that I realized how much Torah learning means to the Rebbe."

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*You could learn Gemara, Mishnayos or Chassidus,  
but I don't want to hear any excuses!'*

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*Harav Yitzchok Meir Hertz*

### FOUR

## "JUST START"

The Rebbe would not only demand of chassidim to accomplish more than they were doing, but to accomplish more than they thought they were capable of.

Harav Yitchock Meir Hertz, the Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivas Lubavitch London, reminisces, "When I was a *chosson*, I went into *yechidus*, and the Rebbe told me to finish the entire *Shas* within the first year of my *chassunah*. In a state of shock, I mumbled to the Rebbe that I don't see how I would be able to do accomplish such an undertaking, in so short a time.

The Rebbe smiled to me and replied: "*Du heib on, vestu shoin gefinen tzait!*" (you start; you'll already find the time). And indeed, Harav Hertz accomplished the Rebbe's directive, much to his own surprise.



## FIVE

## GIVE ME YOUR SOUL!

On the 6<sup>th</sup> night of Chanukah, 5747, the Rebbe suddenly asked Reb Leibel Groner whether Reb Yossel *HaKohen* Gutnik was present at the recent *farbrengen*. The Rebbe immediately continued: “*zog im der possuk*” (tell him the *possuk*).

Reb Leibel was mystified. To which *possuk* was the Rebbe referring? The Rebbe explained, “I am referring to the *possuk* “*ten li hanefesh*” (give me your soul). Tell him I want a detailed list of his *shiurei Torah*!”

The next day, after Reb Yossel handed in a summary of his *shiurim*, the Rebbe called him and his father Reb Chaim, for a special *yechidus* in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. When they entered, the Rebbe lifted both hands in the air, and said with a smile, “We live in a strange age, when a *Yisroel* asks for Chanukah *gelt* from a *Kohen*...”

The Rebbe turned to Reb Chaim and said, “I want you to publish a book of all your *pilpulim* and talks.”

Then to Reb Yossel, “From you I also want *Chanukah gelt*. I want you to increase in your *shiurim*.”

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*“Ten li hanefesh - Tell him I want a detailed list of his shiurei Torah!”*

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## SIX

## HAVING TIME



When a boy would come into the Rebbe before his *bar-mitzvah*, he would receive a special *brocha*. Often, the Rebbe would ask him to say a part of his *drasha*, on which the Rebbe would often comment on the content and delivery.

One *bar-mitzvah bochur* was asked by the Rebbe what he prepared to say for the *bar-mitzvah*, and upon his reply was asked to begin reciting the *ma'amar*.

When the *bochur* reached the part where the *ma'amar* says, “*Yidden say to Hashem, ‘We want to learn Torah, but we have no time!’*”, the Rebbe stopped him and asked lovingly, “And what is with someone who does have the time? He certainly must learn! And now, since you have the time, are you going to learn?”

Reb Ya'akov Yosef Gurkov *a"h*, of London, served as a fundraiser for the Lubavitch *mosdos*. Since his work was very time consuming, he asked the Rebbe whether he should lessen his learning schedule in order to spend more time fundraising.

The Rebbe answered:

“Generally speaking, it is safe to assume that it is the work of the *yetzer hara*, convincing you that you do not have time for both. If indeed it is necessary,

you could catch up on your learning during *leil shishi* (Thursday night).”

On another occasion, the Rebbe told a Shliach:

“When you learn your daily *kvias itim laTorah*, the telephone should be like on Shabbos. It may ring and ring, but it cannot be answered.”

(*Hiskashrus*, issue 359)



A well-known Lubavitch activist related part of a *yechidus*, from Tishrei 5737. The Rebbe spoke with great anguish.

“I never hear from you regarding your daily Torah learning. I understand from this that you indeed do not learn on a daily basis.

“This puts a question mark on your entire work. It is well known that the Tzemach Tzedek dealt with thousands of chassidim, and nevertheless he still found time to write a wealth of *divrei Torah*. Although we are not the Tzemach Tzedek, we are able to accomplish something of his level!”

The Rebbe raised his voice, and continued, “Not to have structured times for learning *iz a vilde zach, un a vilde hanhoge* (is a reckless thing, and a rash behavior).

“In fact, when there is no learning, the activities themselves suffer as well. We see time and again that those who have set times for learning every day are more successful...”

“And the most frightening thing of all is that you *schlep* me into this! You justify the fact that you’re not learning by saying that you are doing my work!”



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*When there is no learning, the activities themselves suffer as well. We see time and again that those who have set times for learning every day are more successful...”*

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*Beis torah ubeis tefillah* (house of study and prayer). This is the phrase used by the Rebbe, to describe the Shul at 770, almost every time it was mentioned.

And so it was that the Rebbe demanded from all Lubavitcher *shuls*, that they serve not only as a place of *davening*, as a classic American 'synagogue', but rather as a center of Torah learning.

Harav Tuvia Blau, the founder and Rov of the Chabad Shul in the Sanhedria neighborhood of Yerushalayim,

had a personal yechidus, in Tishrei 5728 (1967). He heard from the Rebbe the following words:

"Every Shul, especially one in Eretz Yisroel, must have a *shiur torah* on a daily basis.

"Moreover, a Shul which has a connection to our holy *Rebbeim*, is obliged to also have a *shiur* in Chassidus every day."

(Heichel Menachem vol. 1, p. 221)



A gathering where Anash and Bochorim would share novel Torah thoughts, coined *Kinnus Torah*, was first instituted in 5718. The Rebbe held the *kinnus* very dear, and showed his appreciation by delivering a *chiddush* Torah in the Farbrengen preceding each gathering.

During one such *kinnus* in 770, *Isru Chag Shavuot* 5726, Reb Yeshayahu Hertz, a *chassid*, and his future

father-in-law, HaRav Friedman, were conversing outside. Unexpectedly, the Rebbe passed by.

Stopping where the two were standing, the Rebbe motioned with his hand, as if to exclaim, "What are you doing here?!" HaRav Friedman pardoned himself, saying that they were discussing issues related to the *chassidunah*. In response, the Rebbe exclaimed, "In the middle of the *Kinnus Torah*?!", and repeated again, "In the middle of the *Kinnus Torah*?!"






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*You are now communicating  
with Hashem through His Torah!  
You don't even know if it's an  
important call...*

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At most major *farbrengens* in the early years, one *sicha* would focus on the role of women. Oftentimes, the Rebbe would empower the women to take charge of their children's *chinuch*.

"The righteous women of our age must educate their children not to follow the ways of their fathers and grandfathers!" the Rebbe declared at the *Moshiach Seudah* of Pesach 5723 (1963).

"These men are too engrossed in *parnassa*. Even their Torah study has lost its vigor; it's done by rote, without life, without a *niggun*. In bygone days, it was unheard of to learn Torah without a singsong.

"As soon as the telephone rings," the Rebbe continued, "they pick it up. Why do you pick it up? You are now communicating with Hashem through His Torah! You don't even know if it's an important call...

"The solution lies with the mothers, to help their children rebel against their fathers. The obligation to honor one's father doesn't apply here. Indeed, the fathers may be educated by their own children."

(*Toras Menachem*, vol. 36, p. 334)

At the famous *farbrengen* of *Chamisho Asar B'shvat* 5731, the Rebbe said to "conquer the world with learning Torah."

From the archives of Harav Ephraim Wolf, a great Lubavitch *askan* in Eretz Yisroel, we find some of the activities that were done in the aftermath of this unique *farbrengen*.

In a telephone call from Harav Chodakov, on 4 Nissan 5731, he was directed to utilize *Chol Hamoed Pesach*, to involve as much of *anash* as possible in learning. The next day, he received an instruction to shorten

the leave given to the *kollel yungeleit*, so that they begin learning immediately after *Yom Tov*.

In a fascinating *yechidus* with the *Gerrer* Rebbe, the *Leiv Simchah*, on 30 Shvat 5731, the Rebbe told him:

"This year on *Chamisho Asar B'shvat*, I was at the *Ohel*, and I 'was told' to *farbreng*. And so, I spoke about learning Torah. It turned out, that a few days later, there was an attempt to enforce *yeshivah bochurim* to sign up for the military in the U.S.A. It was only due to "conquering of the world with learning" that this was withheld!"

## THIRTEEN

## I SIMPLY HAVE A TA'AYVAH!

One of the new ideas which were introduced by the Rebbe in Lubavitch is the concept of a *kollel*. The reason for this, the Rebbe explained at the *farbrengen* of *Chof Av* 5733: "I simply have a *ta'ayvah* (desire) that *yungerleit* should sit and learn!"

The Rebbe closely monitored the learning and development of the *yungerlait*, and would sometimes express disappointment to the *Roshei Hakollel*.

In a 5735 *yechidus* with the *Rosh Hakollel Tzemach Tzedek* of *Yerushalaim*, *Harav Chaim Sholom Deitch*,

the Rebbe said the following: "In Lubavitch and in Kremenchug there were no *kollelim*. The purpose of my instituting the *kollel* was solely to enable those with an enthusiasm ("*koch*") in learning, to continue to do so.

"When a *Kollel yungerman* walks down the street, he should be stopping someone to say, 'Today I have discovered a new explanation for the opinion of the *Tanah Sumchus*!'"

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*"I simply have a ta'ayvah (desire) that yungerleit should sit and learn!"*

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## FOURTEEN

## WHAT THE REBBE DOES ON SHABBOS



*"The Lubavitcher chassidim think that their Rebbe sleeps on Shabbos, let me show you what really happens."*

Reb Yosef Menachem Vainshtok relates:

During the year 5718, I would stay for many *Shabbosos* at the home of the Bostoner Rebbe, who lived directly across the street from the Rebbe.

One Shabbos, after midnight, the Bostoner Rebbe called me over to a corner of the house and said to me, "The Lubavitcher chassidim think that their Rebbe sleeps on *Shabbos*, let me show you what really happens."

He then showed me that by standing at a certain angle, it is possible to peer into the Rebbe's dining room, because one of the blinds was slightly damaged.

The Rebbe was sitting and learning. Every so often we would see the Rebbe get up to get a sefer from the bookcase. We stood there for three hours in silence, watching the Rebbe delve into the depths of Torah.

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*“I was shocked. I had dealt with many leading Rabbonim in the past, but in those tumultuous years, in war torn Europe, who had the peace of mind to care for their learning?!”*

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## FIFTEEN

## A LOVE FOR TORAH

Reb Binyomin Klein relates:

“As a *mazkir*, I saw the Rebbe’s love for *seforim*. Whenever we would bring in a new *sefer*, the Rebbe would stop all that he was doing, and read the *sefer* from cover to cover.

“In fact, this often left us in a predicament. We would have letters regarding health matters, *shidduchim* awaiting approval etc, and a new *sefer* that came in. If we would hand in the *sefer*, we knew that it would hold up the Rebbe, but our job was to hand in whatever came in. And so, we would watch the scene repeat itself; the Rebbe would take the *sefer*, and not let go until it he finished going through it.”

“I distinctly remember once being called into the Rebbe’s room at 3:05 pm, and on my way, a renowned *rov* presented me with a new *sefer*. As expected, the Rebbe immediately took it and began learning.

“Ten minutes later, the Rebbe came out for *minchah*. As the Rebbe walked past, the *rov* asked the Rebbe to comment on the *sefer*. The Rebbe turned around and replied, “Why do you not mention the Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch* once in the entire *sefer*?”

“He was shocked. This was a thick *sefer*. How had the Rebbe looked through the entire work in ten minutes?”

## SIXTEEN

## THE REBBE’S CHOL HAMOED

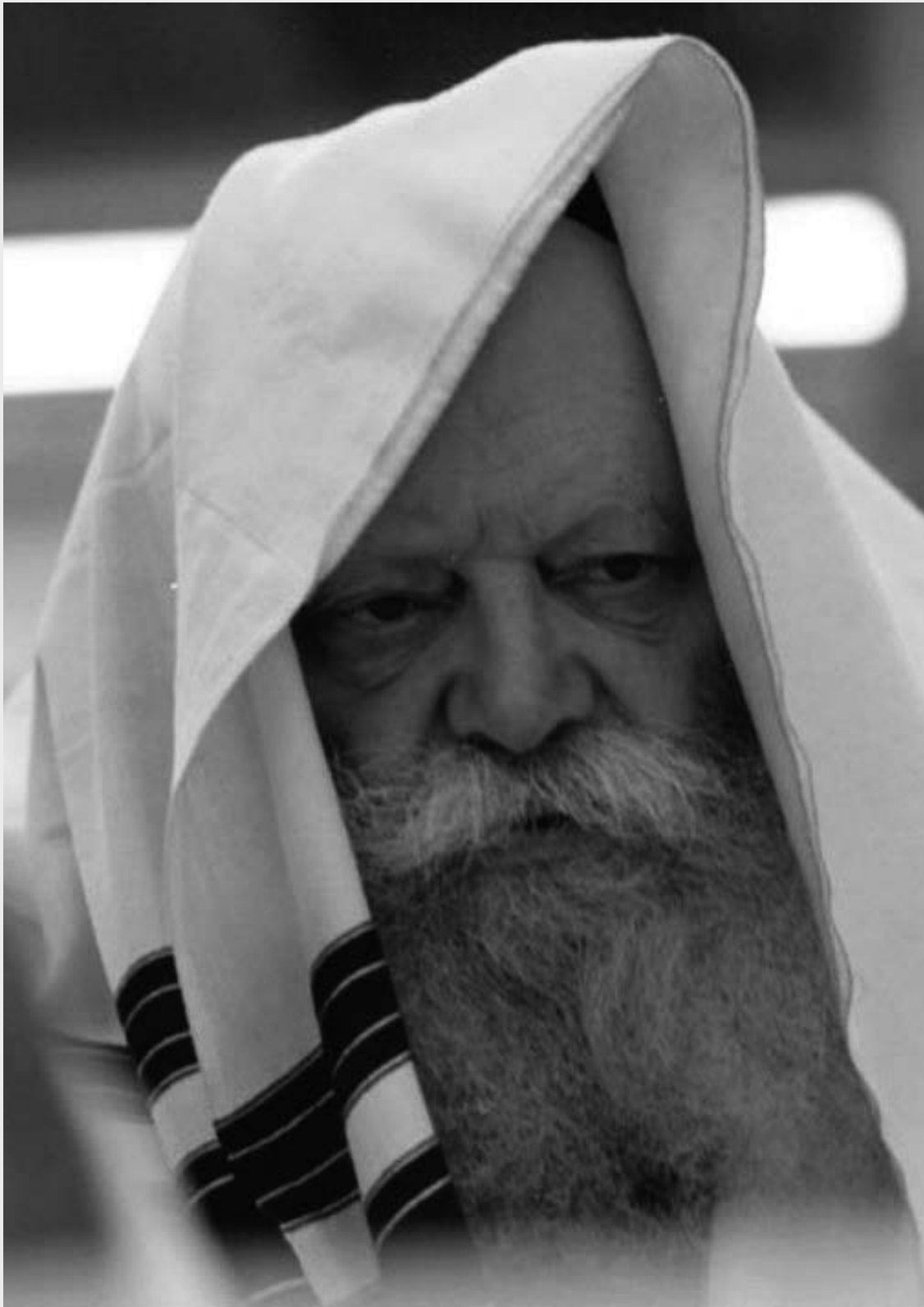
Reb Yosef Yitzchok Groner, Shliach to Charlotte, North Carolina, relates:

“As children, my twin brother Mendy and I would often play in the corridor next to the Rebbe’s room. The *bochurim* and Anash revered this corridor, and called it *Gan Eden Hatachton*, but as children of the *mazkir*, this was where we spent our afternoons. Consequently, we would sometimes see things that others did not.

“One picture is stuck in my mind to this day.

“It was a *chol hamoed*, and the Rebbe had just come up from davening, still wearing his *tallis*. The Rebbe rushed into his holy room, took out a large *sefer*, a *Gemara* or a *Shulchan Aruch*, and began learning.

“The image of the Rebbe, still in his *tallis*, his holy face aglow, swaying over the *sefer* is something that will never leave me.”





When Rebbetzin Chana finally left communist Russia, the Rebbe traveled to Paris to meet his mother, after not having seen her for almost twenty years. In Paris, the Rebbe met with the *vaad hatzalah*, to assist her in her immigration to the U.S.A.

Reb S. Lerner, the clerk of the *vaad hatzala* related: “One day, the Rebbe walked into my office and asked me to assist him in sorting out the appropriate documents. The Rebbe asked me how much of his time I assume it will steal, for he wants to plan his schedule accordingly.

“The Rebbe then said, ‘I want to make sure it will not cause me too much *bittul* Torah!’

“I was shocked. I had dealt with many leading *Rabbonim* in the past, but in those tumultuous years, in war torn Europe, who had the peace of mind to care for their learning?!

“Twelve years later, I was at a *farbrengen* of the Rebbe, and the Rebbe called me up to his place. He had recognized me in the crowd, and he wished to express his heartfelt *hakoras hatov* for the work I had done for his mother.”




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*“Twelve years later, I was at a farbrengen of the Rebbe, and the Rebbe called me up to his place. He had recognized me in the crowd, and he wished to express his heartfelt hakoras hatov for the work I had done for his mother.”*

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# INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

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- 14 STORIES -

ONE

## "YOU HAVE REVIVED ME!"

A Rebbe at the Lubavitch *Cheder* of Detroit, Michigan, was talking to his class. He told the boys that we have to learn from the way the Rebbe cherishes every word in *davening*, how the Rebbe stands so seriously and says every word from the *Siddur*. One student internalized his *rebbe's* words, and took upon himself to begin saying *Birkas Hashachar* in the morning from a *siddur*.

After keeping to his *hachlata* for a while, the young boy wrote a letter to the Rebbe, reporting what he was doing. Despite the heaps of unanswered mail, and the weight of *Klal Yisroel's* burning issues on his shoulders, the Rebbe made time to express to the child the significance of his letter. The Rebbe wrote to him:

*"Hechyisoni, kemayim karim al nefesh ayeifa – You have revived me; like cold water on a weary soul!"*

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*"Hechyisoni, kemayim karim al nefesh ayeifa – You have revived me; like cold water on a weary soul!"*

---

## TWO

## "HAYITOCHEH?"

Reb Gershon Shusterman shared the following personal story:

"I was twelve years old, learning in the *cheder* on at Ocean Parkway, when I received a message that the principle wants to see me. At the principal's office, he dropped a bombshell. Harav Chodakov, the Rebbe's *mazkir* had asked to see me! I was to come at nine o'clock to his office, knock once, and wait. I felt nauseous, and I was literally trembling. But at the appointed time, I was at the office, my little knees pounding against each other.

"Harav Chodakov had a message for me. He showed me a recent test I had taken at *cheder*, (which had been included in the reports the Rebbe received regularly) on which I had received an unacceptable mark. Next to the mark, in pencil, and in the unmistakable handwriting of the Rebbe, was etched one word: *Hayitochen* – How's this possible?

"The Rebbe did not say I was bad, or even that I had done badly. This word meant one thing; I know you could have done much better. It was uplifting, but certainly very demanding."



*Next to the mark, in pencil, and in the unmistakable handwriting of the Rebbe, was etched one word: Hayitochen – How's this possible?*

## THREE

## "WHEN WILL YOU MASTER ALL THESE SEFORIM?"

A conversation that took place on 13 Nissan 5712:

A young boy, free from *cheder*, was playing outside the Rebbe's room. When the Rebbe saw him, he inquired why he was not learning. The child explained that there was no *cheder* during the days preceding *Pesach*. The Rebbe repeated his question, and the child, thinking that the Rebbe had not understood him, repeated his answer.

Seeing that the child was not comprehending, the Rebbe took a *sefer* from his table, opened it to the last page, and patiently said to the child, "Do you see how many pages there are in this *sefer*? And do you see how many *seforim* there are in this room? And do you know that there are many more *seforim*?"

The child nodded his head in the affirmative, and the Rebbe continued. "When will you master all these *seforim*, if you don't learn in your own time?"

## FOUR

## "THE HANHALA HAS KINDLY AGREED..."

It once happened that a *talmid* of the *yeshivah* on Bedford Ave. was suspended from the *yeshivah* by Harav Mentlik, the Rosh Yeshivah. He would only be allowed back if he learned a certain amount of *Tanya baal peh*.

The *talmid* wrote a letter to the Rebbe, in which he wrote that he feels the punishment is unfair. He asked of the Rebbe to please speak to the *hanhala*, to accept him back, without requiring him to learn *baal peh*.

The Rebbe's answer flabbergasted the *talmid*:

"In your letter, I was pleased to read that the *hanhala* has kindly agreed to facilitate your continued learning in the *yeshivah*, under various conditions. In truth, these conditions, should really be done out of your own accord, for this way you may rectify your misdeeds..."

(*Hiskashrus*, issue 535)



## FIVE

## YECHIDUS OF A TWELVE YEAR OLD

Reb Yisroel Yosef Zalmanov relates:

"When I turned twelve years old, I merited a special *yechidus*. I went in on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Shevat, at 8:30pm.

"The Rebbe said, 'Although the mitzvos are only binding once a boy turns thirteen, there is one exception, the *mitzvah* of *neder*, which is also incumbent on a twelve year old.

"What is a *neder*? A *neder* is made about something permitted but unnecessary. The person vows to abstain from indulging in this permissible activity.

"This is what is demanded from a *chossid*, even a twelve-year-old *chossid*. Clearly, the forbidden is out of the question. A *chossid*, though, must also know the concept of *lifnim mishuras hadin*, serving Hashem beyond the letter of the law.'

(*Heichal Menachem*, vol 2, page 207)

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*This is what is demanded from a chossid, even a twelve-year-old chossid.*

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## SIX

## HAVING TIME

When a boy would come into the Rebbe before his *bar-mitzvah*, he would receive a special *bracha*. Often, the Rebbe would ask him to say a part of his *drasha*, on which the Rebbe would often comment on the content and delivery.

When Reb Shlomo Majeski entered *yechidus* for his *bar-mitzvah*, he was asked by the Rebbe what he prepared to say for the *bar-mitzvah*, and upon his reply, he was asked to begin reciting the *ma'amar*.

When the *bochur* reached the part where the *ma'amar* says, “*Yidden* say to Hashem, ‘We want to learn Torah, but we have no time!’ ”, the Rebbe stopped him and said lovingly in the tune of the *maamar*, “But you, who doesn’t have the responsibilities of *parnassa*, can study Torah day and night, and you cannot exempt yourself with *tefillin*...”



## SEVEN

## A DAY WITHOUT TORAH?!

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*The Rebbe  
looked at the  
father and  
said with  
disappointment,  
“How could  
this be?!”*

---

During *yechidus*, the Rebbe would often ask children what they were learning, and have a small discussion with them on the subject.

On Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, 5740 (1980), the Rebbe asked a child what he is learning. The boy answered *mishnayos* and *Chumash*. The Rebbe tested the boy on *Parshas Beshalach*, after which he asked, “Are there *mitzriyim* today?”

The boy did not answer. The Rebbe turned to the father and said, “He obviously doesn’t follow world events...”

That same evening, a six-year-old boy entered *yechidus*, and the Rebbe asked him what he had learned that day. Since the boy was visiting New York with his father for *Tishrei*, he had not learned anything that day. The boy, therefore, did not answer.

The Rebbe looked at the father and said with disappointment, “How could this be?!”

"I was eight years old," recalls Reb Mordechai Meshulovin, "and was visiting 770 for my first time, in Elul 5738 (1978).

"One Friday, my uncle Yitzchok Chazan advised me to stand in the lobby, so I would get a dime from the Rebbe's holy hand. Indeed, as the Rebbe came out, he noticed me and gave me the coin.

"Here is where the trouble began. Try as I might, I couldn't reach the slot in the *pushka* to put the coin in. In those days, there was only the higher slot. I jumped a few times, but couldn't manage.

"What happened next took a split second. The Rebbe slipped his *siddur* under his holy arm, and picked me up in the air. I put the dime in the *pushka*, and the Rebbe put me down."

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*The Rebbe slipped his siddur under his holy arm, and picked me up in the air. I put the dime in the pushka, and the Rebbe put me down.*

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*The Rebbe called over one of the girls, and said to her, “Please go over to your friend, and wish her a gut Shabbos.”*

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It was a sunny Shabbos afternoon, and two little girls were playing in the courtyard of 770.

Just then, the Rebbe had to pass through, on his way to the library, where the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would stay for Shabbos. However, the Rebbe could not walk in between the two girls, as *halacha* prescribes.

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

Reb Dovber Levitin of Eretz Yisroel relates:

“I came to 770 as a child for Tishrei 5739 (1978). Every Monday and Thursday, when the Rebbe came in for *krias haTorah*, I would go to receive a nickel or dime for *tzedaka*.

“One day I was late. As I ran to 770 on Eastern Parkway, I suddenly noticed the Rebbe’s car driving next to me. The car was driving at an unusually slow pace, so I kept on running together with it, and ended up arriving just on time to 770.

“The *mazkir* Reb Binyomin Klein later told me, ‘While I was driving, the Rebbe noticed you, and told me that this must be a child from Eretz Yisroel who doesn’t want to miss the *tzedaka*, so I should slow down. As I drove, the Rebbe watched you run with a broad smile.’”

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*This must be a child from Eretz Yisroel who doesn’t want to miss the tzedaka*

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The Rebbe saw potential in children where others could not. The time of the young was especially valuable, and on occasion the Rebbe would express deep wishes for its utilization in school, after school hours and during *yom tov* vacation.

Reb Yosef Yitzchok Katz relates:

As the *kos shel brocha* line moved along, the photographer Reb Levi Itche Freidin stood to the Rebbes far right and was snapping pictures. A twelve year old boy, a friend of mine, stood next to Mr. Freidin and occupied himself with changing the films for his cameras.

Suddenly the Rebbe bent over, and looked at the boy. With the *becher* still in his hand, the Rebbe said to him: “Your grandfather was immersed in the *maamorim* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, and you waste your time playing with these toys?!”

As a father motivates his child, the Rebbe looked straight at him and said, “Start learning the Mittlerer Rebbes *maamorim*!”

*(As heard from Reb YY Katz)*

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*“Your grandfather was immersed in the *maamorim* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, and you waste your time playing with these toys?!”*

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## TWELVE

## WHEN A CHILD ASKS

Every Hoshana Raba, the Rebbe would stand at the door of his *sukka* and lovingly distribute *lekach* to an endless line of men, women and children.

“One year,” relates Harav Osher Lemel Cohen of Beitar, “My wife went by with our daughter (Mrs. Yocheved Butman). She was then two years old, and as she approached the Rebbe, she stretched out her hand.

“Although there were others before her in the line, the Rebbe extended his hand over them, to give the honey cake to my eager daughter.

“When my wife’s turn came, the Rebbe gave her a piece of cake, and then my daughter stuck her hand out again. The Rebbe again gave her a piece.

“One of the attendants quickly commented that she had already received. But the Rebbe, despite a most hectic schedule, patiently turned around and said, ‘When a child asks for more, one must give...’”

(*Parshios Im Harebi, Bereishis, page 233*)



*The Rebbe, despite a most hectic schedule, patiently turned around and said, “When a child asks for more, one must give...”*

## THIRTEEN

## FATHERLY CARE

Reb Shabsai Slavatitzki relates the following anecdote: “On one occasion when the Rebbe distributed nickels to the children, to be given to *tzedaka*, my family and I merited to be in 770 to take part. Our young daughter received a nickel. In the commotion, we found ourselves standing some distance from our daughter. The Rebbe noticed that our daughter was alone, and he himself bent down and picked her up. In the Rebbe’s hands, she managed to reach the *pushka* and drop the penny inside.

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

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

*The Rebbe noticed that our daughter was alone, he bent down and picked her up.*



## FOURTEEN

## HEARTINESS, SIMPLICITY AND INNOCENCE

The sun was blazing as the Rebbe walked to the library on *Chag Hashovuos* 5738 (1978). A small child, thinking that this was his father, ran up to the Rebbe. He held onto the Rebbe's hand, and wiped the sweat from his forehead with the Rebbe's *kapata*.

Aghast bystanders scolded the child's mother for allowing this to happen. Remorsefully, she sat down after *yom tov* to pen a letter of apology, and gave it in to the Rebbe.

On *Motzoei Shabbos Parshas Pinchas* the mother received her response. The Rebbe began by marking her apology letter with a question mark and an exclamation point.

Then the Rebbe wrote: "Quite the contrary, it gave me great pleasure: The heartiness, simplicity and innocence of a child are immeasurable. If only the adults would have something of it."

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*"Quite the contrary, it gave me great pleasure:  
The heartiness, simplicity and innocence of a child are immeasurable.  
If only the adults would have something of it."*

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# CONNECTION TO THE YESHIVA STUDENTS

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- 21 STORIES -

ONE

## THE YESHIVAH BOCHURIM'S POSSUK

It was Simchas Torah night 5712 (1951), the first after the official *nesius*-acceptance, in the wee hours of the morning. The Rebbe had finished *seudas yom tov*, and unexpectedly came out to the *bochurim* who were still dancing downstairs. To the chassidim's surprise, the Rebbe instructed them to do a second set of *hakofos*!

The Rebbe honored all the *yeshivah bochurim* with the *possuk* "*Vayehi Binsoa*." After they recited the *possuk*, the Rebbe said that they should repeat it, "*shtarker un lebediker*" (with more energy). The repetition didn't

satisfy the Rebbe, and the third try also wasn't good enough, but the Rebbe said to continue.

The next time the *possuk* was read, in the next round of "*Ato Horeiso*," the *bochurim* invested all they had in the *possuk*. The Rebbe remarked with satisfaction, "*Es geit shoin af a veg...*" (We're getting there).

The next year, 5713 (1952), at 3:00am the Rebbe again joined the dancing circle, and then again honored *di yunge noisei ha'aron* (the young *aron*-carriers) with the *possuk* "*Vayehi Binso'a*."

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*To the chassidim's surprise, the Rebbe instructed them to do a second set of hakofos!*

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*“You learn in the Rebbe’s yeshivah, so you are the Rebbe’s children...”*

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## TWO BIRKAS HABONIM

The chozer, Harav Yoel Kahan relates:

It was in the year 5712, the first Erev Yom Kippur after the Rebbe had accepted *nesius*. The Rebbe benched the chassidim after *mincha*, as was the minhag of the Rebbeim. After the bracha, the Rebbe called me over, and I approached with trepidation. The Rebbe told me to tell the bochurim to enter the Rebbe’s holy room before Kol nidrei.

We were a very small group. When we entered, the Rebbe was already dressed in a *kittel* and *tallis*, and his holy face was aglow. The Rebbe turned to us, and said in a voice choked with emotion: “You learn in the Rebbe’s yeshivah, so you are the Rebbe’s children ... *Yevarechecho Hashem v’yishmerecho ... Yoer ... Yiso...*”

From that year on, it became the *minhag* that the Rebbe benches the *yeshivah bochurim*, his children, on *Erev Yom Kippur*.

## THREE NOT TO DISTURB THEIR BOCHURIM

The learning of the *bochurim* was always very dear to the Rebbe. The *hanhala* of the yeshiva in 770 would go to the Rebbe regularly, to report on the *bochurim*’s learning, and as to how much they are utilizing their time.

In fact, the Rebbe once explained (at the *Purim farbrengen* of 5745), that the Rebbe’s *farbrengens* don’t begin until nine thirty p.m., so as not to disturb the *seder* of the yeshiva which extends until that time.

**For the *Kiddush Levanah*** of Kislev 5739, the Rebbe came out at 8:10 pm, ten minutes after the beginning of *seder chassidus*. The Rebbe told the *mazkirus* (secretariat) to announce that he will be saying *Kidush Levanah* with this *minyan*, on the condition that no *bochurim* disrupt their learning to come out!



**FOUR****THE RIGHT PLACE FOR ROSH HASHONO**

Amongst the Rebbe's many directives to the Rosh Yeshivos, was one that began repeating itself from the early years of the *nesius*: That the bochurim should spend Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and the days in between, in yeshivah. These days, the Rebbe explained, are to be utilized to their fullest. This can only be done within the walls of the yeshivah.

To the administration of the yeshivah at seven seventy, the Rebbe would demand that they accommodate the guests, so that every bochur remain in yeshivah.

From the dean of Beis Rivka Seminary of Paris, Harav Yaakov Shlamey, the Rebbe made the same request.

Harav Shlamey relates: "The Rebbe explained his directive to me in yechidus in the year 5729. The Rebbe stated, 'I know that if they are in seminary for Rosh Hashono, they will spend the day saying Tehillim. If they are home, I don't know what the topic of discussion will be around the table...'"

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*If they are home, I don't know what the topic of discussion will be around the table...*

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**FIVE****A SEVENTEEN YEAR-OLD BOCHUR...**

There was a *bochur*, in a Lubavitcher *yeshiva*, who felt that the *hanhala* were not sufficiently dedicated to him. In a *yechidus* of 23 Nissan, 5734 (1974), he told the Rebbe that he is not sure what to do and doesn't know where to go.

The Rebbe replied:

"Go back to *yeshiva*. Especially now that summer is approaching your present *yeshiva* is good, since they learn through the summer.

"Now, generally, a seventeen-year-old *bochur* should be self-motivated to learn, and should not need

the assistance of a *mashgiach*..." be self-motivated to learn, and should not need the assistance of a *mashgiach*..."

During the momentous *farbrengen* of Purim, 5718 (1958), the Rebbe spoke of many touching issues. The Rebbe turned to the *bochurim* and said:

"A *bochur* should have nothing on his mind, other than fulfilling the wish of the Rebbeim, the founders of the *yeshiva*. He should be free of materialistic worries for his future, and even free of preoccupation of finding favor in the eyes of the *hanhala*..."



## SIX

## SOLELY TO THE YOKE OF LEARNING

In the early 5730s, when the *kovtzei haoros* (Torah journals) written by bochurim and Anash first began appearing, the Rebbe expressed a keen interest in their contents and derived much nachas from them.

The Rebbe would regularly walk in to *shul* on Friday night carrying a new *kovetz*, and would read it in his place. Often at a *farbrengen*, the Rebbe would address something a *bochur* had written in that week's *kovetz*.

However, the Rebbe also insisted that the financial side of the publications should not become the responsibility of the *bochurim*. In 5743, the *ho'oros* editorial of a certain yeshiva, wrote to the Rebbe that they are considering stopping the publication due to lack of funds.

The Rebbe encouraged their withdrawal (*Lku"Sh* vol. 39, page 241):

"It is obvious that the financial burden is not theirs, for the *bochurim's* shoulders should be bearing solely the yoke of learning *Nigleh* and *Chassidus*. They should therefore not take upon themselves any other responsibility which should belong to others, for this will be at the expense of their own duty..."

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*Often at a farbrengen, the Rebbe would address something a bochur had written in that week's kovetz.*

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## SEVEN

## EIDELE EATING

Reb Yossel Segal, Rosh HaKolel of Tzemach Tzedek of *Yerushalayim*, relates:

"When the legendary *mashpia* of the central yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, was *niftar* in 5732, the Rebbe chose Reb Mendel Futerfas to fill his place.

"At first, Reb Mendel would not hear of it. The Rebbe spoke to him at length about the importance of *Tomchei Temimim* and the *ma'alos* of the *bochurim* who studied there. Finally, Reb Mendel agreed to accept the monumental task of guiding the *bochurim*. Thus began a new chapter in the history of *Tomchei Temimim*.

"Reb Mendel told me that he asked the Rebbe what he should teach the *bochurim*.

"The Rebbe answered, 'Talk to the *bochurim* about how they should eat. Teach them that a *tomim* should eat with *eidelkeit*.'"



Reb Mendel Futerfas



Reb Shlomo Zarchi farbrengs in 770

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*Reb Shlomo had a great urge to go on the Rebbe's shlichus.*

---

## EIGHT TO BE A TOMIM AS REQUIRED

Reb Shlomo Zarchi began serving as a *mashpia* in the *yeshiva* in 770 during the early 5730's. When he was appointed, the Rebbe told him, "*Dain inyan iz az di bochurim zolen zich kochen in chassidus* (your job is to see to it that the *bochurim* be enthusiastic about *chassidus*)".

On another occasion, the Rebbe told him that he should work '*bimesira unesina*' (with total dedication).

Before the Rebbe's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, Yud Alef Nissan 5732, there was a tremendous *hisorerus* (renewed enthusiasm) among *Anash*. Many *yungerleit* wrote into the Rebbe that they wish to go on the Rebbe's *shlichus*.

Reb Shlomo also had a great urge to go on the Rebbe's *shlichus*. Before Yud Alef Nissan he wrote to the Rebbe that he wishes to join the army of *shluchim*.

The Rebbe's penned response read, "Do you really think, that ensuring that a *bochur* acts a *tomim* is **not** connected to the *shnas hashivim* (the seventieth year)?"

## NINE A BOCHUR'S AVODAH

A transcription of the *yechidus* of a *bochur* from 5732 (1972):

"Hashem should help that the next time you come in you should be able to write of the good that you do, and not only the negative. When I hear of a *bochur* in Tomchei Temimim who learns, *davens* and acts appropriately, this gives me *simcha un tanug nafshi upnimi* (personal, inner joy and pleasure).

"The opposite affect is also self-understood. Certainly, at least out of *ahavas Yisroel*, you and your friends at the *yeshiva* will work to this end...

"Regarding your request for a *bracha* for *hiskashrus* --- it is obvious that one cannot *drei zich arum pust*

*un past* (pass time fooling around) and concurrently be a *mekushar*.

A *bochur* in Tomchei Temimim that doesn't keep the times, learn or *daven* properly – I won't accept bribery from the fact that he learns *Likutei Sichos* periodically and does me a favor by getting involved in *uforatzto* activities...

Hashem should help that you become a true *tomim*, a true *mekushar*, firstly by being *tomim* (wholesome) with Hashem, with *simcha*. And we should be able to say "*Reu gidulim shegidalti*," (look at the 'blossoms' that I have cultivated).

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*It is obvious that one cannot drei zich arum pust un past (pass time fooling around) and concurrently be a mekushar.*

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## TEN

## ONE MAIRIV OF A TOMIM

The Yeshiva Gedolah of Australia was established in 5726 (1966) to serve the graduating class of the local Lubavitch School. For many students this was a great sacrifice, as they had planned to continue on to college, but thanks to the tireless work of younger and elder chassidim, the impossible happened and a *yeshiva* was erected 'down under'.

There was, however, a young man who was steadfast in his plans to pursue his secular education. Still, he first wanted to spend some time in the *yeshiva*, so he approached Reb Chaim Gutnik, asking him if he could spend a short period of time in the *yeshiva* before proceeding to college.

Reb Chaim, unsure of how to respond, consulted the Rebbe in *yechidus*. The Rebbe said, "Yes, take him; he *thinks* it's for a short period..."

The Rebbe clarified his intent. "The main thing is that he should be in *yeshiva*, and see a *dugma chaya* (role model). Even observing one *mairiv* of a *tomim* could have a profound affect..."

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*"Yes, take him; he thinks it's for a short period..."*

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*Reb Chaim Gutnik speaking at the Yeshiva Gedolah*

## ELEVEN

## MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

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*At a group yechidus, the Rebbe expressed his anguish to the bochurim, saying that this mashpia "heard Chassidus from the Rebbe Rashab before you were born!"*

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In Teves 5717 (1956), a notice on behalf of the *mazkirus* appeared in the press, that the Rebbe had officially removed his name from the 770 *yeshiva*. Since it was understood that this was a result of "Hatikva" being sung at the *yeshiva* dinner, some *bochurim* were disrespectful to one of the elder *mashpiim* who was present at the dinner.

Word of the incident reached the Rebbe, and the *bochurim* were expelled from the Rebbe's next *farbrengen*. At a group *yechidus*, the Rebbe expressed his anguish to the *bochurim*, saying that this *mashpia* "heard *Chassidus* from the Rebbe Rashab before you were born!"

Reb Yoel Kahn, who was asked by the *bochurim* to speak on their behalf, defended them, saying that "they want the Rebbe's *yeshiva*." The Rebbe responded, "They want to have a connection with me?! Learn *nigleh*, learn *Chassidus*, and begin toiling in *avodas hatefila*! Don't mix into my politics; politics is *omek hara* (the depth of evil)!"



## TWELVE

## YOU WRITE THAT YOU ARE TURNING TWENTY ...

Reb Yoel Kahn relates:

It was during the first period of the Rebbes *nesius*, when we felt there was a change taking place in the yeshiva at 770. The Rebbe began directing bochurim in yechidus, how to learn and in what areas to invest their time.

To me the Rebbe said: "Although a *bochur* should not be thinking of material goals and aspirations, there comes a time when a *bochur* should ask himself where he wishes to place his emphasis in his learning." The Rebbe then went on to direct me in detail what to learn.

Reb Menachem Meir Blau *a"h* relates:

During one of my yechidus, I asked as follows: "There are those whose interests lie in learning nigleh, and there are others whose dedication is to the study of Chassidus; in what should I invest?"

The Rebbe answered me: "Today there is no such thing; everyone must learn both. The question is only what your foremost focus is. You write that you are turning twenty years old - do you not know yet where your interests lie?!"

*We felt there was a change taking place in the yeshiva at 770.*



*One day, we got together, and wrote to the Rebbe that we are dedicating ourselves entirely to the Rebbes uforatzto call.*

## THIRTEEN

## A BOCHUR'S UFORATZTO

As world Torah Jewry pulled itself out of the ashes of the holocaust, they looked worriedly into the future, hoping to build strong enough defenses from the secular influences.

The Rebbe, however, saw things differently. He explained that "We should not be on the defensive, looking to survive; we ought to go on the offensive." With the battle cry of '*uforatzto*!' the Rebbe blazed the way for the teshuva movement.

Reb Moshe Herson, the Rebbe's shliach to New Jersey, related: We were then a small group of bochurim, at the yeshiva in 770. The Rebbe spoke very powerfully, and we were swept up with the Rebbes vision.

One day, we got together, and wrote to the Rebbe that we are dedicating ourselves entirely to the Rebbes *uforatzto* call.

The next day, HaRav Chodakov called each one of us in separately. On his table were piled up the letters the bochurim had sent in. He told us that the Rebbe had directed him to call us in individually, and to personally show us the Rebbes answer.

The Rebbe wrote: "For now, your *inyan* is to have *uforatzto* in your [personal *avoda*] *ruchnius*."

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*I had a strange feeling that someone was watching me. I looked up, and behold the Rebbe was there, observing me and inspecting my work.*

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Reb Nachman Sudak A"H related:

To us *bochurim* of the 5710s (1950s), the Rebbe was like a caring father. We would often *fabreng* amongst ourselves at our dormitory on Eastern Parkway, and there were times when the Rebbe, walking on his way home from *yechidus*, would stop outside and listen in. There was a feeling of closeness.

One Thursday night, at 3am, I was sitting in the *zal* of 770, typing the Rebbe's *sichos* for publication. I was the only one in the *beis hamidrash*, besides for one other *bochur*, who had fallen asleep on a bench with an open *Likutei Diburim*.

I had a strange feeling that someone was watching me. I looked up, and behold the Rebbe was there, observing me and inspecting my work.

The Rebbe didn't say anything to me. He gently approached the sleeping *bochur*, bent over on his side, and peered into the *Likutei Diburim* to see which *sicha* he was reading. The Rebbe smiled, turned, and left the room.

"Since I'm not satisfied with the morning Chassidus attendance, I hereby announce that in ten days time I will ask for the *hashgacha* list," the Rebbe said at the Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen* of 5712 (1951). "This will be relevant for something," the Rebbe concluded ambiguously.

Ten days later, on the fifth night of Chanukah, the Rebbe summoned the punctual *bochurim* to his room. At 7:30 pm, forty two *bochurim* appeared. The Rebbe turned to the Mashpia and said, "Some of the assembled should not be here. This is not the time for *chesed* and *rachmonus*..."

The Rebbe moved his hand over his forehead, and began speaking. Following the short *sicha*, the Rebbe opened his desk drawer, and distributed silver dollar coins to the assembled.

The next day, Reb Yisroel Jacobson told the Rebbe that some *bochurim*, who had been particular with time keeping, were at a *chassuna* the previous evening, and were now asking to get their deserved *Chanukah gelt*. The Rebbe asked firmly: Did they get permission to go to the *chassuna*?

When Reb Yisroel interceded that "Had they asked, they certainly would have been allowed," The Rebbe said, "Permission cannot be given in retrospect."

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*"Some of the assembled should not be here. This is not the time for chesed and rachmonus..."*

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Reb Yisroel Jacobson



Reb Berel Junik behind the Rebbe at a Kabbalos Ponim

## SIXTEEN A PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

"I feel a personal responsibility," the Rebbe once confided to Reb Berl Junik, "to care for the *bochurim* who follow the Torah true way. I spoke to *Harav* Chodakov and to [the *shadchan*] Reb Yitzchok Goldin to care for the *shidduchim* of these *bochurim*."

Indeed, throughout the *nesius* the Rebbe spent countless hours advising, guiding and encouraging *bochurim* and girls regarding their *shidduchim*.

In the following case, the Rebbe vetoed a proposal for a girl who had not even written directly:

A potential *shidduch* was proposed to her, and she was not sure whether to go ahead with it. Through her

brother she got an explicit answer from the Rebbe: to pursue other ideas.

The surprised girl wrote to the Rebbe that she had received the answer, to which she received the reply, "From your brother's letter, I understood that you were unsure. If this is not true, then disregard my answer, and do as you feel."

"However," the Rebbe continued as a father cares for his child, "one of the reasons I answered in the negative is since it would be advisable for you to pursue a *bochur* who is a greater *lamdan*."

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*"One of the reasons I answered in the negative is since it would be advisable for you to pursue a bochur who is a greater lamdan."*

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## SEVENTEEN

## WHERE DO THE BOCHURIM LIVE?

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*if someone was to be the only chossid in the world, he would have the responsibility, and therefore the power, to make the entire world a chassidishe place.*

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"If in a city, or even a country, there is even one single chossid, he has the power to transform the place into a *chassidishe* city or country!" the Rebbe said at a 5714 (1954) *farbrengen*.

"Just like Avrohom Avinu, the only *Yid* then in the world. Indeed, if someone was to be the only chossid in the world, he would have the responsibility, and therefore the power, to make the entire world a *chassidishe* place."

At the conclusion of the *sicha*, the Rebbe instructed that every guest be called upon separately by name to say *l'chaim*, and they should be introduced as "the leader of this and this city."

When "the leaders of Montreal" were called upon, the Rebbe remarked that it didn't include the Montreal *yeshiva bochurim*. "They don't live in Montreal; they live in Lubavitch!"

*(Toras Menachem, Vol. 10, page 127)*

## EIGHTEEN

## THE SEVEN MENORAH BRANCHES

"This is a call to all the *temimim*," the Rebbe declared at the Yud-Beis Tammuz *farbrengen* of 5718 (1958). "Everyone should proclaim *uforatzto yomo vokeidmo tzfoino vonegbo!*" The bochurim called out the possuk in unison, and the Rebbe sprung out of his seat to the beat of a joyous *niggun*. The Uforatzto era had begun.

"Uforatzto for a bochur" the Rebbe elaborated (Chaf Av 5718), "means to learn without limitations." Still, three months passed, and no specific directives were given.

During Cheshvan 5719, the Rebbe instructed the *hanhala* of the yeshiva, "Fourteen bochurim should be selected, seven for *nigleh* and seven for Chassidus, who will learn diligently, and deliver weekly *pilpulim*. Each set of seven will correspond to the seven menorah branches."

As an expression for the *nachas* this exceptional group gave him, during the Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen* the Rebbe called each one by name, and said with them *lechayim*.

During this period, the Rebbe told a bochur to deliver a *pilpul* one particular week. As if he was the program director, the Rebbe listed out the scheduled speakers from memory, and concluded, "You see, this week we have an empty slot..."




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*As an expression for the nachas this exceptional group gave him, during the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen the Rebbe called each one by name, and said with them lechayim.*

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In the year 5712 (1952) the Rebbe began encouraging older *bochurim* to study practical *halacha*, and get a *semicha* ordination. At the 24 Teves *farbrengen*, the Rebbe explained why:

“In past generations, one would only receive *semicha* if he was very proficient in Torah. However, these days it has become the custom to learn the basics and get *semicha*. This is the approach I want the *bochurim* to take.

“Knowing practical *halacha* is imperative for a *Yid* so he won’t stumble in many areas, for example the intricacies of *Hilchos Shabbos*.

“The paper certificate is not the issue, rather the knowledge. However, technically, in order to know that a *bochur* has done his work, he should get the paper.”

The *rosh yeshiva* Harav Piekarsky was present at the *farbrengen*. The Rebbe turned to him at one point and said, “You will surely pressure the *bochurim* until they get their *semicha*; give it to them in the end, but make sure it doesn’t come easy.”

(*Toras Menachem*, Vol. 4, Page 259)



Harav Piekarsky gives a shiur to the bochurim

*Seeing that his learning was suffering as a result, he penned a letter to the Rebbe.*

From the very beginning of the *nesius*, the Rebbe included *yeshiva bochurim* in his holy work for *Yiddishkeit*: Wednesday Hour, *mitzvoyim* and *Merkos Shlichus*. However, it was consistently stipulated that these activities shouldn’t be on the account of growth in learning.

There was once a *yeshiva bochur* who met outstanding success in various *mitzvoyim* projects, in which he invested his time. Seeing that his learning was suffering as a result, he penned a letter to the Rebbe with the following question:

“Should I dedicate my time to *hafatza* initiatives, or should I devote myself entirely to *yeshiva* and rise in its levels?”

The Rebbe responded, “In order for you to be successful in *hafatza*, preparation is necessary – Torah knowledge, etc.”

(See the handwritten answer in *Klein-Lazar Teshurah*, Sivan 5766)



"HASHEM SHOULD HELP THAT YOU BECOME A TRUE  
TOMIM, A TRUE MEKUSHAR, FIRSTLY BY BEING  
TOMIM WITH HASHEM, WITH SIMCHA. AND WE  
SHOULD BE ABLE TO SAY "REU GIDULIM SHEGIDALTI."

In accordance with the Rebbe's wishes, every year, thousands of bochurim and *bale-batim* go on *tahalucha*, often walking great distances. The Rebbe sent the foot soldiers on these long Yom Tov walks in order to bring extra *simcha* to *shuls*.

One year, after *Simchas Torah*, a Rabbi of a New York shul was in *yechidus*. He thanked the Rebbe profusely for the liveliness the bochurim had brought to his shul, and added with great admiration that

the bochurim deserve much credit for their *mesiras nefesh* to walk such a great distance!

The Rebbe smiled and responded, "The walk is not their *mesiras nefesh*. Their sacrifice is that they know that there is a *farbrengen* here in Seven Seventy, and they forgo this for other *Yidden*."

With that, the Rebbe continued, "And for me too, it is a sacrifice to be separated from these *bochurim* at the *farbrengen*."

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*The Rebbe continued, "And for me too, it is a sacrifice to be separated from these bochurim at the farbrengen."*

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# CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

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- 15 STORIES -

ONE

## YOU TOO HAVE BEGUN TO WEAR THIS SHMATEH?

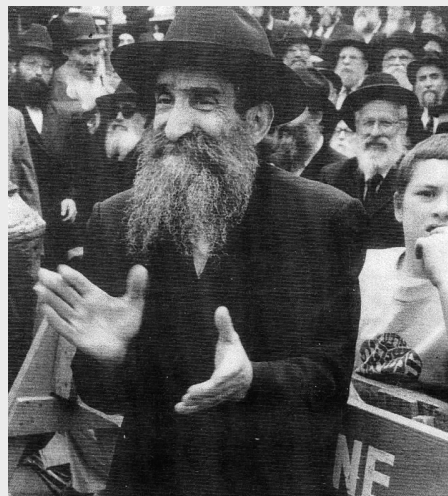
Reb Chatzkel Brod, a chassid from pre-war Russia, remembers the first *farbrengen* of the Rebbe he attended:

It was Shavuos 5711 (1951). It was extremely crowded, and I sat on the window sill, with one leg in the room and the other outside. But I did not feel any discomfort, as I was transfixed on the Rebbe.

At that time, the Rebbe's *farbrengens* had a family-like atmosphere, and the Rebbe would often give individual attention to those present.

During the *farbrengen*, I lifted my cup to say *l'chaim* to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked at me, and then at the tie on my neck. The Rebbe smiled and asked, "You too have begun to wear this *shmateh*? Remove it!"

Needless to say, I took it off immediately, and ever since, I am not very particular with the American dress code...



Reb Chatzkel Brod



## TWO ABUNDANCE IN RUCHNIYUS

In the year 5727 (1967), a father of a soon-to-be *bar mitzvah* boy was in *yechidus*. On a note he had written prior to entering, he informed the Rebbe of his upcoming *simcha*. He added as an aside, that since Hashem had blessed him with the means, he planned on celebrating the *bar mitzvah* with great *harchava* (abundance).

The Rebbe replied that the *harchava* could and should be in the *ruchniyus* aspect. 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 light of the Rebbe's directive, to have *harchava b'ruchniyus*, the *bachur* would be saying two *maamorim*! The Rebbe awarded them with a broad smile of satisfaction.

(*Hiskashrus Issue 361*)

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*In light of the Rebbe's directive, the bachur would be saying two maamorim! The Rebbe awarded them with a broad smile of satisfaction.*

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## THREE PICTURES



Throughout the first years of the Rebbe in the U.S.A., the Rebbe would avoid being photographed, as is evident from the pictures taken in those years. The Rebbe would often inconspicuously turn his head, or cover his face with his hand. In the year 5711 (1951), the Rebbe stopped this custom, when the photographer Mr. Tzvi Yehudah Trainer told the Rebbe that his *parnasa* was dependent on it.

Even so, during *chassunos* when the Rebbe was the *mesader kiddushin*, a rule was set limiting the amount of pictures being taken of him. In 5716 (1956) it was one picture, and later it became two. Some *chassanim*, including Reb Sholom Morozov and Reb Zelig Katzman, understanding that the Rebbe did not approve of pictures, had no pictures taken of the Rebbe at their *chassunah*!

When the Rebbe left the *chupah* of Reb Shimon Aharon Rosenfeld, which took place on 3 Nissan 5711 (1951), the Rebbe gave a sharp look at the photographer. It was understood that this was because he had broken the rule of limiting the pictures.

(*Mekadesh Yisroel album*)

## FOUR

## "WHERE IS THE PRIDE?!"

Simchas Torah 5715 (1954) was one to remember. The Rebbe prefaced the *hakafos* with a quote from the Rebbe Rashab that "Simchas Torah *shat nit*" (on Simchas Torah harsh words will not cause harm), and began discussing a sensitive topic in the most direct manner:

"The first three years when a child begins to learn, are the foundation of his future success. Then how is it that during this period a child is taken and stuffed with English and geometry?!"

"*Halevai* adults would also not know of these matters! But certainly not a nine or twelve year-old child... Hashem wishes to dwell in the mind of a *Yiddishe* child – and his head is taken and crammed with secular studies! Where is the *Yiddishe* pride?!"

This *farbrengen* was to be the basis of the establishment of Oholei Torah, *Cheder al Taharas Hakodesh*, by Reb Michoel Teitelbaum. It was soon followed by the establishment of other *chadorim* in Kfar Chabad, Detroit, Holland and Bnei Brak.

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*Hashem wishes to dwell in the mind of a Yiddishe child – and his head is taken and crammed with secular studies! Where is the Yiddishe pride?!*

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## FIVE

## NOT A MODERN HAIRCUT

During the early years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe invested much energy into *Anash* and their families, encouraging them to withstand the American *nisyonos*, and setting the standard for Chassidim.

When Reb Shimon Goldman celebrated his son's *upshernish* on 23 Shevat 5713 (1953), the Rebbe was honored with the first cut of the boy's hair.

The Rebbe said a short *sicha* on the quality of Torah study beginning at age three. Then, just before getting up to leave, the Rebbe turned to Reb Shimon and said:

"I wish you a *chassidishe* home, not a modern home. This will also express itself in the kind of haircut you give your son: that it be in the proper fashion."

The Rebbe then added with a smile, "I assume you know what I mean..."

(*Toras Menachem*, vol. 7, p. 339)



Reb Shimon Goldman

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*I wish you a chassidishe home, not a modern home. This will also express itself in the kind of haircut you give your son.*

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SIX

## "YASHER KOIACH" FROM THE REBBE



R. Moshe Yitzchok Hecht

It is well known amongst chassidim that the Rebbe did not look kindly upon extravagant spending of any sort. Especially, if this would cause negative peer pressure, forcing others to spend what they could not afford.

At the *chassunah* of Reb Yaakov Kaplan, there were no flowers, in accordance with the Rebbe's wishes. *Harav* Chodakov took part in the *chassunah*, and made note of it. A number of days following the *chassunah*, *Harav* Chodakov called in the *chassan* and thanked him in the Rebbe's name for not spending on flowers.

But the real surprise was yet to come. When the *kalla's* parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Yitzchok Hecht of New Haven, were in a *yechidus*, they received a warm "*yasher koiach*" from the Rebbe in person!

Naturally, when the word got out, this had a great impact on the excess expenditure of the *simchas* among *Anash*.

SEVEN

## SHABBOS CLOTHES

"There are some *yungerleit* who wore *kapotes* at their *chassunahs*, yet now they have stopped wearing them on Shabbos. Why is this so?" the Rebbe asked Reb Leibel Groner in the early 5710s (1950s).

Reb Leibel replied that the *yungerleit* could not afford the *sirtuks*.

"I remember," said the Rebbe, "growing up in Yekatrinoslav, people were very poor; this one had a patch on his right elbow, that one on his left elbow, and yet another on his chest. Yet never did it occur to anyone to substitute his Shabbos clothes with a short jacket! The *yungerleit* should be told that there is no need to be intimidated by the world around them, just as *Yidden* never were."

Reb Leibel commented, "In America, patched clothing would not be considered Shabbos clothes..."

The Rebbe responded sharply, "And half a garment **is** considered *Shabbosdik*?!"




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*Never did it occur to anyone to substitute his Shabbos clothes with a short jacket!*

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## EIGHT FROM SIDNEY TO SHOLOM



Mr. Hecht

Mr. Sidney Hecht was childless for eighteen years. He visited doctors and professors in the field, but to no avail.

During a *farbrengen* of 5716 (1956), between the *sichos*, the Rebbe suddenly called out to him, “Change your name from Sidney to Sholom, so that you may have peace in your body and soul, and you will have a healthy child!” Sidney became Sholom, and was blessed with a daughter within the year.

*Harav* Tzvi Raisman, a member of the Eidah Hachareidis Bes Din in Yerushalayim, was a former *rosh yeshiva* of Mr. Hecht. This story of the Rebbe was his favorite, and he would always conclude with excitement, “Only the Lubavitcher Rebbe could promise a child in public, after eighteen years of waiting!”

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*Only the Lubavitcher Rebbe could promise a child in public,  
after eighteen years of waiting!*

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## NINE AN AMERICAN CHASSUNAH

In 5719 (1959), the Rebbe told Reb Nissan Nemenov the following in *yechidus*, asking him to publicize it:

“I am unhappy with the lifestyle of chassidim in America. A *chassunah* used to be a small, warm affair, where everyone would contribute by making some food, so everyone felt that 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 a strain on a friend who cannot afford one, to either go without a gift or to borrow 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 table plan. Here, the host must place 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.

“I obviously cannot tell anyone to act differently; to be the odd one out...”



Reb Nissan Nemenov

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*I obviously cannot tell  
anyone to act differently; to  
be the odd one out...*

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## TEN

## MATERIALISTIC COMFORTS

In the summer of 5720 (1960), a chossid wrote to the Rebbe to share the good news that he had purchased and moved into a house in Newark, NJ.

In a 5 Elul letter, after giving his *bracha* on the move, the Rebbe cautioned him to be wary of what the Rebbeim termed “*balebatishe hanochos* (material focuses)” which pull a person down.

“Some most-painful evidence has reached me, that you, your brother-in-law, and others have reached

this plateau: you are content with your *nigleh* and Chassidus studies and *avodas hateflah*. You also find your *hafotzas hamayonos* work satisfactory.

“It is just that since a person naturally must advance, you have made sure to progress in every area of bodily luxuries, including a pleasurable afternoon nap...”

The Rebbe concluded bluntly, “Is the purpose of your *neshama*’s coming down into her body truly for this ‘ascent?’”



## ELEVEN

## WHERE TO MAKE A BAR MITZVAH?

“My *bar mitzvah* was supposed to be a lavish event,” relates Rabbi Yochanan Gurary. “My father was a well-known *gvir*, and if all of my friends could afford a catered dinner in a hall, I shouldn’t have been outdone.

“As the day of my *bar mitzvah* approached in Kislev 5725 (1964), my father asked the Rebbe which hall to rent. To his surprise the Rebbe answered, ‘A *bar mitzvah* should be celebrated at home or in *shul*.’

“My parents obviously followed the Rebbe’s directive, and my *bar mitzvah* took place at the *yeshiva* on Bedford Avenue. My mother found it difficult to swallow, so she brought a painter to paint the *yeshiva* beforehand.

“Indeed, the difference was immediately felt. The atmosphere was that of a *fabrengen*, with *divrei Torah* and *niggunim*. As a result, my classmates followed suit, and we all fondly remember our *bar mitzva*hs as warm, *chassidishe fabrengens*.”

## TWELVE

## THEIR RABBI IS ALREADY CONSERVATIVE...

Among the Rebbe's many battles for American Jewry, stood the combat for strict *mechitzas*. As the Rebbe retorted during the Yud Beis Tammuz *farbrengen* of 5724 (1964): "A *mechitza* is not put up to divide herds of goats, for which the Gemara says three *tefochim* (handbreadths) would suffice; its purpose is to separate people, so that they don't **see** each other..."

In the summer of 5735 (1975), the president of a prominent *Sefardi shul* in North America began insisting that the planned raise of the *mechitza* should be halted. The rabbi excused himself to the Rebbe that should he insist on the valid *mechitza*, the community may replace him with a Conservative rabbi.

The Rebbe answered in writing: "If you **do** give in to them *chas vesholom*, then they will *already* have a Conservative rabbi..."

The rabbi also suggested that since the *achdus* of the congregants is at stake, perhaps it would be advisable to concede to the president's demands.

To this The Rebbe replied: "If you **will** raise the *mechitza*, there will then be *achdus* between the *shul* and the Rambam, the Beis Yosef, etc..."  
(*Lahak Weekly Sicha, Mishpotim 5773*)



*If you do give in to them  
chas vesholom, then  
they will already have a  
Conservative rabbi...*

## THIRTEEN

## RAISING STANDARDS OF ANASH



Reb Volf Greenglass

During the early years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe waged many battles for the raising of standards among American *Yidden*. Even amongst fine people, associated with *Anash*, much was left to be desired; the Rebbe addressed it.

The late *mashpia* of Montreal, Reb Volf Greenglass A"H, related: The concept of having a strict *mechitzah* at *chassunos* was at that point still a *nisayon* for many. The Rebbe spoke out publicly at *farbrengens*, privately in *yechidus*, and via extensive correspondence, until matters improved.

There was once a *chassunah* where the Rebbe appointed someone to stand guard at the *mechitzah* to ensure that it was not tampered with. One of the guests attempted to shift the *mechitzah*, but was stopped.

The next day, the Rebbe asked to receive the name and mother's name of that person.

The Rebbe's strong stance made waves among *Anash*. From that incident, everyone became more particular with the decorum at *chassunos*.

## FOURTEEN

## REB MICHOEL WILL BE THERE

Reb Volf Greenglass related:

During the early years, the group of *Anash* who came from Russia would hold weekly *melaveh malkahs*. The Rebbe took a keen interest in them.

One *Motzaei Shabbos*, the *melaveh malkah* was held at the home of a chossid who had become somewhat Americanized. On the wall of his dining room he had hung a picture of himself with his wife.

As the *fabrengen* proceeded, Reb Michoel Teitelboim, who had said some *lechayims*, got up and removed the picture.

The next time a *melaveh malkah* was held at the home of someone with similar leanings, the Rebbe suggested that the pictures be removed in advance...

(*Likutei Sipurei Hisvaaduyos*, page 341)



Reb Michoel Teitelboim

## FIFTEEN

## OVERCOMING THE MECHITZAH CHALLENGE

“During the 5710s (1950s), there were still many *klipas* to be conquered in America,” related Reb Nachman Sudak A”H. “One was the concept of a *mechitzah*, which was a challenge even among *frum Yidden*.

“I had a friend who made a condition at his engagement that there be a *mechitzah* at the *chassunah*. However, when he walked into the wedding hall, there was none to be seen. The *bochur* was furious, and he stormed out of the hall.

“The *bochurim*, his friends, who had come to join in his *simcha*, were at a loss. In their quandary, they

telephoned the Rebbe’s secretariat, and explained the situation. The Rebbe instructed that that they proceed with the *chassunah*. However, they should set up tables around themselves as *mechitzos*, and be *freilach* with the *chassan*, ‘and make enough noise so that others will want to join you.’

“Indeed, others joined, and brought more *mechitzos*-tables with them. The lonely, distinguished dignitaries sitting on the dais, a respected *rosh yeshiva* amongst them, could only watch the sincere *temimim* with envy.”

(*Main Nachman*, page 8)

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*The lonely, distinguished dignitaries sitting on the dais, a respected rosh yeshiva amongst them, could only watch the sincere temimim with envy.*

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# SENSITIVITY

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- 16 STORIES -

## ONE TO SAVE A BOY EMBARRASSMENT

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

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

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

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



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

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## TWO MADE BELIEVE

Erev Rosh Hashana, the early 5710's.

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

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

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

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

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



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



## THREE FATHERLY CARE

Reb Shabsai Slavatitzki relates the following anecdote:

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

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

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

## FOUR ON MY BILL...

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

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

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

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

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



Reb Boruch Pariz

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

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## FIVE KREPLACH

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

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

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

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

## SIX THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S WORK

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

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

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

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



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

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## SEVEN THEY WILL NOT BE WITH THEIR FAMILIES

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

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

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

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

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

## EIGHT "WHY FRIGHTEN YIDDEN?"

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

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

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

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

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



Reb Itchke Ganzburg

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

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## NINE POSTPONING THE MAIL

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

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

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

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

## TEN

## UNDERSTANDING THEIR PLIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

## ELEVEN

## SOFTENING HUMOR

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

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

The guest left with a smile.




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

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## TWELVE

## THE REBBE ASKS PERMISSION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## THIRTEEN

## SENSITIVELY INFLEXIBLE

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

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

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

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

## FOURTEEN TO CARE FOR EVERYONE

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

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

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

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

*(As heard from Mrs. Vechter)*



*Reb Mendel Vechter (right) with Reb Yoel Kahn*

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

## FIFTEEN

## OTHER PEOPLE'S TIME

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

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

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

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

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



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

## SIXTEEN

## CARING FOR A BULLIED BOY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# CHINUCH

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- 16 STORIES -

ONE

## CHINUCH – A PRIORITY

Reb Tuvia Blau served as principal of the Beis Chana Girls' School in Yerushalayim. Additionally, he was involved in many projects of *hafatzas hama'ayanos* throughout Eretz Yisroel.

His two responsibilities often conflicted. Reb Tuvia felt that it would be appropriate to leave his teaching position and dedicate himself entirely to his other important responsibilities. After much deliberation, Reb Tuvia presented the idea to the Rebbe during his next *yeichidus*, in Tishrei 5728 (1967).

Although the outreach work of Reb Tuvia was very dear to the Rebbe, the Rebbe did not allow Reb Tuvia to leave the school. The Rebbe explained, "You are successful in *chinuch*. I do not think there is anyone in our generation who could take upon himself the responsibility of 'freeing' you from your *chinuch* work in order to concentrate on other activities, worthwhile as they may be."

(*Heichel Menachem*, vol. 2, page 216)



## TWO A HEALTHY FUTURE

At the *farbrengen* of Yud Shevat 5733 (1973), the Rebbe said:

“It was once thought that when there are available funds, they should go towards organizations for *bikur cholim*, or for building new *shuls*. Today, however, it is clear that all available resources should be invested in *chinuch*, for the future depends on *chinuch*.”



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*“Today, it is clear that all available resources should be invested in chinuch.”*

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## THREE IMPERATIVE TO AMERICAN CHINUCH



On 28 Adar 5728 (1968), the Rebbe held a *yechidus* with a delegation from Beis Yaakov of Borough Park, who came to receive inspiration and direction for their work.

The Rebbe said, “There are two points which are imperative to stress in the education of youth in America, especially with girls.

“The first is the opening passage of the *Shulchan Aruch*, ‘One should not be embarrassed by scoffers.’ Even before the *Shulchan Aruch* talks of the qualities a person should have, it established this premise, not to be ashamed of *Yiddishkeit*.”

The second point: “Children must be taught *kabalas ol*. This simply means having respect for parents and teachers and doing as they say.”

Another thing mentioned during the *yechidus*: “The *alef-beis* and the *nekudos* should be taught before the children learn the sounds.”

Additionally, the Rebbe remarked, “You should talk to the girls about the greatness of Hashem, the greatness of the creation and the sanctity of humanity.”

## FOUR WHO ARE PREFERRED TEACHERS?

During that 5728 (1968) *yechidus* with a delegation of Beis Yaakov of Borough Park, the Rebbe touched upon many issues. Here are some points from the transcript written following the *yechidus*:

The Rebbe said that it is important not to use secular reading books. If necessary, suitable parts could be excerpted and should be printed separately, in accordance with the copyright laws.

Regarding text books, "It is not advisable to erase or remove inappropriate pages. This will only arouse the child's curiosity. However, recently, Torah Umesora has published appropriate material for us."

The Rebbe then moved on to discuss how to select teachers.

"A woman teacher is preferable to a male, since her *yiras Shamayim* is stronger. Additionally, being that she is a woman, her influence will more apparent in the students.

"Teachers must be role models. It is therefore preferable to hire – even for secular studies – a Beis Yaakov graduate rather than someone who has learned in college."

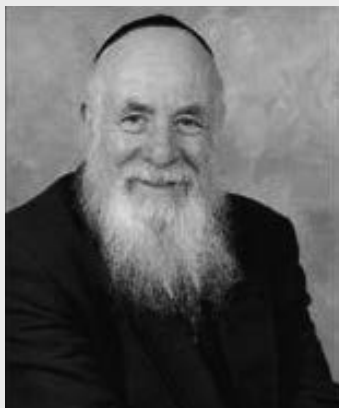



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*"A woman teacher is preferable, since her yiras Shamayim is stronger"*

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## FIVE THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING A MECHANECH



Reb Yosef Goldstien, famously known as "Uncle Yossi," began working in *chinuch* in the early 5700s (1940s).

Upon arriving in America, the Rebbe *farbrenged* every *Shabbos Mevarchim* as per the instruction of the Frierdiker Rebbe. During one such intimate *farbrengen* of 5705 (1945), in the small *shul* in 770, Reb Yosef was present.

After saying *l'chaim*, the Rebbe turned to look at him and said, "How fortunate you are that your *parnassa* is from being a *melamed*! Your livelihood comes from influencing students, *un nisht fun porken zich in bloteh* (and not from sludging around in mud...).

(*Ymei Melech* vol. 2, page 270)

## SIX TENDING HASHEM'S GARDEN

In a heartfelt response to a demoralized *mechanech*, the Rebbe wrote:

“A person is likened to a tree, and *Klal Yisroel* to Hashem’s garden. The fruits are the children – boys and girls. How great is the *zechus* of the watchman, with whom the Owner has entrusted His garden!”

“Indeed,” the Rebbe developed further, “it is quite apparent, that every improvement, however small, in the seed, significantly increases the quality of the tree which grows from it.”

(*Likutei Sichos* vol. 6 p. 309)




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*“How great is the zechus of the watchman, with whom the Owner has entrusted His garden!”*

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## SEVEN WHY THE WAY HE WANTS, NOT THE WAY I WANT?

There was an American *shliach* who served as a teacher in the local school. In 5736 (1976), he decided that he wanted to dedicate himself totally to outreach work.

When he asked the Rebbe, the Rebbe refused to let him leave his *chinuch* post. The Rebbe’s sharp response is recorded in the following handwritten note:

“Why does he think that his place of *shlichus*, and type of *shlichus*, must be just the way he wants it, contrary to the way I want it?” (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, page 488)

**To another** teacher who was frustrated with his employers and wanted to leave his position, the Rebbe wrote:

“How could you desert the flock? Even if a replacement will be found, he will certainly not have your qualities, especially since your job requires a person who is ready to fight the ‘street,’ including the orthodox ‘street’... and regarding the apathy of the school board, this only underscores the need to stay.”

## EIGHT THE ELEVENTH RULE

Reb Avrohom Meizlish relates:

When the Rebbe established the network of Oholei Yosef Yitzchok schools in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Alexander Bin-Nun A”H was appointed as supervisor to oversee the many schools.

After some years working with teachers, Reb Alexander decided to do something to assist them in their sacred mission. He meticulously prepared a list of ten most critical rules for *chinuch*, to the best of his understanding, which he planned on giving out to the teachers.

When Reb Alexander was in *yechidus*, he showed the Rebbe his “ten rules” list.

The Rebbe reviewed the list, looked up and remarked, “There is one rule missing: the rule in *chinuch* is that there are no rules.”

(*Sha’ari Chinuch* p. 231)



R. Alexander Bin-Nun (left) at a Reshet conference

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*The Rebbe reviewed the list, looked up and remarked, “There is one rule missing: the rule in chinuch is that there are no rules.”*

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## NINE THE ALEF-BEIS REBBE

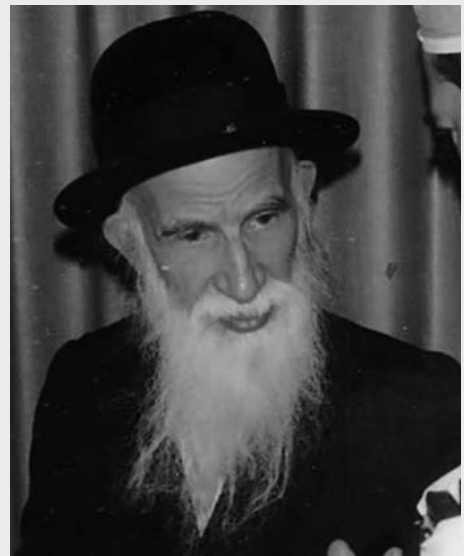
During one of the *farbrengens* of 5718 (1958), the Rebbe announced that all who were involved in *chinuch* should say *l’chaim*.

Reb Elya Chayim Roitblat, the founding *melamed* of Oholei Torah *cheder*, was also present at the *farbrengen*, but he did not say *l’chaim*. Even as others encouraged him to do so, he refused, saying that he has his reasons.

The Rebbe noticed that Reb Elya Chaim had not said *l’chaim*, and turned to him:

“When a *rosh yeshiva* says a *pilpul*, there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the *pilpul*. We could therefore never be sure that he is actually teaching the true Torah of Hashem. But when one teaches a child *kamatz-alef-OH*, we could be certain that he is indeed teaching Hashem’s Torah.

“Therefore,” the Rebbe concluded with a smile, “say *l’chaim*!”



Reb Elya Chayim Roitblat

“The reason we are losing so many of our youth,” said the Rebbe at the Yud Shevat 5734 (1974) *farbrengen*, “is due to the collapse of the family unit. All difficulties in father-son relationships, with all the fancy English terms given for them, stem from the laxity in educating the principles of honoring one’s father and mother, the obligation of a father to teach his children, etc.

“When the *Yidden* were counted in the wilderness, they were organized according to their family. Every nation in the world is dependent on family ties, especially *Am Yisroel*.

“The previous generation made the mistake of not investing enough into family time, thereby neglecting many youth, who were left despondent to climb the *galus* walls themselves. Not surprisingly, they strayed...

“Today too, there are families where the husband, wife and children all *daven* in separate *shuls*. This is a recipe for disaster! Families must be together!

“An opportune time for togetherness is Friday night. The entire family should sit together, in a *Shabbosdike* atmosphere and discuss *Shabbosdike* topics. This is the formula for a healthy family and success in *chinuch*.”

“Chassidus is for everyone,” the Rebbe would always say, “even for small children.”

Whenever the Rebbe would speak at Tzivos Hashem rallies, the *sichos* would always be directed to the young in their language. Nevertheless, they contained messages culled from the depths of Chassidic thought.

Reb Zusha Posner, *mashpia* of Tomchei Temimim Lod, relates:

“There was a teacher of nine- and ten-year-old boys who was in *yechidus*. The Rebbe told him that he should teach his pupils about *gadlus haBoreh* – the greatness of Hashem.

“The *melamed* was befuddled. ‘*Gadlus haBoreh*? How will these children understand?!’ he exclaimed.

“The Rebbe answered with a smile, ‘If Hashem has managed to condense Himself so much that we are able to realize His greatness, surely He could be *metzamtzem* Himself just a little bit more so that a child will comprehend.’”



## TWELVE

## DON'T JOIN A HOSPITAL

During the early years, the concept of not having a secular education was very difficult for many chassidim to swallow.

One Lubavitcher chossid told the Rebbe that he wished to have his son learn *limudei chol*. As a justification, he argued that the Frieddiker Rebbe had incorporated secular studies in the Lubavitcher *yeshiva* school curriculum, which he himself had established.

The Rebbe answered him by way of parable:

“When one enters a hospital, at first glance it could be very impressive. The hygiene, the order and the individualized attention. It all looks very good. Still, no healthy person would consider becoming a patient...”

“You must understand this,” concluded the Rebbe. “The secular education department of the Lubavitcher *yeshiva* is a hospital, for those not yet ready to join the full-time healthy society.”

(*Likutei Sipurei Hisva'aduyos*, p. 345)

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*“The secular education department of the Lubavitcher yeshiva is a hospital, for those not yet ready to join the full-time healthy society.”*

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## THIRTEEN

## CHINUCH ATMOSPHERE

Situated in the center of Eretz Yisroel, the Tel Nof Israeli Air Force base is a fortress of defense. Thousands of officers and technicians live there, ready at a moment's notice to protect the nation.

Brigadier General Ron Peker, the celebrated commander of the base during the Yom Kippur War, was in a *yechidus* on 21 Cheshvan 5736 (1975).

During his lengthy *yechidus*, many defense and political issues were discussed. However, one point the Rebbe made took Ron by surprise. The Rebbe expressed, “I understand that the officers must be available for any given situation. Still, I believe they should live adjacent to the base and not on the actual campus.

“You see,” the Rebbe explained, “the children of the officers should not be brought up in the base, in the shadow of war planes. It is not healthy for their *chinuch*.”

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*“Still, I believe they should live adjacent to the base and not on the actual campus....”*

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## FOURTEEN YOUTH NOVELS

Shmuel Argaman was one of the first authors of *frum* Hebrew children's novels, paving the way for many to follow. In 5738 (1978), he published *The Submarine Submerged at Midnight*, which included some science fiction. It tells the story of a group of *Yidden* fleeing Russia, and how they battle a terrorist organization who seeks to rule the world using death-rays.

He sent his book to the Rebbe, asking for constructive criticism.

After thanking Shmuel for sending in the book, the Rebbe wrote: "While it is true that children's educational stories ought to be packaged just right so

that they are drawn to it, being that they are children, if the messages the author wishes to transmit are too obscure, they may be overlooked.

"One cannot rely on youth to pick up the subtleties, when so little text is dedicated to the message. Especially since it is not an integral part of the narrative."

On a practical, detail-oriented level, the Rebbe advised: "Enough text must be devoted to *yiras Shamayim* ideas, and pictures or sub-headings would also help direct their attention to them."

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*"One cannot rely on youth to pick up the subtleties,  
when so little text is dedicated to the message"*

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## FIFTEEN IF YOU WILL BE, HE'LL BE...

Mrs. Martha Stock related:

In 5721 (1961), we went into *yechidus* with our family in honor of our son Benjy's *upshernish*. My husband Reb Shimshon said to the Rebbe that he was requesting just one *bracha*: that Benjy should be a *chossid* and a *lamdan*.

The Rebbe answered, "Shimshon, you have to show your son how to do it. He can't do it on his own. You must teach him. If you will be a *chossid* and *lamdan*, he'll be."

At another *yechidus*, Shimshon went in with our children. Benjy and his sister Chani, five- and six-years-old, were already attending school, and the Rebbe tested them on their studies.

After completing the questions, the Rebbe got up from his seat, came around the table and put his hand on Shimshon, saying, "*Ken ich dir farheren?*" (Can I test you?)

Shimshon said, "Forget it, Rebbe." But the Rebbe would not hear of it, "*Epes darfst du lernen.*" (You need to learn something.)

After the *yechidus*, Shimshon began consistently attending a *shiur*.



Reb Shimshon Stock



Reb Berl Futerfas relates:

“My father, the *mashpia* Reb Mendel, would spend a few weeks every winter fundraising for Russian Jewry. This was a continuation of his work there: to help *Yidden b’gashmius*.

“One year he was also asked to collect funds for Oholei Torah *cheder*. Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbe in a *yechidus*, and was encouraged by the Rebbe to fundraise for the cheder as well.”

“My father was still troubled. He said to the Rebbe, ‘But someone who gave a thousand dollars last year will give the same again, to be split between the two causes. Won’t this mean that *cheder* donations are on the account of *pidyon shevuyim* (redemption of captives) funds?’

“The Rebbe looked at my father and said, ‘Saving children from learning *limudei chol* is the greatest *pidyon shevuyim*!’”

*(As heard from Reb Berl)*

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*“Saving children from learning limudei chol is the greatest pidyon shevuyim!”*

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# DAVENING AND SHUL

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- 14 STORIES -

## ONE THE REBBE'S MESSAGE

"During the winter of 5730 (1970)," related Professor Velvel Green, "I was invited to London, UK to take part in epidemiological research, my field of expertise. Upon the Rebbe's directive I also invested much time to assist the work of Lubavitch there.

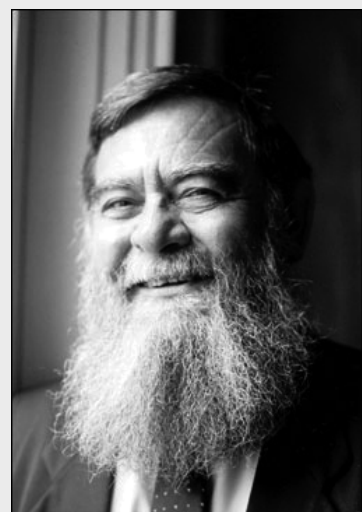
"One day, while I was busy at work in the hospital, I received an urgent call. 'There is an emergency meeting at Lubavitch House,' I was told. 'An important message from the Rebbe came in. Drop everything – come now.'

"I took the train. At Lubavitch House, I saw all the local chassidim and Lubavitch affiliates already assembled in hushed silence. Reb Bentzion Shemtov was seated at the head of the table, but did not utter a sound. I was told that he had just arrived from New York with an important message for all *anash*.

"Suddenly, Reb Bentzion got up and announced, 'The Rebbe said that *davening* must be "nice!"'

"The meeting was over. From that day on, everyone *davened* in one *minyán*, there was no talking, and the *chazanim* were chosen carefully; the *davening* revolutionized, becoming 'nicer.'"

*(Professor Green Sholom Ubracha, p. 153)*



*Professor Velvel Greene*

## TWO

## THE WORDS OF DAVENING

In the public letter of Erev Pesach 5724 (1964), the Rebbe decries the way people want to make great changes in their lives, but do not understand that the trivial, small things are what make the person.

One example the Rebbe gives: “Being cautious not to swallow words in *davening*.”

*HaRav* Chodakov related:

The Rebbe once called me over and said, “There is this boy who *davens* in our *minyan* in 770, and it seems that he skips words in his *davening*. Please make sure he is spoken to.”

Reb Leibel Groner related a similar incident:

During Chanukah 5742 (1981), the Rebbe *davened* downstairs in the big *shul*. In the middle of *davening*, the Rebbe turned around a number of times, looked towards the children, and said “*Amen*” louder than usual.

A few days later the Rebbe told me, “It has already been three days that I see a child not answering ‘*Amen*’ properly. There are adults who stand next to him, yet they don’t do anything about it. I wanted to go over to him myself, but that would have created an uproar.”

(*Hachinuch Vehamechaneh*, p. 62)

*In the middle  
of davening, the  
Rebbe turned  
around a  
number of times,  
looked towards  
the children,  
and said  
“Amen” louder  
than usual.*



## THREE

## CHAYUS IN DAVENING

In honor of his seventeenth birthday, *Hatomim* Shmuel Notik, today a *shliach* in Chicago, IL, merited a *yechidus*. In the note which he handed to the Rebbe he asked how he could develop a *chayus* in *davening*.

The Rebbe responded:

“The teaching of the Frieddiker Rebbe is well known that one should divide his *davening* into six or seven segments, and each day of the week to ‘*daven*’ one part.

“However,” the Rebbe clarified, “this is not referring to the simple *pirush hamilos* [literal translation], which is a daily obligation. This is only in reference to the *chassidisher taitch* [Chassidic insight] of *davening*.”

The Rebbe concluded with an assurance, “If you do this, you will develop a *chayus* in *davening*.”

## FOUR

## YOU CAME TO SHUL TO DAVEN? THINK ABOUT HASHEM!

During the *farbrengen* of 13 Tishrei 5743 (1982), the Rebbe publicly lamented the state of the *davening*: “People come to *shul*, and instead of looking in the *siddur*, they watch me *daven*! There may be a concept of looking at a *rov*, but *davening* is not the time for it.

“You came to *shul* to *daven*? Think about *davening*! Think of Hashem! We’re not talking of deep *kavanos*, rather merely about standing ‘as a servant before his master.’ Think about the Master!”

As the *sicha* continued, the Rebbe expressed such anguish with the laxity in *davening* that he threatened not to join the public *minyan* if matters didn’t improve.

**It happened once**, during the 5730’s (1970’s), that as the *aron kodesh* was opened, the *niggun* “*Ano Avdo Dekusho Brich Hu*” was started, and the Rebbe began dancing vigorously.

Naturally, many in the crowd turned to get a better look at the Rebbe during these special moments of ecstasy. The Rebbe however pointed to the *aron kodesh*, signaling where to look.

(*Heichel Negina*, p. 312)



## FIVE

## DAVENING WITH A MINYAN

When the Rebbe wanted to give a public message to chassidim, it would often be through Reb Nissan Nemanov, the *mashpia* in Brunoy, France. After his *yechidus*, he would *farbreng* in 770 and publicize the Rebbe’s words.

In the *yechidus* of Tammuz 5733 (1973), the Rebbe said, “The concept of *davening* with a *minyan* has lately become extremely neglected. Some think that *tefilla betzibur* is for children... They should know that anyone not *davening be’arichus* is obligated to *daven* with a *minyan*!”

Two years later, on 9 Teves 5735 (1975), Reb Nissan had another *yechidus*. As soon as he entered, the

Rebbe continued the conversation left off two years earlier.

“What is the situation in France regarding *davening* with a *minyan*? We are just coming from Yud-Tes Kislev. All of the *Pada Beshalom maamorim* connected to this day discuss the importance of *davening* with a *minyan*.”

The Rebbe rose slightly in his chair, and said with great emotion, “Why is no one active about it? Why is there such negligence? Even non-chassidim appreciate the greatness of a *minyan*. Other things we manage to accomplish, but this issue is only getting worse.”

## SIX THE PREREQUISITE FOR DAVENING

During the 770 visit of the renowned Toldos Aharon Rebbe of Yerushalayim in 5721 (1961), a heated discussion ensued between the Rebbe and his guest. The Rebbe insisted that a *Yid* must prepare for *davening* by learning Chassidus, while the Toldos Aharon Rebbe maintained that having the simple *kavana* suffices.

During the course of the conversation the Rebbe expounded, “*Davening* must be with all of one’s limbs. This obviously does not only refer to the physical limbs, but also to the various facets of the person’s character: his intellect and emotions.

“Now,” continued the Rebbe, “if a person does not understand the depth of his *tefilla*, he is utilizing only a shallow part of his mind, thereby relinquishing its depth. *Davening* must be with every facet of a *Yid*’s being, including that depth.

“The only way to achieve this would be by learning and contemplating the inner meaning of the *tefilla*, through the study of Chassidus.

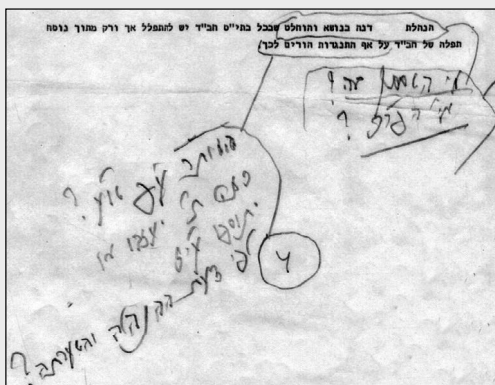
“It does not have to be Chabad Chassidus,” the Rebbe concluded, “but Chassidus it must be.”

(*Toras Menachem*, vol. 30, page 319)



The Toldos Aharon Rebbe

*“If a person does not understand the depth of his tefilla, he is utilizing only a shallow part of his mind”*



The Rebbe’s hand-written response

*“Is it permitted according to the Shulchan Aruch, to force a child to daven in a nusach that is not his own?”*

## SEVEN NON-CHABAD NUSACH

The administration of a Lubavitch day school, that had accepted students from non-chassidic homes, came to the conclusion that it only befits a Chabad school that the children *daven* in *Nusach Ari*, as the Alter Rebbe has established.

Despite some of the parent body protesting, the principal enforced the rule, and the administration reported the good tidings to the Rebbe.

In his holy handwriting, the Rebbe responded with dismay. “Who partook in this meeting? Where are the minutes?”

Then the Rebbe raised the question: “Is it permitted according to the *Shulchan Aruch*, to force a child to *daven* in a *nusach* that is not his own?”

And still another question: “how many children, in the view and estimate of the administration, will be attracted or distanced, as a result of the new policy?”

(*Simpson Teshurah*, Kislev 5774)



## EIGHT DAVENING TIMES

When the great 5706 (1946) Russian exodus of Chassidim finally settled, a large contingent spread throughout the periphery of Paris. Reb Chonyeh Levin lived in Aubervilliers, a suburb of Paris, together with some ten other Lubavitcher families.

In a 5718 (1958) *yechidus*, after answering Reb Chonyeh's questions, the Rebbe prodded, "Tell me, what time do you begin *davening* in the *anash shul* of Aubervilliers on Shabbos?"

Reb Chonyeh answered, "Being that the *mikva* is a great distance away, a good forty-five minute walk, the *davening* begins at 10:30. It happens that until everyone gathers and puts themselves together, *davening* could be delayed until eleven o'clock."

The Rebbe was not pleased. He gave Chonyeh a message to deliver to *anash* of Aubervilliers: "Tell them in my name, that the *chazzan* should already begin *Hodu* at ten o'clock sharp."

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*The Rebbe prodded, "Tell me, what time do you begin davening in the anash shul of Aubervilliers on Shabbos?"*

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## NINE A WELCOMING SHUL

Despite being preoccupied with the loftiest of worlds, the Rebbe's care for the *shul* at 770 brought him to deal with the most mundane of matters.

"It is important that there be clean towels available for people to wash their hands before *davening*," the Rebbe stated at the 28 Elul *farbrengen*, 5728 (1968).

Another such occasion was the *farbrengen* of Shushan Purim 5741 (1981), when the Rebbe made the following suggestion:

"This *shul* has been operative for many years. Various people step in to learn and to *daven*, they come in tired and sweaty – why shouldn't they find a glass of water, or a hot tea?"

The Rebbe then made note of the fact that there weren't even cups available, or a designated place in the *shul* to have a drink. "The Rebbeim taught that it is important to be well-mannered."

Following that *farbrengen*, a tea machine was purchased, soon to be replaced by a larger one, eventually evolving into a fully stocked tea corner at 770.



*"The Rebbeim taught that it is important to be well-mannered."*

## TEN HOW A CHOSSID DAVENS

The esteemed chossid Reb Sa'adya Liberow first came to the Rebbe in 5718 (1958) from his *shlichus* in Morocco, and periodically came thereafter on a consistent basis. His stays in 770 were spiritually stirring experiences for him, during which he would spend many hours covered in his *talis*, *davening* with devotion.

Reb Yisroel Friedman relates:

"I remember one Shabbos in 5719 (1959), as Reb Sa'adya stood and *davened* in the smaller *shul* of 770, the Rebbe walked in. The Rebbe stood there for a few moments, looking at him with a special expression of pleasure: the Rebbe's face literally shone as he observed the chossid *davening*, totally oblivious to his surroundings."

Reb Sa'adya's son Reb Sender adds, "On another occasion, the scene repeated itself. This time, after the Rebbe watched my father *daven* for a moment, the Rebbe turned to the bystanders and said, *'Zeht vi a chossid shteit un davent*. (Look how a chossid stands in prayer)."

(*Techayeinu* Issue 7; "Reb Sa'adya Liberow," Adar 1 5768)



Reb Sa'adya Liberow

*The Rebbe's face literally shone as he observed the chossid davening, totally oblivious to his surroundings.*



*The Rebbe showed that youth have a prominent position in a shul.*

## ELEVEN CHILDREN IN SHUL

The Rebbe's love for children and their participation in *tefilos* was obvious. Through encouraging "Amen", their singing, and even the lengthy banging out of Haman on Purim, the Rebbe showed that youth have a prominent position in a *shul*.

At the same time, the Rebbe demanded appropriate behavior.

Reb Zelig Slonim, who established the Shikkun Chabad *shul* in Yerushalayim, once received a letter from *HaRav* Chodakov, decrying a report the Rebbe had gotten from a visitor.

"The children's conduct in the *shul* and courtyard was inappropriate. It disturbed the *davening* and they also failed to show respect to the elderly.

"Upon the Rebbe's directive, I am writing to you to improve the situation to the extent that you can, and I would appreciate a report of what has been done."

(*Labkovsky Teshurah*, Tammuz 5775)

## TWELVE

## NOT FOR EVERYONE

The Rebbe insisted that *davening* at 770 should begin at 10 o'clock on Shabbos, to allow for time to appropriately prepare for *tefilla*, through learning and contemplating Chassidus.

However, this wasn't for everyone. In a 5734 (1974) *yechidus* with Reb Efraim Volf, the administrator of Chabad *mosdos* in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe directed him regarding the Beis Sefer Limelacha vocational school:

"At this *mosad*, *davening* should start no later than the time of reading *Krias Shema*. Since the students learn

*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, they wouldn't understand why *davening* doesn't begin at the proper time.

"A *yeshivah bochur*, who is capable of learning Chassidus for two hours, understands why according to Chassidus *davening* should start later. But not a student at a vocational school. Especially the younger classes. Regarding the older classes, if indeed they could learn for two hours, and none of them waste their time, they could begin *davening* at ten."

(For the full *yechidus* see Halperin Teshurah, Tammuz 5762)

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*Regarding the older classes, if indeed they could learn for two hours, and none of them waste their time, they could begin davening at ten."*

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Reb Elya Chayim Roitblat

*I will never forget how the Rebbe turned around to look at Reb Elya Chayim. A wide smile spread across his holy face, expressing deep pleasure.*

## THIRTEEN

## A CHOSSID'S DEVOTION

In the rebbes presence chassidim were naturally measured. However, there were times when a chossids self-expression in front of the rebbe caused *nachas ruach*.

"It happened one year on purim," relates Reb Yisroel Friedman, "as we stood and *davened mariv* with the Rebbe at seven o'clock. Since the *fabrengen* would only begin hours later, the crowd was very small, and every motion that anyone did was audible.

"Reb Elya Chayim Roitblat, the longtime melamed of oholei torah, recited the *oleinu* prayer, pronouncing every word with devotion. Everyone in the *shul* could hear him.

"When he reached the words *she'heim mishtachavim le'hevel ve'lorik* (they bow to vanity and nothingness) he muttered to himself almost unwittingly, "*feh, klipah!*"

I will never forget how the Rebbe turned around to look at Reb Elya Chayim. A wide smile spread across his holy face, expressing deep pleasure.

(Techayeinu Issue 7)



More than once, on the way into *shul*, the Rebbe stooped down to pick up a cigarette butt or fallen paper, and on occasion stopped to reorganize a pile of *seforim* on a nearby table. It happened that the Rebbe also made mention of it in public.

“The *shul* tables should be cleaned immediately following a *farbrengen*, so there won’t be a halachic question if it is permissible to *daven* in these circumstances,” the Rebbe said at a 21 Elul *farbrengen* of 5724 (1964).

Four years later, 28 Elul 5728 (1968), the issue arose again. “The towels shouldn’t be thrown on the floor, and there shouldn’t be boxes in every corner of the *shul*.”

“And those who didn’t make the mess, but pass by and don’t care for it, are also responsible.

“Imagine,” intoned the Rebbe, “if a child behaved this way at home. His parents would educate him, and if necessary punish him. This is the home of Hashem! The parents and teachers should educate the children to behave at least as they would in their own homes!”



*The Rebbe points out to Rabbi Chodakov a small scrap of paper on the shul floor.*

*“And those who didn’t make the mess, but pass by and don’t care for it,  
are also responsible”.*





