

ב"ה

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# B'derech Tomim



דניאל עיני

מערכת "בדרך תמים"

שנת חמשת אלפים שבע מאות שבעים וארבעה

שבעים שנה להסתלקות - הילולא של כ"ק הרלווי"צ ז"ל

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### Behind the cover:

The rebbe standing alongside the friediker rebbe on the 16th of adar 5709 when the friediker rebbe received American citizenship at his home in 770.

The rebbe requested that the event be professionally recorded with pictures and color video, and kept the video all the years in his room.



# אשכילה בדרך תמים



## מעלת הנשיא

רבים המחפשים ומבארים מעלות וגדולת נשיאי חב"ד בכלל, ונשיא דורנו, הוא כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ, בפרט, בענינים שונים: איש המסירות-נפש, גאון, בעל מדות, צדיק, בעל רוח הקודש, מלומד בנסים ועוד ועוד.

וגדלו ביותר שבחים אלו, על פי ההגדרה בתורת החסידות, מהו מסירות נפש, מהו גאון וכו'.

ובכל זה – העיקר חסר כאן. ונוסף על זה, שהוא עיקר בעצם, חשוב הוא ביחוד משום שנוגע ביותר, וביחוד לנו, קהל חסידיו ומקושריו. וזהו – מה שהוא הוא הנשיא, ונשיא חב"ד.

כי – נשיא בכלל, נקרא ראש אלפי ישראל, הוא בחינת ראש ומוח לגביהם, וממנו היא יניקה וחיות שלהם, ועל ידי הרביקה בו קשורים ומיוחדים הם בשרשם למעלה מעלה.

והנה כמה סוגים בנשיאים: אלו אשר השפעתם בבחינת פנימיות, ואלו אשר השפעתם בבחינת מקיף. וכזה גופא חילוקים: אם השפיעו בתורת הנגלה או הנסתר או בשניהם יחדיו, לימדרו דרכי העבודה והחסידות, המשיכו השפעות גשמיות וכו' וכו'.

וישנם כאלו, שהי' בהם כמה מבחינות הנ"ל, או גם כולם.

וזה הי' מאז ועד עתה ענין הנהגת נשיאי חב"ד, מן כ"ק אדמו"ר הזקן ועד כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ ועד בכלל, אשר כללו כל הסוגים והחילוקים: השפיעו בפנימיות ובמקיף, בתורה עבודה וגמ"ח, ברוחניות ובגשמיות. ובמילא היתה התקשרותם עם השייכים אליהם בכל תרי"ג אברי נפש וגוף המקושרים.

ועל כל אחד ואחת מאתנו כולנו לדעת, היינו להעמיק דעתו ולתקוע מחשבתו בזה, אשר הוא הוא הנשיא והראש, ממנו ועל ידו הם כל ההשפעות בגשמיות וברוחניות, ועל ידי ההתקשרות אליו (וכבר הורה במכתביו איך ובמה מתקשרים) קשורים, ומיוחדים בשרש ושרש השרש עד למעלה מעלה כו'.

(אג"ק כ"ק ח"ג ע' של"א)

— איז דאמאלט אויף א בית החיים גייט מען ניט, אויב אבער איר האלט אז דער רבי האט זיך איבערגעקליבן אפאר בלאַק ווייטער, איז וואס איז דער חילוק פון דא צו דארטן.

## ו ש ר ז

ומה שמקשה הלא א"א עתה לשאול את כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ כשיש ספק בהנהגה — אם יעמוד חזק בהתקשרותו אליו, מבלי ישיב לב לפתויי היצר, וישלח השאלה על ציון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ — וועט דער רבי געפינען א וועג ווי עם צו ענטפערן.

*(אג"ק ח"ג ע' 107)*

## ו ר ש ש

מורי החסיד הרשב"ץ פלעגט זיך נוהג זיין צו גיין אויף גאנץ יוכ"פ אויפן אוהל אין ליובאוויטש. . דארט ביים אהל איז געווען א מנין שבת און יו"ט, און בחיי הוד כ"ק אדמו"ר הרה"ק מוהר"ש איז דארט געווען א מנין אויך בימות החול.

*(ספה"ש תש"ה ע' 32)*

## נסיעה אל הרבי

### ו ר

. . אזוי איז אויך ווען אן אורח קומט אהער, וואס דאס איז אן ענין פון שבת, — איינער א חסיד איז געקומען צום רבי'ן אין אטוואצק פון לעמבערג, און האט געבעטן דעם רבי'ן זאגן חסידות. האט דער רבי געזאגט אז חסידות זאגט ער שבת. האט עם דער חסיד געענטפערט, אז ווען ער קומט צום רבי'ן איז ביי עם שבת. האט דער רבי אריינגערופן האַטשע'ן — ה' יחזקאל ז"ל פייגין — און געזאגט חסידות — דארף ער אין די צייט אפליידיקן זיך און ארויסגייען פון די אלע הגבלות וואס ער האט אין די היים.

. . די ביסל צייט וואס ער איז דא דארף ער מייקר זיין, ווארום אין דער ביסל צייט קען מען אויפטאן אסאך מערער ווי אין א משך פון א לאנגע צייט, זייענדיק אין דער היים, וויילע דא האט ער ניט די אלע הגבלות וואס ער האט אין דער היים. און דאס וועט געבן אז אויך קומענדיק אהיים וועט ער ניט זיין אזוי. .

און אויך דארטן וועט אויף אים זיין קענטיק אז ער איז א ליובאוויטשער.

*(משיחת ש"פ שמות תשי"ג)*

### ז ר ת

דער רבי האט אמאל דערציילט, אז איינער א עלטער חסיד, פלעגט גיין אלע יאר צו פוס קיין ליובאוויטש, בשעת ער איז געווארן עלטער פלעגט ער גיין איין מאל אין צוויי יאר, אבער אלץ צו פוס.

האבן זיינע קינדער מיט עם גע'טענה'ט ער זאל פארן אויף א פערד און וואגן. האט זיי דער חסיד מסביר געווען, אז בשעת ער וועט קומען אויף יענער וועלט, וועט מען ארויפלייגן אויף דעם משקל הזכויות זיין גאנג קיין ליובאוויטש, איז בשעת ער וועט פארן אויף א פערד, וועט דאך דער פערד אויך קומען צו גיין, איז ווי ער ניט האבן צו טאן מיט א פערד.

*(משיחת יו"ד שבט תשי"ז)*

## האזהל הקדוש

ש ו ש ז ו

וועגן דעם ענין ההשטחות איז דא א קונטרס פון כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי, אזוי אויך פון כ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ און פון די שפעטערדיקע רביים. די ענינים זיינען דאך שוין געדרוקט, במילא וועל איך דאס ניט איבער'חזרן, איך וויל נאר ריידן וועגן דעם ענין פון גיין אויף א ציון פון א צדיק, וואס דאס איז נאך העכער פון השטחות.

דערפאר איז דאך פאראן אין אחרונים ובמקצת הראשונים וואס זוכן אלע עצות און היתרים אז כהנים זאלן קאנען גיין על ציון הצדיק, אבער קיינער איז ניט שולל אז מ'זאל ניט גיין, וואס פון דעם איז מוכח גודל המעלה שבדבר, ניט נאר בפנימיות נאר אויך ע"פ נגלה, ווארום דער איסור איז דאך א איסור ע"פ נגלה.

. . . און דאס איז מעלת התפלה ובקשת צרכיו על ציון הצדיק, תפלה איז דאך א ענין פון התקשרות עצם נשמתו מיט עצמות א"ס ב"ה, ס'איז אני והוא ואין לזרים אתך, דערפאר דארף דאך זיין פניו לא"י ווארום "עיני ולבי שם כל הימים", דארטן איז ניטא קיין שליטה פון די ע' שרים, און דאס איז דער ענין התפלה על ציון הצדיק וואס דאס איז א סגולה נוספת, אז די בקשה זאל נתמלא ווערן, וכרצון הנשיאים אז דאס זאל אראפקומען בחיי היום יום, אין מחדר"מ, מ'זאל מקיים זיין די שליחות בפועל, אן העלמות והסתרים ובהצלחה מופלגה בגו"ר גם יחד.

די דוגמא וואס מ'האט פריער גערעדט פון משה רבינו, אז ער איז געבליבן אין מדבר צוליב אידן, זעט מען דאס ביי אלע נשיאי חב"ד, אז זיי ליגן אין פארשידענע ערטער, בכדי צו זיין צוזאמען מיט צאן מרעיתם און העלפן זיי.

ס'איז דאך ניט נאר א ענין וואס דער גוף ליגט לעבן די גופים, נאר ס'איז א ענין וואס די נשמה כללית וואס זי איז דער שורש פון אלע נשמות פרטיות איז פותח א פתח אין א"י ווי א"י איז קודם החורבן, וואס דאס איז מסייע בכל יום ויום.

געוויס איז בשעת מ'גייט אויפן ציון איז דער סיוע שטארקער, אבער אפי' בשעת מ'געפינט זיך ש ש , העלפט דאס אויך, ע"ד ווי די גמרא זאגט אז בשעת ס'איז פאראן פת בסלו איז דער הונגער ניט אזוי שטארק, ווארום מ'קען אים פארטרייבן דורך עסן.

אזוי איז אויך בשעת דער יצה"ר ווייס אז ס'איז דא צו אים א עצה, להשתתח על ציון הצדיק, און ניט א צדיק סתם נאר – נשיא הדור, וואס ער איז א פרט פון אים, וואס במילא איז דער סיוע אויך א גרעסערער ווי דער סיוע פון סתם א צדיק, במילא גייט ער לכתחילה ניט מיט אזא תוקף ווארום ער ווייס מ'קען אים צוברעכן לגמרי.

*(משיחת יו"ד שבט תשי"ד)*

ז ו ר ו ו

[סיפר הרב פ. שי': הי' זה אחרי "קבלת הנשיאות" (אחרי תשי"א), שהגעתי ממונטריאל לכמה ימים בחוה"מ והייתי צריך לחזור מיד באסרו חג, ושאלתי את הרבי באם נכון לנסוע על הציון (איני זוכר בדיוק אם השאלה היתה בנוגע לחוה"מ או אסרו חג). ואמר:] אויב דאס איז ביי אייך א בית החיים

# תמים במעשיו



## Rabbi chodakov

Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Eizik Hodakov, Chief of the Rebbe's secretariat for more than 40 years, was born in the Russian town of Beshenkowitz in 5662 (1902) on the 4th of Shevat to Horav Hagaon Reb Sholom Yisroel, a descendent of Chabad Chassidim and to Chaya Treina Hodakov. Two years after his birth, the family moved to Riga, Latvia, where he was brought up under the auspices of the famous Gaon and Tzadik Reb Yoel Barantzik. As a young man, he began spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit and the famous Chabad chossid, Reb Mordechai Dubin, the leader of Agudas Yisroel in Latvia and a minister in the government, directed him to utilize his shining talents in chinuch.

During WWI, Jews from Czarist Russia, driven away under suspicion of aiding the Germans, arrived in Riga. These refugees lived in a desolate life, especially in regards to their children's chinuch. Reb Yoel Barantzik created a group, "Tiferes Bochurim" to introduce the youth to evening shiurim of Halacha and Mishnayos. Rabbi Hodakov was one of the two people responsible for organizing and supervising these activities and he successfully rallied many students around him.

### **Principal of the Torah V'Derech Eretz school at 18**

Rabbi Godin, one of Rabbi Hodakov's students in Riga, recalled, "The Torah V'Derech Eretz school in Riga was founded in 5680 (1920). A year later, a branch was established for girls. Rabbi Hodakov was 18 years old, when he was appointed the principal of the Torah V'Derech Eretz school by Rabbi Barantzik. He ran the school as if he were an experienced educator. When we arrived in the morning, Rabbi Hodakov was already there and he would remain there until late at night. He followed the growth of every student and encouraged and assisted each of them. The school attained a notable reputation and parents from nearby cities became interested in registering their children. Within two years, there was no space for

new students. In the following years, branches of this yeshiva were established in Dwinsk, Lepo, Rezekne Karasovo and more.

The spirit behind the growth of the school was Rabbi Hodakov, who was involved in the development of each student. All of his thoughts and ideas were invested in the yeshiva. He demanded endless devotion from the teachers, and constantly urged them and the students to increase the quality of their spiritual and religious growth, as well as their attainment of knowledge. He encouraged the teachers to go for higher degrees and credentials, in order to attract students from intellectual families.

### **Achos Tmimim**

A significant increase in Jewish chinuch took place in Riga when the friediker Rebbe arrived in late 5687 for Simchas Torah, and stayed for the next five years. Rabbi Hodakov met the friediker Rebbe for the first time. During that period, when Rabbi Hodakov was exerting so much of his energy in the Torah V'Derech Eretz girls school, a new organization, "Achos Tmimim" was founded to provide Torah and Chassidus shiurim for girls from other backgrounds.

### **First meeting with the Rebbe**

Towards the end of the month of Tishrei in 5687 on Shabbos Parshas Noach, Rabbi Hodakov met the friediker Rebbe's son-in-law for the first time. Their meetings marked the development of the respect of the young educator to the Rebbe.



Rabbi Hodakov never spoke about himself or his personal experiences. Still, he considered this experience very exceptional and he described that eventful Shabbos meeting.

"I entered the house of the friediker Rebbe on Motzoei Shabbos and I saw this wonderful scene. The new guest from Yektarnislaw was saying 'Vyiten Lecho'. He stood and held the siddur with both hands, and said it quietly and simply. It is difficult to describe but it 'caught' me completely. In the moment when I saw the guest, I saw and sensed truth in its pure genuine manner. In that 'Vyiten Lecho' I saw the truth itself". Seven years later, when Rabbi Hodakov again met the Rebbe, the friediker Rebbe alluded to the relationship that was to develop in the future years.

In the summer 5634, Rabbi Hodakov was appointed the head of Jewish education

for the Latvian Ministry of Education in Riga and a new era began. Rabbi Hodakov reviewed all of the Jewish schools and realized the extent of the ignorance of Jewish tradition. He instituted the study of Tanach and traditional Judaism. A struggle began when Rabbi Hodakov instituted a rule requiring the wearing of yarmulkes when teaching Tanach. Over the course of time, Rabbi Hodakov replaced the non-religious teachers with religious teachers who accepted the guidance of Rabbi Hodakov's appointed board.

In the schools and homes, a Jewish atmosphere was felt. Young children began lighting Shabbos candles and coming to shul with their parents. The atmosphere in the street slowly began to change, with children beginning to wear yarmulkas.

**“This Maamor will bring you a benefit”**

In 5665 (1935), the friediker Rebbe was living in Warsaw and Rabbi Hodakov, the

senior representative for Jewish matters in the Latvian Education Ministry, arrived in the city and was invited to the Rebbe's table. That Shabbos, the son-in-law, the Rebbe, was also present. The highlight of this Shabbos seuda was a Maamor, a Chassidic discourse, delivered by the friediker Rebbe for the small group of four people present. The primary concept of the Maamor was the meaning of Divine Providence. A while later, when Rabbi Hodakov entered Yechidus with the friediker Rebbe, he was told, “This Maamor will bring you a benefit”.



Rabbi Hodakov told this experience without elaborating but it was clear that he understood from the Maamor and the Previous Rebbe's words that he and this person- the Previous Rebbe's son-in-law- were going to be attached in an unusual way.

In 5700, the friediker Rebbe escaped to the U.S. from Poland. The friediker Rebbe saw his settlement to the United States, as a means to demonstrate that “America is no different”. He chose a first class chinuch man, as the most appropriate person to stand at his side in the work awaiting him in the U.S. Rabbi and Mrs. Hodakov were asked to accompany the friediker Rebbe and became a part of the official entourage. They were among the few families who received this privilege.

Rabbi Hodakov recalled that while on the boat, he was instructed to create plans for working with the youth and publishing Judaica literature, to spread Yiddish-

keit in the U.S. in the fields of chinuch.

Some time in 5702, after their arrival in the United States, the Friediker Rebbe appointed him Director, Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Lubavitch movement; Machne Israel, the social service arm; and the Kehot Publication Society, all under future the seventh Rebbe's chairmanship.

In the following years, Rabbi Hodakov participated in many distinguished Rabbinical conferences, and an eloquent speaker, left a deep impression on the world of Torah and Rabbonus. In the month of Tishrei, he would address the conference of the Lubavitch Youth Organization, outlining the activities for the new year, based on the Rebbe's talks and directives.

In 5711, when the Rebbe assumed the nsius, the leadership of the world wide Chabad-Lubavitch movement, Rabbi Hodakov became the head of his Secretariat. He was later appointed chairman of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, the umbrella organization that oversees the worldwide network of Chabad-Lubavitch organizations and institutions.

Rabbi Binyomin Klein, a member from the Rebbe's secretariat, who had a close relationship with Rabbi Hodakov and was a confidant of his, recalled the following. "Rabbi Hodakov was an unusually modest and private person. In general, he never spoke about himself, unless there was a lesson he wanted to convey. The Rebbe would refer people to Rabbi Hodakov in response to the many questions on chinuch which were sent in to him. In the first years of the Rebbe's nsius, Rabbi Hodakov would also give a shiur for the students in the sefer Chovas Ha'levovos.

### **The rebbe's head secretary**

Rabbi Hodakov would bring people into yechidus with the Rebbe and sometimes would request that they conclude the Yechidus, an act demanding much tact and diplomacy. He would also follow up with people who had been in Yechidus. This included phone conversations, which he would later report to the Rebbe and receive directives.

In his actions, it was obvious that two central characteristics existed at the same time; total commitment to the Rebbe as well as utilizing his intellect and intuition. People older than today's youth remember when the Rebbe would sit entire nights accepting people in Yechidus. Prior to the Yechidus, Rabbi Hodakov would enter the Rebbe's room with a list of those with appointments that evening. At the conclusion of the Yechidus, he would enter to receive directives relating to that night's Yechidus. He was totally dedicated to his work and never took a vacation. In later years, when he was elderly and weak, he continued coming to 770, as much as he was physically able.

### **Cherishing Time**

A central feature of Rabbi Hodakov's personality and work was preserving time. We can say without exaggeration that this Yid did not waste a moment

Over the years, the Rebbe would notify his secretaries if he would be delayed for the 3:15 Mincha minyan. Rabbi Hodakov pointed out that some people might be comfortable waiting without appropriately utilizing the time. He would say, "How can one do this? It is definite that the reason the Rebbe notified us of the delay, was so that one should fill the time with content. How can one just waste these moments?" Another interesting anecdote relates to Rabbi Hodakov's wedding day. Rabbi Hodakov reportedly went to work and from there, he went to his wedding.

### **Confidential person**

Being discrete was natural to him and he also instituted this as an iron principle in the work of the secretariat. One should not discuss private matters, relayed from the Rebbe to individual people. If anyone wrote a letter to the Rebbe, and Rabbi Hodakov had the Rebbe's answer, he would not deliver the message to any other family member, even to that person's wife. The same was true when the wife wrote to the Rebbe. Rabbi Hodakov would hand over the Rebbe's response, and the paper would be folded and the answer concealed, in order that there be no discomfort or concern that Rabbi Hodakov was aware of the Rebbe's answer.

### **Admonishing a person**

There were two facets to Rabbi Hodakov's personality; as a leader, he was strong in his convictions but also knew how to concede to others. He knew how to juggle these two traits. When he needed to admonish someone he would do so indirectly, by telling a story from a Medrash or giving over a parable to convey his message. An additional fact needs to be noted. Rabbi Hodakov was very careful, even if it was difficult, not to relay a negative message about anyone to the Rebbe. On more than one occasion, the Rebbe expressed displeasure about an action taken by one of his secretaries. Rabbi Hodakov would always accept blame and never told the Rebbe that he was not responsible. He was extremely careful about slandering anyone to the Rebbe.

### **What did Rabbi Hodakov do in his "spare" time?**

In addition to his twenty-four hour responsibilities Rabbi Hodakov maintained a relationship with his students in the 1920's and 1930's in Riga. He would remember with sorrow, the students who were killed in WWII, and worked tirelessly to locate those who had made it through the war. He corresponded with them, and encouraged them to strengthen themselves. Rabbi Hodakov influenced educators from different yeshivos, to develop alumni gatherings for their students, in order that they all keep stay in contact with each other, serving both a spiritual and physical benefit.

### **Helping the deprived**

Rabbi Hodakov was always creative in establishing new ideas and would concentrate on fields not yet fully developed. For example, establishing activities for the orphans of Israeli veterans was actually his idea originally. He was constantly con-

cerned about the condition of deprived people needing assistance.

In summation, Rabbi Hodakov was a soldier; indeed, he was a leader of many distinguished mosdos and was involved in many great projects who conducted himself as a soldier. His aim was to fulfill the Rebbe's directives. He had no other desire. In everything, he was very particular that it should be done with truth and honesty. When Rabbi Hodakov placed a personal phone call from the office, he would immediately drop a few coins into a specially designated box".

Rabbi Hodakov was a vigorous and resolute activist who introduced many educational ideas and programs. His advice is compiled in a book on education, "The Educator's Handbook". He was a role model for many young Chassidim in his devotion to the Rebbe.

In his service of Hashem, he kept numerous hiddurim. Although his job demanded exhaustively long evenings leading into the early hours of the morning, he utilized every moment for Torah study. His bitul to the Rebbe was amazing. Despite entering into the Rebbe's room many times daily, prior to doing so he would prepare himself. He was observed straightening his clothing, as if it was the first time that he was entering the Rebbe's room.



While a man of great vision, he never lost sight of the details. For

instance, while briefing two Rabbinical students in 5736, in advance of a summer outreach project to countries behind the Iron Curtain, he told them not to forget to bring kosher candy to give to Jewish children along the way, and to verify that lard was not being used in the bakeries.

He demanded total commitment to the welfare of the Jewish people. When a young couple would be sent to a community as permanent Chabad-Lubavitch representatives, he would instruct them with great passion on their responsibility to every Jew, regardless of background or affiliation. If that Rabbi would return to Brooklyn for a holiday, Rabbi Hodakov would ask if all the needs of the community had been taken care of before he came to New York.

Prior to his ptira, he suffered a brief illness and was taken to the hospital. On Thursday, he became very weak and his last words were, "We need to leave this false world and become closer to the truth". He was nifter on Friday night, the third of Iyar, 5753 at the age of ninety one.

# לעבען מיט'ן רבי'ן



## Yud shevat ha'gadol

### 5730

#### **Background: Moshiach's Sefer Torah**

On the night of Simchas Torah, 5702, during the Farbrengen before Hakofos, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke to the Chassidim of writing a Sefer Torah expressly for the purpose of greeting Moshiach.

It is important to note when this took place: At that time, the Jewish people were suffering terribly all across Europe – struggling through more horrifying afflictions than anyone could have imagined would ever occur. In those darkest of times, the Frierdiker Rebbe initiated new efforts to awaken all of his Jewish brethren to return to Hashem, seeking to seize an opportunity to bring about the ultimate Redemption. Thus did the project to write a special Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach commence.

Originally, the Frierdiker Rebbe requested that the parchment for the Sefer come from Eretz Yisroel, so he sent a telegram to R' Shlomo Yehudah Leib Eliazarov of Yerushalayim with precise instructions: The parchment must be made from a "Shlil" (i.e., the hide of a calf still in its mother's stomach) of an animal slaughtered properly through Shechitah; it must be worked specifically for the sake of the Sefer Torah only; and the parchment should be six Tefachim in width.

However, when he realized that the cost of acquiring such a parchment from Israel would be too great, the Frierdiker Rebbe decided that the parchment should be made – and the Sefer Torah written – in America. The Sofer chosen was R' Shmaryahu Factor, who began to write the Sefer in the Alter Rebbe's K'sav.

Initially, it was arranged to start writing the Sefer on the 20th of Cheshvan (birthday of the Rebbe Rashab). For a variety of reasons, however, the writing did not actually begin until the 2nd of Iyar (birthday of the Rebbe Maharash).

The actual writing of the Sefer began in a quiet event without fanfare in the Frierdiker Rebbe's room, with only the Sofer and R' E. Simpson together there

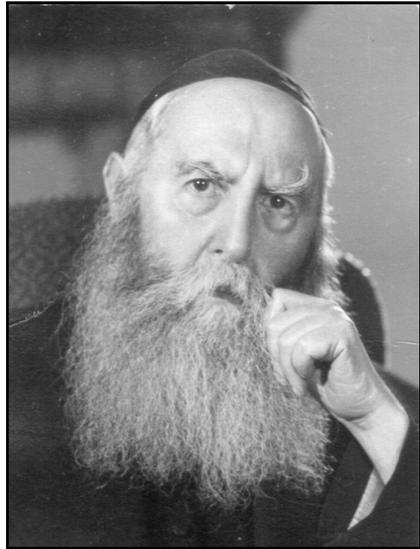
with him. The Sofer drew the outline of the letters of the first word and the Frierdiker Rebbe filled them in, setting this unique endeavor in motion.

Following the completion of the first letters, Chassidim gathered for a special meal in the shul downstairs, where they joined together in saying "L'chaim!" From there, they moved on to Mincha in the room where the Frierdiker Rebbe's mother had stayed (this was during the year following her passing, in which the Frierdiker Rebbe regularly davened in her room). After davening, the Frierdiker Rebbe turned to face the crowd and delivered a Sichah. Among the things he said then, the Frierdiker Rebbe related that when a terrible plague struck his city, the Baal Shem Tov instructed that a Sefer Torah be written – and the plague miraculously ended. Now too, said the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Jewish nation is in dire need of immediate salvation; and he concluded, "May Hashem help that the writing of this Sefer Torah indeed bring it about!"

Later that day, the Frierdiker Rebbe selected three of the elder Chassidim – R' Shmuel Levitin, R' Elya Simpson, and R' Dovid Shifrin – as a committee to supervise the entire project. They were instructed to announce to the public that everyone would be entitled to purchase a letter in this historic Sefer Torah, for the price of one dollar.

In a letter dated that day, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes:

...In the merit of our holy Rebbes, Hashem has granted me the esteemed privilege to carry out the great and exalted Mitzvah of awakening and arousing immediate Teshuvah, preparing ourselves for



the imminent redemption, and to write a Sefer Torah expressly to greet Moshiach. Initially, the idea was a personal secret, with intention to perform the act alone. But during the Simchas Torah meal, while speaking about the specialty of Ahavas Yisroel, I had second thoughts as to whether I was correct in my decision to hide the truth and withhold the public from participating in this great and holy opportunity. I have therefore chosen to proclaim openly that, with Hashem's help, I do plan on writing a Sefer Torah exclusively to greet Moshiach speedily ... All those who wish to participate in the writing are to complete the necessary forms and send them to the committee.

The Frierdiker Rebbe took upon himself all of the costs of the Sefer Torah, as well as the payment due to the Sofer; all of the contributions received from participants in writing the Sefer were given to Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel Fund.

As soon as this momentous project was launched, the Rebbe (as chairman of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel) immediately began promoting the new campaign on a very large scale, enlisting many Jews – including many community leaders – to sign on as participants in the writing.

In the year 5708, the Rebbe wrote R' Bentzion Shemtov that Moshiach's Sefer Torah would likely be completed in the near future.

Bochurim who learned in the yeshiva in those years recall that every Thursday night they participated in reviewing columns of the Sefer Torah, checking for accuracy.

During this period, R' Elya Simpson composed a detailed program for the Siyum Sefer Torah ceremony that they had scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan, 5708. According to his plan, they would bring the Sefer Torah to the Frierdiker Rebbe's room to request permission to proceed in writing the final Pesukim; from there they planned to continue to the Rebbe's room downstairs where the writing would take place, and then return to the Frierdiker Rebbe to fill in the last three words – "L'einei Kol Yisroel" – to be followed by a great and joyous celebration.

For reasons unknown, the plan did not materialize; but the Chassidim presumed that the Frierdiker Rebbe had given instructions that the proper time had not yet arrived...

And so the Sefer Torah remained unfinished until 5730 (1970) - twenty years after the passing of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

### **Yoman – Shevat 5730**

In 5730, with the approaching Yud Shevat marking twenty years of the Rebbe's

leadership, Chassidim from all over the world prepared themselves for the momentous day. A special committee, the "Va'ad L'chagigos Ha'esrim" ("Committee for Commemorations of the Twenty[-year Anniversary]), was formed in Eretz Yisroel. This Va'ad fielded many suggestions and proposals for projects to utilize this opportunity to broaden the Rebbe's work in general and achieve its ultimate goal – the arrival of Moshiach.

From Eretz Yisroel came one woman's suggestion that the time had arrived to request the Rebbe's approval to complete the "Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach" started more than twenty years earlier. This proposal was greeted with great excitement by all Chassidim; soon, a letter was drafted and submitted to the Rebbe. To everyone's dismay, however, the response was negative.

On Wednesday night, Rosh Chodesh Shevat, with the Rebbe's late return from the Ohel came a wonderful surprise for the Chassidim: The Rebbe gave notification



that “all obstacles have been brought to an end,” and they may now proceed with completion of the Sefer Torah. Imagine the outbreak of joy at this extraordinary news – at last, the “Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach” would finally be finished!

That Shabbos, Parshas Va’era (the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Shevat), the Rebbe announced the exciting news publicly that the Siyum for “Moshiach’s Sefer Torah” would soon take place. During the Sicha, the Rebbe expressed astonishment that no one in 770 had made this proposal:

The idea, and request, to complete the Sefer Torah came from Eretz Yisroel, when it should have come from right here in New York, where the Sefer Torah is kept – for, as people point out, 770 is the Gematriya of “Poratzta”!

Nonetheless, this notion remains for me (as do many other questions I have) unanswered. One can be standing before a precious treasure in broad daylight, with open eyes, yet he does not see a thing! Where is there a greater and more precious treasure – awaited and hoped for by all of the preceding generations – than the coming of Moshiach? Yet people turn their faces this way or that; everyone is busy with his own endeavors...

Just as had been instructed when the Sefer was started, the Rebbe announced that anyone who wanted to participate in the writing of the Sefer Torah may do so by donating one dollar. Although the participants would no longer be able to purchase their own letters in the Sefer – for almost all of the letters were already complete, with only a few lines left unfinished –they would nevertheless be able to make their contributions, “and the Malochim will divide the letters among them all!”

Further, the Rebbe indicated that the members of the original committee appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe to supervise the writing of the Sefer Torah should continue the project now as well. The Rebbe concluded, “Let the entire Jewish nation know about this endeavor so that they may all be granted the opportunity to participate in it, and may we indeed merit to bring the Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach!”

Immediately after Shabbos, Chassidim around the world leaped into action. As soon as the news reached Eretz Yisroel, hundreds of Bochorim and Anash went from one end of the country to the other enlisting tens of thousands of their Jewish brethren in this remarkable project. Newspaper advertisements spread its information to all the cities around, resulting in nearly one-hundred-thousand participants from Eretz Yisroel alone!

Among the Chassidim themselves, the atmosphere was electric. Every Chossid had complete confidence and absolute certainty that with the completion of the Sefer Torah, the Golus would end instantly – and the long-awaited Geulah would finally arrive. Everyone prepared in his own way for the much-anticipated future that was now so near!

As Yud Shevat approached, the excitement peaked as hundreds of Chassidim, from all corners of the world, began to stream into 770 to take part in this historic

moment. More than a hundred Chassidim arrived just from Eretz Yisroel alone, bringing with them the lists containing the names of participants in the writing of the Sefer Torah. Chassidim flew in from France, England, Holland, South Africa and many other locations.

At that time, the Sefer Torah was held in R' Shmuel Levitin's room. Throughout the entire week, the Sofer, Rabbi Zirkind, was seen entering the room often, not leaving till late at night.

When the Rebbe returned from the Ohel on Thursday, the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> of Shevat, he called the members of the committee into his room. When R' Elya Simpson emerged from the meeting, he announced in the Rebbe's name that the Siyum would take place the next day at 2:30 p.m.

Next, members of the "Va'ad L'chagigos Ho'esrim," which had overseen the project's promotion in Israel, were summoned to bring their lengthy lists of participants to the Rebbe's room. When they placed the lists on the floor, the Rebbe asked that they be spread out on the table, and a short Brocho followed.

All that night, a constant flow of Chassidim arrived at 770. As buses full of Chassidim and their families pulled up from all across the United States and Canada, the building became more and more crowded – upstairs and downstairs, even outside.

Inside 770, the night shone like day as Chassidim sat together in Farbrengen all through the night, in an unprecedented atmosphere of delight and anticipation of the rare events about to transpire...

R' Chanoch Glitzenshtein, officially designated as the representative for all of the Chassidim of Eretz Yisroel, relates:

On Thursday night, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Shevat, I stayed at the home of my host, R' Meir Harlig. At 4 a.m., I received a telephone call from R' Efraim Wolf (who had also come from Israel) who told me, "We have come here to act – so we are going to assemble now at R' Shimon Goldman's home; you must come immediately, after immersing in the Mikvah."

When I arrived there, I found the members of the "Va'ad L'chagigos Ho'esrim," along with R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, already waiting. We spoke of many things – among them, we discussed practical measures to bring about the Geulah. As the meeting concluded, we decided to write a Pa"N to the Rebbe in which we would request his holy blessing that all our plans should successfully materialize. We resolved that the Pa"N should be read at the Frierdiker Rebbe's Ohel, then presented to the Rebbe.

R' M. M. Wolf adds:

Early Friday morning (after the meeting at R' Goldman's), the members of the committee awaited the Rebbe's arrival at 770. When the Rebbe appeared, they entered his room. presented the Pa"N and beseeched the Rebbe, saying: The time for Moshiach has arrived and we want him to come actually! The Rebbe listened with deep concentration and instructed the group to go to the Ohel and make the exact same request there.

That day, Friday, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Shevat, the shul in 770 was packed from end to end. In addition to the many Chassidim who had come from around the world, Jews from all across the New York City area arrived to be part of this historic moment.

At exactly 2:30 p.m., R' Elya Simpson made his way through the crowd cradling the special Sefer Torah. Close behind him walked the Rebbe, with a closed box in his holy hand, as the Bochorim sang "Napoleon's March." The Sefer Torah was set on the table near the Rebbe's place; then the Rebbe sat down.

The Rebbe began with a short Sicha in which he explained that they were performing the Siyum after midday on Friday so that it could take place as close as possible to the actual completion of the twenty years from the Frierdiker Rebbe's passing on Yud Shevat.

This, said the Rebbe, was like the case of the Shofet, Shimshon – of whom it says in one place that he ruled the Jewish people for twenty years, while in another



it states that his rule lasted for forty years. This teaches us that he was still feared by the Philistines – even twenty years after his passing.

The Rebbe continued: Being that it is Erev Shabbos, it is a most auspicious time to finish the Sefer Torah according to the instruction of a Nosi Hador – just as the first leader of the Jewish people, Moshe Rabbeinu, completed writing his Sefer Torah for the Jewish people on Erev Shabbos.

Then, in a unique turn of events, the Rebbe proceeded to invite all the Jewish people, wherever they may be, to come and join in the event, "whether they find themselves in the Diaspora or in Eretz Yisroel; and especially those under repressive rule, an exile within an exile..."

The Rebbe then suggested that the eldest member of the Sefer Torah committee appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe say a chapter of Tehillim. Normally, the Rebbe said, one normally does not say Chapter 20 of Tehillim after midday on Erev

Shabbos; but now, he explained, we stand in uncommon times when all signs point towards Moshiach's coming; thus we now do things that previously might not have been done.

The Rebbe rose and pointed in the Siddur as R' Shmuel Levitin recited the chapter, verse by verse, with all those gathered repeating after him. The Rebbe then turned to R' Yoel Kahan and instructed him to begin the Alter Rebbe's Nigun; followed by the Nigunim of each of the Rebbeim, and "Hoshiya Es Amecha."



Finally, the moment had arrived, and the last few letters of the Sefer Torah were finished by the Sofer, R' Shmaryahu Factor. The Rebbe stood up again; fixing a powerful gaze on the Sefer Torah, he did not remove his eyes from its letters until the Sefer was completed.

Then the Rebbe asked R' Elya Simpson to give out the Pesukim of "Atoh Horeisa." Overwhelmed by the moment, R' Elya stuttered and confused himself in distributing the verses; the Rebbe corrected him repeatedly. The first and last Pesukim were given to the Rebbe to recite; distinguished Chassidim representing communities around the world – including R' S. C. Kesselman; R' A. Z. Slonim; R' D. Baumgarten; R' Z. Serebransky; R' N. Nemenov; R' B. Goredtzky; R' D. Skolnik; and R' B. Shemtov – recited others. Rabbi Hadokov, the Rashag and the members of the Sefer Torah committee were also honored to recite Pesukim.

The crowd then sang the Nigun, "Prozois Teisheiv Yerushalayim."

The crowd then sang the Nigun, "Prozois Teisheiv Yerushalayim."

After Hagboh and Gelilah, the Rebbe opened the box he had carried with him into shul. The entire gathering looked on in awe as the Rebbe removed a majestic Torah crown from the box and placed it on top of the Sefer Torah. As the Rebbe set the crown in its place, the Chassidim sang, "Ani Ma'amin"; then the Rebbe carried the Sefer Torah to the Aron Hakodesh under a Chupah, accompanied by burning

candles. Reciting the “Shehechyanu” Brocho (which included the new Torah), the Rebbe ate a new fruit.

Then the Chassidim sang the “Nigun Hachonoh,” and listened intently as the Rebbe delivered the Ma’amar, “Lehavin Inyan K’sivas Sefer Torah.”

The Rebbe concluded with a short Sicha, stating: We have just finished something that had been missing; now, it is only up to each of us to finish the last few things that need to be done to break through the Golus and bring Moshiach.

He added, “It is Erev Shabbos, the day before the [Frierdiker] Rebbe’s ‘Yom Hahilulah.’ Let it be clear that we do not intend to make a dinner or banquet, or anything of that sort; a ‘Yom Hahilulah’ is a day for Torah and Yiras Shamayim, for inspirational words that will have positive effect on all those who hear them.”

The Rebbe sang the Nigun, “Tzomo L’cho Nafshi” (switching some of the words in the second stanza). Finally, after reciting a Brocho Acharonoh, the Rebbe left the shul as everyone sang, “Uforatzta!”

On Shabbos, the day of Yud Shevat, the Rebbe conducted a Farbrengen. On Motzoei Shabbos, the Rebbe Farbrenged again, washing for Melavah Malka.

[A short while before the evening Farbrengen began, with only a few Chassidim present in shul, the Rebbe entered with a Sefer Torah in hand – carrying it to the front of the shul, he placed it in the Aron Hakodesh. It is rumored that this Sefer Torah was bequeathed to the Rebbe as a gift by the Jewish community in Morocco.]

That evening would mark the first time that the Rebbe’s words were transmitted by hook-up to countries all over the world. After the Farbrengen, the Rebbe Bentched and distributed “Kos Shel Brocho” to all of those present.

### **A few interesting points about Moshiach’s Sefer Torah:**

1) On Shabbos Emor 5734 (1974), an error was found. In the words Me’erev Ad Erev Tishbesu Shabatchem there was an extra AD, so it read Me’erev Ad Ad Erev. An amazing thing happened that Shabbos: the Rebbe gave a Rashi sicha on this posuk at that day’s Farbrengen for over an hour.

2) Moshiach’s Sefer Torah would only be used on a Shabbos or a Yom Tov according to the Rebbe’s direct instruction usually on that Friday. If the Sefer Torah was used for that Shabbos, then it would also be used for mincha of that Shabbos. The Rebbe would receive the third aliyah on Shabbos mincha if Moshiach’s Sefer Torah was used.

3) If Moshiach’s Sefer Torah was to be used, Reb Shaya Matlin, a sofer (scribe), would go over the entire parsha of that Shabbos on Friday afternoon upstairs in 770. This continued by R. Matlin into the 1980s.

4) Moshiach’s Sefer Torah was never kept inside the ark downstairs in 770. Instead, it was kept in a special aron kodesh in 770’s library. Since Gimmel (3) Tamuz, it is kept somewhere else by different people.

# חסי'דעשע אוצרות



## Memories 5710 - 5711 by Reb binyomin mintz

“The yeshiva davened in the small zal on the first floor every Shabbos. Ramash (later to be the Rebbe) would come from his home, enter the room for a few minutes and then come out, walk into the long corridor, enter the ‘second room’ and from there go to the zal and sit in his place next to the far entrance. (After accepting the nesius, he would enter the zal from the main door opposite his room). His place was on the bench with everyone else with a shtender near the wall. Sometimes I sat next to him during davening.

“I noticed that Ramash would start from ‘Ma Tovv’ and daven at his own pace. When the minyan would finish the Shabbos davening, he would be up to ‘Boruch Sh’Omar.’ During the Torah reading, the Rebbe Rayatz’s two sons-in-law were given an aliya. Rashag got shlishi and Ramash got shishi. After the minyan finished davening, Ramash returned to his room and nobody knew what he did there.

“On special days like 12 Tammuz or 19 Kislev there were two farbrengens: the first night, Rashag farbrenged in the small room downstairs. On the second night, Ramash would farbreng in the beis midrash. More people attended Ramah’s farbrengens. Ramash would also farbreng every Shabbos Mevarchim. After the davening, the people would set up two tables and Ramash, who as I said, hadn’t yet started ‘Boruch Sh’Omar,’ would sit at the head of the table and farbreng for about forty minutes. We bachurim would come from the yeshiva on Bedford to attend this farbrengen.

“We often saw him on Erev Shabbos when I sat in the zal and reviewed the parsha. He would enter the zal wearing a gray suit and hat. On Shabbos, of course, he wore a sirtuk and a black hat.”

### THE VALUE OF EVERY DROP OF WINE

One of my memories is of the final Sukkos, Shabbos Chol HaMoed 5710, when I was on the first floor of 770 and heard singing from the Rebbe Rayatz’s sukka on the second floor. Someone told him that the Rebbe was farbrenging in his sukka.

"I went up to the second floor and saw that the door was open. I went in until I reached the yechidus room. I saw a large desk and large pots full of water for netilas yadayim. The entrance to the sukka was through that room so I walked in and went to the sukka. I saw the Rebbe Rayatz sitting facing Eastern Parkway and Ramash sitting and facing Kingston. Those present, a handful of Chassidim, sang, and now and then the Rebbe Rayatz spoke.

"At that point, it was very hard to understand the Rebbe since his speech was impaired. I saw a spot in a corner of the sukka and sat down quietly. Between sichos I took mashke and said l'chaim to the Rebbe. Then I went out and as I was already in the room heading out, I heard the people stop singing and the Rebbe began talking. Although what he said was almost entirely not understandable, I suddenly heard him say clearly, 'Wine is a precious thing and every drop must lead to a benefit in avoda.' I remember being taken aback by how clearly this was said."

### THE HISTALKUS

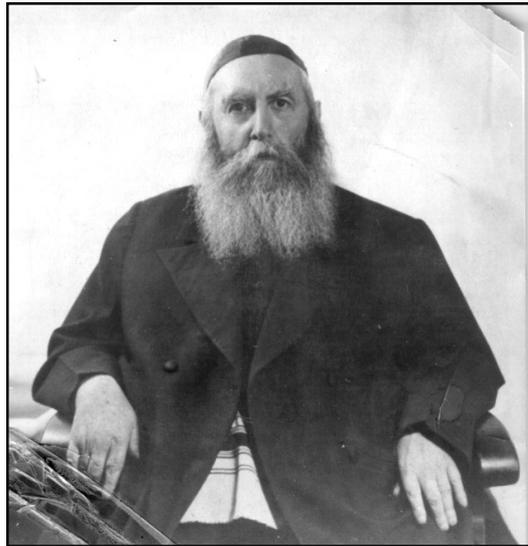
That bitter day of Yud Shvat 5710, the day of the histalkus, is etched in my memory.

"the previous Friday, After I finished eating at my hosts, the Kestenbaums, I went to 770 and found Rashag sitting and learning the maamer 'Basi L'Gani' that the Rebbe Rayatz had prepared before Shabbos.

"The next day, Shabbos morning, when I arrived for Shacharis, I saw Zalman Posner running from 770. I asked him where he was running and he replied obliquely, 'I'm

going to Brownsville.' At that time, there were many shuls there and thousands of Jews lived in the area.

"I continued to the beis midrash for davening when I suddenly noticed R' Nachum Novokov standing near the window and sobbing. He owned a store on Montgomery. I still didn't know what had happened and thought he was crying over some personal matter. Then I noticed Ramash enter the beis midrash with some other people and when he saw that they had already begun to daven he entered the 'second room' and went before the amud and began davening very quickly until he reached the point that they were up to in the main minyan in the large room. Then the two minyanim joined and davened together. I also heard someone crying during the Torah reading but I still did not attribute any significance to this.



“After the davening, as I got ready to go eat the Shabbos meal, a bachur older than me came over and said, ‘Perhaps you’ll go up to say T’hillim.’ I innocently asked him why, but he said, ‘Don’t ask questions, just go up.’ When I went up, I understood everything. I sat down to say T’hillim near the Rebbe’s bedroom. The door was slightly ajar and I saw the Rebbe’s bed in the corner while the other bed was moved to the side. The bed was covered with a sheet.

“Rashag walked here and there in a frenzy. Ramash on the other hand was restrained and dealt with everything that needed to be done, telling each one what to do. It was easy to discern the difference between them. Other bachurim came up to say T’hillim and I left for the Shabbos meal. When I arrived at my host’s house, I found that they already knew of the Rebbe’s passing. As I said, my host wasn’t a Lubavitcher but he traveled on business to various countries including Russia. Each time, the Rebbe Rayatz asked him to take Jewish religious items with him saying, ‘It’s dangerous but you have an American passport.’ A few times when he came for the Rebbe’s blessing and to offer to take some items, the Rebbe declined saying, ‘Now is not the right time for that.’”



“As I stood there next to the yechidus room, I couldn’t help but remember the t’fillos that took place with the Rebbe as he sat there and the congregation davened in the minyan in the next room, his mother’s room. The Rebbe would listen to the minyan through the partially open door. I could sometimes see the Rebbe sitting near the table, wrapped in his tallis with only wisps of his beard visible.

“Sunday morning, we went down to the beis midrash and davened Shacharis while the chevra kadisha closed the door to the room and made the preparations for the funeral. When we went back upstairs, the Rebbe was in the aron (coffin) they built out of his shtender. It was lying on the chairs, covered with his tallis. Downstairs, all the bachurim had already done kria.

“They took the Rebbe downstairs for the funeral where a large crowd waited. The aron left 770 and the bachurim turned left until Brooklyn Avenue and then right where the cars were waiting. The chevra kadisha’s car took the aron to the yeshiva on Bedford and Dean from where they continued to Atlantic Avenue, and turned right towards the cemetery on Springfield Boulevard.

“When we arrived there, they told us not to enter through the main gate but to walk left till the grave. It was a long detour and when we got there, the burial had already taken place. Someone told us that we should take some dirt and place it on

the grave. As I stood there, I saw Ramash standing on the right side of the grave and Rashag on the left, gazing silently.

“By the time we left the cemetery, the buses had already departed for 770. As mourners do, we sat for a short while on the pavement on the side of the road, and then took a city bus to 770.”

### **RAMASH WILL BE THE SUCCESSOR**

According to R' Mintz, the feeling that Ramash was the person to fill the void was apparent to him and many others.

“We bachurim knew that if something happened to the Rebbe, Ramash would succeed him. I remember that one time, when I ate at the Kestenbaums, they were discussing what would happen after the Rebbe Rayatz’s 120 years. I said, ‘Nothing will happen because he’ll be the Rebbe until Moshiach comes,’ but they insisted on asking. I said, ‘Then the younger son-in-law will be the Rebbe.’”

“He was very unassuming, like an ordinary person, but we could all see that he was superior to all.

Throughout the year, minyanim were held in the Rebbe Rayatz’s room and the two sons-in-law said Kaddish. Rashag davened in the first minyan at nine, and the Rebbe davened in the second minyan that began at ten.

On Lag B’Omer the Rebbe said he wanted to go to the gravesite together with a minyan. Since we did not have a regular yeshiva schedule that day, I decided to go along. When we arrived at the Ohel, the Rebbe stood at the foot of the grave, facing the gravestone while the rest of us stood all around. Each of us said the *Maaneh Lashon* and when we finished, we went out and waited for the Rebbe outside the cemetery near the bus. After the Rebbe finished his avoda, he came out.

“Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson and some other older Chassidim arrived. R' Kazarnovsky showed the Rebbe the plans they had prepared for a stone wall around the grave. The initial plan was that the inner stone wall would be a little larger than the grave. When the Rebbe saw the plan he said, ‘Why was so little space left?’ They said they wanted the space to be as small as possible in order to give people room to stand. To their surprise, the Rebbe said, ‘And who said that the Rebbe [Rayatz] is here?’ pointing at the grave. ‘Maybe the Rebbe is here, more to the left?’

“They were all flabbergasted by this and did as the Rebbe said. The inner wall was constructed more to the northern side. this was on Lag B’Omer, just three months after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, and long before the Rebbe accepted the nesius. Even then, the older Chassidim had utter bittul to the Rebbe for they knew that the Rebbe was head and shoulders above them all.”

## מוקדש

לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר  
זצוקל"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

## לזכות

התלמידים השלוחים שיזכו  
לגרום נח"ר לכ"ק אדמו"ר במילוי  
שליחותם