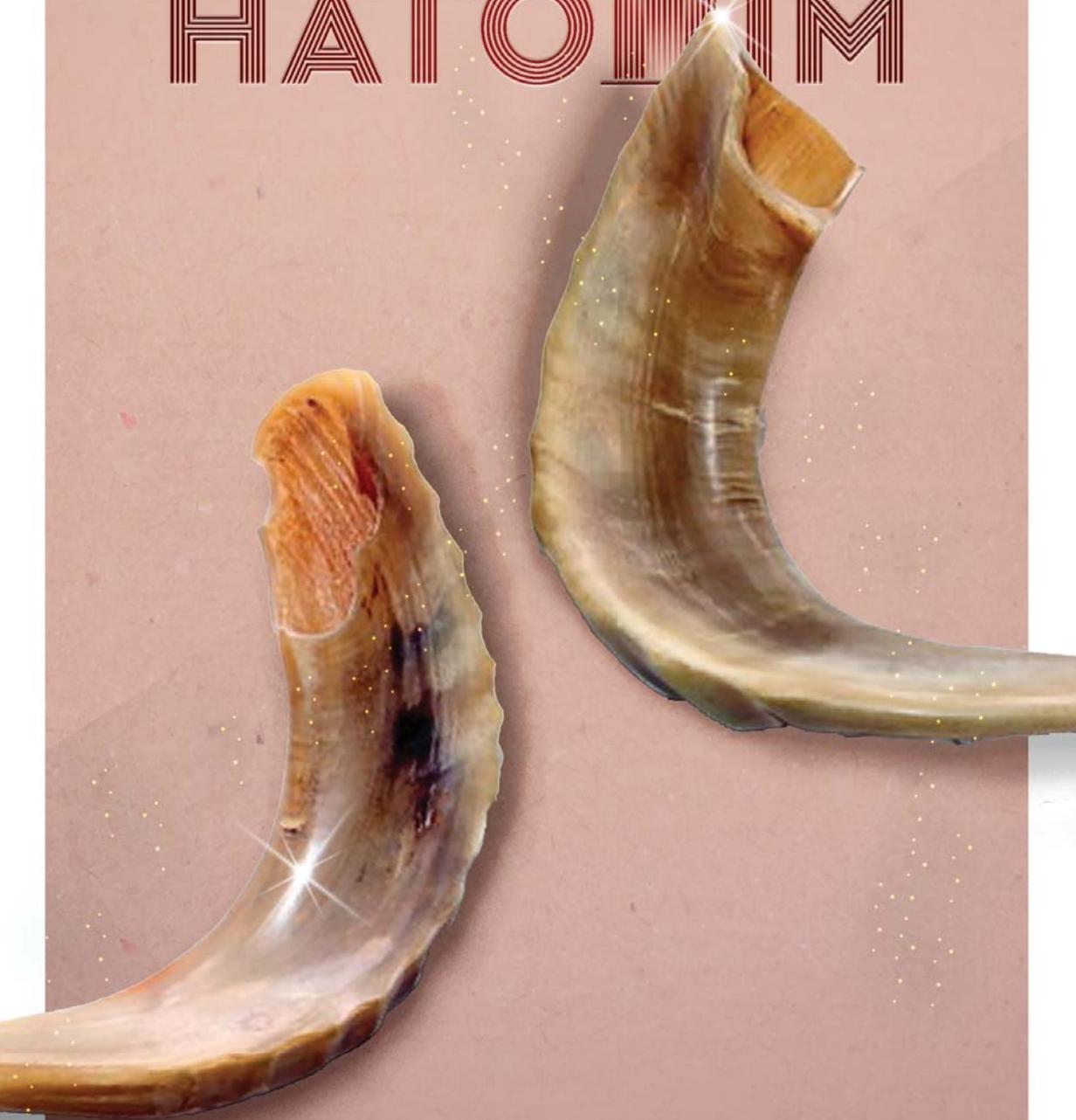


# HATONIM





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## About The Cover

At Tekios, the Rebbe's hanhaga is to come with at least three shofaros. Here are some of the shofaros (two of which appear on the cover) the Rebbe used throughout the years. A full overview of Tekios with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and a brief description of the Rebbe's various shofaros appears in this issue of Hatomim.



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"Bachurim come for  
Tishrei and wander  
around Kingston Avenue"



פּוֹתְחִין  
בְּדַבָּר  
מִלְכוּת

### CONDUCT OF A YESHIVA BACHUR DURING ELUL AND TISHREI

A compilation from the Rebbe's teachings about the benefit of staying in yeshiva and properly using the time of Elul and Tishrei. Compiled by **Rabbi Chaim Ashkenazi a"h**

### NO TIME FOR VACATION

"During the Yomim Noraim, Aseres Yemei Teshuva and Yom Kippur, [yeshiva bachurim] need to be together in the same institution where they receive guidance in Yiras Shamayim. The benefit in this and in publicizing this conduct is inestimable, both for the talmidim themselves, and even more so, for their environment.

(Igras Kodesh vol. 7, p. 347)

### GOING HOME FOR TISHREI – ILLOGICAL

That talmidim go home for the entire month of Tishrei is behavior that makes no sense and is the opposite of the intent in the guidance toward Yiras Shamayim. For if this is necessary all year round, there is no better and more auspicious time for this than during Selichos and the Yomim Nora'im, etc. If it is not possible to change this practice, at least fortify them with spiritual sustenance, both for themselves and for the places they are going to. If it is possible to at least keep back the older ones in yeshiva, at least for Rosh Hashana,

Aseres Yemei Teshuva, and Yom Kippur, use this time to draw them close to the customs of Chassidim and their ways.

(ibid)

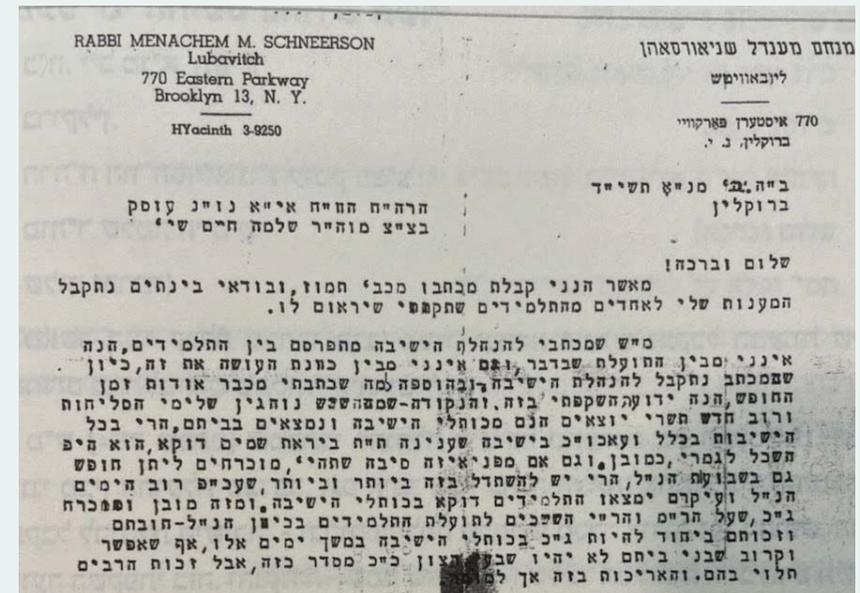
### THE OPPOSITE OF HEALTHY INTELLECT

May you increase your effort in your holy work, despite the custom of the country which is the opposite of healthy intellect, and even the intellect of the *nefesh ha'sichlis* (the intellectual soul), and not just the intellect of holiness, that at the end of Elul and the month of Tishrei they diminish the avoda of chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh ... Of course, my intention is not to rebuke but to inspire contemplation yet again. Perhaps the time has come to improve matters, at least a bit.

(Igras Kodesh vol. 9 p. 312)

### THE TALMIDIM SHOULD BE IN YESHIVA

What I've already written about vacation, my view is known. That some have the custom to leave yeshiva for home



"That which some are accustomed to — leaving the walls of Yeshiva for the days of Selichos and most of Tishrei..."

The original letter to Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman (translation appears below)

during the days of Selichos and most of Tishrei, in all yeshivos in general and all the more so in a yeshiva where the point is learning Torah with fear of Heaven, this is obviously the complete opposite of rationality. Even, if for some reason, you must give vacation during these weeks, you must try very hard that the talmidim be in yeshiva at least most of these days. Obviously the teachers and roshei yeshiva who are needed for the benefit of the talmidim, need to be in yeshiva during these days even though it is likely that their families will not be too pleased by this. But the merit of the many depends on them. Going on at length about this is unnecessary.

(2 Menachem Av 5714,  
Igras Kodesh vol. 9 p. 234)

### YOU REVIVED MY SOUL WITH THIS NEWS

I was pleased to receive your letters in which you write about what happened before Rosh Hashana and afterward about the talmidim staying on etc. **You revived my soul with this news that brought me joy, that you are going step after step in preparing matters so they will be vessels for the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.** You should not falter or be fazed by it seeming to be slow, less than anticipated, because it is impossible to assess the truth of the progress. Based on what is alluded to at the end of Igeres HaTeshuva that the movement of the shadow on earth just a handbreadth is relative to (and thus also causes) the movement of the sun in the

# Tekios By Our Rebbeim: A Timeline

## The Baal Shem Tov's Kavanos

The Rebbe Rayatz and Rebbe would order the *baal tokeiah* to study the *maamar* “*L’havin Inyan Tekias Shofar al pi kavanas haBaal Shem Tov*” the morning of Rosh Hashana. It is in the *Siddur im Dach*. In this *drush* the meaning of the *tekios* is explained based on the Baal Shem Tov’s *kavanos*. Obviously, this is in addition to knowing the laws of *tekias shofar*.



## The Rebbe Maharash:

72 Teruos “My grandfather the Rebbe Maharash had a very long breath — when blowing the shofar he would sound seventy-two blasts for the *teruah*.” (Sefer HaToldos — Admor Maharash, pp. 73)

## The Alter Rebbe: Never Was a Child...

All the Rebbeim were either *baalei tokeia* or had the position of *makree*, the one who shows the shofar-blower where he is up to and the proper length of the *tekia*.

We know that the Alter Rebbe was not a *baal tokeia*. He himself once said that he did not know how to blow because a person learns to blow in childhood and he had never been a child.



.....  
**The Frieddiker Rebbe during the Rebbe Rashab's lifetime in this world**  
 .....

## The Rebbe Rashab Takes Charge

On the second day of Rosh Hashana 5702 the Frieddiker Rebbe related: “In 5648 (1887), my father took charge of the *tekios*; on the first day this had been done by my uncle, the Raza. Reb Chaim was the *baal tokeia*. My father assumed that role only after the year 5660 (1899). In the years 5658, 5659 and 5660, I was the *baal tokeia*.”

## The Frieddiker Rebbe: “My son, I want to hear from you”

5681 was the first year of the Rebbe Rayatz’s *nesius* and although he blew in the time of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, he declined to blow shofar (and in general, distanced himself from all trappings of *nesius*) but his mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah said, “My son, I want to hear *tekias shofar* specifically from you.” Since she requested it, he said the blessings and blew one *tekia* and then gave the shofar to **Rabbi Yitzchok Yoel Refaellovitz** to complete the *tekios*.



## How Could the Rebbe Not Know How to Blow?

In Elul 5712, two members of the Vaad Lubavitch, Rabbi Zalman Gurary and Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov, went to the Rebbe to ask that the Rebbe blow the shofar on Rosh Hashana as was customary for the Rebbeim over the generations. The Rebbe said he did not know how to blow. R’ Zalman got up the nerve and said, “It’s a *chochma* (wisdom) not an *umnuh* (skill). How is it possible the Rebbe does not know this *chochma*?”

The Rebbe expressed his consent only after asking R’ Shmuel to clarify exactly what the Rebbeim would sing quietly to themselves before the *tekios*. Indeed, R’ Shmuel went to the Rebbe several times before Rosh Hashana and taught him the “*tenuos*” (snatches of tune) that the Rebbeim sing at the *tekios*.

## By the Rebbe:

With the Rebbe, the system of the *tekios* came in stages. On Rosh Hashana 5711, before the *tekios*, the Rebbe gave the shofar to Rabbi Moshe Dovber Rivkin to blow. At the *tekios* of Musaf, Rabbi Yosef Menachem Mendel Tennenbaum blew.

The following year, Rosh Hashana 5712, the Rebbe only said the *pesukim* before the *tekios* and when it was time to blow, he motioned to R’ Tennenbaum to say the *brachos* but he refused and the Rebbe said them. R’ Tennenbaum blew the *tekios* and the Rebbe was the *makree* (with his finger in the siddur).



.....  
**Rabbi Tennenbaum by the Rebbe; R’ Zalman Gurary can be seen in back**  
 .....

## The Rebbe's Shofaros

The Rebbe always brought three shofars with him, one of the Tzemach Tzedek which he inherited from his father. This shofar remained in Russia for many years

and was finally taken out by Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Raskin. Some time after he arrived in Eretz Yisrael, the Rebbe sent him a request to return the shofar to him as the heir. The full story of this shofar was published in Beis Moshiach #1230.



R' Yaakov Yosef Raskin blowing shofar in the Rebbe's presence, 25 Elul 5742

On Rosh Hashana 5713, the Rebbe blew only the first *tekia*. He then gave the shofar to R' Tennenbaum to finish the *tekios*. From 5714, the Rebbe started blowing the entire first series of *tekios* (*d'meyushav*) himself. From then until 5752 inclusive, the Rebbe blew the first series of *tekios* every year.

**We hope and pray that this Rosh Hashana we will be zoche to once again hear the tekios from the Rebbe himself.**

ת ק ע ב ש ו פ ר ג ד ו ל ל ח ר ו ת י נ ו

# THE REBBE'S SHOFAROS

As mentioned in the article, there were a number of Shofaros that the Rebbe uses for tekios. Here are photos of them of them with some information on their origins:

✓ **1 • A black and white shofar of the Tzemach Tzedek.** It is assumed that it was passed down from the Tzemach Tzedek to his eldest son Reb Boruch Shalom, the Rebbe's great-great-grandfather, and passed from father to son until reaching the Rebbe. Even after this shofar became possul due to its old age, the Rebbe kept bringing it with him to tekios .



✓ **2 • The black shofar that was used by the Rebbe's father, R' Levi Yitzchak** which came from the Rebbe Maharash (see above). This is the one the Rebbe uses most often. Many times, the Rebbe tried other "easier" ones and changed back to this one.



✓ **3 • A white, flat shofar of the Frierdiker Rebbe.**

✓ **4 • A white, curved shofar also belonging to Reb Levik, the Rebbe's father.**

✓ **5&6 • These two were made for the Rebbe in Eretz Yisroel** at a request of the Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka who requested that 'easier' Shofaros be obtained for the Rebbe after his heart attack on Simchas Torah, 5738. The Rebbe used these shofros for three years, from 5739 to 5741 (1978-1980), and then went back to using the black shofar of the Rebbe Maharash.



# TEN FACTS ABOUT NAPOLEON'S MARCH



## 1 • THE CUSTOM

At the end of Neila on Yom Kippur, at the end of the great, holy day, and at the end of the forty days of repentance and forgiveness that began on Rosh Chodesh Elul, Chabad Chassidim sing “Napoleon's March” with great joy.

## 2 • THE ORIGINS OF THE NIGGUN

The niggun is referred to by Chassidim as Napoleon's March. It was after the Alter Rebbe's fierce opposition to Napoleon to the extent that he announced that if Napoleon won although the stature of the Jewish people would be raised, and there would be an increase of wealth among the Jewish people, the price would be steep; the hearts of the Jewish people would part from their Father in heaven. However, if the Russian czar won, although the stature of the Jewish people would decline and there would be an increase in poverty among the Jewish people, their hearts would delight, connect and bond to their Father in heaven.

## 3 • “BIRUR” OF THE NIGGUN”

The Rebbe Rayatz related:

“When the Alter Rebbe left Liadi erev Shabbos Mevorchim Elul 5572 because of Napoleon's war, he instructed that they inform him of the march tune the French soldiers used when crossing the Russian

border. When they sang it for him, the Alter Rebbe said it was a victory tune and he entered into a deep ecstatic trance. He finally raised his head and said: In the end, it will be didon notzach (our side will win)!

## 4 • SONG OF VICTORY

“Napoleon's March” stands out with its strong movements and metered full stops, which express feelings of victory. When they sang this song tune for the Alter Rebbe, he said, “This is a victory tune.”

## 5 • GLOWING COUNTENANCE

One of the special moments of the month of Tishrei with the Rebbe was when “Napoleon's March” was sung following the holy day. In a diary written in Tishrei 5716, the scene is described:

“In the kaddish after Neila, before tiskabel, they sang, as they do every year, the victory march known as 'Napoleon's March.' The Rebbe turned to the crowd with a glowing countenance and sang with them for a long time with great enthusiasm and joy. After they blew the tekia gedola, they finished kaddish.”

## 6 • HIGH UPON HIGH

The Rebbe would get up on his chair (which was on the platform) and energetically encourage the singing. Later on, they even

prepared a special staircase which also stood raised above the platform. Thus, the Rebbe, from “high upon high,” encouraged the crowd as the thousands gathered were excited with joy that was well beyond the norm.

## 7 • JUMPING ON THE CHAIR

This is what the Munkatcher Rebbe, the Minchas Elozor (some of whose customs the Rebbe adopted), would do. In the sefer Darkei Chaim V'Sholom it is brought down as almost exactly matching the description of the Rebbe's practice:

“Fortunate is the eye that saw our Rebbe at this time ... in the early years ... it was his holy practice to jump and skip on the chair that was placed near him and he danced on it... and the entire people rose up opposite him in dances of joy. It is beyond description the tremendous avoda that he had then with a literal divestment of physicality.

## 8 • TEARS MINGLED WITH JOY

With the conclusion of Neila on motzoei Yom Kippur 5734, a shocking scene unfolded before the eyes of the Chassidim. They all finished Avinu Malkeinu and the beis medrash was silent as they all waited for the chazan to start Shema Yisrael and Boruch Sheim. However, suddenly they could hear sobbing from the Rebbe's place. His body was covered with a tallis and moved from side to side with the sobbing as though he could not calm down. Even when they began singing “Napoleon's March,” the Rebbe remained standing in place unlike the usual practice. Throughout the niggun his face was covered. His hands encouraged the singing but they could see that the crying did not stop.

“People could clearly see that the Rebbe wanted to achieve a victory in heaven,” wrote one of those who kept a diary that year. “Only after many minutes did the Rebbe turn to the crowd, uncover his face and one could see a sign of joy and victory.”

## 9 • “STAND AT ATTENTION” - WITH THE MARCH

The night of Shemini Atzeres 5734, a few minutes before 9:00 in the evening, the Rebbe went in for hakafos. After saying “Ata Horeisa” the second time, the Rebbe told the gabbai to announce, “Imdu hachen kulchem — Stand at the ready all of you, men, women and children, to greet the 'time of our joy' of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah. And since [the call to] 'stand at the ready' is connected to an army, they should sing a song of victory.”

## 10 • MOTZOEI YOM KIPPUR IN CHESHVAN

At the farbrengen on parshas Noach, 4 Mar Cheshvan 5752, the Rebbe spoke about the manner of personal accounting and the teshuva that ought to be on Shabbos. At the end, he said this had a special connection with the conclusion of Yom Kippur when “Hashem Hu Ha'Elokim” is said after saying Shema one time and Boruch Sheim three times.

The Rebbe then began proclaiming in the motzoei Yom Kippur tune the words “Hashem Hu Ha'Elokim” seven times and L'Shana Ha'Baah B'Yerushalayim! Then, in a manner that stunned and sent a tremor through the crowd, the Rebbe began to sing “Napoleon's March” as he encouraged the singing with both hands. At the beginning of Cheshvan, the Chassidim felt like it was motzoei Yom Kippur.

# We Can't Just Say

“Zhid, Davai Diengl”



“Jew, Give Me Money”

The same Rebbe who demands of us to accomplish things that are **“Oros d'Tohu”** also wants them to be **“b'Keilim d'Tikkun”**

**Reb Pinnye Korf** writes about how we are to approach publicity of sensitive aspects of Mivtza Moshiach



In the famous sicha of Chof-Ches Nissan 5751, the Rebbe roused each one of us with fiery words about what is incumbent on each and every one of us, to do what it takes to bring the Geula. The Rebbe said that “matters that are in a way of lights of Tohu but in vessels of Tikkun” needed to be done.

The Rebbe stressed the need for avoda that would comprise two aspects, “lights of Tohu” and “vessels of Tikkun.” This obviously means that in our avoda now, “to bring to Yemos ha'Moshiach,” one cannot have one without the other. You cannot focus only on “lights of Tohu” and forget about “vessels of Tikkun” and vice versa, you cannot stress “vessels of Tikkun” and forget about “lights of Tohu.”

More particularly (in order to illustrate and negate the mistake that has taken root among some):

In Beis Moshiach, issue 409, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg wrote: *When, time and again one encounters the same bizarre and upsetting claim of “ofen ha'miskabel” so that it becomes a “foundation of faith” that is the last word on every issue; as though it was said in order to prevent the publicity of “light of Tohu” since “vessels of Tikkun” are needed and not what the words really mean, namely that the purpose of “ofen ha'miskabel” and “vessels of Tikkun” are only for the purpose of conveying the full force of the message of “lights of Tohu.”*

The words are worthy of the one who said them and he is absolutely right, because the entire purpose of vessels of Tikkun is only to actualize through them the lights of Tohu.

## CAUTION IS NEEDED

On the other hand, the vessels of Tikkun are no less vital than the lights of Tohu because they were said by the same Rebbe. Therefore, those who stress only the lights of Tohu are no less mistaken than those who stress only the vessels of Tikkun.

We can see this in the sicha of Tazria-Metzora 5751 which was said after the sicha of Chof-Ches Nissan. “The cause for the possibility of nourishment of the outside forces to the point of the opposite of purity (openly and externally) from the ‘supernal lights’ of *negaim* (as they truly are in their spiritual source) is because of the tremendous loftiness of the ‘supernal lights’ which cannot be invested into ‘vessels.’ As Kabbala and Chassidus put it, ‘lights of Tohu’ that are above becoming invested in ‘vessels of Tikkun,’ from which devolved (after the shattering etc.) all undesirable matters.”

The meaning of this paragraph is that the lights of Tohu are a lofty and awesome level because they are very lofty lights, but if they are not invested into “vessels of Tikkun,” there could be a “nourishment of the outside forces,” from which can devolve all undesirable matters.

## WITHOUT SHATTERING THE VESSELS

What follows are two examples that will illustrate the proper approach:

There is the story of R' Pinchas Roizas and R' Shmuel Munkes in which R' Shmuel goes to the home of his friend, R' Pinchas who was very rich. As is the way of the rich, his house was orderly and clean, attractive and well-appointed

with carpets on the floor. R' Shmuel, whose clothing and shoes were full of mud did not hesitate (and maybe did it on purpose) and walked on the rugs and dirtied them with mud. Leaving marks with every step he took, he went to the drawing room where important guests were received, sat on the sofa and even lay down to rest with his feet on the clean upholstery.

The wife of R' Pinchas, who was astonished over the conduct of the strange guest, did not dream of throwing out the impudent guest but still asked her husband to tell him that he at least remove his shoes from the sofa and not make everything filthy.

R' Pinchas went to R' Shmuel and seeing that it was so he said, "Shmuel, is this another one of your pranks? Why put your shoes on the sofa when you could have removed them before you lay down to rest?"

"What?! You care about things like that? After everything we learned by the Alter Rebbe that all is nothing ..."

Behavior like this was appropriate for great Chassidim like R' Shmuel Munkes and R' Pinchas Roizas, but among ordinary people and all the more so for people who need to be drawn toward Chassidus, this type of behavior is completely *tohu'dik* and for one who acts this way, not only is there no connection between this and *darchei ha'Chassidus*, to the contrary it is entirely the opposite of the intention and it could cause "undesirable things."

In a letter from 15 Shevat 5709, the Rebbe writes to Anash in France about the activities that needed to be done to bring people close and connect them to the Nasi HaDor by giving *maamad* (financial support) etc. He writes:

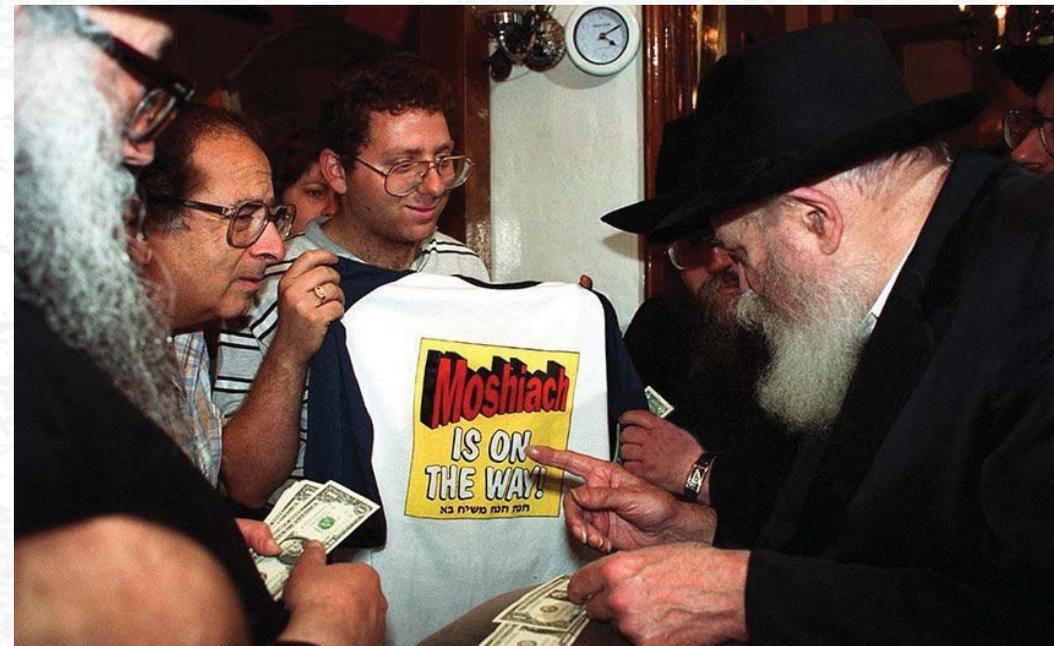
"Their main job in their current country now is to spread the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe among the people on the outside in France. And we have no other wellspring through which are drawn the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe except for one – and this is the Rebbe, my father-in-law *shlita*.

"... It is obvious that the person who believes with full faith, meaning [faith] that governs **all** of his faculties, that the view and blessing of so-and-so rules over all and he knows about his friend that he has to make a crucial decision pertaining to children, life and sustenance... then from the perspective of humanity, *Ahavas Yisrael*, *pikuach nefesh* etc. if there is only a hope and the **slightest doubt that perhaps** he would listen to his words, it is incumbent upon him to **chase** after his friend and tell him have mercy on yourself and your family and everything you have, and do not rely on your own understanding. Learn Chassidus [DaCH], connect to so-and-so, and act according to his words and then you will succeed."

From this it is obvious that we need to talk and publicize and not be fazed. At the same time, the Rebbe adds in the very same letter:

"It is obvious that if they will approach a Jew and say to him, Jew give me money and I will give it to so-and-so that lives thousands of miles away whom you don't know and he has no connection to you, but he possesses lofty and elevated qualities – they will be in his eyes like mockers."

Here we have it made clear for us that the *avoda* must be in each place suited to its character and in such a way that makes it accepted. And even this lofty matter of



giving *maamad* needs to be done in the right way.

## PUBLICIZING THE IDENTITY OF MOSHIACH

The same is true for publicizing the identity of Moshiach. Obviously, if we come to someone and shout at him that the Rebbe is Moshiach, not only won't he accept it but he will recoil from this. Conversely, if we try to explain it to him in a well-reasoned manner, then even if at first he won't agree, the matter will definitely no longer be so out of the question for him and slowly but surely he will even accept it.

If one can explain even to someone who is not observant that there is One who governs this world, and one can explain that there is a Rebbe in the world and everyone needs to connect to him, etc. why wouldn't one be able to explain to anyone that the Rebbe is Moshiach?

However, one needs to think and come up with the right way to approach a person according to his personality and style. We see that those who explain it, are successful.

I personally once met with the son of Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky and he asked me about those who say that the Rebbe is Moshiach. I told him that I believe it too. He began to ask questions and to mock it, etc. At first I tried to explain it to him and when I saw that he wasn't receptive I told him there is a letter from Rabbi Aaron Soloveitchik that says that those who say that the Rebbe is Moshiach are not going against *halacha*. Then he said to me, "Nu, send me the letter," and was silent.

Similarly, I've seen, in my experience in many cases, that when you explain something and try to adapt it and bring it down to the level of the recipient, i.e. "lights of *Tohu*" specifically, but in "vessels of *Tikkun*," one is successful. ■

# ה'חזק'ה'ך



Reb Yoel Kahan arrived in 770 just on time to become the Rebbes' Choizer who memorized entire farbrengens and transcribed them after Shabbos. **Over the years**, he trained new generations of Chozrim and Meinichim. Two of them, **Rabbi Simon Jacobson** (of Vaad Hanochos HaTmimim) and **Rabbi Nachman Schapiro** (of Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos) told Hatomim what it was like to be around such a giant of memory, precision and sharp understanding.

## AVROHOM RAINITZ ◦

### PREPARING LIKUTEI SICHOS VOLUMES 3-9

In advance of Shavuot 5718, the Rebbe agreed to edit his sichos so the yungeleit and tmimim who would be going to speak in shuls would be able to share the Rebbe's sichos with their listeners. Volumes one and two were worked on primarily by Rabbi Yehoshua Dubrawsky and Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Gansbourg. They used the notes that R' Yoel Kahan had written of the sichos over the years. They were assisted by Rabbi Uriel Zimmer who rewrote the unedited notes so they would be suitable for reviewing in shuls. After the rewrite, the sichos were submitted to the Rebbe for editing and after the editing they were photocopied and distributed by Tzeirei Chabad as "Tochen Inyanim B'Dach Lachzor B'Batei Kneisiyos." These sichos were collected as volumes one and two of Likutei Sichos.

In advance of Simchas Torah 5723, the Rebbe again agreed to edit sichos, apparently to mark the 150th year since the passing of the Alter Rebbe. All the work was given to R' Yoel Kahan along with R' Dubrawsky, R' Gansbourg and Rabbi Zissel Piekarsky. The Rebbe edited the sichos over an entire year, until Simchas Torah 5724. These sichos were published as books and they are volumes three and four in the series of Likutei Sichos.

In 5725, after the passing of Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother, the Rebbe dedicated the farbrengens to explaining *peshuto shel mikra* in Rashi's commentary.

R' Yoel prepared the sichos and submitted them to be edited by the Rebbe and to the joy of all, the Rebbe agreed to edit them in memory of and l'ilui his mother. After Shabbos parshas Vayishlach the Rebbe stopped editing the sichos. The few sichos that were edited were later printed as an addendum to Likutei Sichos volume five.

At the beginning of 5727, Rabbi Benzion Shemtov, who worked enthusiastically to disseminate the Rebbe's teachings, started the Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos together with Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanin and Rabbi Sholom Jacobson. At first, the vaad disseminated unedited hanachos (notes transcribed from memory). Once they realized that the Rebbe was not pleased with the dissemination of unedited sichos, they began disseminating the sichos from the first four volumes. In the winter of 5729 after a cycle and a half of the sichos in the first volumes were disseminated weekly in print format, they saw that for the Shabbosos of Mikeitz, Shemos, Vayikra, Emor and Vaeschanan there were no sichos to print. They fervently hoped that the Rebbe would agree to edit new sichos.

The members of the Vaad asked R' Yoel to prepare these sichos. After he put together a sicha from parshas Mikeitz, the final product was submitted to the Rebbe and the members of the Vaad wrote that since there was no other sicha to print, they were asking that the Rebbe be willing to edit the sicha.

A few days later, the Rebbe sent out the edited sicha. Their joy was indescribable. Until then, even if on rare occasions

the Rebbe edited sichos, it was only in connection with special occasions, so the editing of a sicha without any connection to a special date, was a significant breakthrough.

5729 ended along with most of the edited sichos that they had prepared. They wrote to the Rebbe again and enclosed a sicha that R' Yoel prepared for parshas Bereishis 5730. That was the night of Hoshana Raba and the very next morning the Rebbe gave his edits to the sicha to the secretary, R' Yehuda Leib Groner. In hindsight, that day was the most significant milestone in the history of Likutei Sichos. After that, the Rebbe began editing sichos weekly. For two years, R' Yoel worked with the members of the Vaad in preparing the written versions of the Rebbe's sichos and they received countless instructions regarding this.

These sichos, edited mostly by R' Yoel, were later printed in volumes five through nine of Likutei Sichos.

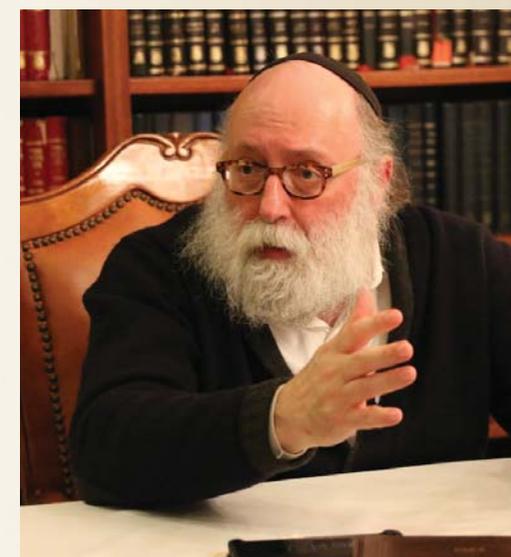


Motzoei Shabbos in Crown Heights. Midnight. Lights in the neighborhood were shutting for the night, but in one place the lights remained on and dozens of Chassidim sat and listened closely to the review of the farbrengen that had just taken place. R' Yoel Kahn sat in the center and spent hours reviewing what the Rebbe said. Around him sat the tmimim who helped with the review, adding a detail or piece that they remembered.

"Those are my first memories of R' Yoel Kahan," said Rabbi Simon Jacobson. "As a boy I took an interest in *chazara* (review). I loved going into the small zal after Shabbos to see this group of chozrim led by R' Yoel. It wasn't the usual scene. In



RABBI NACHMAN SCHAPIRO



RABBI SIMON JACOBSON

shul you generally see davening, shiurim or farbrengens. This scene of chazara was something unique that could be seen only in the small zal of 770 on motzoei Shabbosos following a farbrengen of the Rebbe."

During those years of the mid-sixties, when R' Jacobson would go to the chazara

as a child, Rabbi Nachman Schapiro was already an active participant in the chazara albeit unofficially. Later on, R' Schapiro joined the team of chozrim, as he recounted:

“R' Yoel was my mashpia when I was a boy in Lubavitch Yeshiva on the corner of Bedford and Dean and when I came to 770 in the sixties, I joined the team of chozrim. He would often ask me to go with him to his home or office as he sat and wrote the hanachos or to arrange the Likutei Sichos and I was able to observe his work at all stages of the process of preparing the Rebbe's sichos for print.”

## NEW SYSTEM OF THE 7TH GENERATION

Since the Chassidus movement was founded, Chassidim lived in burning anticipation to learn the teachings of the Rebbe, knowing that this is *Divrei Elokim Chaim*, and they were attaching their souls to the “general soul” of the generation. It was customary for the Rebbeim to write their own teachings and give them to the Chassidim for them to copy. Most of the series of maamarim of the Rebbeim [aside from the maamarim of the Alter Rebbe] are in their holy handwriting or a copy. Maamarim that were only a hanacha from one of the listeners were only put in as hosafos (addenda).

With the Rebbe M<sup>TM</sup>HM it was different. Nearly all his maamarim and sichos were written by meinichim (those who recorded what was said from memory [or later from tapes]) and only some of this was edited by the Rebbe afterward. This editing took on many forms. Sometimes he would point out a few things and make corrections and would say to publish it as *bilti mugah*, i.e. the editing was not

completed to his liking. Sometimes he would edit once, twice and again and allow the sicha to be printed as “edited.”

The chozrim of the “seventh generation” had to contend with another change. In earlier generations, after learning the maamar well, they would go into the Rebbe's room and review it for him. The Rebbe would correct their mistakes and explain the parts they did not understand. This system did not continue with our Rebbe so that it was necessary to reconstruct alone all of the points and phrases that were said and to try and understand the content and the connection between them.

However, the main novelty of the “seventh generation” was in the new content and style and a completely different scope. The teachings of the earlier Rebbeim focused on the saying of maamarim every Shabbos and Yom Tov which is why there is a Sefer HaMaamarim from all the years of Chabad Chassidus which contain the maamarim of that year. The Rebbe started lengthy farbrengens when most of the time was spent on sichos that were an amalgam of Nigleh and Chassidus, based on the Rebbe's unique and amazing approach. The Chassidim had to get used to hearing deep “hadranim,” “diyukim” in stories of the Rebbeim that could properly be understood in light of the words of the Rogotchover Gaon in a certain place and were aligned with some deep explanation in Chassidus on a seemingly unrelated topic, and so on.

The difficulty lay in the new type of content and style as well as the incomparable breadth: farbrengens which regularly lasted five to six hours and often longer and included many sichos and a maamar. Also, in the early years there



REB YOEL STANDING NEAR THE REBBE DURING A FARBRENGEN

were times that the Rebbe said a maamar in his room on Shabbos morning and if it was a Shabbos-Yom Tov think about how hard the chozrim's work was when Yom Tov was over!

## WHEN THE REBBE BEGAN EDITING

R' Yoel spoke about the early days on a number of occasions:

At first, I wrote the sichos for myself without any special intention. I told R' Berel Chaskind that I was writing down the sichos and he asked me for the notes. I asked him what for and he only said, what do you care?

R' Chaskind was afraid to bring the notes of the sichos to the Rebbe for editing and so he conveyed them through someone else who told the Rebbe that Anash out of town also wanted to know what the Rebbe said. The Rebbe told him, “Certainly; this could have been beforehand [before Yud Shevat] too.”

R' Yoel wrote all the sichos that the Rebbe said in 5710 and on. At the *kabbolas ha'nesius* of 5711, the Rebbe said the maamar, “Basi L'Gani” and the following Shabbos he said the maamar, “Ha'yosheves Ba'ganim.” Since in earlier generations the Rebbeim wrote their own maamarim, R' Yoel thought that this Rebbe would also write the maamarim that he said. Therefore, when the Rebbe asked him what was happening with the



## THE REBBE TOLD US WHO MOSHIACH IS, BECAUSE THE WORLD MUST KNOW IT TOO!

”

A transcript of **Reb Yoel Kahan's** address at a Kinus held in 770 on 16 Shevat 5753 as a “**follow-up**” to the famous “**Kabbolas HaMalchus**” satellite broadcast in which the Rebbe participated on **Yud Shevat** that year

In the hadran on the Rambam 5746, the Rebbe innovates a completely new way of looking at what is “the coming and revelation of Moshiach,” what is the Geula. At the beginning of the hadran, there is an amazing explanation about belief and knowledge of Hashem which is described at the beginning of the Rambam:

The Rebbe explains: With belief and knowledge of Hashem, there are three levels: 1) Firstly, the simple faith that every Jew has, belief and awareness of the existence of G-d. This knowledge is derived from the fact that the “*Maor* [the source of all G-dly light] is in a revealed state,” from the very fact that G-d is present in the world. After that, there are other levels of knowledge. 2) Intellectual knowledge, to understand and recognize that G-d enlivens and brings into existence all creations ex nihilo, at every moment, which is a conclusion that is driven by intellect. 3) A higher knowledge than this, to understand and recognize that G-d is not bound by the limitations of intellect and He can also create a world which does not need constant vivifying by Him.

The Rebbe innovates that the highest level of all is the simple faith of every Jew in the very existence of G-d; since knowing that G-d creates everything ex nihilo and even the knowledge that G-d is completely above the bounds of intellect, comes from man's limited contemplation which can never reach the very essence of G-d.

However, the faith of the simple Jew comes from the fact that G-d chose to be revealed here in this world and to give the possibility of knowing and recognizing His existence, and therefore, with this faith, a Jew grasps G-d Himself – His very essence and being. Furthermore, this faith is the basis, the core “essence” from which

everything is derived. All understanding and comprehension, fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos etc. all come as a result of the very essence of this faith.

### THE “ESSENCE” OF THE COMING OF MOSHIACH

Further in the sicha, the Rebbe explains that also regarding Moshiach there are the three levels that were mentioned. We won't go over the entire deep explanation which was explained in the sicha but the point of it is that the Rambam defines Moshiach as “a king from the house of Dovid.” What singles out a king from the house of Dovid from other kings is that he is called a *melech b'etzem* (a king in his very essence).

In other words, he is not merely a king who performs the technical functions of leading the nation and leading them in war etc. but he is a “king of the house of Dovid,” *melech b'etzem – yechida klalis* through whom the entire nation connects with G-dliness and each one individually reveals the deepest level of his own neshama, yechida.

In simple terms; the very revelation of Melech HaMoshiach in the world [before he even begins to act in that role], who is the *yechida klalis* of the entire generation and the entire world, and everyone recognizes this in the simplest manner, i.e. that one can point at a Jew and say that he is Moshiach – this is the idea of the “coming of Moshiach,” the idea of Geula!

The Rebbe explains in the hadran that aside from the fact that Moshiach will carry out certain individual matters - fixing the world and compelling all of Israel etc., the very idea of the “coming of Moshiach” in the world means: when they

know, according to Torah, that a certain Jew is definitely Moshiach (i.e. after the building of the Beis HaMikdash and the gathering of the exiles – the time which is meant with the term “the coming of Moshiach”, when Moshiach has arrived with certainty and one can point and say he is Moshiach) – that is revelation of *Maor* [the light-source], the revelation of *yechida*.

It is true that there are also individual matters that Moshiach will do in the world, but that is something additional to his very existence as Moshiach. The coming of Moshiach itself means that it is revealed in the world that this Jew is Moshiach! This is the idea of the revelation of *yechida* – the *Maor* is in a revealed state.

Truthfully, we need to know that this point has always been; that the purpose of the creation of the world from the start was that Moshiach would be revealed in the world. When the Rebbe would speak about the Rebbe Rayatz, even after his passing and also in his lifetime, he would say as a point of fact that he is Moshiach. We don't need to look for a greater *mekushar* than the Rebbe and the Rebbe certainly did not look to add something to the word Rebbe, it's just that this was always the case. Therefore, for Chassidim it was a given that the Rebbe is Moshiach. It wasn't an addition or praise of the Rebbe, but rather that the two are one and the same.

The goal of a Chassid is that the Rebbe be revealed in the world and that everyone know of him and connect to him and this is because the Rebbe is Moshiach and this is the purpose of the creation of the world as mentioned, that it be revealed in the world that this Jew is Moshiach!

Except that throughout the generations, the matter of Moshiach was not emphasized which is why in the Chassidus of the earlier generations it does not talk about this point, that through Moshiach himself the kingdom of Hashem is drawn down into the entire world in such a manner, and that this will be revealed specifically and in detail through Moshiach. But now that the Rebbe himself raised and revealed these issues, certainly we need to live with this and enliven the entire world with this.

## THE WORLD NEEDS TO KNOW WHO MOSHIACH IS

In the Kuntres Beis Rabeinu sh'b'Bavel and in other sichos, the Rebbe gives an interesting explanation about what it says in the Medrash that Moshiach stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash and announces that the time for the Geula has come. There would seem to be a simple question: what is meant by standing on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash? After the third Mikdash will be built will Moshiach need to announce that the time of the Geula has come? We will see the Beis HaMikdash!

Says the Rebbe that this alludes to Beis Rabeinu sh'b'Bavel, the miniature sanctuary, for “*gagin lo niskadshu*” (the roofs in the Mikdash were not sanctified) - this alludes to Beis Rabeinu sh'b'Bavel which is outside Eretz Yisrael and it does not have the holiness of the Beis HaMikdash in Eretz Yisrael. And Moshiach will come and announce that the time for the Geula has arrived. It seems to me that everyone knows who is the one who stood in Beis Rabeinu sh'b'Bavel and announced that the time



REB YOEL SPEAKING AT THE SATELLITE BROADCAST ON YUD SHEVAT 5753

for Geula has arrived! That is how, as a literal aside, the Rebbe learns *pshat* in the Medrash ...

Obviously, it is possible and even required to try and think, why did the Rebbe really tell this to us? The truth is that nobody can know why the Rebbe says certain things. Perhaps others have a straighter head, but to me it makes sense to say that this is not merely to learn a *pshat* in the Medrash but for us to truly understand who Moshiach is, that we know this. Why do we need to know? I'm not getting into that, but if we didn't need to know, the Rebbe would not have said it.

Everyone can learn “*pshetlach*” as he likes, everyone can say his explanation, but the simple fact is that if we did not need to know, it would not have been said to us. Why was it said? Because the world needs to know!

As mentioned before, the Rebbe is saying in the hadran of 5746 that this is

the “essence” of the coming of Moshiach, that people know who Moshiach is!

## THE REBBE CERTAINLY KNOWS HE IS MOSHIACH

Does the Rebbe not know that he is Moshiach? Does the entire world know and he doesn't know? If he didn't know, he would not have said such a *pshat* in the Medrash.

There is the idea of Torah knowledge. The Rebbe also learns the sichos and *maamarim* ... He also knows that Moshiach and the Rebbe is the *inyan* of *yechida*; it says so in all the sichos. Everyone understands that the Rebbe learned the first *maamar*, “*Basi L'Gani*” 5711 and everyone knows what is the role of the seventh. This a Torah idea, that according to Torah and especially according to *pnimiyus ha'Torah*, the *Nasi HaDor* is the *yechida klalis* and the Moshiach of the generation.



# SIMCHAS TORAH 5753: FIRST ENCOURAGING OF “YECHI” FROM THE BALCONY



**Everyone** has seen videos of the Rebbe encouraging Chassidim singing “Yechi.” **However**, what many don’t know is that this **tremendous giluy took off** during hakafos on the night of Simchas Torah 5753. **A Yoman of perhaps the most historic Simchas Torah in Lubavitch**

Since 27 Adar 5752, the Chassidim had not seen the Rebbe (except for one time on Shavuot). A balcony was constructed for Rosh Hashana on the far side of the big zal and the congregation was able to daven with the Rebbe for the first time since the stroke. After that, the Rebbe began coming out more and more to the public and the excitement and anticipation grew commensurately.

A crescendo was reached the night of Simchas Torah. Word got out: the Rebbe is coming out for hakafos! At the time, 770

was mostly empty and it was possible to get a spot wherever you wished. At 7:35, the Rebbe came out to the special room. The chazan, R’ Leibel Zajac, went over to the amud and davened quickly and with the special Simchas Torah tune. At 7:45, the Rebbe came out to the balcony that was built especially for Simchas Torah. The crowd sang the Simchas Torah niggun. Two minutes later, they began the hakafos. The Rebbe was honored with all the pesukim of the first Ata Horeisa and after each verse that he said, he looked at

the crowd for them to repeat it. He said the first verse louder and the secretaries were able to hear it.

After the first “Ata Horeisa,” they began singing a Niggun Simcha for hakafos and the Rebbe immediately began nodding encouragingly. All that time he scanned the crowd and encouraged them with his nodding for ten minutes. After the second “Ata Horeisa,” they began singing “Al Hasela.” At this point, the Rebbe surprised the crowd as he moved his entire body in all directions with all his might. The crowd, even with speeding up the singing, could not keep pace and the Rebbe continued with these powerful movements for about four minutes. If you hadn’t seen it for yourself, you wouldn’t believe it.

For the first hakafa, R’ YY Gutnick gave the Rebbe the small Torah scroll and the Rebbe took it in his arm and transferred it to his right hand. Then he began encouraging the singing.

The Rebbe was given the honor, once again, for the seventh hakafa. As the Rebbe read the pesukim of the hakafa, the children, with the crowd following them, began proclaiming “Yechi.” After they did this three times, the Rebbe suddenly began encouraging them with movements of his head, right and left, forward and back, in an unequivocal manner. There were some who still hesitated about singing this in front of the Rebbe but their hesitation was momentary. The singing rose up and the entire 770 was swept up in the fire of emuna.

The Rebbe continued encouraging the singing by nodding and moving his head quickly from side to side. Nobody could keep up. It was like adding fuel to the fire in any case, and the crowd continued singing Yechi as the Rebbe strongly encouraged it with his body. The Chassidim, who could

not believe their eyes, continued singing, and the Rebbe continued encouraging the singing. The song was sung for three to four minutes.

One of the Chassidim who recorded a diary that year wrote, “I looked around and saw them; those many individuals who sobbed. Eyes filled with tears. Bitter tears. Tears of joy. Cries that shook one’s body. The excitement reached the heavens. It was the first time seeing the Rebbe after such a long time since that bitter day. And above all else, such open joy. Then, in the midst of the great excitement, someone began loudly singing Yechi. There was no agenda. It welled up from the core of the soul, which was at peak revelation. Hundreds joined in the singing with ecstasy. Hundreds more waited to see what would happen. In that brief moment in time, a great thing came to pass in the world...

“Later that night, I saw those thousands of Chassidim who gathered for Tishrei dancing excitedly in place. Mashke poured like water and the joy rose up and spilled outside the doors of the shul. The mighty singing made hearts tremble. Now everyone knew – a new era had begun!

“It was a historic night in Lubavitch. It was reminiscent of the description of when the Rebbe said the first maamar and the Chassidim jumped in excitement and said l’chaim. History was repeating itself in my day! All that night the singing continued with tremendous enthusiasm. Chassidim danced until dawn with indescribable joy and put the words Yechi Adoneinu to every niggun.

“The song hasn’t stopped till this day. It has become a set thing that every time the Rebbe comes out to the public, Yechi is sung. Also, since then, they began writing ‘The Rebbe shlita Moshiach Tzidkeinu’ in advertisements.” ■



# THE רש"י REBBE'S REVOLUTION

The Rebbe on his Rashi approach: "I became a melamed dardeki (=a school teacher)".

Before Parshas Noach 5725, the Rebbe announced that there would be a farbrengen, but nobody imagined that the Rebbe's entire style of farbrenging would change. "Before the Rebbe entered for the farbrengen, we noticed a Mikraos Gedolos Chumash on the table. That was unusual, because until then the Rebbe did not open a sefer during a farbrengen

## A NEW-STYLE FARBRENGEN

Until 5725/1964, the Rebbe farbrenged on Shabbos Mevarchim, Yomim Tovim and Chassidishe special days. After the passing of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana a"h, on 6 Tishrei 5725, R' Yosef Wineberg wrote to the Rebbe that since the Rebbetzin was a great admirer of the Tanya and sichos broadcasts on the radio, perhaps throughout the year it would be worthwhile to arrange that every Motzaei Shabbos there could be a broadcast of sichos (not only on Shabbos Mevarchim as was done until then) and it should be *l'ilui nishmasa*. Because in those days, the Rebbe did not farbreng every Shabbos, wrote R' Wineberg, on the Shabbosos that there wouldn't be a farbrengen, he could take sichos from Likkutei Sichos which were already printed or from those that were not yet printed.

The Rebbe liked the idea very much of delivering a sicha every week *l'ilui nishmas* his mother. The Rebbe underlined the word "perhaps" and made an arrow to the words "worthwhile to arrange." The Rebbe also circled the words "throughout the year" and added in his handwriting, "This supports my considered reasoning of a farbrengen – bli neder – on Shabbos Kodesh [throughout the year] at least briefly in quantity [of time]."

Indeed, before Parshas Noach, the Rebbe announced that there would be a farbrengen, but nobody imagined that the Rebbe's entire style of farbrenging would change. As to what occurred at that farbrengen, R' Nachman Schapiro fills us in. He was a yeshiva bachur at the time and was later appointed to the staff of the Vaad L'Hafatzos Sichos:

"Before the Rebbe entered for the farbrengen, we noticed a Mikraos Gedolos Chumash on the table. We later learned that R' Sholom Yisroel Chodakov brought it as per the Rebbe's request. That was unusual, because until then the Rebbe did not open a sefer during a farbrengen but lectured by heart.

"The Rebbe began the farbrengen with the saying of our Rebbeim that Rashi's commentary contains within it 'the wine of Torah' from Pnimiyus HaTorah, in conjunction with 'Peshuto Shel Mikra,' i.e. that Rashi unites the simple meaning of the text with the esoteric meaning. After the Rebbe explained how the *pshat* reveals the *sod* of Torah, he opened the Chumash and began reading and explaining the first Rashi on Parshas Noach, just like a teacher teaching his students. The Rebbe read a piece from Rashi's commentary, analyzed and explained it, and then said, 'and Rashi goes on to say' and looking inside the Chumash, quoted the next words of Rashi, and again asked questions and gave wondrous explanations.

"The crowd was surprised by the new style of farbrengen and I remember that after the farbrengen we looked at one another and wondered, is this what farbrengens with the Rebbe are going to be like from now on?"

It wasn't only the crowd that experienced the change. R' Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, relates that in 5725 a distinguished person had *yechidus*; when he came out of the Rebbe's room, he told R' Groner that during their meeting the Rebbe had spoken to him about his sichos on Rashi and said about himself, "I've become a *melamed dardeki* [teacher of young children]."

If at first the Chassidim thought it was a one-time event, on the Shabbosos that followed they saw that aside from the style of farbrengens that had changed, the Rebbe was revealing depths in Rashi's commentary while setting out principles and developing a new method and original way of learning.

"In the first sichos, the Rebbe's explanations were not entirely in line with the *pshat*," says R' Groner. "The emphasis was primarily on the 'wine of Torah' and horaos in the way of Chassidus. As time went on, the Rebbe began to put a stress on the *pshat* of Rashi, with nearly every farbrengen revealing a new principle in Rashi's approach for learning the *pshat*."

R' Nachman Schapiro points out a clarification that is published in the additions to Likkutei Sichos Volume 5, as an introduction to the sichos of the winter of 5725, which were edited by the Rebbe. This is what is written there: "It is worth noting that the 'simple meaning' of the sichos that were printed here (5725) are not with the same simplicity as the explanations on Rashi's commentary in later years, since, as it is known, with *pshat* too there are various approaches." This note was written by those who published it but underwent the Rebbe's editing and approval.

As time passed, the Shabbos farbrengens undertook a certain established routine. At the beginning of the farbrengen the Rebbe opened the Chumash and began reading the first Rashi and explaining it. Then he said an explanation on the "Chassidishe parsha" (i.e. Torah Ohr and Likutei Torah) and then explained another Rashi. After a few weeks, the Rebbe began choosing another Rashi from the end of the parsha. The Rebbe presented a series of questions and textual

observations on Rashi's commentary and compared Rashi's wording to the wording in the Medrash or the Gemara from where Rashi derived his commentary. The Rebbe often brought the explanations of commentaries and dismissed them for not fitting with "Peshuto Shel Mikra." In his explanations, the Rebbe showed new principles in Rashi's commentary and in accordance with these principles he answered all the questions. (From Shabbos Vaeira 5626 and on, things changed a bit and the Rebbe started the farbrengen with a Maamar Chassidus and then went on to explain Rashi).

Anash, who began getting used to the new style of farbrengens, would stand while holding Chumashim and when the Rebbe began reading that week's Rashi, the Rebbe looked inside the Chumash and so did the Chassidim. It was an unusual sight at the Rebbe's farbrengens, like a teacher with students in yeshiva.

During the week, the team of transcribers worked on editing a transcription of the farbrengen. To their great joy, the Rebbe edited the sicha, even though, since the start of the *nesius*, hardly any sichos of entire farbrengens had been edited. In advance of the upcoming Shabbos, on Thursday night Anash and the *tmimim* sat down to learn the new sicha. The unique style of the sicha with the subtle textual insights in Rashi's commentary and the new principles that the Rebbe taught nearly every Shabbos had them learning late into the night as they analyzed what the Rebbe said.

Thus, these sichos on Rashi's commentary changed the way of life of the Chassidim, both on Shabbos and during the week.

## THE REBBE'S NEW APPROACH GOES BEYOND CHABAD

The Rebbe's sichos, which were disseminated around the world, brought his new approach to learning to other groups as well.

"In 5727," recalls R' Groner, "the sichos were seen by a principal of a Litvishe girls' school in Yerushalayim. He was so excited by the new study approach that he included learning the Rebbe's sichos in the curriculum."

R' Schapiro remembers a certain Litvishe scholar who came for a farbrengen and just in the initial stage, when the questions were asked, became passionately excited over the rare combination of genius and simplicity that were expressed in the Rebbe's textual analysis of Rashi.

R' Schapiro also remembers another scholar who came to the Rebbe's farbrengen, and after hearing the Rebbe repeating the phrase "the *ben chomesh l'mikra*" asks, over and over, he asked one of the Chassidim standing next to him: Who wrote the book *Ben Chomesh L'mikra* and where can I get this brilliant work?

In those days, many religious Jews who were not Lubavitcher Chassidim lived in Crown Heights and every Shabbos after the farbrengen R' Schapiro would walk to one of their shuls. While there, a Chassidishe Admor would hold a tish for his Chassidim in one corner and in another corner, R' Schapiro sat with R' Yosef Waldman (whom we will hear more about soon) and a group of bnei Torah and reviewed the Rebbe's new explanations.

R' Tuvia Blau, author of *Klallei Rashi B'Pirusho al ha'Torah*, emphasizes that until fifty years ago, Rashi was considered a commentary for school children and only few Gedolei Torah learned Rashi. Now, every self-respecting talmid chacham learns and delves into Rashi's commentary on Torah. Big scholars plumb the depth of Rashi and devote time to learning Rashi extensively and discover wondrous insights in his words. We can definitely say that this is a direct result of the Rebbe's teachings.

"That is the role of Moshiach," says R' Blau, "to bring shleimus to Torah. Therefore, our generation merited that the Rebbe is rectifying the world and showing each of us the right way of reaching shleimus in Torah. It is so clear that only the blind cannot see it and only a liar does not admit to it.

"I come from the non-Chabad Torah world. After decades of close observation, I can say that the Rebbe revived the study of Rashi. When I have occasion to meet with Gedolei Torah, I hear their amazement with the Rebbe's approach, for he brought shleimus to the Torah."

## THE REBBE CONTINUES, THANKS TO AN INITIATIVE "FROM BELOW"

"The Rebbe said that these farbrengens were l'ilui nishmas his mother," said R' Groner. Throughout the year of mourning, the Rebbe farbrenged every Shabbos and explained the first and last Rashi in every parsha.

After several months, Anash and the tmimim became used to the new style

farbrengen and, unfortunately, the great excitement of the earlier months began to dissipate. R' Groner says that the Rebbe sadly said, on more than one occasion, that Anash were not taking sufficient interest in Rashi's commentary.

A few Chassidim, who assiduously studied the sichos, would write in their questions to the Rebbe. R' Groner himself submitted many questions that occurred to him as he learned the sicha, and he received answers. Sometimes, the Rebbe wrote his answers on the page and sometimes he quoted the question at the next farbrengen and answered it.

Apparently, the Rebbe anticipated greater interest on the part of the Chassidim. After seeing that their initial interest was dying down, he announced, toward the end of the year of mourning, that he would be stopping these explanations on Rashi.

The Chassidim felt very bad about this, but none of them dared to approach the Rebbe and ask him to continue. Just one Chassid, by the name of R' Yosef Waldman, who attended Yeshiva Torah Vodaas and became interested in Chabad, wrote a letter to the Rebbe pleading with him to continue with these amazing sichos. In his



letter, he wrote that stopping the sichos would cause a weakening in "spreading the wellsprings."

In his response, the Rebbe circled the phrase about it undermining the spreading of the wellsprings and sent him to talk with askanim of Anash and members of the organizing committee. R' Yosef went and spoke to those Chassidim and then wrote a lengthy report to the Rebbe. The Rebbe's response was "action is the main thing." R' Yosef understood from this that since there was a waning of interest on the part of the Chassidim, the Rebbe would not continue with these sichos.



**THE REBBE NOT ONLY  
TEACHES RASHI;  
HE CREATED A METHOD  
THAT ANYONE COULD USE**

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Interview with **Rabbi Tuvia Blau**, compiler and editor of the famous **Klallei Rashi** — Rules for Studying Rashi from the Rebbe's sichos

Presented By Avrohom Rainitz

**What motivated you to write Klallei Rashi B'Pirusho al ha'Torah?**

It was literally an "arousal from above," a direct instruction from the Rebbe. After the passing of Rebbetzin Chana a'h in 5725, the Rebbe began to farbreng every Shabbos and offer amazing explanations in Rashi's commentary on the parsha. We did not immediately catch on that this was a novel approach. We thought that the Rebbe was learning Rashi like a sugya in Gemara.

It was only after several months that the more astute began to notice that the Rebbe was actually laying out a new approach in the study of Torah and Rashi's commentary. The Rebbe began every sicha with a list of questions and observations in Rashi and there were questions in a style that we were not used to. Even those who learned the commentaries on Rashi on the Torah were not used to fine points being made on the *dibbur ha'maschil* (the starting words) of Rashi, which words that Rashi cites before his comments and which ones he leaves out, or the order of the two comments in Rashi, and the like. These questions, as well as the Rebbe's ingenious answers, were coming from a new set of assumptions that were never mentioned by commentaries on Rashi, and so people began to realize that the Rebbe was constructing a new approach to understanding Rashi.

Several years later, when it became possible to clearly discern the Rebbe's new method to learning Rashi on Torah, I wrote an article in a periodical for the union of teachers of Torah subjects in Eretz Yisrael. It was a long article under the title, "The Lubavitcher Rebbe's new approach to learning Rashi's commentary on Torah," in which I discussed some

of the Rebbe's fundamental rules, with examples.

Like everything we published at that time, I sent a copy of this article to the Rebbe. Within a short time, I received a letter from the Rebbe in which the Rebbe wrote that since the article was very successful, a book should be published that would be a collection of all the rules on Rashi.

I began compiling rules from the Rebbe's sichos and arranging them by chapters. In the meantime, the sichos kept coming and in nearly every sicha we discovered another rule. Each time I received one of these sichos, I would note

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**We took the pile of sichos that collected over the years and began the editing work. Within a short time we had managed to produce the first booklet and we sent it to the Rebbe.**

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the rule in brief and file away the sicha.

In 5740, about ten years after I started the compiling work, Rabbi Efraim Wolf called me and said that the Rebbe's head secretary, Rabbi Chodakov, wanted to convey the following message to me: The Beis Yosef wanted to die *al kiddush Hashem* even at the cost of not producing his sefarim, which doesn't mean we would have lost out on his major work, the

Shulchan Aruch, for someone else would have written it.

The hint was obvious and I immediately holed myself up in a room with my oldest son, R' Yaakov Meir, and we began working at top speed. We took the pile of sichos that collected over the years and began the editing work. Within a short time we had managed to produce the first booklet and we sent it to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe was very pleased with it and in the letter that he sent he wrote (free translation without explanation of the many Hebrew plays on words – see original):

*Teshuos chein and teshuos chein for everything he sent in connection with klallei Rashi etc, and there is wisdom (in addition to the great work) here etc. etc. And Hashem should grant him success to make a blessing upon literally upon the completion soon of the first edition in our times. And obviously – it is better one day earlier.*

*In any case, as in all similar matters pertaining to the commentary of Rashi – [of which it is said] delve into it and delve into it... and see with it... - there will come a second edition (more accurately – additions) and afterward a third etc.*

*And the merit of Ra(bban) Sh(el) I(srael) assists and hastens and adds hatzlacha raba.*

I must say that I never saw such an enthusiastic letter from the Rebbe to an author. Obviously, after such a letter, I worked hard to quickly complete the work and within a short time I published the first edition of *Klallei Rashi* in 5740.

To appreciate the enormous importance and fondness that the Rebbe attributed to this sefer, note that the sefer

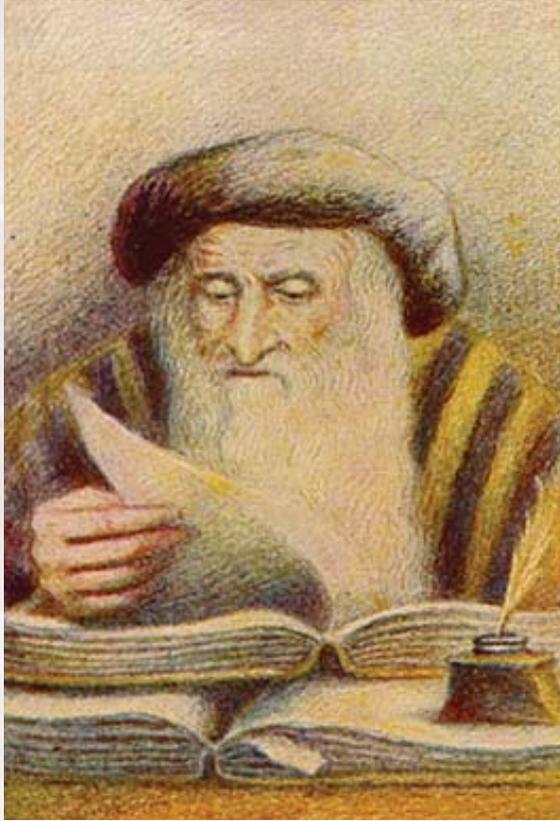
was published, by the Rebbe's instruction, by Kehot with the special frontispiece design of the Rebbe's sefarim!

As the Rebbe wrote in his letter about my publishing further editions, I continued collecting all the sichos in which the Rebbe established new rules in learning Rashi's commentary and in 5751, after including my son Peretz Uriel in the work, I published another, expanded, edition.

**Your sefer has 389 rules but it seems that the rule most familiar to all is the declaration that Rashi's commentary must adhere to the strict pshat. Who established this rule?**

The first source for this rule is Rashi himself who said, "I have not come except for the literal meaning of the verse." However, this rule is very surprising since Rashi often quotes Medrashim that are not pshat (plain meaning). On the very first pasuk, Rashi writes, "this verse does not say anything except interpret me in a homiletic way." This is why all commentators on Rashi did not take that declaration literally. The opinion of all is that sometimes Rashi explains things not according to pshat but according to drush.

To what extent does Rashi try to stick to peshuto shel mikra? Rabbi Dovid Pardo, one of the great commentators on Rashi, maintains that Rashi does not use Medrash unless he has to, i.e. when the pshat does not suffice. Rabbi Eliyahu Mizrachi, the leading commentator on Rashi, goes so far as to say that Rashi uses Medrash wherever it is possible to interpret it according to drush. Additionally, the author of Sefer Zikaron maintains that most of Rashi's commentary is drush. As he puts it, "With most verses of the Torah he puts aside the simple meaning of the



In addition, the Rebbe demonstrates Rashi's strict adherence to the pshat from the fact that several times Rashi says, "I do not know its meaning," even though there are many Medrashim to explain it. From this we see that Rashi does not use Medrash unless it fits with the pshat.

This established rule paved the way for the Rebbe's extraordinary explanations, ingenious in their simplicity, which demonstrate time and again that even when it looks as though Rashi was written entirely according to drush, the truth is that there is pure pshat here that is understandable to even a little child, the proverbial *ben chomeish l'mikra*.

**Before you explain how a commentary built entirely on drashos can be defined as pshat, I'd like you to explain why we don't understand these "simple" explanations without the Rebbe's explanations.**

To understand why we don't understand the pshat, we need to understand what "peshuto shel mikra" is. What is "peshuto" and what is "medrasho?"

Hashem speaks to us through the Torah on four levels of: *pshat*, *remez*, *drush* and *sod*. In other words, Hashem intended to communicate every word and subject with four general meanings: the simple meaning, the allusive meaning, the homiletic meaning and the kabbalistic meaning.

In one of his sichos, the Rebbe explains, based on what is explained in *sifrei kabbala*, that the four ways correspond to the four worlds (Atzilus, Beria, Yetzira, Asiya) starting with sod which corresponds to

Atzilus until pshat which corresponds to Asiya. Based on this, says the Rebbe, just as when it comes to the worlds it is known that they are not different things G-d forbid, but the very same divine flow passes through and descends from the world of Atzilus to the world of Asiya (in every world it appears in the "garment" of that world, the "lights" and "vessels") - so too, the sod, drush, remez and pshat are one thing that manifest in different ways.

To understand what is the precise definition of the pshat in Torah, we need to examine the way people speak to one another:

When a person speaks to his friend, his words are comprised of layers of understanding. The upper level is the most superficial understanding as per the simple meaning of the words. Beneath that are other levels which contain additional meanings that require examination and searching to find them. These levels are revealed to one who examines and searches in accordance with his prior knowledge of the matter.

For example, when a guest comes to my house and I say to my son, "Give the guest a chair," there is only one level which my son understands in its superficial and only meaning - that he needs to give a chair to the guest. The listener is exempt here from examination and investigation. But sometimes I tell my son, "Look, a guest came and he is standing!" If my son will take things at their initial, surface meaning, he would conclude that what I said was informative and I only wanted him to know that the guest is standing. A clever boy will understand that he must seek out another meaning and look for another level of understanding which is to give a chair to the guest. Experience and prior knowledge are needed. You can have

another situation in which all I'll say to the boy is, "Look, a guest came," without adding the words, "and he is standing." The child needs to be even wiser to figure out what is meant. Sometimes, the additional meaning to what was said is not only that the child should offer a seat but to serve something too, for example.

We see that even everyday conversations of people includes various meanings. We also see that there are meanings which are only implied and require interpretation of the words uttered in order to arrive at their meaning. This means to think more deeply into their content and to seek out more internal layers than the outermost layer of the initial superficial understanding.

Pshat then, is the initial, superficial meaning of things, while drush includes all the deeper meanings, layer within layer, that there are in the words. Success in finding the drush depends on prior knowledge necessary for understanding this.

It is also possible for "drush" to turn into "pshat": when people talk among themselves about a certain topic and all the participants have prior knowledge needed for this subject, their conversation is such that from the outset the speaker says his piece on the level of drush and it is heard by the listeners as pshat.

We can draw from the above two conclusions about the way people speak: 1) there can be many layers of drush, one within the next; 2) when it is clear to us that both the speaker and the listener have certain prior knowledge, one of the levels of drush rises to the surface level and becomes pshat.

Since "the Torah speaks as humans do," we can begin to draw these conclusions,

text and brings the Medrash of the Sages. Although he sometimes writes, 'And I have come only for the plain meaning of the text' - he means only for that verse, not for the entire Torah."

It appears that the first, and the only one, to take Rashi at his word is the Rebbe. In his sichos, the Rebbe establishes an iron rule: the entire commentary of Rashi, without exception, must be in line with the simple meaning of the text. The Rebbe learned this from a wording analysis in Rashi, "I have not come except." If he had written, "I have come," you could understand it to mean just this verse, but when he declares, "I have not come except," you must understand it to mean that all his commentary, without exception, must align with the way of pshat.



## PRAYER WHILE STARVING

During World War II there were Chassidim who lived in the Moscow area and remained there until the cursed Germans approached Moscow. There was widespread starvation and people fell like flies.

R' Nissan Nemenov lived there and there was terrible starvation in his home. It was also bitter cold and there was nothing with which to heat the house. Despite this, R' Nissan remained unfazed and he davened for hours, as was his way.

R' Avrohom Maiyor (Drizin) once visited him and when he saw the situation he immediately made sure to heat the house and to provide them with food.

## YOM KIPPUR IN A BAR

Like many Chassidim, R' Nissan also sat in jail. They say that when he left prison, it was shortly before Yom Kippur and he did not make it to a Jewish area in time. He entered a tavern and stood near the wall and that is how he davened all day! The gentiles caroused around him and he was completely unaware...

## FEEDING THE HUNGRY

R' Mendel Morosov related that during the starvation years in Tashkent, R' Nissan would daven for hours upon hours. Then he would go to the home of one of the old wives of the Chassidim who was very sick and weak from hunger and he would give her food. She was so sick that R' Nissan had to put the food in her mouth. He did this every day during that time.

## AHAVAS YISRAEL COMES FIRST

I heard from a rabbi named Rabinowitz, who was imprisoned in Russia, that when he was released he was sent to the home of R' Nissan in Tashkent. When he arrived at R' Nissan's house, it was three in the afternoon and he was surprised to see R' Nissan still davening. He had never seen anything like this.

As soon as R' Nissan saw him, he removed his tallis and tefillin and went to get food for him.

## HISKASHRUS TO THE REBBE MH'M

I learned in Brunoy by R' Nissan from the winter of 5710 until the winter of 5713.

When the Rebbe Rayatz passed away, we were in Brunoy. The news arrived on Sunday and I went to yeshiva and saw R' Nachum Labkowsky standing in a corner and crying and bachurim crying. Then, in walked R' Yosef Goldberg and when they showed him the note he immediately began crying and everyone tore *keriya*.

R' Nissan was not present at the time, but in the evening they all went to the office where we could hear cries from R' Nissan that you can't imagine. He remained completely broken all year.

Generally, R' Zalman Haditcher was the mashgiach in yeshiva but there was a time when he wasn't well and R' Nissan was the mashgiach instead of him. After the histalkus, it would occasionally happen that when R' Nissan sat at his table he would burst into bitter tears. From that point, R' Nissan became a man of tears; until then, he was very forceful



R' NISSAN NEMENOV DAVENING

and farbrenge very forcefully and you never saw him cry. That year, he cried a lot. On Rosh Hashana too, in the middle of davening, he sobbed.

On 10 Shevat 5711, he signed the writ of *hiskashrus* and spoke about *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. He cited what is written in Basi L'Gani 5710 "that G-d, may He be blessed, grants prophecy to the sons of man," and he said this alludes to the Rebbe.

## THE REBBE'S APPOINTMENT

In Samarkand we lived near R' Nissan. He was the mashpia of Anash in Samarkand and farbrenge with them a lot. When the Rebbe Rayatz left Russia, he appointed R' Nissan as mashpia to Anash and everyone respected him because of

this. Although when the Rebbe left Russia, R' Nissan was still a young man, they all respected him because R' Nissan was the "image" of a "baal avoda."

R' Yisrael Neveler was older than him and also had an "expansive mouth." (I left Russia with him on the same train and afterward I was with him in Peking for a year. He would farbrenge a lot in the style of the Chassidim of Nevel, with all of the characteristic elements). Once, in the middle of a farbrenge, he said: Why do I have *bittul* toward R' Nissan? I know more Chassidus than him but the Rebbe appointed him as mashpia!

## AMAZING CLARITY IN TANYA

R' Nissan gave a shiur in Likutei Torah every Shabbos and every week he