

New York State and City Officials Join Crown Heights Sukkos Celebration

On Tuesday night, veteran Crown Heights activist Rabbi Chanina Sperlin hosted the annual Sukkos gathering with a who's who list of New York's elected officials in his Sukkah.

The gathering was joined by New York Governor Kathy Hochul, Attorney General Tish James, New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso,

and District Attorney Eric Gonzalez.

As well as Council Member Chi Ossé, who represents parts of Crown Heights, NYPD Inspector Richie Taylor, and many others.

After a few words by the Governor, Rabbi Sperlin made a L'Chaim with the governor thanked her for her long-standing friendship with the Jewish community.



Photos by Oded Kaizerman/Chabadinfo

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D'VAR MALCHUS

Joy That Knows No Bounds

All reserve disappears in the exuberant dancing of Simchas Torah. Every Jew feels a natural desire to take a Torah scroll in his arms and celebrate. Hidden resources of joy, energies which we did not know we possessed, surface at this time.

The source for this happiness, the center of attention, is of course the Torah. Yet, throughout the entire Hakafos celebrations, the Torah is never opened; we dance holding it wrapped in its mantle. Furthermore, on Simchas Torah people do not usually add to their usual schedule of Torah study; if anything, the opposite is true. Though the Torah is usually associated with disciplined study, on Simchas Torah we approach it differently, singing and dancing in a manner that bears no apparent relationship to understanding.

The Core of the Torah

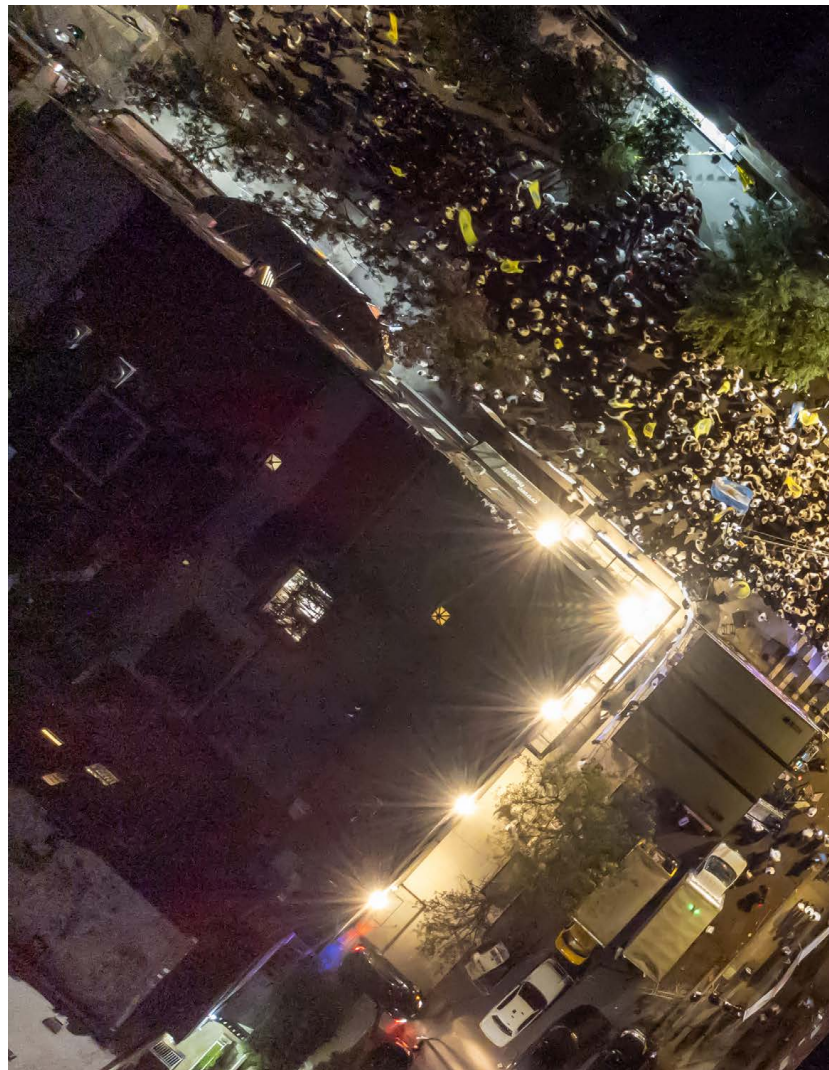
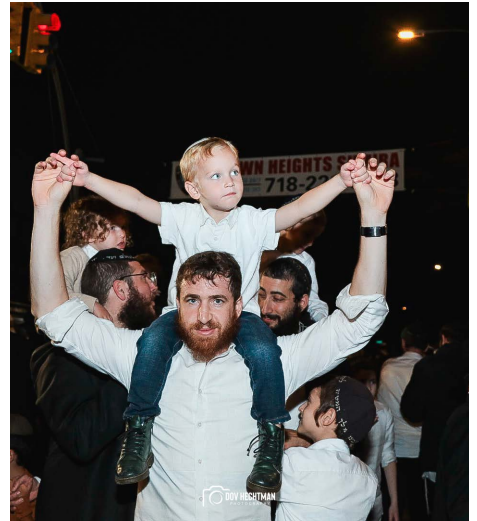
The reason for these innovations on Simchas Torah is that intellect is not the only means through which a person can connect with the Torah. One dimension of the Torah can be defined and grasped by our minds; another dimension is infinite, beyond all human comprehension. The infinite aspect of the Torah represents its essence, for "G-d and His Torah are one."

Just as G-d is infinite, transcending all bounds and limitations, so too is the Torah, extending beyond the confines of human understanding. Accordingly, for man to relate to Torah, his commitment must mirror this infinity. Thus, when our ancestors received the Torah at Mt. Sinai they declared, Naaseh venishma ("We will do and we will listen"), thereby making a superrational commitment to follow G-d's will, a commitment that was not conditional upon their understanding. By first stating Naaseh ("We will do"), they demonstrated that they were willing to follow G-d's commands without reservation.

The intellectual dimension of the Torah is crucial, but does not define its essence. So that man could relate to G-dliness, the Torah was brought down from its infinite heights and invested in rational concepts, laws and principles that can be studied, understood and incorporated into our behavior. These, however, represent merely the external dimensions of Torah and not its inner core.

Garbing the Torah in intellectual categories is a process of outreach by G-d to man. On Simchas

Simchas Beis Hasheiva Around Crown Heights





Mashpi'im Farbreng in Drizin Sukkah

Chassidic philanthropist, R' Sholom Ber Drizin, a staunch supporter of Chabad activities, especially the work of Eshel Hospitality, fulfilled his longstanding yearly tradition, hosting an eclectic group of mashpi'im in his Sukkah the second night of Chol Hamoed. At the farbrengen, the mashpi'im thanked R' Sholom Ber for his consistent support of the Rebbe's children, the Temimim



The Rebbe & The Ribnitzer

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBAUM • PRESENTED IN HONOR OF THE RIBNITZER'S YAHRTZEIT ON 29TH ISRUG CHAG

Friends, students and Chassidim the world over were shocked to hear the sad news that on Hoshana Rabba last year, Rabbi Shmuel Rodal, one of the Rebbe's shlichim to Milan, Italy, returned his accomplished soul to its Maker.

He was a holy man, a tzaddik, and his name was Chaim Zanvil Abramowitz, known as the Ribnitzer Rebbe zt'l. His holiness and asceticism were well-known and thousands sought him out for his brachos.

The Ribnitzer Rebbe was born in Botosani (Botoshan), Romania in 1902. His father, R' Moshe, was a Chassid of the Tzaddik, Rabbi Avrohom Matisyahu Friedman of Stefanesti (Shtefenesht), and his mother was Mrs. Yuta Tzipora. His father passed away when young Chaim Zanvil was two and a half and he moved to live in the Rebbe's home in Shtefenesht where he soaked up the holiness and the spiritual path of removal from matters of this world. The Ribnitzer Rebbe later said that he learned the entire Torah from his Rebbe and by the age of 18 he already knew all of Shas with Rashi.

World War II had R' Chaim Zanvil wandering from place to place until he reached Chernowitz which was under communist rule. There is where he first met Chabad Chassidim and where they got to know him as a special person who was reminiscent of the great Chassidim who were completely removed from this world. There is where the first line of communication opened between him and the Rebbe MHTM, about which more is hidden than known.

310 Immersions In The Frozen River

Many Jews lived in Chernowitz after the war but few were religiously observant. A group of Chabad Chassidim lived there led by the mashpiim, R' Moshe Vishedsky, R' Mendel Futerfas, R' Chaim Zalman Kozliner (Chazak), R' Avrohom Shmuel Lebenharz, and others. The main Chabad askan was R' Hirschel Rabinowitz who was sort of a miracle man in that he was involved in every matter of holiness.

The city of Ribnitz in Moldavia wasn't far from Chernowitz and the Ribnitzer Rebbe would sometimes visit Chernowitz where a warm connection developed between him and the Chabad Chassidim, as he got to know the character of the Chabad Chassidim who refused to bow to the decrees of the communists, which is why he became close with them.

The Lubavitcher Chassidim respected him greatly. R' Mendel Futerfas, who knew him personally, said that he reminded him of the Chassid R' Itche der Masmid who was known to abstain from worldly things and observed many stringent practices. The Ribnitzer Rebbe was above the world and they saw this in him.

Whenever he went to Chernowitz, he would walk from the train station directly to the mikva, before

doing anything else. Having a mikva in those days in Soviet Russia was no small thing. When R' Mendel Futerfas and R' Moshe Vishedsky returned from labor camps after many years, they raised money and built a mikva. They searched for a house with a cellar, obtained construction material on the black market, and some of the youth worked on building secretly. As they dug, they found that they were right above a natural spring of water so they built the mikva over the spring. Since there weren't many families who kept the laws of family purity, the mikva was covered with shmattes most of the time and only when it was needed did they clear it away and clean and arrange the place so it would be fit for immersion. The camouflage was in the event that the KGB came so they wouldn't notice that it's a mikva.

On the side of the mikva they dug another pit that descended directly into the spring for the morning immersion. Those who immersed would go down to the spring with a ladder, in utter darkness.

To his astonishment, he saw the Ribnitzer Rebbe immersing 310 times as brought in sifrei Kabbala.

As mentioned, when the Ribnitzer Rebbe went to the city, he went to the mikva. R' Moshe Vishedsky went first. The water was ice-cold which is why he immersed quickly. R' Hirschel Rabinowitz was next. Then it was the Ribnitzer's turn. He went down into the freezing water and didn't come up. Thirty seconds passed, a minute, several minutes, and he did not come out. The two Chassidim began to worry. R' Hirschel undressed again and went down and to his astonishment, he saw the Ribnitzer Rebbe immersing 310 times as brought in sifrei Kabbala.

Aside from the danger because of the KGB, the freezing water was dangerous for the Rebbe who was a thin man, skin and bones. R' Hirschel saw this but left without saying a word.

When they finished, they went to R' Hirschel's home. The Ribnitzer put on tefillin very early (five in the morning) and sat with tefillin and immersed in prayer the entire day, until one in the morning. Then he removed the tefillin and washed his hands for a meal. He did not eat meat or chicken for kashrus reasons and Hirschel served him vegetable soup. He ate bread with soup and didn't finish the soup.

R' Benzion Vishedsky described him: A small, thin man sat there, face aglow, alert as though he

just woke up. Barely eating a bit of bread with soup after eating nothing all day. He 'took' a lot of mashke, farbrenge, encouraged and inspired with divrei Torah until two in the morning. Then he rose to do tikkun chatzos at great length and with tears. He returned a brief time later said the birkas ha'mazon, and when he finished, he fell asleep on his fist. He slept this way for an hour or hour and a half, then woke up with great joy like a new man and began preparing for shacharis of the next day, and the whole schedule began anew.

KEEPER OF SECRETS

R' Hillel Zaltzman, one of the leading activists in Samarkand, also remembers the Ribnitzer Rebbe:

"One of the prime talmidim in our yeshiva was Benzion Robinson. He came from the same city as the Ribnitzer Rebbe. He came to us at a young age after his father was arrested and sentenced to ten years imprisonment and he remained at home with his mother and younger sister Tamar. R' Mendel was a relative of his and when he went to Chernowitz after his release from imprisonment, he made sure that Benzion would go to Samarkand and learn with his friends.

"Every year, Benzion would travel home to spend the summer with his mother and sister. Since his family, like all Chabad Chassidim in Chernowitz, were close with the Ribnitzer, Benzion would go to visit him. The Ribnitzer never asked him where he had been and where he learned but in talking to him, he understood that Benzion was learning somewhere.

"One day, he gave him 1000 rubles as a donation to the yeshiva. It was a huge sum in those days which could pay the salary of a melamed for nearly a year.

"Although he guessed about the existence of the underground yeshiva founded and run by the Lubavitchers in Samarkand, and even knew some bachurim from Chernowitz and other towns in the area of the Carpathian Mountains who learned there, the Ribnitzer never let on that he knew anything. Although he surely wanted to know details about the yeshiva, he never asked directly. He knew the situation we were in and was afraid that if he inquired too much this would engender fear among the askanim which is why he was careful."

THE REBBE'S GARTEL LOST IN THE MAIL

The connection between the Ribnitzer Rebbe and our Rebbe probably began in Russia, behind the Iron Curtain, when a physical bond was nearly impossible. The following incredible story, shows the connection between them:

One day, the Ribnitzer Rebbe asked one of the Chassidim to accompany him to the local post office. When they arrived there, the Ribnitzer asked

the clerk for a package that had come for him. After a few minutes, the clerk came back to the window and gave him a package that was well-secured.

The Ribnitzer Rebbe asked the Chassid to help him open the well-sealed package. When it was opened, the Ribnitzer Rebbe removed a pair of glasses, a sirtuk, and a siddur (some say a tallis too). Only afterward did it become known that these items had been sent by the Rebbe in New York.

The Ribnitzer Rebbe wasn't satisfied and he began to look again and again in the package since he did not find a gartel that was supposed to be there. He went back to the clerk and demanded that he be given the missing item. The postal workers insisted that they had not opened the package and hadn't taken anything from it but the Ribnitzer Rebbe persisted. It was only after a long time that one of the postal workers took a gartel out from somewhere and gave it to the Rebbe.

As mentioned, there were times when there was no physical connection between New York and Ribnitz – no letters and certainly no phone calls. The only connection there was, most likely, was a spiritual one.

Using the siddur he received from the Rebbe, the Ribnitzer Rebbe would say a chapter of Tehilim every day and take it with him wherever he went. The following story is told about this siddur:

One day, he was hospitalized and of course he had the siddur with him. When he was released, the siddur was left behind. When the gabbai saw how upset he was, he asked whether to go back and get it. The Admor said it wasn't necessary because "it will come back to us."

A while later, the wife of his attendant underwent treatment in that hospital. While she was there, she was given "a Jewish prayer-book that was there" by a gentile nurse and it was returned to the Ribnitzer Rebbe who was very happy.

As to the mystical bond between the Rebbe and the Admor during those years, there is the testimony from Professor Rabbi Yaakov Friedman of Anash in Yerushalayim, who knew the Ribnitzer Rebbe from when he lived in Russia:

"While I was in Russia, I would meet with the Ribnitzer Rebbe. I was a student and when I went to him it was the first time in my life that I saw a Jew connected to another world, a world beyond what we see. When I parted from him before I moved to Eretz Yisrael, he told me, 'When you are in Lubavitch, write to the Rebbe and give him my regards.' That was a strange line for me. Although I had a connection with Chabad Chassidim, I myself wasn't a Lubavitcher. Afterward, it became apparent that he saw with his ruach ha'kodesh that I would become a Chassid of the Rebbe and indeed, I began to write to the Rebbe."

A few months after he left Russia, R' Friedman went to the Rebbe for Tishrei 5732.

"The feeling was that the Rebbe was lifting you up to other worlds. When I had yechidus for the first time, I wanted to sink into the ground in shame. The Rebbe began to ask about my academic involvements and encouraged me to work with Professor Yirmiyahu Branover."

YECHIDUS WITH THE REBBE

In 5733, the Ribnitzer Rebbe was able to leave Russia and he moved to Bat-Yam and then Yerushalayim. Wherever he went he was known as a holy man and miracle worker. He did not remain in Eretz Yisrael for long. In 5734 he moved to the United States.

R' Hillel Zaltzman relates:

"I remember that when I was in the Catskill Mountains one summer, they told me that the Ribnitzer Rebbe was staying in a nearby summer camp and they suggested going to see him. It was motzoei Shabbos and by the time we got there it was already midnight but he was still up to the Torah reading



for mincha.

"His daily avoda surprised many. He davened all day so that his shacharis was connected to his mincha and maariv and he wore his tallis and tefillin until late at night. He did this also after leaving the Soviet Union.

"They told the Rebbe about the Ribnitzer's inexplicable avoda and the Rebbe said not to say anything about him, because he knew what he was doing.

"Some time after his arrival in America, I went to him with R' Moshiah Chudaitov and R' Mottel Goldschmid (who was visiting the Rebbe at the time) to suggest that he visit the Rebbe. His gabbaim refused to allow us to approach him so as not to disturb his avoda. We tried to convince them, saying we came from Russia and wanted to talk to him but they refused. In the end, one of them agreed that we could write our request and he would give it to the Admor.

"When he was in Russia, we had not met. The first time I saw him was when he was in Eretz Yisrael, where I met him together with R' Moshe Niselevitz and we told him about our activities in Samarkand. So we wrote to him that we are the activists from Samarkand and we wanted to meet with him. Right after he read our note, he came out and received us with great joy.

"We suggested that he come to the Rebbe. His response was, 'I've wanted to go to the Rebbe but I

don't know how it is possible to go to him because my gabbaim said that the Rebbe is very busy and does not receive people.' When we said that the Rebbe would certainly receive him and we could come and take him, he was very happy about this. We arranged to come on a certain day and go together to the Rebbe.

"We spoke with the secretary, R' Groner, about his visit and after we arranged a time for yechidus we went to the Ribnitzer Rebbe on the appointed day, 26 Tammuz 5734, and waited outside his home. It looked as though he was waiting impatiently for us because as soon as he saw us he got up and told his gabbaim that he was going to the Lubavitcher Rebbe. His gabbai, Mr. Herman, joined us.

"When he arrived at the Rebbe's office, the Rebbe rose to greet him with a big smile. Mr. Herman wanted to go in with him for yechidus but R' Groner explained that 'yechidus,' as the word implies, is entering to see the Rebbe without escorts. The Ribnitzer remained in yechidus with the Rebbe for forty minutes.

"In the interim, Mr. Herman told R' Groner that the Ribnitzer Rebbe was still fasting, R' Groner, who wanted to cut short the yechidus to be able to allow people in, knocked on the door and said to the Rebbe that the Ribnitzer was fasting since the morning. The Rebbe cut the yechidus short and the Ribnitzer Rebbe came out a short while later.

"The Rebbe asked the attendant, 'He's still fasting? Why didn't he eat earlier?' The attendant defended himself by saying he did not want to eat anything before having yechidus with the Rebbe.

The Rebbe extended his hand toward him in a gesture of surprise as though to say, why aren't you taking care of him?"

In the diary of Rabbi Tuvia Zilberstrom of Yerushalayim it says that after the yechidus, the Chassidim of the Ribnitzer Rebbe approached the Rebbe and held out their hands in greeting. The Rebbe said they needed to ensure that he ate and they said he did not want to. The Rebbe said, "Obviously, if he wants to, there is no need to make sure."

The Rebbe escorted the Ribnitzer Rebbe toward the exit of 770 and at the door he asked R' Groner who was taking the Admor home. R' Groner said that R' Chudaitov who brought him would take him back with his car. The Rebbe stood and waited until the Admor entered the car.

Afterward, when he arrived in Boro Park, the Admor commented about R' Groner's intrusion [that the Admor had not eaten anything all day], "I had such spiritual delight we could have sat a lot longer and who was the youngster who disturbed in the middle?" He revealed that the Rebbe had spoken to him mainly about the Jews of Russia and their situation and advised how they could more easily leave Russia.

In 5752, the shamash of the Ribnitzer Rebbe passed by the Rebbe for dollars and asked the Rebbe for a bracha for a refuah for his Rebbe. Hearing this, the Rebbe said, "He is a Jew of mesirus nefesh and he champions good for the Jewish people!" •

Thousands Spend Sukkos With The Rebbe



Thousands Shake Lulav Prepared for the Rebbe

After dancing all night, the line starts forming to shake the Lulav and Esrog prepared for the Rebbe MH"M. Thousands stand in line waiting to get to the set spot in the corner of 770's Sukkah



YERUSHALAYIM:

Sign Stolen from Chabad Sukkah

Hours after a sukkah was defaced in Ness Ziona on Tuesday evening, unnamed individuals were filmed arriving at a sukkah set up by Chabad-Lubavitch in Jerusalem, pulling down signs inviting the public to participate in holiday events.

The Chabad sukkah at Denia Square in Jerusalem's Beit Hakerem neighborhood, which was erected in accordance with the law,

Following the incident, the Chabad house filed a complaint with the police.

Rabbi Dovi Erentroi, the Chabad-Lubavitch emissary to the neighborhood, said, "For years, we have set up a public sukkah at Denia Square, with approval from the municipality. This year is the first time we have experienced such antisemitism."

"A new immigrant from Europe, who saw the footage, expressed horror, remembering the attacks he experienced before immigrating to Israel," the Shliach added.

"We want to note that a complaint has been filed with the police, but thus far the individual who perpetrated this act of hate has not been caught. Personally, I worry that without management, we will easily end up with worse and worse violence. The writing is on the wall."

Joy That Knows No Bounds (continued)

Torah, however, man reaches out to G-d and attempts to connect with the aspect of Torah that is one with Him. This requires stepping beyond the restrictions of one's own rational mindset. And this is precisely what takes place when a Jew dances with a Torah scroll on Simchas Torah.

Dancing Together as One

All Jews, learned and unsophisticated alike, share equally in the Simchas Torah celebrations, because these celebrations tap a point in the soul which, by nature of its infinity, defies the entire concept of rank and gradation. At this level of soul, no difference exists between one Jew and another. The basic commonality that links us all makes us join hands and dance together, oblivious to the personal differences that might otherwise create barriers between individuals.

The "Feet" of the Torah

The Previous Rebbe used to say that on Simchas Torah, the Torah itself wants to dance; however, since a Torah scroll has no feet, we Jews must function as its feet and carry it around the dais in the synagogue.

A foot has no independent will; it is totally subservient to the head that controls it, obeying its wishes without question. So deep and complete is our surrender to the Torah on Simchas Torah, that we are lifted beyond the realm of our individual identities and become the "feet of the Torah."

This metaphor reminds one of the need

to advance in Torah throughout the entire year, for the feet are associated with marching forward. This progress affects the Torah as well as the Jewish people, for just as the feet can bring the head to a place it cannot reach alone, the Jewish people can elevate the Torah and bring its essence to the surface.

Landing Safely

In light of this, we can appreciate the place of Simchas Torah in the sequence of holidays beginning with Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. All of these holidays focus our attention on the inner core of our relationship with G-d. Simchas Torah, as their climax, is the point of transition between the intense spiritual experience of the month of Tishrei and our daily, down-to-earth circumstances.

This safe landing is navigated by means of the rejoicing of Simchas Torah. At that time, our joyous awareness of how "Israel, the Torah, and the Holy One, blessed be He, are one," lays the groundwork for our divine service throughout the entire year. These celebrations enhance the bond with G-d and the Torah that is unconfined by the limits of intellect, in every aspect of our conduct throughout the year.

Moreover, these celebrations anticipate the ultimate celebrations that will accompany the coming of Mashiach and the advent of the Era of the Redemption. May this take place in the immediate future.

Adapted from Likkutei Sichos, Vol. IV, Simchas Torah - Translated by Sichos in English



From The Rebbe's Pen

"If So, How Will The Company Make Money?"

An answer from the Rebbe written on a note submitted by one of the Rebbe's secretaries, on behalf of a businessman who asked the Rebbe's advice and bracha regarding the fact that some executives in his company resent the fact that he gives Tzedakah from company funds, claiming that it is not legal:

Maybe this is the true reason for the recent financial unrest in the company, because Tzedakah must be given "with a cheerful countenance" and joyfully.*

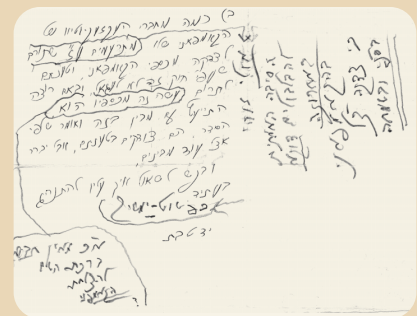
They further claimed that if he wants to donate, he should do so from his private money, to this, the Rebbe responded:

If so, where will the company get Hashem's blessing for its success?

The secretary, who wrote in this person's request, added that the person consulted with a Maven on the matter, and he said that those executives seem to have a point to their legal claims and that he will consult with others. He concluded the letter asking how he should conduct himself with regards to this in the future, to which the Rebbe replied:

Obviously – he should continue.

*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 34:7



Eastern Pkwy Turns Into Jewish Art Gallery

The Leviim Art Gallery presented its fifth annual street art fair, on Monday, the first day of Chol Hamoed Sukkos, on Eastern Pkwy and Kingston featuring artwork from dozens of Chassidic artists.



Photos by Dov Ber Hechtman/ChabadInfo

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MAZAL TOV

מזל טוב

New Engagement

- Levi Yitzchak Pinchasi – Crown Heights to Rivkah Leah Ben Ohr – Beis Dagan, Eretz Yisroel
- Yekoutiel Cohen – Montreal, Canada to Naomi Bassali – Milan, Italy
- Shneur Buhadana – Rehovot, Israel to Haya Sides – Yerres, France
- Dovid Beuthner – Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to Elka Baumgarten – Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Motty Hertz – Bensonhurst, NY to Mintcha Mayzlesh – Mexico City, Mexico

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