

ברכנו אבינו

Birchas Habonim

The Rebbe's *bracha* to the
bochurim on Erev Yom Kippur
before *Kol Nidrei*



A Chassidisher
Derher
א חסידישער דערער



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Published by **A Chassidisher Derher**, under the
auspices of **Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim Haolomi**

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Inside:



Dear *Bochurim*,

The date is Erev Yom Kippur 5705, and a group of Chassidim are gathered in 770, waiting to be granted access to the Frierdiker Rebbe's *yechidus* room.

Two groups have already entered and have received the customary Erev Yom Kippur *bracha*. This last group, though, is composed of Chassidim who had missed the earlier opportunities and were now hoping to enter just before *Kol Nidrei*.

In a short entry in Sefer Hasichos, we read the Frierdiker Rebbe's message:

"Now I cannot. It isn't that I'm sparing my time or my health, but I heard from my father [the Rebbe Rashab] that this time is not for the public. [This time] belongs to family and one's own, and not to the public. Those (who wish to enter now) have already been included in thought earlier, and Hashem will help that all the *brachos* will be fulfilled."¹

Fast forward seven years later, to 5712. In those same moments, just before *Kol Nidrei*, a group of Chassidim are summoned to the Rebbe's room.

This group, however, is composed of only *bochurim*. Gathered around the Rebbe's desk, the Rebbe speaks to them dressed in his *kittel* and *tallis*.

"You learn in the Rebbe's *yeshiva*; you are the Rebbe's children. Therefore, we will *bentch* you with *Birchas Habonim*."

Each year onward, until 5752, this custom

continued. After reciting *Birchas Kohanim*, the Rebbe would usually add a few words of *bracha*. Gradually, it grew to be an entire *sicha*.

For us *bochurim*, the moments of *Birchas Habonim* are, without a doubt, among the year's most cherished and precious.

In these dark days of *golus*, thirty-four years since we last heard the *bracha*, we hold dear the *zechus* and the sacred obligation to study, listen to, and watch the *bracha* each year. Through this, we can internalize the Rebbe's message to us.

This year, the Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim has published a new *kovetz*, "לקט ברכת הבנים"—*Leket Birchas Habonim*, which contains the "Torah" of *Birchas Habonim*. This publication serves as a supplement to the *kovetz*, vividly recounting the "story" of *Birchas Habonim*.

It is our heartfelt hope that this publication will serve as an important tool for *bochurim* to relive those sacred moments with the Rebbe. May we very soon merit to once again see and hear the Rebbe *bentch* us—the ultimate "*Barcheinu Avinu*"—with the complete and true *Geula*, now.

The Editors

ערב יום הכיפורים ה'תשפ"ו
שנת הע"ה ל"ברכת הבנים"

1. Sefer Hasichos 5705 pg. 20.



ב'ר'כ'ה'

An overview of *Birchas Habanim*, featuring stories, anecdotes, and memories from throughout the years

‘Only Bochurim’

The date was Tes Tishrei, Erev Yom Kippur, 5712, just about half a year since the Rebbe had formally accepted the *nesius*. Ahead of the Yom Hakadosh, three groups of Chassidim—*bochurim* and senior Chassidim alike—entered the Rebbe’s room to hear a *bracha* for the new year and to receive *lekach*.

Closer to evening, as the third and final group of Chassidim were preparing to exit the Rebbe’s room, the Rebbe called over Reb Yoel Kahn (a *bochur* at the time).

“זאג די בחורים אז זיי קענען שפעטער אריינגייען”—Tell the *bochurim* that they can come in later,” the Rebbe said. Reb Yoel was confused; is the Rebbe referring to the *bochurim* who had not yet entered? Why specifically the *bochurim*?

Before he had a chance to ask, the Rebbe added: “איך—מיינ אויך די וואס זיינען שוין געווען, אבער נאר די תלמידים—I mean also those [*bochurim*] who have already entered; but only *bochurim*.”

At approximately 5:25 p.m., the small group of *talmidei hayeshiva* learning at 770 entered the Rebbe’s room. On the table were two candles burning in a glass, and three large candles stood atop a chair.

The Rebbe was dressed in his *kittel* and *tallis*, with a deeply serious expression on his face. For a moment, the Rebbe gazed at the *bochurim* with an intensely penetrating look. “I had never seen such a look on the Rebbe’s face,” writes Reb Yoel in his diary. “I spoke afterwards with other *bochurim*, and they all told me that they had never seen the Rebbe like this.”

Several *yungerleit* attempted to push into the Rebbe’s room and the Rebbe said several times loudly: “נאר

בחורים—only *bochurim*.”

The Rebbe lowered his *tallis* over his face and was shaking. In a voice choked with tears, the Rebbe said:

“איר לערנט דאך אין דעם רבי'נס ישיבה, זייט איר דאך דעם—
רבי'נס קינדער—You learn in the Rebbe's *yeshiva*;
you are the Rebbe's children. Therefore, we will
bentch you with *Birchas Habonim*.”

Reading from his *siddur*, the Rebbe began to recite *Birchas Kohanim*. As he started, the Rebbe lifted his hands as is customary for *kohanim* reciting *Birchas Kohanim*. The Rebbe then continued and added a short *bracha*.²

The Early Brachos

Following the inaugural *bracha* in 5712, the custom became that the *talmidei hayeshiva* would enter the Rebbe's room every year for a *bracha* that became known as “*Birchas Habonim*.”

In 5713, the Rebbe added a condition to the *bochurim* who would enter: only those who learn Chassidus “in Rabbi [Yisroel] Jacobson's class, Rabbi [Shmuel] Levitin's class, or those who study on their own.”³

That year, the Rebbe did not read *Birchas Kohanim* from his *siddur*, and as the Rebbe spoke, his voice choked with tears. The Rebbe opened by quoting the Sifri: “*V'shinantam levanecha—eilu hatalmidim*.”

The *bracha* took place a bit earlier in the day,

and after the *bochurim* had left, *anash* entered for the general *bracha*.

The *bracha* in 5714 took place once again just before *Kol Nidrei*. The Rebbe spoke very quickly, and after finishing, the Rebbe motioned for the *bochurim* to hurry on to the *shul*.⁴

In the description of the *bracha* of 5716 as published in Kovetz Lubavitch, it is written: “Before *Kol Nidrei*, according to the program set in place since the Rebbe took on the *nesius*, the elder *talmidei hayeshiva* enter the Rebbe's room to receive his holy *bracha*. The Rebbe is careful that no one else should be present inside the room at this time.”

An additional episode from 5716: As the Rebbe opened the door to his room, to allow the *bochurim* to enter, the Rebbe noticed a married Chossid standing in the crowd. The Rebbe told him that the Frierdiker Rebbe had said that now is the time for *bochurim*, and the time for *yungerleit* is earlier the day. After the Chossid explained that he wasn't present earlier in the day (at the general *bracha* for *anash*), the Rebbe gave him a *bracha* as well.⁵

5718 was the last year that the *bracha* took place in the Rebbe's room. In 5719, the *bochurim* gathered in *Gan Eden Hatachton* and the Rebbe recited the *bracha* while standing in the open doorway. Also beginning in 5719, the Rebbe occasionally added a *bracha* for “*Ufaratzta*” in *limmud haTorah*.

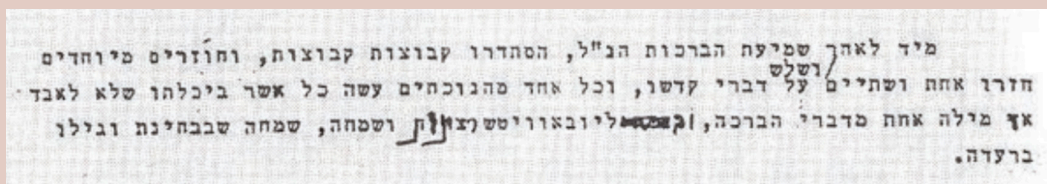
The *bracha* continued to take place in *Gan Eden*

Reb Avrohom Chanoch Glitzenstein wrote a *yoman* of Tishrei 5720 to be published in “*She’arim*,” a newspaper in Eretz Yisroel. He merited that the Rebbe reviewed his *yoman* and even edited it partially.

In his entry about *Birchas Habonim*, Reb Avraham Chanoch finishes off:

“Immediately after hearing the *bracha*, [the *bochurim*] organized themselves in groups and repeated once and twice the Rebbe’s holy words, and all of those present did all they can as not to miss even one word of the *bracha*, “*v’ha’ir Lubavitch tzahala v’sameicha*” [and the city of Lubavitch shouted and rejoiced], a *simcha* the likes of “*v’gilu b’reada*” [rejoice with quaking].

The Rebbe edited the words “*v’ha’ir Lubavitch tzahala v’sameicha*” to read “*ub’Lubavitch retzinus v’simcha*”—and in Lubavitch [there is] seriousness and joy.



Hatachton for the next several years (until 5731), and the crowds of *bochurim* gradually grew. In 5720, Gan Eden Hatachton was so packed that when the Rebbe attempted to enter his room on his way in, it was extremely difficult to open a path.

In 5725, after the passing of Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe arose from *shiva* on Erev Yom Kippur. The Rebbe davened Mincha in his mother’s home, and afterwards went to the mikvah. At six o’clock, the Rebbe arrived at 770, still dressed in his *kapote* torn for *aveilus*, and entered his room. Then, with his face covered by the *tallis*, the Rebbe came out to *bentch* the *bochurim* who had crowded in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

During the *bracha*, it was evident that the Rebbe was holding himself back from crying.

Afterwards, the Rebbe reentered his room, emerged again after two minutes, went down to

the large *zal*, and gave a *bracha* to the assembled crowd before *Kol Nidrei*.⁶

Evolution

As the years went on, the crowds grew, and the space in *Gan Eden Hatachton* became dangerously too small, as hundreds of *bochurim* attempted to squeeze as close as possible to the Rebbe.

In 5731, Rabbi Leibel Groner asked the Rebbe if the *bracha* can be moved into the upstairs *zal*, in order to alleviate the dangerous crowding and to accommodate more *bochurim*, and the Rebbe agreed. However, when Rabbi Groner followed up later and asked the Rebbe where exactly in the small *zal* the Rebbe would stand, the Rebbe said that since the *zal* is a public area, and there are others *davening* there, the *bracha* will take place in the lobby of 770.

In 5729, during the general *bracha* to Chassidim, the Rebbe did not say “*a chasima un a gmar chasima tova*.” Several Chassidim took note and asked the Rebbe (via Rabbi Leibel Groner) about this.

The Rebbe wrote in response:

הרי נאמרה בפ' - וכענין בפ"ע - לאחר סיום ברכת הת' ש' בסיום עריוהכ"פ ובהתחלת יום הקדוש
אשר בהקדש אשר הוא' על זבחי' ש"ס
זכין את ישראל בערב יורכ"ל אחר מנחה
לא הצטרף - וענין כל שנה ושנה - זשון
הבינה "א חתמה און אחר חתמה טובה" (ז"ל)
הרי נאמרה בפ' - וכענין בפ"ע - לאחר סיום ברכת הת' ש' בסיום עריוהכ"פ ובהתחלת יום הקדוש
אשר בהקדש אשר הוא' על זבחי' ש"ס
זכין את ישראל בערב יורכ"ל אחר מנחה
לא הצטרף - וענין כל שנה ושנה - זשון
הבינה "א חתמה און אחר חתמה טובה" (ז"ל)

הרי נאמרה בפ' - וכענין בפ"ע - לאחר סיום ברכת הת' ש' בסיום עריוהכ"פ ובהתחלת יום הקדוש
It was said clearly—and as a standalone inyan—after the conclusion of the *bracha* to the *talmidim* at the conclusion of Erev Yom Kippur and at the beginning of Yom Hakadosh [Yom Kippur].

Indeed, at the end of the *bracha* to the *bochurim* the Rebbe added the words “*a chasima un a gmar chasima tova*,” and in the edited version of the *bracha*, this *ksav yad* appears in a footnote.

An interesting *ha'ara* appears in the *muge'dike* *bracha* of 5731: On the title of the *bracha*, “*Lifnei Kol Nidrei*” (that the *bracha* was recited before *Kol Nidrei*), a footnote adds: “the time of *Birchas Habanim*. And see the *Sifrei* (Va'eschanan 6, 7): ‘*Levanecha eilu hatalmidim*.’”

In 5732, as the crowd continued to grow and the lobby of 770 simply couldn't contain the number of *bochurim*, the *bracha* was relocated to its *makom kovua*: the upstairs *zal*.

The shelves on the wall between the *zal* and the *cheder sheini* were removed, so *bochurim* standing in the *cheder sheini* would

be able to see and hear as well. Eventually, air conditioning units were installed in the *zal*—although ultimately, they were barely able to keep up with the masses of *bochurim* jammed in the room.

In 5733, the Rebbe said the *pesukim* of “*vayidaber*” and “*v'samu*” with the *tallis* covering his face, and extremely low.⁷

Beginning in 5735, the *zal* opened only after *Mincha* (and *bochurim* would only be able to take their places then). This was a result of the Rebbe saying: “די בחורים דארפ'ן: פארפאסטן—the *bochurim* need to eat before the fast.”

In later years, the *zal* would be opened even

later in the day and closer to the *bracha*.

‘Innermost and Heartfelt’

In 5738, 5739 and 5742, the Rebbe did not begin the *bracha* with *Birchas Kohanim*; only after some *divrei bracha* did the Rebbe recite *Birchas Kohanim*. In 5739, as the Rebbe said (at the end of the *bracha*) “*ut ut kumt Moshiach*,” his voice choked with tears.

Also in 5739, a seder was established in which only *bochurim* of age 23 and older, as well as *chassanim*, would be allowed to stand in the *zal*, and *bochurim* aged 22 and *kevutza* would stand in the *cheder sheini* (these age rules changed in future years slightly). For the first time, the windows to the *chotzer* of 770 were removed, and all the rest of the *bochurim* stood in the *chotzer*.

After entering the *zal*, the Rebbe gazed at all the *bochurim*, and took a moment to gaze at the *bochurim* standing outside in the *chotzer* as well. Speakers also played the *bracha* live in the downstairs *shul*.

In 5741, as the Rebbe entered, he saw the photographer Levi Freidin standing with his camera, and the Rebbe motioned that he shouldn't film.⁹ In 5744, after entering, the Rebbe motioned that the microphone set up should be removed.¹⁰

In 5746, during the *seforim* saga (which culminated in victory on Hei Teves), the Rebbe spoke about the eternal life of the Friediker Rebbe: “... *talmidim of Nesi Doreinu*, the Rebbe,

my father-in-law, who is the *memale makom* of his father, the founder of Tomchei Temimim, who is the eternal founder and the eternal *menahel*, together with his son as one (“*k’echad*”)...”

Also in 5747 the Rebbe said: “the Rebbe, my father-in-law, *Nesi Doreinu* . . . was, and is, practically, until today, until Moshiach comes and after that, the *menahel poel* of the *yeshiva*.”

Before the Rebbe entered the *zal* in 5747, the *bochurim* strongly sang Napoleon's March.

After the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin on Chof-Beis Shevat 5748, the Rebbe began to light Shabbos and Yom Tov candles in his room, and *Birchas Habonim* began to take place after the Rebbe had begun Yom Kippur. Therefore, the videos and recordings stopped.

During many of the general *brachos* to Chassidim, the Rebbe gave a *bracha* according to the *aleph-beis*. At times, the Rebbe would reference that *bracha* during *Birchas Habonim*. During *Birchas Habonim* 5750, the Rebbe also gave a *bracha* in the order of the *aleph-beis*.

In 5751, when referencing the general *bracha* recited after Mincha, the Rebbe referred to it as “ברכות ואיחולים פנימיים מקרב ולב עמוק פנימה—*brachos* and good-wishes from the innermost and deepest parts of the heart.” As the Rebbe said these words, he lifted his head with closed eyes towards the *bochurim*.¹¹

The last time that the *bochurim* merited to hear *Birchas Habonim* directly from the Rebbe was in 5752. That *bracha* is especially unique and is filled with many beautiful *leshonos* and expressions about the *brachos* that the *Nasi Hador* showers on the *bochurim*.

הגהות

An overview of Birchas Habanim, featuring stories, anecdotes, and memories from throughout the years

THE REBBE'S
HAGAHOS ON THE
BRACHA OF 5750,
WHEN THE REBBE
GAVE BRACHOS
ACCORDING TO THE
ALPEH-BEIS.

Publishing the Bracha

Immediately after *Birchas Habanim*, the Rebbe's words would be transcribed and published. Many times, even before *Kol Nidrei*, a *hanacha* of the *sicha* would be hanging on the wall in 770. Once, on his way

ג. ע"פ הג"ל - אז דער זמן (סוף ערב יוה"כ"פ והתחלת יוה"כ"פ) איז א מקור אויף אלע ענינים במשך שנה
הבאה (כולל אלע שינויים האפשריים) - איז פארשטאנדיק, אז בזמן זה ווערן נמשך אלע ברכות והמשכות,
וועלכע זיינען כולל כל הענינים כולם פון שנה הבאה - וואס זיי אלע זיינען גבול אין די אותיות פון
דעם אל"ף בי"ת (ווארום אלע ענינים און אלע ברכות הויבן זיך דאן אן מיט אן אות פון אל"ף בי"ת),
און בשעת מ'דערמאנט איין ברכה פון יעדער אות, איז דאס כולל אלע ברכות וואס הויבן זיך אן מיט דעם
אות (א ברכה וועלכע הויבט זיך אן מיט דעם אות אל"ף - איז כולל אלע ברכות וואס הויבן זיך אן מיט
אל"ף, ועד"ז באות בי"ת א.א.וו.) -

עס זאל זיין א שנת אורה, שנת ברכה, שנת גילה, שנת דיצה, שנת חוד והדר, שנת ועד טוב, שנת זכיות
גדולות, שנת חיים טובים וארוכים, שנת טובה - בטוב הנראה והנגלה, שנת יעוד טוב, שנת כלכלה
בהרחבה, שנת לימוד התורה בהצלחה רבה ומופלגה, שנת מרומים, שנת נסים און נסים, שנת סימן טוב,
שנת סייעא דשמיא, שנת עוז, שנת פדות, שנת צדקה, שנת קדושה, שנת רוממות, שנת ששון ושמחה, שנת
תהלה, שנת תפלה און שנת תשובה,
כולל - שנת נס הכי גדול - דער קיום פון דער תהלה ותפלה הכי גדולה פון אלע אידן, אחכה לו בכל
יום שיבוא¹⁹, אז עס קומט די גאולה האמיתית והשלמה בתחלת שנה זו ממש, ומה טוב ומה נעים - היום
ממש, וויבאלד אז אחכה לו בכל יום, ועאכו"כ ביום תשיעי בתשרי, וואס גייט גלייך אריין אין עשירי
בתשרי - העשירי יהי קדוש²⁰, מיט אלע ענינים פון עשירי - וואס שלימותם וועט זיין בגאולה
העתידה²¹, וועלכע קומט תיכף ומיד ממש.
ד. האמור לעיל קומט אלס הוספה צו דעם וואס מ'האט פריער גערעדט צו כללות בני ישראל, וואס זיכער
זיינען תלמידי הישיבה בכלל זה,
ואדרבה - תלמידי הישיבה זיינען "ראשיכם שבטיכם"²² (פון בני ישראל), ווייל זיי זיינען זיך
מתעסק אין דעם "ראש" פון כל ישראל - דער ענין פון לימוד התורה, וואס עיקרו איז - לימוד בהבנה
והשגה מיטן מוח שבראש, להבין ולהשכיל, בחכמה בינה ודעת.
וואס דערפון איז מובן, אז די אלע ברכות הג"ל - וועלכע הויבן זיך אן מיט די אלע אותיות פון
אל"ף בי"ת - זיינען לכל לראש צי תלמידי הישיבה, ב"ז די ברכה הכי עיקרית, און נס הכי גדול - די
גאולה האמיתית והשלמה, וואס דעמולט וועט זיין תורה חדשה מאתי תצא²³, די שלימות הכי נעלית אין
לימוד התורה, דער לימוד הכי נעלה בחב"ד שבשכל, מיוסד און פארבונדן און דורכגענומען מיט יראה
עילאה אין תשובה עילאה, וואס תשובה עילאה איז (עיקר) ענינה - עסק התורה (במבואר אין תניא²⁴),
וואס דאס איז בשמחה רבה²⁵.

In particular, the Rebbe quoted the *possuk*:
"He that has a generous eye shall be blessed; for he gives
of his bread to the poor," and drew from it
insight regarding the *brachos* showered upon
the *bochurim*—*brachos* that flow from *Atzmus*
U'mehus as they are drawn down through the
Rabbeim.



down to the *zal*, the Rebbe looked surprisingly at the fresh *hanacha* hanging on the wall with the *bracha* said just a few moments earlier.

Twenty-seven out of forty-one *brachos* were edited by the Rebbe and subsequently published in the *hosafos* of Likkutei Sichos, in their respective volumes according to the years. The edited *brachos* are all written in the original Yiddish.

All the *brachos*—both edited and not—have been translated to *Lashon Hakodesh* and are printed in the set of Toras Menachem.

This year, the Vaad Hatmimim has published “לקט ברכת הבנים—*Leket Birchas Habonim*,” a *kovetz* collecting all the *brachos* of *Birchas Habonim* (with permission and special thanks to Kehot Publication Society and Vaad Hanochos B’Lahak). Included are the edited *brachos* in Yiddish, and when there is no Yiddish *hanacha*, a Hebrew *hanacha* is printed.

The Rebbe’s Gaze

Even after the events of Chof-Zayin Adar, the
10 Barcheinu Avinu

Bochurim continued to merit special moments with the Rebbe during the time of *Birchas Habonim*.

After Mincha on Erev Yom Kippur 5753, Rabbi Leibel Groner asked the Rebbe if he wants to *bentch* the Chassidim and the *bochurim*, as is customary every year. The Rebbe agreed and the window was opened in the specially built room in the back of 770. The crowd sang “*kesiva vachasima tova*” and the Rebbe stayed in the public eye for over a minute.

In 5754, a short time after *shkiah*, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky exited the Rebbe’s room and announced that the *bochurim* would be able to pass before the Rebbe. The news spread like lightning throughout 770, and throngs of *bochurim* began to stream outside toward *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

At 7:05 p.m., the *bochurim* began to pass by the Rebbe, and over the course of about half an hour approximately 1,500 *bochurim* passed by, while the Rebbe sat at the entrance of his room and looked at each *bochur*.

Experience

Re-live over forty *brachos* of the Rebbe to the *bochurim*.

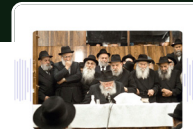
2. Based on the diary of Reb Yoel Kahn, with details from Reb Elye Gross's *yoman* (published in Yemei Bereishis).
 3. From Reb Dovid Raskin's letter to his parents.
 4. *Yoman* of Reb Moshe Levertov.
 5. *Yoman echad hatemimim*.
 6. *Yoman* of Reb Meni Wolf.
- An interesting anecdote regarding the *bracha* to *anash*: As the Rebbe recited the *bracha* his voice choked with tears, and in general the Rebbe spoke low. This was in addition to the fact that only a small crowd was present at the start, as the *bracha* came as a surprise. After the Rebbe finished speaking, Rabbi Hodakov asked the Rebbe to repeat the *bracha* again, and the Rebbe did.
7. *Yoman* of Reb Moshe Chaim Levin
 8. *Yoman* of Reb Yitzchok Meir Sossover.
 9. *Yoman* Reb Michoel Seligson, *Shnas Hakhel v' Beis Chayenu*, etc.
 10. *Yoman* Reb Elyashiv Kaploun.
 11. *Yoman* Fax-A-Sicha.

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All the *brachos* in one *kovetz*
לקט ברכת הבנים

LISTEN



Birchas Hatemimim, Erev Yom Kippur, 5745

22 *Brachos* are on audio recording and can be accessed on Ashreinu.app.

WATCH



6 *Brachos* are on video and can be accessed at JEM.tv.



שמע בז'י

Taking a closer look at the
Rebbe's *brachos* to the *bochurim*

Each year's *Birchas Habonim* was special, featuring its own special *brachos* and expressions from the Rebbe—in addition to the *brachos* that the Rebbe often repeated from year to year.

In preparation for Erev Yom Kippur this year, the staff at Barcheinu Avinu sat down with several *Mashpi'im* and *Roshei Yeshiva* to take a closer look at the Rebbe's *brachos*, and to “unpack” at least a bit of their messages in a practical and down-to-earth way.

In addition to sharing their understanding of the Rebbe's *brachos*, the *Mashpi'im* and *Roshei Yeshiva* also shared personal memories and inspiring stories. Their contributions transform these pages into a farbrengen-on-paper of sorts ahead of *Birchas Habonim*.





זייט איר דאך דעם רבי'נס קינדער

(ה'תשי"ב) |||||

Rabbi Yosef Abrams

Yeshiva Gedola—Miami, FL

It was Erev Yom Kippur 5712, and I was thirteen years old. Without any prior notice, Rabbi Hodakov (if I remember correctly) came over to where I was standing just outside *Gan Eden Hatachton*, in the lobby of 770, and announced that all the *bochurim* should go into the Rebbe's room (for a *bracha*). Nobody expected it; no one even dreamed of such a thing. It was a complete surprise.

There was only a small group that entered. Many of the American *bochurim* had gone home for the *Yomim Tovim*, and in those years quite a few lived in Brownsville. I myself was then learning in Bedford and Dean.

The Rebbe began: "V'shinantam l'vanecha eilu hatalmidim." He continued to say that the *bochurim* who learn in the Rebbe's *yeshiva* are the Rebbe's children, and that "ס'איז דאך א מנהג"—*minhag Yisroel* is to give a *bracha* to the children." The Rebbe said the *pesukim* of *Birchas Kohanim*, and he cried very hard throughout. I remember that he mostly cried during that part of the *bracha*; while saying the *pesukim*, he was crying very hard.

The surprise, being ushered into the Rebbe's

room and receiving his emotional *bracha*; it was a powerful and exciting moment—it seeped into our bones. But the Rebbe was also teaching us what it means to be a *bochur*, something that applies very much today.

You are "*dem Rebbe's kinder*—the Rebbe's children," and the Rebbe was showing us what it means to be his *bochurim*. The Rebbe explained what can be described as the *tamtzis*—the essence—of a *tomim*. "איר זאלט מצליח זיין אין לערנען." מיט יראת שמים, און איר זאלט אויספירן דעם רבי'נס "כוונה"—Learning Torah with *Yiras Shamayim* and carrying out the Rebbe's will.

That Erev Yom Kippur, the Rebbe began the *minhag* of giving a special *bracha* to the *bochurim*. It started then, with us. Although I was present when the Rebbe gave *brachos* to the *bochurim* many times, I can't say I distinctly remember each year. This first time, however, on Erev Yom Kippur 5712, I remember clearly. Each of us felt that he is the Rebbe's *ben yachid*, the Rebbe's only child.

Now as well, every *bochur* must understand that he is the Rebbe's child, and the responsibility and privilege that brings.



אז די רביים זאלן אויף אייך קאנען
זאגן, "ראו גידולים שגדלתי"

(ה'תשי"ד) |||||

Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Wolberg

Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch –Kfar Chabad

Part of the Rebbe's *bracha* (more than once) is that the Rabbeim should be able to say about the *bochurim*: "Re'u *gidulim shegidalti*—see the fruits I have nurtured."

When the Rebbe is saying about each and every one of us—the *bochurim*—that I am "*gidalti*—raising you," this in itself should create a certain feeling: on the one hand it is a tremendous *kiruv*, a feeling of closeness—the Rebbe is literally raising us, "*gidalti*."

On the other hand, though, this should also evoke a feeling of awe and responsibility. The *chinuch* that the Rebbe is instilling within us is *gevaldige zachen*, but on our part, we must make sure that we are not being affected by other influences that can eclipse or undermine this *chinuch*, *chas v'shalom*.

So let us learn from this a sense of responsibility: the Rebbe wants to see in us that "*gidalti*—I raised you" and we shouldn't allow anything else to get in the way of this.





אויספירען די כוונה העליונה, וואס דאס
איז די כוונה פון נשיאינו רבותינו

(ה'תשח"י) |||||

Rabbi Yosef Klyne

Tomchei Temimim—Nyack, N.Y.

The deepest wish of a Chossid, with which one wishes another, is “*tzu oisfiren di kavana*.” Not to reach heights, not to achieve any specific level in *ruchniyus*, but rather to be a vehicle through which the Rebbe’s *ratzon* is realized.

The Rebbe’s *kavana* has various levels. As the Rebbe famously said at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5711, that the *kavana* is spreading Yiddishkeit, but the *kavana pnimis* is to disseminate Chassidus.

In 5718, the Rebbe’s *lashon* was that they should fulfill the *kavana* of “*Nesieinu Raboseinu*.”

In the context of the *temimim*, the Rebbe Rashab’s words in Kuntres Eitz Chayim are

relevant here, emphasizing that the objective of Tomchei Temimim is to toil not only in *nigleh*, but in Chassidus.

But perhaps even more pertinent, is the *sicha* of “*Kol hayotzei l’milchmes Beis Dovid*,” where it was established that a *tomim* is a “*neir leho’ir*,” and that this is dependent upon being removed from *hanochos olam hazeh*.

With these few words, the Rebbe is entrusting, empowering and demanding. The Rebbe expects that we know what the *kavana* is, and believes that we are up to the task. At the same time, as a father *bentches* his children, the Rebbe is giving us his *bracha*, that we should manage “*tzu oisfiren di kavana*.”





די נקודה התיכונה - עבודת התפלה

(ה'תשכ"ג, ובמשך השנים) |||||

Rabbi Yaakov Winner

Yeshiva Gedola "Zal"—Melbourne

A common *bracha* that the Rebbe would include through the years is for *hatzlacha* in *avodas hatefilla*. It's clear that the Rebbe simply wanted *bochurim* to take *avodas hatefilla* seriously; to actually *daven* properly.

It says in Hayom Yom: "ראשית הירידה הוא העדר—the beginning of a *ruchniyus'dike* decline is a lack of *avodas hatefilla*." If this is the case in the negative, surely we can infer the opposite as well, in regards to an *aliya* in *ruchniyus*—that the beginning of one's ascent in *avodas Hashem* is also *avodas hatefilla*.

Often, when explaining the idea of *davening*, *maamarei* Chassidus brings the *possuk* "סולם מוצב ארצה וראשו מגיע השמימה firmly on the ground, its top reaching up toward heaven." Just as a ladder has many rungs, so does *davening* have many different levels, and as a *Yid davens* he ascends this "ladder," level by level, step by step.

Additionally, Chassidus often brings the words of the Zohar about *davening*: "שעת צלותא שעת קרבא—*davening* is a time of a battle," a battle between the *nefesh ha'elokis* and the *nefesh habehamis*.

The time for a *bochur* to work on affecting himself and changing himself in a *pnimiyus'dike*

way is during the *avodah* of *davening*. Specifically during *davening* can a person affect himself, and cause a *hashpa'a pnimis* on his *middos* and his *nefesh habehamis*.

Reb Meir Tzvi Gruzman, a member of the *hanhala* in Tomchei Temimim of Kfar Chabad, would encourage *bochurim* to occasionally *daven b'avodah*. Other members of *hanhala* felt that perhaps *bochurim* of our generation are not *shayach* to *avodas hatefilla*, or to what it says in *kuntres hatefilla* of the Rebbe Rashab.

The next time Reb Meir Tzvi was in *yechidus*, he asked the Rebbe if it was appropriate to encourage his *talmidim* to *daven b'avoda*. The Rebbe responded: "תומכי תמימים אן עבודה פנימית קען ניט זיין,"—Tomchei Temimim without *avodah pnimis* cannot be, as explained in the *kuntreisim* [of the Rebbe Rashab]."

Avodas hatefilla is part of the *mehus* of a *bochur*, and it is critically important that he takes it seriously. Tomchei Temimim without *avodah pnimis* cannot be!

There is no doubt that when a *bochur* davens as he should, he brings the Rebbe much *nachas ruach*, and fulfills the Rebbe's *ratzon*—as expressed so often in the *bracha* on Erev Yom Kippur.



און א התעוררות פון תשובה אמיתית, תשובה
פנימית, תשובה עילאה (מתוך שמחה)
(ה'תשכ"ד-ה, ושנים אחרות) |||||

Rabbi Avraham Mann

Yeshivas Lubavitch—Toronto

The *bracha* for *teshuva amitis* and with *simcha*, expresses the Rebbe's special expectation he has from the *bochurim* and the *nesinas koach* given for the *bochurim* to fulfill this *bracha*.

What is “*teshuva amitis*—true *teshuva*”?

The Rebbe explains in the *farbrengen* of *Parshas Noach* 5752, that a decision to do *teshuva* and to change one's past, is considered true *teshuva*, “*teshuva amitis*.” The Rebbe goes on to explain that we are talking here about *teshuva ila'ah*, which means a *teshuva* that not only amends what has been missing, but a *teshuva* that builds an even stronger connection to Hashem than before, and this type of *teshuva* is done with *simcha*.

In the *maamar* “*Margela b'pumei d'Rava*” 5746, the Rebbe explains that right now we are holding very close to the *Geula*, already “Erev Shabbos after *chaztos*.” It is therefore demanded and attainable for everyone to reach the level of *teshuva ila'ah*, *teshuva* with *simcha*.





אייננעמען די וועלט בתורה . . און מאכן א דירה—ששין בעיקר לתורה

(ה'תשל"ב) |||||

Rabbi Mendel Shuchat

Kollel Torah—Panama

In *Birchas Habonim* of 5732, the Rebbe used a *lashon* that wasn't regularly used in *Birchas Habonim* until then. In that *lashon*, however, lies a foundational *chiddush* of the Rebbe in general—particularly regarding *bochurim*, and more specifically in regards to *talmidim hashluchim*.

The Rebbe says that the *avodah* of *bochurim* is “*ainnemen di velt b'Torah . . un machen a dirah—to conquer the world and create a dirah b'tachtonim.*” In the *ha'ara* the Rebbe explains that creating a *dirah b'tachtonim* is primarily associated with Torah.

To understand this *chiddush*, let's back up eight months before this *bracha*, to *Chamisha-Asar B'Shevat* 5731. On that day, the Rebbe went to the Ohel, and upon returning began a surprise *farbrengen*. It was during this *farbrengen* that the Rebbe launched *Mivtza Torah*, using the words “*ainnemen di velt durch limmud haTorah.*”

Now, this line is obviously not just a slogan used to launch a *mivtza*, *chas v'shalom*, but it actually carries within it a monumental *chiddush* of the Rebbe.

It was always understood from Chassidus—and in fact, it is clearly spelled out in *Tanya perek 37*—that a *dirah b'tachtonim* is created

through *mitzvos*. However, in this line the Rebbe is *mechadesh* that if one wants to “conquer the world,” to bring about real change—that happens through learning and teaching Torah. Specifically through Torah one can conquer the world.

Throughout the following summer, the Rebbe continued to unpack and explain this *chiddush*, and for several weeks, the *manichim* were corresponding with the Rebbe back and forth in order to clarify this monumental idea.

Very often a *bochur* could think: “When I go on *mivtzoim*, or eventually when I'll go on *shlichus*—then I'll finally have a *chelek* in *dirah b'tachtonim*, in ‘*kibbush ha'olam*.’ But to sit and learn a se'if of *Shulchan Aruch* or a *maamar* Chassidus? That's not “*ainnemen di velt*”!

Comes the Rebbe and says *punkt farkert!* Do you really want to conquer the world? Do you really want to make a *dirah b'tachtonim*? The primary method of *kibbush ha'olam* is “*shayach b'ikar l'Torah!*”

In other words, a *bochur* who is now sitting and learning isn't just preparing to eventually create a *dira b'tachtonim*; learning Torah isn't a *hachana* for *dira b'tachtonim*—it itself is *dirah b'tachtonim!*

This is especially relevant to *bochurim* that are around the age of *talmidim hashluchim*. The

concept of *talmidim hashluchim* is literally an invention of the Rebbe. At first glance a *talmid* and a *shliach* seem like two opposites. How can you be effectuating real change in *olam hazeh* if you're a *bochur* in *yeshiva*? The answer, however, is clear: how are we going to conquer the world? Specifically through *bochurim* sitting in a *yeshiva* and learning Torah, specifically through *shluchim* who are *talmidim*—that is what creates a *dira b'tachtonim*!

At the end of 5741, my father had the *zechus* to be sent to Morocco to lead the first group of *talmidim hashluchim* as the *rosh yeshiva*, and he stayed there for several years. While he was in Morocco, my grandfather was once standing outside of the *mikvah* on Union St. and asked

the Rebbe for a *bracha* for his children, referring to them all by name. Mistakenly though, he omitted my father's name. The Rebbe turned to my grandfather and asked: "*un vos iz mit di zun vos kert iber di velt in Morocco?*—and what is with your son who is turning over the world in Morocco?"

My father had no big *mosdos* or programs—his only job was to sit in *yeshiva* for 18 hours a day teaching *nigleh* to the *bochurim*. But for the Rebbe that is "*kert iber di velt*—turning over the world."

The Rebbe turned Chassidus on its head to prove that the primary *kibbush ha'olam* is through learning Torah—the *tafkid* of a *bochur*.

You want to turn over the world for the Rebbe? Sit and learn!





תלמידי הישיבה,

שתורתם אומנתם

(ה'תשנ"ב) |||||

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Gurary

Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch—Montreal

“**T***oraso umnaso*” literally means that one’s sole occupation is Torah. The Rebbe expressed countless times that a *bochur*’s primary occupation should be *limmud haTorah*, both *nigleh* and *Chassidus*. That’s how the Rebbe wants a *talmid* in *yeshiva* to spend his time.

In the *yechidus* to *bochurim* several weeks after this bracha, at the end of Tishrei 5752, the Rebbe demanded that *bochurim* be so involved in learning that they’re even dreaming about Torah! Generally, your dreams reflect what you think about during the day (real *mekusharim* who think about the Rebbe often, sometimes dream about the Rebbe). Evidently, the Rebbe wanted *bochurim* to be so immersed in their learning, that even when they sleep at night, their dreams should be about Torah!

In the early 5730s, as the Rebbe was increasingly speaking about *mitvzoim*, *bochurim* began going out to the streets every day to put *tefillin* on other Yidden. This was the beginning of the era of the Mitzvah Tanks, and every morning the tanks would roll out from 770 packed with *bochurim* headed to Manhattan.

I went into *yechidus* during that *tekufa*—it was during *chodesh* Tishrei—and the Rebbe began

complaining to me (as a *hanhala* member) that the *hanhala* is missing in action—the *bochurim* are roaming the streets in front of his office instead of learning with a *seder*. I tried explaining that the *bochurim* aren’t just hanging around, they’re going on *mitvzoim*.

“And this is an accomplishment of the *hanhala*?!” the Rebbe answered, “the *bochurim* go on *mitvzoim* because I speak about it—that’s why the *bochurim* go! And in actuality, [when I speak about going on *mitvzoim*] I’m not even referring to the *bochurim*, I am referring to the *balebatishe yungerleit*. I don’t mean to exclude the *bochurim*, but I am referring to the *balabatishe yungerleit*. When it comes to the *bochurim*, I have said and written many times, that they must ask the *hanhala*. And the *hanhala* must know how to explain to the *bochur* that his main *inyan* is to be immersed in learning.”¹²

The *hanhalos*, the Rebbe made clear, must educate the *bochurim* to know that “*Toraso umnaso*.” Sometimes, outside of *seder* and with *hanhala*’s permission they can go on *mitvzoim*. Their main energy, though, should be hyper-focused on learning and keeping the *yeshiva sederim*.

12. See the complete *yechidus* in Teshura Gurary-Matusof 5772.



הצלחה בלימוד הנגלה

(במשך השנים) |||||

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro

Yeshiva Gedola—Miami, FL

Each year during *Birchas Habonim*, the Rebbe would include a bracha for “*hatzlacha b’limmud haTorah, limmud hanigleh v’limmud haChassidus*—success in learning Torah, *nigleh* and Chassidus.” Interestingly, this is similar to the *lashon* the Rebbe would say to *bochurim* when they went into *yechidus* for their birthday.

Learning *nigleh* is just as important as learning Chassidus. Perhaps that's the reason the Rebbe would start off with saying first “*limmud haTorah*” and then elaborate, *nigleh* and Chassidus. Similar to what the Rebbe says about Rashi, that when Rashi brings two *pirushim*, the first commentary brought is always closer to *derech hapshat*. However, if there are two explanations which are equally according to *pshat*, then Rashi prefaces that there are two ways of explaining this, highlighting that they go into an equal category. Perhaps we can say so similarly here—the Rebbe starts off with *limmud haTorah* as a *hakdama*, that they are both equal.

To the Rebbe, the study of *nigleh* was very important. The Rebbe wanted the *bochurim* to learn *nigleh* well, and that they should be *lomdim*. In *yeshiva*, the main *limmud* is *nigleh*, spending many more hours on it, and the Rebbe wanted the *bochurim* to learn *nigleh* diligently.

When the Rebbe established the *kanim* (a group of *bochurim* who would dedicate themselves to learning even more *nigleh* and Chassidus and would occasionally give *pilpulim*), the Rebbe made them in both *nigleh* and Chassidus.

I once traveled with a group of *bochurim* to Boston on Yud-Tes Kislev 5729, to speak in learning with Rabbi Y. B. Soloveichik. When we returned we wrote in a *duch* to the Rebbe. In the *duch* it was mentioned that we shared with Rabbi Soloveichik *inyonim* in *nigleh* from the Rebbe's *sichos* (like crossing the dateline, *hilchos teshuva* etc.). The Rebbe responded:

”ח על הדו”ח, בודאי כמדובר כמה פעמים שקלו וטרו”
גם משלהם (לא רק חזרה מהנדבר בהתוועדות) ותבוא עליהם
ברכה”.

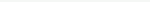
“Many thanks for the report. Surely, as discussed many times, you also discussed your own ideas in *nigleh* (not only repeating what was spoken by the *farbrengen*. They should be blessed.”

The Rebbe was very happy when the *bochurim* would learn and *koch* in *nigleh*, and it brought much *nachas* to the Rebbe. This is what the Rebbe was *bentching* the *bochurim* for, success in learning—especially in *limmud hanigleh*.

By fulfilling this, we give the Rebbe the greatest *nachas ruach* we can imagine.



בהתמדה ושקידה

(במשך השנים) 

Rabbi Leima Wilhelm

Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch—Morristown N.J.

One of the *inyonim* that the Rebbe mentioned *b'keivus* during *Birchas Habonim* is “*hasmada u'shekida b'limmud haChassidus*.” But what exactly is “*hasmada u'shekida b'limmud haChassidus*”?

First, let's discuss the uniqueness of Tomchei Temimim:

Before Tomchei Temimim, learning Chassidus started only at a certain age, and was not always with a specific seder. When Tomchei Temimim was established, all this changed—*bochurim* began learning Chassidus at a young age (age 15-16), and for several hours a day. This was a revolution!

Additionally, Chassidus began to be studied with a *seder*, just like *seder nigleh*. It became part of the daily learning schedule.

And finally, Tomchei Temimim revolutionized *the way* of learning Chassidus. A *tomim* is taught to really understand Chassidus—that he should really get it, really grasp it, just like a *sugya* in *nigleh*.

This results in each *limmud* having an impact on the other: the *limmud haChassidus* affects the *limmud hanigleh*—in the fact that a *tomim* learns with *Yiras Shamayim*, knowing that it's Hashem's

Torah—and the *limmud hanigleh* affects the *limmud haChassidus*—just like when learning *nigleh*, we work to understand it and figure it out.

The *nekuda* of all this is that Torah—both *nigleh* and Chassidus—is *Torah achas*, and Tomchei Temimim brought this out in the ultimate way.

In our generation, the Rebbe brought this up a notch, to an even greater level. The Rebbe established the “*kanim*,” a group of *bochurim* who were taught to be *mefalpel* in Chassidus, to innovate in Chassidus. This was something totally new for Dor Hashvi’i.

Now we understand what learning Chassidus for a *bochur* in Tomchei Temimim means. To summarize, we've discussed three aspects: 1) Who should learn—*bochurim* of all ages should learn Chassidus. 2) Time spent—Chassidus should be studied for significant periods of time, full *sedorim*. 3) Method of learning—Chassidus should be studied in a way that it can be fully understood, just like a *sugya* in *nigleh*.

So now let's go back to our question: what does "*hasmadah u'shekida b'limmud haChassidus*" mean, in addition to the above?

In general, there is a *seder* of Chassidus every day, the several hours that we learn Chassidus in yeshiva. However, in addition to this, the Rebbe



demands that we learn Chassidus *b'shufi*, to “*toivel zich*” in Chassidus. In simple terms: not just to learn Chassidus out of obligation, but to totally immerse ourselves in the study of Chassidus.

This is “*hasmadah u'shekida b'limud haChassidus*.” Chassidus is our life and we learn it diligently, putting time into it and being involved.

I often hear *bochurim* saying: “I’m learning Chassidus so much, yet I don’t see any serious change in my life!”

There’s a letter in Igros Kodesh where the Rebbe addresses this (here’s a free translation):¹³

“The correct way [to learn Chassidus] is not to continuously pursue all the different calculations, but to learn and learn again and not to look at the clock and calculate how much you understood during [the past] hour. And when you will delve into Chassidus more and more, automatically your mind and heart will become refined, and you will be a receptacle befitting to receive the light of Toras haChassidus, and mainly—also the *ma’or* of Chassidus.”

This is an important lesson: have patience. You may not see the impact right away, but continue to learn and it will come. Put in the effort, and you’ll gradually develop a *geshmak*.

And obviously, only once we throw ourselves into learning Chassidus, can we continue to share it with others—*hafatzas hamaayonos chutza*.

The Rebbe told the story, that when the Alter Rebbe came to Shklov—a city that was a stronghold of *misnagdim*—he entered to the *shul*, banged on the *bima* and said with a *niggun*: “טעמו וראו כי טוב הוי’, פארזוכט וועט איר זען אז דער אויבערשטער איז גוט—taste and see that Hashem is good!”

When the Alter Rebbe left the *shul*, many people followed and eventually became Chassidim.

Tayere bochurim, when the Rebbe *bentches* us to have “*hasmada u'shekida b'limud haChassidus*,” the Rebbe is telling us as well: “*ta’amu u’ru ki tov Havaye!*” Get involved in learning Chassidus, and you’ll see how sweet it is!

And with the Rebbe’s *brachos*, we will surely succeed.

13. Vol. 5 pg. 89.



קיום המצוות בהידור

(במשך השנים) |||||

Rabbi Osher Farkash

Yeshivas Chabad—Argentina

From the strongest expressions of how dear the Rebbe held the *bochurim* was *Birchas Habonim*. All year long we awaited it, as it was from the highlights of the year, clearly portraying how the Rebbe is our father and we are his children. The entire scene inspired a special feeling of *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

Although it was mainly a *bracha*, the details of what the Rebbe *bentched* the *bochurim* with give insight into what the Rebbe's hopes and demands of them are. Especially in the later years, when the *bracha* stretched to be an entire *sicha*, they sort of paint a picture of what the Rebbe's ideal *bochur* looks like.

One of the things the Rebbe spoke of many times in these *sichos*, is "*kiyum hamitzvos b'hiddur*," especially *avodas hatefilla*. The Rebbe demands of a *bochur* in Tomchei Temimim that his *avodas Hashem* be on the highest caliber, fulfilling *mitzvos* to their utmost, davening with as much concentration and sincerity as he can muster.

In some years, it seems like the Rebbe means *kiyum hamitzvos b'hiddur* in its simplest interpretation—going the extra mile to perform a *mitzvah* or fulfilling it in the best possible way, no matter the obstacle. Other times the Rebbe explains that it means fulfilling *mitzvos* not only in practice rather with a *chayus* and excitement.

Yet in other years, the Rebbe explained that the real way of fulfilling the *mitzvos* to the utmost is through *avodas hatefilla*. A possible explanation for this can be what it states in Chassidus that *avodas hatefilla* is the "spine" of *avodas Hashem*, upholding one's *avodah* and infusing it with *chayus*.

Sometimes the Rebbe would combine the two, saying that *kiyum hamitzvos* in general is simply going the extra mile for a *mitzvah*, and according to *Pnimiyyus haTorah* this is through *avodas hatefilla* which infuses a *chayus* in *avodas Hashem*.



נרות להאיר

(במשך השנים) |||||

Rabbi Meir Shlomo Kaplan

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“**O**hr” (light) illuminates the space where it shines with life. The difference between living in a dark cave or in a sunlit room, isn’t necessarily a difference in action—i.e. that in a lit room one acts differently—rather that when light shines everything becomes clear and alive.

One can live his life doing everything as he should, but without the light of Torah and Chassidus. Although he does everything Yiddishkeit demands of him, serving Hashem, learning Torah and doing *mitzvos*, he does so without understanding the inner purpose and meaning of what he’s doing; without internalizing the essence of what a *Yiddishe neshama* is.

Through learning Chassidus and connecting to the Rebbe, the *ohr* begins to shine into the life of the Yid. As he uncovers the inner meaning and depth Chassidus gives, his *avodas Hashem* begins to pulse with new life. When truly understanding how precious a Yid is to his Creator and how important his Torah and *mitzvos* are, it breathes new energy into his *avodah* and infuses him with joy.

Once igniting his own *neshama*, his own candle, one must become a “*ner leho’ir*,” and spread that *ohr* onwards. This is the mandate our

Rabbeim gave us of *hafatzas hamaayanos* and *hafatzas hayahadus*.

Aside from getting others to practically do *mitzvos*, it means imparting this *ohr* to them so it shines in them too. The ultimate goal is to illuminate their lives with this clarity and purpose, with the understanding that Yiddishkeit is their life and what provides them with true happiness and fulfillment.

When someone dedicates his time to working with others, to being a *ner leho’ir*, his personal *avodas Hashem* does not become diminished in any way. A candle is something that gives without losing anything of itself. When igniting another candle’s flame, the torch continues to blaze with the same intensity as before.

To the contrary, spreading the *ohr* to others will in fact only reveal it more in your life. As the Alter Rebbe states in Tanya regarding one who teaches others, “נעשה מוחו ולבו זכים אלף פעמים ככה”—his heart and mind become 1,000 times more refined.” Through igniting another Yid’s *neshama*, one’s own heart and mind will become more refined.

Far from being just a job description though, or an action item to accomplish on the “*avodas Hashem* checklist,” *neiros leho’ir* is an everpresent

state of being.

Just by existing, a candle exudes light, shining the path forward and illuminating its surroundings. Similarly, a *Chossid*, just by going about his life as the Rebbe teaches he should, shows a living example of the higher mode of existence in which Chassidus puts a Yid. Without even going out of his way to do anything special, he illuminates his surroundings and shines the light of Yiddishkeit and Chassidus.

This is the job of the *bochurim*, *talmidei*

hayeshiva, to be *neiros leho'ir*, as the Rebbe calls them. Living their lives totally within the confines of *kedusha*, they are saturated with this *ohr*.

When possible, during times not set aside for learning, through *mivtzoim* and *hafatza* they spread this light on to others, igniting souls. And constantly, just by being the best living example of the Rebbe's *Chossid* they could be, they bathe their surroundings in this *ohr*, illuminating the world around them, igniting a never ending chain of *neiros leho'ir*.



2 KISLEV 5714 | KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

The Rebbe, for his part, is like
an actual father, *bentching* us
with *Birchas Habonim* on Erev
Yom Kippur. If only we can
also be true children!

*From the diary of Reb Yoel Kahn, after the inaugural
Birchas Habonim, Erev Yom Kippur 5712*