

SHADAR

Touching Hearts, One Person at a Time

RABBI MENACHEM SHMUEL DOVID HALEVI RAICHIK

Dovid Zaklikowski with Rabbi Shimon Raichik

בס"ד

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CONGREGATION LEVI YITZCHOK - BEIS SHADAR
Los Angeles

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Rabbi Raichik shortly after his arrival in Los Angeles, circa 1950.

[PROLOGUE]

"Where Could He Be?"

It had been a stressful week for the Raichik family. The preparations for their first Los Angeles wedding, with 1100 guests expected, were finally complete. The Los Angeles Jewish community was not going to miss the opportunity to celebrate with its beloved leader, the man who had nurtured it for the past 30 years and continued to guide it with painstaking care.

Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik was a personal friend to thousands. He was not only a database of names and places, he was a wellspring of unconditional love, a trusted confidant to whom people poured out their troubles. Though he touched and influenced countless lives, he was more interested in quality than quantity. "Every person you connect to is an entire world," he once said. "If G-d blesses you to affect 25 people, that is great. You have to know that every person is capable of extraordinary things, and that the entire world was created for this individual."

But on this sweltering Monday evening in July 5740 (1980), it was his family who needed him. The wedding of his daughter, Devora to Moshe Wilhelm was about to begin, and he was nowhere to be found. The story behind his absence epitomizes the sincerity and self-sacrifice with which Rabbi Raichik fulfilled his life's mission as a representative of two Chabad Rebbes.

Though Rabbi Raichik was neither the first nor the last to be appointed a

shadar, the Hebrew acronym for *shlucha derabana*, personal emissary of the Chabad Rebbe, he may have been the longest-serving. He became so identified with the role that in Chabad circles it was pointed out that the title was also an acronym for his name.

His mission was twofold: to bolster and encourage the observance of Judaism in every community he visited, and to raise funds for Chabad headquarters. As the sixth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, wrote, to be a shadar is "to sow spirituality and reap materiality." Rabbi Raichik never separated the two goals. As he saw it, his job was to help Jews perform mitzvahs, whether they were donning tefillin, koshering a kitchen, or giving tzedakah.

Every individual he met felt his personal interest and concern. He reassured a generation of assimilating Jews that they could live Jewishly in the American melting pot; instilled confidence in Holocaust survivors that G-d was with them in America, and that Judaism could flourish here as it had in Europe; and reached out to young American Jews and encouraged them to explore their heritage and grow in their observance.

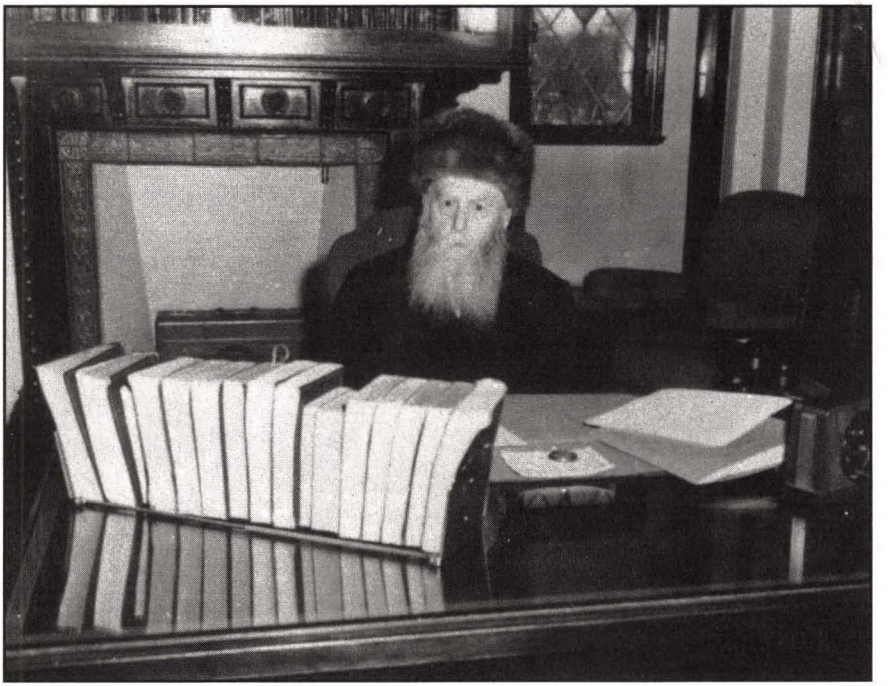
Rabbi Raichik did these things both at home in Los Angeles, where his house became a bustling center of activities and events, and in the many cities he visited during his regular trips around the country.

Barren Land

When they arrived in 5709 (1949), it was not easy for the Raichiks in Los Angeles. There was a very small *frum* community, kosher food was hard to find, and a Jewish day school was only a dream. In addition, Rabbi Raichik traveled on the Rebbe's behalf to Jewish communities for many months of the year, leaving Rebbetzin Raichik alone with their children.

Often on his trips he would stop in Brooklyn to be with the Rebbe and other chassidim. It was clear that he felt Los Angeles was "exile" and that Crown Heights was where he really wanted to be.

After his passing, his wife found a letter from the Rebbe dated Teves 27, 5712 (1952), which he carried with him every weekday in the pocket of his *kapote*. The single sheet was tattered, half of the letterhead missing, the date cut off, and the page itself split in three. Many of the words were illegible, but Rabbi Raichik had



The Rebbe Rayatz in the "yechidus room" around the time the Raichiks were sent to Los Angeles, 5708 (1948). *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

looked at the letter so often, they must have been etched on his soul. In the letter, the Rebbe writes him:

> *I have my suspicions that you look at residing in Los Angeles as one exiled to a foreign land, and you are waiting every day for the "awaited heralding" to arrive, when you will be freed from your duties and be able, in a good and successful time, to return to Brooklyn or Williamsburg. It is understood the impossibility that such thoughts will not disturb you and cause a shortcoming in the proper performance of your mission.*
>
> *Your mission in [Los Angeles] is your central work...*

Years later, at a Kinus Hashluchim gathering in the 5740s (1980s), Rabbi Raichik would reflect on facing the difficulties of shlichus. "A shliach does not need to make calculations," he said. "He may be in a place that Jewishly is a 'barren land,' a 'dry season.' There is no realistic way that he could be successful. Yet he needs to fulfill his mission, because he knows that this is what Hashem wants him to do.... What will be later does not make a difference.... Later, you will



With the Rebbe.

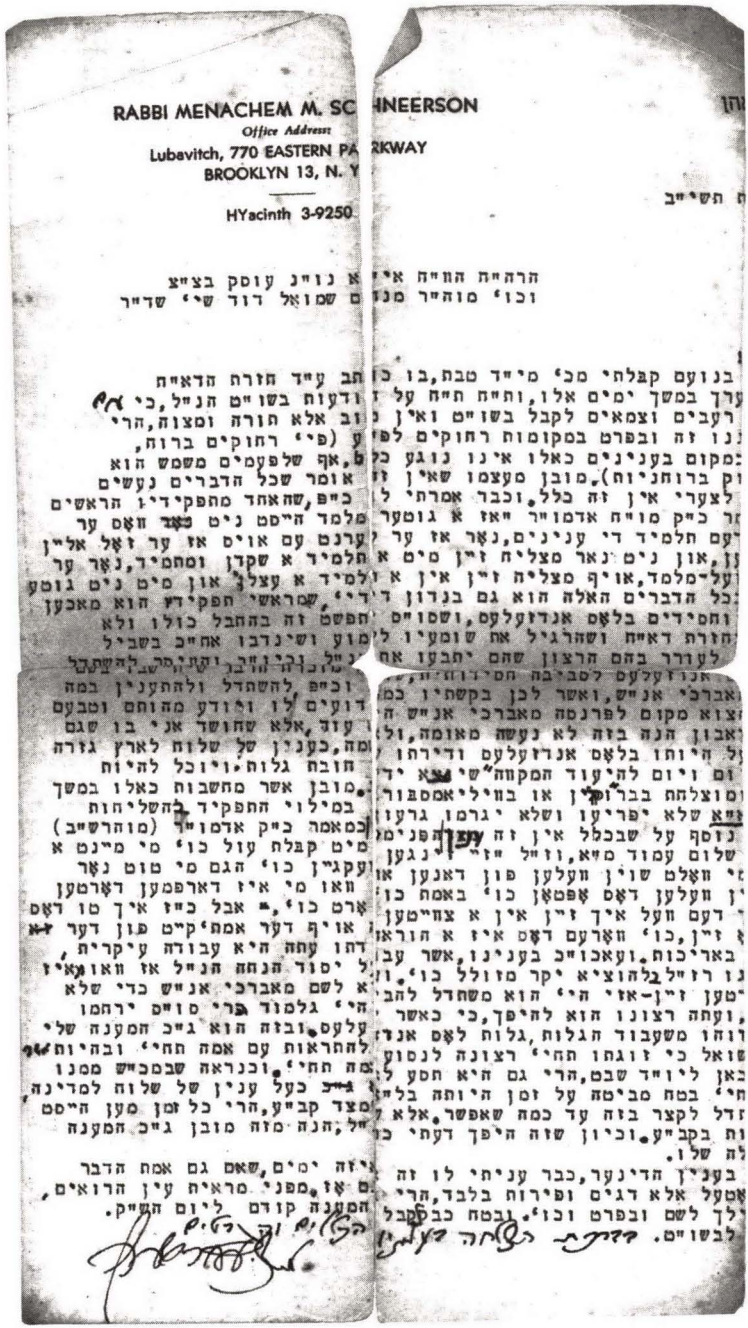
see that Hashem blesses you when you make no calculations in fulfilling your shlichus..."

Though he traveled extensively, Rabbi Raichik's impact was still felt most in California. Guided by the Rebbe's directive to make sure that he was fully present and available to serve the community's needs, he persevered and was ultimately successful, with some assistance, in changing the Jewish landscape of the state.

Los Angeles locals received frequent, often weekly, calls from Rabbi Raichik, during which he asked after their families, reminded the men to put on tefillin, and encouraged the women to light Shabbos candles. He dedicated their new homes, affixed mezuzahs to the doorposts, and attended their family celebrations. By 5740 (1980) the city he had once considered desert-like was a relative oasis, with shuls, day schools, and an abundance of kosher food.

Summer Wedding

When Devora became engaged, the Raichik family scrambled to figure out the details of planning a wedding in Los Angeles. Their main concern was to find a venue large enough to hold the crowd that was expected. The wedding


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The letter from the Rebbe that Rabbi Raichik kept in his pocket for over four decades (see page 363).

was pushed off until summer, though it is not usually considered an auspicious time because of the period of mourning that stretches from the 17th of Tammuz through the 9th of Av.

It was proposed to schedule the wedding after Tisha B'Av, but Rabbi Raichik was still not completely comfortable. He finally agreed, provided that the chupah took place on the 15th of Av, an auspicious and joyous day on the Jewish calendar, and was completed by nightfall (then 7:57 PM).

"There will only be 500 people attending," he told his wife as they looked for a hall. Eventually they settled on the Century Plaza Hotel, which they rented at a discounted rate with the assistance of a local rabbi. At the time it was one of the biggest hotels in the country, and boasted several large ballrooms.

Then the response cards began to pour in. The invitees obviously felt honored to be asked to celebrate with their beloved mentor. It was the community's chance to thank the Raichiks, who had opened their home and hearts to them for more than three decades. The family soon realized that the event would be much larger than they ever imagined.

While Rebbetzin Raichik and their children were busy with invitations, flowers and photographers, Rabbi Raichik took it upon himself to ensure that the kitchen in the hotel was 100 percent kosher. There would need to be extra precautions and rigorous inspections, he told the staff. All the dishes had to be new, and he needed to know exactly how the cutlery would be kashered. He personally discussed all this with the mashgichim who would be supervising the food preparations.

A few weeks before the wedding, Rebbetzin Raichik attended the wedding of her nephew Avery, her sister Esther Stok's son, in New York. Her oldest sister, Shaindel Backenroth, who resided in Israel with her husband Dovid, was also in town. Afterwards her family encouraged her to stay a few more days in New York, but she was anxious to get back to California to finish preparing for her own simcha. "Are you making the fish for the wedding?" her family asked jokingly. Little did they know that indeed she had prepared home-made salmon for the guests who Rabbi Raichik felt would not be comfortable eating food from the hotel's kitchen.

Rabbi Raichik wanted to be in New York for the Shabbos aufruf before the



At the wedding of his daughter Chani to Chaim Hanoka, 3 Kislev, 5751 (November 20, 1990).

wedding, when the chosson would have an aliyah to the Torah during the Rebbe's minyan and host a kiddush afterwards. Of course, it was also an opportunity to spend more time with the Rebbe. Tickets were booked; Rabbi Raichik, his son Elozor, the chosson and the chosson's parents were scheduled to fly back to Los Angeles on Sunday afternoon, arriving on Sunday evening. The wedding was on Monday.

It was customary for the Rebbe to give every chosson his siddur to use for Minchah before the wedding and to wish him and the parents mazel tov. Since the wedding would be in Los Angeles, Moshe would receive the honor the day before, on Sunday afternoon. The group was scheduled to depart shortly thereafter.

That afternoon, however, Rabbi Raichik found out that the Rebbe was planning to farbreng, hold a chassidic gathering, in the evening, and, without informing anyone, changed his ticket to Monday morning. Later he met the chosson walking up Kingston Avenue and told him what he had done. Moshe and Elozor decided to do likewise, though Moshe's parents flew to Los Angeles as planned.



Over a thousand guests celebrated with the Raichiks at their first family wedding in Los Angeles, 15 Av, 5740 (July 28, 1980).

After Maariv that evening, the main shul in 770 was prepared for the farbrengen, which began around 9:45 pm.

At the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about the importance of the 15th of Av and its connection to marriage, quoting the well-known line from the Gemara, "There is no Yom Tov like the 15th day of Av."

The Rebbe also discussed that week's Parshah, Va'eschanan. The first section describes how Hashem took the Jews into the desert, the "great and dreadful wilderness, wherein were snakes, vipers, scorpions, and thirst induced by lack of water" (Devarim 8:15). The Rebbe drew a parallel to the spiritual desert in which one whose job is to disseminate Torah might find him- or herself. He promised that in that wilderness, too, G-d would provide, just as that verse continues with how Hashem "brought forth water." The farbrengen finished with the singing of niggunim, and the Rebbe departed the shul at 12:20 am.

Monday Morning

In the morning Elozor realized that they might miss their flight if his father



Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik at the Wilhelms' wedding.

wasn't ready on time. He called the home where he was staying, but no one answered. He quickly arranged for someone to drive them to the airport, and went to the house himself. Finding his father awake and ready to leave, he breathed a sigh of relief.

Plane rides with Rabbi Raichik were always an adventure. He would walk the aisles, offering to put on tefillin with any Jew he could find. If he had a kosher meal, he would find a Jew who was eating non-kosher and convince them to eat his meal instead. That morning, though, he had other plans.

There had been no time to daven Shacharis in New York, so as soon as he boarded, he donned his tallis and tefillin. He was known to spend many hours in davening, quietly standing in a corner, oblivious to the world around him. There were not many unused corners on the Boeing 747, so he found an empty space in the back of the plane and began to pray. However, it soon became apparent that the space was used to maneuver the food carts between aisles.

The flight attendants politely asked him to move, but Rabbi Raichik did not respond. They could not get his attention, and did not understand what he was

doing. Things were at an impasse until Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, a representative of Chabad headquarters who was also traveling to the wedding, stepped in. "This is a holy man and he is in prayer," he told the flight crew.

The jumbo jet had another floor that included a lounge. Rabbi Kotlarsky convinced them to let Rabbi Raichik go up there and daven, promising that he would soon be done. But an hour passed, they had finished serving the meal, and he was still davening. Once again, Rabbi Kotlarsky pacified the crew and brought him back downstairs. Throughout, Rabbi Raichik gave no sign that he was aware of what was happening. When he finally finished davening, he made no mention of it.

The plane landed in Los Angeles around 11 am. A car was waiting at the airport to whisk Rabbi Raichik, Moshe and Elozor home, where they arrived around noon. There were just a few hours remaining before the kabbolas ponim was scheduled to begin, and the family was busy with last-minute preparations, including the baking of the fish.

The city's Jewish community was also busy preparing. Many of the Jewish stores planned on closing early so that the owners could attend the historic event. Parents were frantically trying to find babysitters. One rabbi who was supposed to recite a berachah under the chupah later said that he could not make it because all of the babysitters were already taken for that evening.

Around three o'clock, the chosson, his father and the witnesses gathered at Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad to sign the tenaim, the engagement contract. Rabbi Raichik, however, was nowhere to be found. Everyone began to wonder where he could be. He had been so particular that the chupah had to be completed before nightfall, and if the tenaim was late, the entire wedding would run overtime.

When they told Rebbetzin Raichik, she nonchalantly said, "Go to Fairfax Avenue, to Schwartz Bakery, and pick him up." Someone drove there and found him standing in front of the bakery helping a man put on tefillin.

That was Rabbi Raichik. He knew that there was a wedding, but he had certain priorities. Every day at three in the afternoon he would put on tefillin with someone who worked in the bakery, so he made the 15-minute walk from his home to Fairfax Avenue.

When he was done, he went to complete the tenaim.



Putting on tefillin at a Lag BaOmer parade in Los Angeles.
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

[PART I]

Immersed in Torah

Rabbi Menachem Shmuel Dovid Raichik was born on Nissan 2, 5678 (March 15, 1918), in the Polish town of Mlawa. His family's roots in the town were deep. His mother, Lieba Devora, was the daughter of Rabbi Chaim Shmaya Segal, the *dayan* (rabbinic judge) of Mlawa.

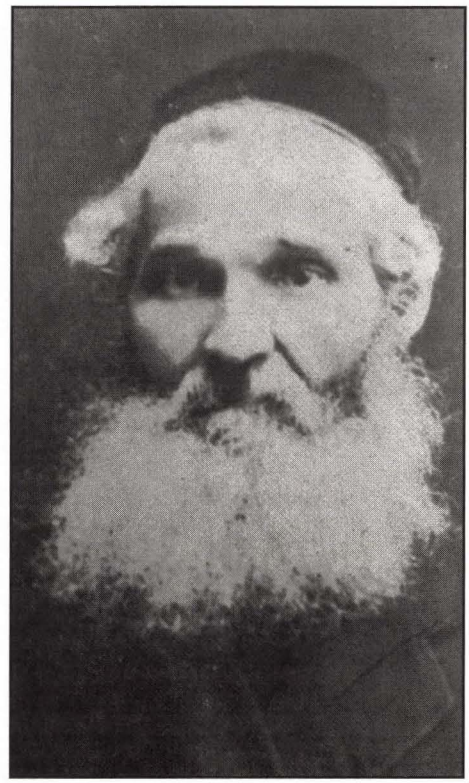
"Chaim Shmaya was a Shabbos and Yom Tov Jew, one who held every day holy, totally immersed in the study of Torah," recalled Dr. Yitzchok Zev Yunis, resident of Mlawa and recorder of its history. "His wife, Dina, together with her daughter Lieba, saw to their livelihood. They had a small shop quite close to the little bridge. Chaim Shmaya taught the Gur chassidim in their *shtiebel*." There were



Shmuel Dovid as a young student at the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Otwock, Poland. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

always people learning Torah and Chassidus in the Segal home, he recalled.

When Shmuel Dovid, as he was called, completed his studies in the town, his father, Reb Shimon Raichik, wanted him to continue learning. As a follower of Amshinov Chassidus, he turned to his rebbe, Rabbi Shimon Shalom Kalish, for advice. Rabbi Kalish lived not far from the Lubavitcher yeshivah in Otwock, Poland, and he promised Reb Shimon that if he sent his son there, he would keep an eye on the lad.



Rabbi Raichik's maternal grandfather, Rabbi Chaim Shmaya Segal.

New Beginning

Majestic woods and the sweet smell of flowers lent a refreshing backdrop to the Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch Yeshivah. The vacation town of Otwock (pronounced "Atvotzk") was an unusual place to find a center of Torah study, but in the summer of 5695 (1935) the sixth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, `moved there on the advice of his doctors, and the yeshivah followed. The three-story building housed a large study hall. The yeshivah also rented smaller dormitory buildings to the students.

"The students toiled in Torah study with diligence and perseverance," recalled Rabbi Avrohom Garfinkel, a student at the yeshivah and later a legendary *maggid shiur* at Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in New York. "While one student delved into *Ketzos Hachoshen* [a famous work on Jewish law], another enthusiastically pored over volumes of Chassidus, such as the *Tanya* and *Likkutei Torah*. The sound of Torah was heard from afar, through the trees of the forest."

To be accepted into the yeshivah was difficult. Several hundred students



The idyllic town of Otwock was the perfect place for intense yeshivah studies.
Courtesy of Rabbi Zev Katz/Lubavitch Archives

were already learning there, and the school was bursting at the seams. Any additional space was needed for graduates of the Lubavitch *mesivtas* (high schools) in towns across Poland. Only upon a recommendation from the Amshinover Rebbe was Shmuel Dovid accepted as a student, in Elul 5696 (1936).

Almost immediately the young man became a dedicated chassid of the Rebbe Rayatz, as Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was known. His commitment was so great that when his father was in the area to visit *his* rebbe, he had to work hard to convince his son to join him at the Amshinover's *tish*, a gathering where the rebbe spoke and the chassidim basked in his presence. His loyalty to Chabad notwithstanding, Shmuel Dovid always held the Amshinover Rebbe in the highest esteem.

Shmuel Dovid was a diligent student. He would study for hours on end, often spending the whole night in the study hall.

"From my time studying in the yeshivah in Otwock," recalled Moishe Baitch, who later lived in Kfar Chabad, "I especially recall Rabbis Chaim Meir Bukiet and Shmuel Dovid Raichik sitting and learning. I was privy to see their night study,

when for a short period I was preparing for a difficult test."

Rabbi Yehonoson Balter recalled how he arrived at the Otwock yeshivah from his hometown of Ostrowiec as a young teenager, and felt overwhelmed and somewhat anxious in the unfamiliar surroundings.

"A young man approached me and took me around, making me feel at home," Rabbi Balter said, describing Shmuel Dovid. "I wondered where my sleeping quarters were.... [He] assured me that there was nothing to worry about, and showed me a bed."



Rabbi Yehudah Eber. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

After several weeks in the town, Rabbi Balter said, he realized that it was not easy to find lodging there, and that he was fortunate to have gotten a bed so quickly. When he mentioned this to a fellow student, the young man responded, "Shmuel Dovid gave up his bed for you."

"But where is he sleeping now?" Rabbi Balter asked, taken aback. "On a bench in the study hall," was the reply.

"Rabbi Raichik was entirely selfless," Rabbi Balter would tell his children, "dedicated to the wellbeing of others, with no regard for his own worldly comfort."

The Teachers

The yeshivah was a vibrant place, a magnet for devoted chassidim. Rabbi Garfinkel, who was a close friend of Shmuel Dovid's, described the teachers and atmosphere.



Rabbi Boruch Friedman. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbi Yehudah Eber

Rabbi Eber was a brilliant rosh yeshivah in the underground Lubavitcher schools in the Soviet Union. In 1930 he and his family escaped to Riga, Latvia, where the Rebbe Rayatz lived at the time. In 1932 the Rebbe appointed him rosh yeshivah of the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Warsaw. He later moved with the school to Otwock.

Rabbi Eber would give a daily Talmud shiur to the older students. Once a week, on Motzaei Shabbos in the winter and on Friday in the summer, he gave a shiur to all of the students for one and a half to two hours. Each semester he would delve thoroughly into one tractate. His explanations were remarkable. The students derived so much satisfaction from his analyses that they forgot the passing time. Afterwards they spent hours discussing and reviewing the lesson.

Rabbi Eber would sit in the study hall for two or three hours daily, when students could approach him with questions regarding his shiur or another topic. He would also call upon students to answer questions. His keen interest in their studies inspired them to apply themselves with more diligence.

Rabbi Eber typed up his lectures and gave them to the top students to copy for wider distribution. He was also a member of the committee appointed to oversee the yeshivah's financial affairs.

Rabbi Boruch Friedman

Reb Boruch, the lead *mashpia* (spiritual mentor) at the yeshivah, was born in Poland. In his youth he studied at the original Tomchei Tmimim in the town of

Lubavitch, where he was an outstanding student. He was both a *maskil* (expert in Chabad Chassidism) and an *oved* (one who labored in his service of G-d, especially in prayer).

Reb Boruch would deliver a daily shiur in *Tanya* to the entire yeshivah. To a novice it might have seemed that he added little insight or commentary to the fundamental text of Chabad. But those knowledgeable in Chassidus understood him deeply and knew that in his succinct style he explained *Tanya* in a way that resolved many questions. Sadly, his lectures were never transcribed.

On Shabbos, Reb Boruch would spend additional time in prayer, meditating deeply. He would finish davening at about five in the afternoon. Only after ensuring that the students had started their afternoon Chassidus seder did he allow himself to go home, make kiddush and eat.

On Rosh Chodesh and other occasions, Reb Boruch would *farbreng* with the students all night, interweaving magnificent explanations of deep concepts in Chassidus with stories of chassidim in past generations. He was known for his sincerity and love for his students, and left a deep impression on everyone who knew him.

Rabbi Raichik recalled that Reb Boruch would constantly instill in the students that "the purpose of a Tomchei Tmimim education is to guide the conduct of your life after you leave yeshivah."

Rabbi Dovber Kurnitzer

In 1936 Rabbi Dovber Garfinkel, known as Reb Berel Kurnitzer, escaped the Soviet Union and arrived in Otwock. He was immediately appointed by the Rebbe Rayatz to be the *mashgiach* (supervisor) and general examiner for *nigleh* (Talmudic studies) and Chassidus in the yeshivah.

He was a wonderful role model, well-versed in the breadth of Torah and Chassidus. It was said that he knew the entire Shas (Talmud) by heart. When he conversed with another faculty member or student, he would often quote the Gemara and the accompanying Tosafos commentary from memory. He was also exceptionally eloquent in explaining complex topics. He quickly won the hearts of his students.

When Reb Berel would enter the study hall, he would walk over to each ta-



Rabbi Dovber Kurnitzer. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

ble, cheerfully patting the students on the back, saying, *"Lebidiker! Lebidiker!"* ("Livelier! Livelier!")

He applied his enthusiasm and attention to each student, first identifying the student's individual nature and character, and then suggesting a course of study to suit him. He organized study groups for all students, appointing a senior student to address his group's needs, material or spiritual, and to engage them in discussion and farbrengens. Each senior student was guided by Reb Berel, who also submitted a detailed report to the Rebbe Rayatz.

Reb Berel would sit in the study hall, calling individual students to his table to discuss subjects they were studying. Once, he called Rabbi Garfinkel over with his study partner. They were then learning a *ma'amar* (chassidic discourse) in *Likkutei Torah*. He asked them a few questions. They thought they had understood the text well, but his probing demonstrated that they had not even begun to grasp it. When he began explaining it to them, "it felt as if he had opened a door to a room full of light," Rabbi Garfinkel recalled. They stood there for two full hours, marveling at his exquisite approach.

The Atmosphere

Every Friday evening between Minchah and Maariv, during the spring and summer months, the groups of students would disperse among the trees in the forest. The scene was magical. They would sing *dveikus niggunim* [soul-stirring melodies], and then one student in each group would review a ma'amar by heart,



The Rebbe Rayatz with students of the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Otwock.
Courtesy of Agudas Chasidei Chabad Library

while the others listened with intensity. Then they would return inside to daven with exalted spirits.

The students of Tomchei Tmimim were lucky enough to glimpse spiritual greatness in both their teachers and occasional visitors. They had ample opportunity to meet many of the older chassidim from other cities who would come to visit the Rebbe. Among them were Rabbi Mordechai Cheifetz from Riga, Latvia; Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson from the United States; Rabbi Leib Sheinin from Dokshitz, Russia; Rabbi Yaakov Baruch; Rabbi Shmuel Levitin; and others from Russia.

With the teachers' permission, the senior chassidim would farbreng with the students. The students especially enjoyed the visits of Rabbi Yitzchok Gurevitch, better known as Reb Itche *der Masmid*.

Due to the Rebbe Rayatz's deteriorating health, only a select few were allowed into his study when he would deliver a ma'amar on Shabbos. The students who excelled in their diligence and conduct were granted the honor of entering the Rebbe's room.

On Yamim Tovim and special days, everyone was allowed to attend. Due to the sheer number of students, the farbrengen was often moved to the study hall. The Rebbe would partake of the meal and then farbreng with the crowd.

[PART II]

Europe on Fire

In the summer of 5699 (1939) Europe was on the brink of war. Many wished to flee, but most countries did not welcome refugees, and Jews were the least welcome of all.

The Rebbe Rayatz, however, vehemently denied that there would be a war. People speculated that, realizing he could not rely on human sympathy to save his people, he had resolved to nullify the harsh decree with prayer and study.

Rabbi Yitzchak Hendel, a student of the yeshivah (who later led the Chabad community in Montreal, Canada), asked the *maggid* (preacher) in his town if he thought there would be a war. The maggid responded affirmatively.

"But the Lubavitcher Rebbe is of the opinion that there will not be a war," Rabbi Hendel said. The maggid responded, "Great people are fighting spiritually for the war to not materialize."

Beginning on Rosh Hashanah of 5699 (1938) chassidim detected nuanced changes in the Rebbe Rayatz's conduct. In retrospect, they realized that the Rebbe was mounting a spiritual campaign to prevent the war.

The famed secretary of the Rebbe, Rabbi Yechezkel "Reb Chatche" Feigin, wrote a letter describing the Rebbe Rayatz's behavior that Tishrei:

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe davened in shul, and his own Maariv lasted around five hours, as is his holy custom. What was different that year was that he instructed the congregants who wished to remain in the shul to recite Tehillim loudly, and not to listen to his prayers.

The Rebbe recited the prayer verses before the Shofar blowing. As he chanted the verse Min hameitzar ["From the depths I call upon You"], he clearly pronounced the word anani as aneini, thus changing the meaning from "answered me" [past tense] to "answer me" [imperative form]....



Shmuel Dovid's passport photo.

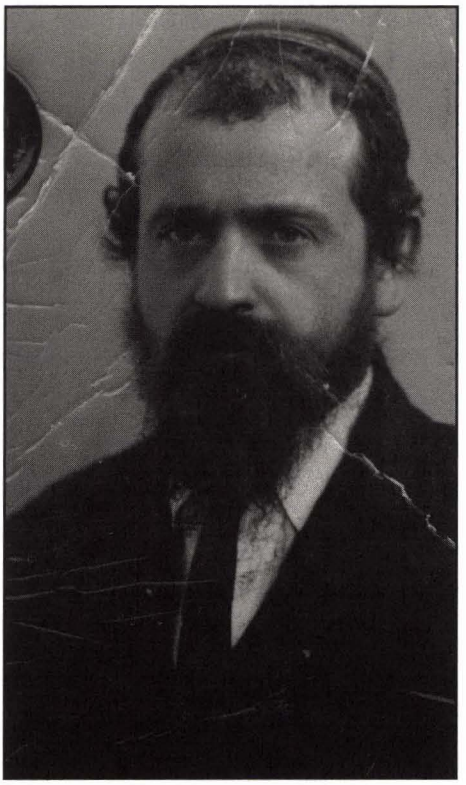
On Motzaei Yom Kippur the Rebbe held a farbrengen. His words were uplifting. He mentioned the general situation of the past year and continued, "From on high, this year is surely a good one. We need Hashem to remove any obstacles in the channels of subsistence, so that goodness can be drawn down in a revealed state.... The Almighty will surely treat us as if He is indebted.... No one should have to have self-sacrifice or be forced to defend himself."

In addition, some of the ma'amarim noticeably departed from the usual format. The Rebbe spoke often about the revelation and essential being of Moshiach. Of particular note was the farbrengen of 19 Kislev (the date that the founder of Chabad, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, known as the Alter Rebbe, was liberated from prison). Those present called it a watershed in the annals of Lubavitch.



The Rebbe Rayatz speaks to members of the Jewish community in the town of Gluboke.

Rabbi Feigin described:



Reb Chatche Feigin's Latvian passport photo. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

> *The face of the Rebbe was shining in a special way, but he was serious as well. All the chassidim came [to the farbrengen], even the younger ones. It was organized in a way that everyone could see and hear the Rebbe. Suddenly, in the middle of the farbrengen, he exclaimed: "Yidden! You should know that Moshiach is standing behind the wall! Those who have eyes can see him, and those who have ears can hear him. When you climb a mountain and start nearing the peak, it gets harder. Then you have to hold on to every little twig and blade of grass. When one is awake all night and the final fifteen minutes approach, one must exert himself to not fall asleep."*

On Acharon Shel Pesach the Rebbe discussed the new Torah that Moshiach would teach. On Shavuos he delved into the great humility of Moshiach, who, despite his unparalleled wisdom and knowledge, would learn with the simple folk as well.

As the fateful month of Elul 1939 approached, the Rebbe ordered the ma'amar *Mi Keil Kamocha* to be reprinted and distributed for the second time that year. Its central theme is that although a Jew must subjugate his ego to the supernal will, G-d must also reciprocate with forgiveness.

On Rosh Chodesh Elul, Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson, a Chabad chassid who had

moved to America to establish the movement's presence there, arrived in Otwock with a group of American students. When Rabbi Jacobson had asked if they should still come despite the rumors of imminent hostilities, the Rebbe said yes.

One of the American students, Rabbi Avrohom Hecht, described his experiences:

> *While a student in Yeshiva Torah Vodaas, through hashgachah pratis [Divine providence] and the encouragement of my older brother, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht, I studied* Tanya *once a week with Rabbi Jacobson. This led to a greater interest in Chassidus. When the famed chassid Rabbi Mordechai Cheifetz came from Riga and gave a chassidishe farbrengen, the seeds of yearning to meet the Rebbe were planted.*
>
> *But as our group formulated travel plans, the world was increasingly alarmed by tensions in Europe. The accursed Nazis already occupied various lands; a sense of foreboding and despair permeated the world powers.*
>
> *The bochurim were fearful to travel, and the parents especially were quite reluctant to send their children to Otwock. One of the talmidim wrote to the Rebbe that his parents were fearful to send him due to the probable outbreak of a huge war. The Rebbe answered, "There is nothing for them to fear."*
>
> *It was as if the Rebbe took upon himself all liability for the journey. This letter helped ease the resistance of the parents, and eventually we all obtained permission to go.*

In the Americans' honor, on Shabbos Parshas Shoftim the Rebbe Rayatz delivered a ma'amar on the verse "Appoint for yourselves *shoftim v'shotrim*, judges and officers, at all of your gates." The Rebbe explained how the pain of the judged causes pain in the heavens, similar to the pain a father feels when his son suffers. On the next Shabbos the Rebbe's ma'amar was based on the famous refrain of the High Holiday prayers, *U'teshuvah u'tefilah u'tzedakah maavirin es ro'a hagezeirah* (repentance, prayer and charity turn aside the evil decree).

Later, after the war began, the Rebbe said to Reb Schneur Zalman Shmotkin that when the second Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Dovber, known as the Mitteler Rebbe, was a young boy, he once reflected upon the verse (Tehillim 30:6), "For His

anger endures but a moment; life results from His favor. In the evening, one lies down weeping, but with dawn – a cry of joy!"

Even then, the Rebbe had not given up hope that all the suffering could be averted by revealing secrets of Chassidus and spreading a spirit of faith and joy in the coming of Moshiach.

Rabbi Raichik would later recall that the summer of 5699 (1939) was a politically tense one. A prominent rabbi in Poland commented shortly before the war that if he had citizenship in a foreign country, as the Rebbe did (he was a Latvian citizen), he would have already left Poland.

The Rebbe's son-in-law, Rabbi Shmaryahu Gourary, known as the Rashag, devised a plan for the Rebbe and his family to travel to Riga. But the Rebbe refused, saying that the Rashag and his family might go, but he would stay.

War in Poland

The Second World War broke out on Friday, Elul 17 (September 1), when Germany invaded Poland.

It was a warm and clear summer day. At around 8:15 in the morning the students heard a terrifying explosion. They rushed out of the house where they were staying, and saw six German aircraft dropping bombs on the small resort town.

"When we heard the attack," Rabbi Garfinkel recalled, "the talmidim didn't want to believe that this was an actual German bombing raid. They thought at first that the explosions were training missions of the Polish air force."

Moishe Baitch recalled a friend asking, "Do you think that these are German or Polish aircraft?"

He swiftly responded, "Of course they are Polish! Do you believe that the Polish have been defeated so quickly?"

However, when the students walked to the mikvah they encountered the horrific truth. Many of the bombs had fallen in the Jewish neighborhoods, leaving numerous casualties and demolishing countless structures. News spread that the war had started.

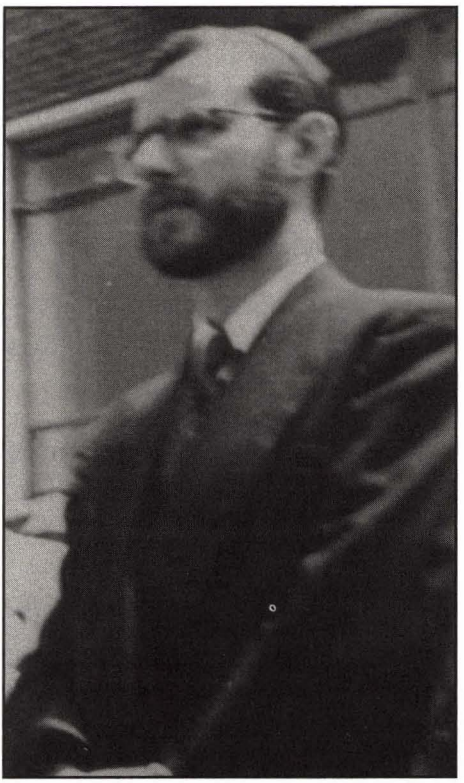
Among the Germans' targets were an old age home and an orphanage not far

from the yeshivah. Scores of lives had been obliterated on the spot.

The yeshivah building was not damaged, because it was located in a semi-rural area some distance from the town itself.

That Shabbos was Chai Elul, the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe Rayatz blessed everyone that these two holy tzaddikim should protect them.

Meanwhile, the Rebbe displayed incredible presence, exuding calmness to those around him. "I don't accept war! Tonight is Chai Elul!" Rabbi Raichik recalled the Rebbe saying. "It was wondrous to be a part of that moment," he said.



Rabbi Avraham Hecht. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbi Hecht recounted:

> *We were frightfully scared and didn't know what to do! We ran to the Rebbe's courtyard to get instructions from him.... The Rashag opened the door and came out to us and told us to run to the Rebbe's mother and calm her down; she shouldn't fear, and all will be good.*
>
> *The Rashag then told us to pack our clothes and prepare to leave. But first, we went in to the Rebbe for a farewell blessing.... It was around 12:30 in the afternoon, before Shabbos, and we were all standing before the Rebbe, who was clothed in his Shabbos finest. These were his words: "I am sending you to my chassidim in Riga, Latvia. I wish you a* kesivah vachasimah tovah *and a* gemar chasimah tovah."
>
> *One of the bochurim asked, "What will be if we are forced to desecrate Shabbos?"*

> *The Rebbe gave him a stern look and answered, "It is fitting that in the merit of the holy Baal Shem Tov and Alter Rebbe you should not have to desecrate Shabbos!" And with these words we left the holy sanctuary of the Rebbe.*

"That Shabbos I was still in the yeshivah," Mr. Baitch recalled, "but by Sunday they told the bochurim to disperse throughout the surrounding environs and find refuge in Jewish homes."

On Tuesday, September 5, rumors began to circulate that the Rebbe, his family and entourage would be leaving for Warsaw. Rabbi Raichik called the taxi that would take the Rebbe Rayatz there.

A large crowd arrived at the Rebbe's residence to see him off and receive a farewell blessing.

Rabbi Yosef Wineberg recalled:

> *At the parting, the Rebbe was deeply upset and his eyes expressed great pain. He said, "*Zait aleh gezunt*, you should all be well, and receive the yoke of heaven.... A king watches his servants, and Yidden are His children. May Hashem watch you wherever you will be. May it be that this departure is unnecessary."*

En route to Warsaw, German bombs fell on the road, which was dense with traffic. Most people ran from their cars to the side of the road, but the Rebbe refused to leave his car. He told his family there was nothing to fear. "Right now our Father is working on our behalf," he said.

By the time the Rebbe arrived in Warsaw, the borders had been closed because of the fighting. It was impossible to travel to Riga. He was forced to remain in Warsaw for the first months of the war.

Bombardment of Warsaw

In an attempt to escape the advancing enemy, Jewish refugees flocked to Warsaw as a last refuge. Though the capital was still holding out in desperate resistance, its swollen population was not protected from the onslaught.

Heavy German artillery pounded the encircled city from all sides. The guns paid particular attention to the Jewish neighborhoods. At the same time German planes flew unhindered at rooftop height, releasing their bombs upon Jewish

homes. Huddled in shelters and cellars, those who survived felt each earthshaking explosion as if the bomb had hit the house next door, even when the planes had dropped their deadly load a mile or two away.

"The fighting was increasing in intensity as the enemy approached the gates of Warsaw," Rabbi Garfinkel recalled. "Eventually, on a Thursday, the last train pulled out of the city."



Rabbi Yosef Wineberg. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

The train was chartered especially for diplomats and foreigners. The American students, who had been in Warsaw since the war began, succeeded in gaining passage aboard it. There was the possibility that the Rebbe Rayatz and his family would embark upon it as well. However, the Rebbe refused to leave Poland, even though his family begged him to do so. He said that he wished to remain together with the Jewish community and his chassidim. Though this meant enduring appalling conditions, including a critical food shortage, the Rebbe remained steadfast throughout the bombardment.

Rabbi Wineberg remained with the Rebbe. He wrote in his diary:

> *When I arrived at the Shmotkin residence, where the Rebbe was staying, I found that the Rebbe was indeed still there. Many people had asked the Rebbe where to go. The Rebbe indicated to some to leave Warsaw, and to others to stay put. With endless floods of tears, everyone around the house and the adjoining shul continuously recited Tehillim, davening and beseeching Hashem for mercy.*
>
> *I inquired about the Rebbe's situation. I was told that at present it was pre-*



Reb Zalman Shmotkin. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

mature to consider continuing on to Riga. The hope was that, as a Latvian citizen, the Rebbe would be able to reside at the protected Latvian consulate. This course was being pursued.

On Thursday or Friday of that week the consulate granted permission, but it was impossible to travel by vehicle due to the various roadblocks throughout the city. So they decided to carry the Rebbe on a stretcher. When the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, saw the stretcher, she was overcome with emotion. She began to scream, "Where is the Alter Rebbe? Where is the Mitteler Rebbe?" Her screams were horrific. Suddenly, word arrived from the consulate that there was no possibility for the Rebbe to enter its grounds, so the Rebbe remained in the Shmotkin home until Erev Rosh Hashanah.

A day before Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe asked Reb Zalman Shmotkin to concern himself with the needs of the students who were in Warsaw. The Rebbe instructed that they be provided with plenty of food, and gave Reb Zalman all the money necessary.

Rabbi Wineberg continued:

> *On Erev Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe appeared one time only, to receive the* pidyonos *[lists of names and requests for spiritual and physical needs for the coming year]. For the prayer services of Yom Tov, they requested that only a minyan of ten come, due to the fear that a larger assembly would attract the unwanted attention of Polish authorities who were conscripting men to build fortifications around the city.*

Suddenly bombs began to fall in the neighborhood. One of the bombs fell upon the Shmotkin home, and the structure caught fire. All of the apartment dwellers began to scurry out, and took shelter near the front gate of the building. The women and children were wailing. We stood around the Rebbe in order to protect him from being pushed by the crowd. A chair was brought and the Rebbe sat down. His holy face was very serious. He said repeatedly that firefighters should be called. He sat the entire time, and his lips were murmuring constantly. One of the chassidim began to recite Mishnayos by heart. Whenever he made an error, the Rebbe corrected him.

Afterward, the Rebbe turned to me and asked where the bochurim were. He requested that they stand at his side. They came and surrounded the Rebbe. The Rebbe also inquired about the wife of Reb Shepsil Meir, who was pregnant, and also about a young girl who initially was missing.

The bombing intensified. A big explosion rocked the house across the street, and immediately it was destroyed. It was discovered later that there was a great loss of life. A large cloud of dust filled the air, choking the huddled mass of people in the entranceway of our building. People thought that it was a gas attack and began to scream. Mrs. Chana Gourary (the Rebbe's eldest daughter) took a damp cloth and placed it over the Rebbe's mouth. A short time later the dust settled, and all were assured that in fact it hadn't been gas.

The bombing did not let up. A message was sent to the Rebbe from a different district of Warsaw that he should come there, since it had thus far been spared. The Rebbe refused the suggestion, disregarding his family's urging. He said to Mrs. Gourary in a humorous tone, "It is already time to *bentch licht* [light candles]."

The Rebbe's grandson approached him and said, "Zaide, if this doesn't stop, we will be forced from here." The Rebbe answered, "After it lets up, we will still be here!"

When the fires around the house grew, and the family desperately pleaded with the Rebbe to escape to safety, he agreed, although he clearly showed his disapproval. It was very difficult to obtain transport for the Rebbe. Only through exhaustive efforts was a wagon procured. The Rebbe departed with the carriage in



Students in the courtyard of the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Otwock.
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

the evening. Billowing flames lit up the night. Debris fell around and upon the carriage itself.

Students in Otwock

After the Rebbe left for Warsaw, many of the yeshivah students returned home to their families, but over a dozen, including Shmuel Dovid, remained in Otwock throughout the Yamim Tovim.

When the Poles realized they were losing the war, they encouraged everyone to flee deeper into Poland. The students in Otwock, who were cut off from communication with the Rebbe, decided to obey the directive.

"When we were running away," recalled Rabbi Hendel, "we thought all was good, but all of a sudden the German bombing started again. We were always worrying what would be next."

Another student, Reb Shea Bronchtain, asked the Amshinover Rebbe whether, if the Germans started bombing the road they were on, they should run into the forest or remain on the road.

The Amshinover Rebbe responded that a person must make an effort, however small, to protect his life, even running into a forest, and then Hashem would help.

Those fleeing soon realized that the attempt was futile, since the Luftwaffe was bombing throughout Poland, and no town was safe from them. After several weeks dodging bombs, the group returned to Otwock.

Reb Avrohom Baum (Boymelgreen) recalled that when they arrived back in Otwock they went into the Rebbe's deserted house and found some flour and other staples, which helped them survive.

Shmuel Dovid and Rabbi Eber went to the market to purchase food. Rabbi Volf Greenglass, who was blonde, blue-eyed and spoke Polish, went ahead of them to make sure the peasant market was safe. The provisions they purchased, along with the salvaged food, helped keep hunger at bay.

They were also privileged to eat soup lunches at the home of the Yarchever Rov, Rabbi Aron Dovid Rosenfeld, who was stranded in his summer residence.

With winter fast approaching, the *rov* asked Rabbi Greenglass to travel to his home in Jarychow, Poland, and bring him his winter coat and boots. In addition, Rabbi Yaakov Bunim, brother of the Aleksander Rebbe, asked that on his way Rabbi Greenglass stop in cities to raise funds from Aleksander chassidim.

Rabbi Greenglass did all that and more: he wore the rov's coat and boots and carried his own, so that in case of robbery the rov's belongings would remain safe.

Sukkos Ceasefire

In the days leading up to Yom Kippur, the bombardment of Warsaw intensified. The authorities instructed people to protect themselves by staying in narrow passageways. Therefore the Rebbe and his family spent most of their time in the corridor of the house where they were staying. Nevertheless, many times the Rebbe motioned that this precaution was unnecessary, and returned to his room, ignoring the explosions outside.

The radio announced that the Germans were intending to demolish Warsaw, and that all who wished to flee were advised to do so via a specific route.



The Rebbe Rayatz's son-in-law Rabbi Shemaryahu Gurary, known as the Rashag. *Courtesy of United Lubavitch Yeshivah/Lubavitch Archives*

The talmidim who were with the Rebbe asked if they should leave, and the Rebbe responded that if the route was indeed secure, they should flee, but if it was not, they should stay and Hashem would guard them.

"Though each new day brought more violent assaults," Rabbi Wineberg wrote, "the shadow of terror was never seen on the Rebbe's holy face. Once there was a raid in the area and the shock waves reverberated throughout. The Rebbe's hand shook as well. He said, 'I am not a fearful person, but from a strong bang the flesh reflexively recoils.'"

At one point the thunderous artillery volleys reached deafening proportions, recalled Mordechai Reichrot. "The chassidim grew panicked, and they asked the Rebbe if he wanted to transfer to a different location. The Rebbe refused, and everyone chose to remain with the Rebbe. I was greatly impressed that the Rebbe took upon himself the responsibility for the lives of tens of people."

During one attack, the Rebbe was deep in thought. Suddenly he stirred and turned to the people around him, saying, "Sukkos is approaching and we need to prepare. We need to do our part by preparing a sukkah, and Hashem will do His part so that we'll be able to sit in it!"

At the Rebbe's instruction, they built a small sukkah in the courtyard.

Rabbi Raichik recounted what he had heard on the 13th of Tishrei (September 26), the Rebbe Rayatz's son-in-law, the Rashag wept, saying to the Rebbe, "We

have suffered enough."

The Rebbe turned to the chassidim surrounding him and said, "Hashem should protect everyone, and should recoup everything that was lost." Rabbi Raichik said that those present said the Rebbe's words filled them with hope that the ordeal would soon end.



Feivish Zalmanov. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Shortly thereafter, having withstood the Germans for a month, the Polish commander had no choice but to surrender. The ceasefire was set for noontime on Wednesday, Erev Sukkos (September 27).

At the appointed time, the ear-shattering explosions stopped abruptly. Rabbi Garfinkel recalled that when Poland surrendered, people began to dig themselves out of their shelters. Hundreds of Warsaw's Jewish survivors leaped from cellars. They grabbed broken doors and window frames, and pulled them together to construct sukkahs. By sunset, numerous sukkahs greeted the holiday. The Jews were jubilant that they could fulfill the mitzvah, though they had but a few morsels of bread to consume.

Fires still raged throughout the city, and the sky was filled with dark smoke for weeks after the ceasefire took effect. When the Rebbe came into the sukkah on the first night of Sukkos, before kiddush, he told Rabbi Wineberg to take a cart and go to Feivish Zalmanov's shop to salvage everything from the flames, "so he should later be able to have what to live on." Rabbi Wineberg went, and later recalled that though it was evening, from the numerous fires the area was lit up as though it were daytime.

Since the Germans had bombed all of the trains, no esrogim reached the

capital. The Rebbe had secured three esrogim before the war broke out. Before Sukkos began, he sent Rabbi Wineberg to deliver an esrog to Rabbi Yitzchok Zev ("Reb Velvel") Soloveitchik, the Brisker Rov, who was in another area of the city.

When the survivors heard that it was possible to fulfill the mitzvah of lulav and esrog, they were overjoyed. Rabbi Garfinkel recalled standing in line for hours, with thousands of others, marveling at how the day after the ceasefire, with shattered homes, destroyed streets, and little food, Jews were waiting to make the berachah on the lulav and esrog.

Rabbi Wineberg went back to Otwock for Shemini Atzeres. He recalled how the students managed to obtain some spirits, and the mashpia, Rabbi Friedman, held a farbrengen. The topic was a verse from Tehillim (122:1): "I rejoiced when it was said to me, 'We shall go to the House of Hashem.'" Rabbi Friedman quoted the Gemara Yerushalmi (Shekalim), which interprets the words to mean that Dovid Hamelech's test was whether he could accept G-d's will with joy. In times past, he said, the test Jews faced was retaining their identity in a dominant culture, but today the nation faced a test similar to Dovid's. They had to accept this harsh decree with joy.

After Simchas Torah the Germans lifted the blockade on Warsaw, and Rabbis Raichik and Greenglass were able to bring some meat to the Rebbe. Rabbi Raichik would recall the deep effect the war had on the Rebbe, and the pain on his face at that time.

It was known that the pact the Germans made with the Soviet Union divided Poland between them. The children of the Brisker Rov came to ask the Rebbe if they should escape to the German or the Soviet side of Poland. They feared being under the Communists as much as they feared the Germans. "Wherever you may find yourself, Hashem should protect you," the Rebbe responded.

One Friday night in the middle of Cheshvan, as Shmuel Dovid and the remaining bochurim in Otwock were davening Kabbolas Shabbos, Nazi soldiers walked into the yeshivah looking for young Jewish men. They wanted a large ammunition cache left by the retreating Polish army moved, and the local Poles advised the Nazis to use the students to haul the items. The entire night, the Germans forced them to carry enormous loads to the nearby German army base.

Escape from Poland

On the ground, the political situation was changing rapidly. At the end of Tishrei (October 10, 1939) the Soviets had granted independence to Lithuania, providing Jews and others with an unofficial refuge. The Rebbe encouraged the students, and anyone else who would listen, to escape from Poland and go northeast to Vilna (Vilnius). Through Rabbi Eber he provided travel expenses of 100 to 150 zlotys per student.

Word of the Rebbe's instructions spread fast. When Rabbi Hendel first returned home from Otwock, like many others he did not know what to do. Some said that everyone should go deeper into Russia, where there were as yet no signs of war. Shortly afterwards, refugees from Warsaw came to the town and told them that "the news is that the Lubavitcher Rebbe encouraged his students to go to Vilna." This advice saved his life.

Rabbi Garfinkel recalled:

> *During the month of Kislev, we came to the house of the Rebbe. The Rashag, who was overjoyed to see us, informed us that the Russians had agreed to return the city of Vilna to Lithuania; all of the Lithuanian yeshivah students who were detained by the Russians during their conquest of eastern Poland were able to relocate themselves to Vilna...*

We were accepted into the Rebbe's room for yechidus (a private audience). His face was joyful and radiant. He gave me his blessing that I should arrive in Vilna in peace, and that I should assist in the formation of the yeshivah there. The Rebbe asked us if we were prepared to smuggle ourselves over two borders: the German-Soviet border and the Soviet-Lithuanian border. He also requested that I publicize his firm conviction that everyone should leave Poland and not seek sanctuary from the Soviet regime, but rather continue on to Vilna.

I readily agreed to leave the very next day. Rabbi Gourary gave me 100 zlotys plus an additional 50 zlotys to take along to my older brother, since my parents refused to consent to my plan unless we went together.

Together with a group of ten bochurim, Rabbi Raichik departed Otwock for Vilna. When they were in Praga, a small suburb of Warsaw, Rabbis Raichik and Greenglass were chosen to bring a letter to the Rebbe to ask for a blessing for their journey.

They saw the Rebbe Rayatz in Warsaw on the night of 19 Kislev. The Rebbe was staying at the home of Rabbi Hershel Gourary. There was a sign on the door stating that the occupant was a Latvian citizen not of Polish origin. Since Latvia was not at war with the Germans, the hope was that the sign would offer those inside the home some protection.

Rabbi Greenglass disguised himself so as not to be identified by the Germans or Poles as a Jew, but Rabbi Raichik did not. When they arrived at the Gourary residence, Rabbi Greenglass persisted in his disguise despite the protests of the Rashag.

"You can't go in to the Rebbe looking the way you do," the Rashag told him.

Rabbi Greenglass replied, "Sometimes the Rebbe has to see me as I am."

The Rebbe gave Rabbi Greenglass a broad smile when he did finally remove his disguise, along with the berachah that they should leave and arrive safely, and meet again in joy. Rabbi Raichik would retell this story, adding, "Even under the German occupation, you could see the Yom Tov of 19 Kislev reflected in the radiance of the Rebbe's face."

After receiving the Rebbe's blessing, they rejoined the group in Praga and

had a farbrengen together. They then took a train from Warsaw to the village of Siedlce, arriving after midnight, while a curfew was in effect. The German soldiers stopped them at the station and searched their belongings for anything of value. Rabbi Greenglass had hidden the money they received from the Rebbe in the spine of a *Tanya*. The Germans threw the book up in the air and flipped through the pages, but miraculously the money was not discovered. They returned the *Tanya* undamaged; today it remains in the possession of Rabbi Greenglass' family.



Rabbi Volf Greenglass. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

The Germans forced them to strip to their underwear. During their search the Nazis had found their tefillin, and asked its purpose. When they explained that it was for prayers, the soldiers told the students to put on the tefillin. "Show us how you pray," they taunted, while the young men shivered in their state of partial undress. After ten unbearable minutes, the Germans miraculously returned the tefillin and told the students that they could go.

The group had to sneak across the German-Soviet border of Poland, and then across the Soviet-Lithuanian border. For safety reasons, they split into small groups; each group experienced miracles of their own. Some bochurim regrouped in Bialystok, while others took a train to Baranowicz.

Rabbi Raichik, together with his small group, hired a wagon driver to take them to Zamita. From there, on December 8, they hired someone with a small boat to take them across the Bug River to the Soviet side of Poland. They could not enter the port, for fear of being caught, so they zigzagged down the riverbank until they came to a place safe enough to disembark.



Rabbi Mendel Tenenbaum. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

The group walked 100 yards or more in the freezing river and climbed a muddy, slippery hill to enter Soviet territory. Several people became ill from the expedition, and this was only the beginning of their journey.

Their travels took them to many towns and villages in the Soviet Union. They passed through, among other places, Lida, Ashmyany (Ushmina), Slonim, and Glubokoe. Originally they wanted to cross the border to Lithuania near Ashmyany, but they were told of heavy patrols in that area. They therefore traveled to Pastavy and from there to Hoducziski. On January 1 they crossed the border to Švenčionys, Lithuania.

Rabbi Greenglass recalled that before leaving Otwock they had made one last visit to the Rebbe's empty home. There they found olive oil with which to light the menorah when Chanukah would come. He carried the oil on their journey, and during one stop they lit the menorah with many other refugees, despite the tremendous danger. "The simcha of all the people was abundant," he would say.

During their travels, many people assisted them with money, food and lodging. One was Rabbi Yitzchak Mendelbaum of Glubokie, who wanted to join them in their journey, but opted to stay because of his responsibility to provide for the spiritual needs of the locals.

Rabbi Raichik and his friend Rabbi Mendel Tenenbaum hired a guide to take them through the forest into Lithuania. At one point Rabbi Raichik got lost, and kept calling "Mendel, Mendel!" Eventually they found each other. It was

so dark, so cold, and the snow so deep that while he was searching for the group, he lost his boots and had to walk without them. Several of his toes became frostbitten, and for the rest of his life Rabbi Raichik suffered from complications of frostbite. When he arrived in Vilna he was sick and in pain, yet, Rabbi Mordechai Bryski recalled, he seemed only worried about everyone else's needs.

Rabbi Raichik's report to the Rebbe Rayatz describing the students' escape to Vilna.

Rabbi Greenglass said that his group, once inside Lithuania, took refuge in an inn to escape the frigid weather. As they huddled in a corner trying to get warm, a group of Lithuanian soldiers sat around toasting their New Year. One soldier noticed them and quietly warned, "Students, what are you doing here? These soldiers are on border patrol!"

The group left immediately and hired someone to take them to Kaunas, Lithuania.

With great emotion, Rabbi Garfinkel recalled that in Lithuania he was welcomed with open arms whenever he knocked on the door of a Jewish home. Notwithstanding their own destitution, when the locals saw a yeshivah student, they would share their last bit of food and give up their own beds.

Life in Vilna

After Rabbi Raichik's arrival in Vilna, he wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz about his travels and challenges. At that time the Rebbe had already escaped from Poland and was in Riga, Latvia, waiting to depart for the United States:

> *With this I can notify the Rebbe about the great kindness that Hashem did for me. After much tribulation and great difficulty, I returned to Tomchei Tmimim here [in Vilna], the night of the 29th of Teves (January 10, 1940)...*
>
> *Hashem should give me the strength that I be a tomim [Chabad yeshivah student], like I was meant to be, and I should be successful in learning Nigleh [the Talmud and Jewish law] and Chassidus. There should be no obstacles keeping me from being involved in Torah and avodah.*
>
> *I should hear good tidings from my father [a euphemism for the Rebbe] together with the entire Jewish nation.*

In Vilna, the yeshivah was located in a Lubavitch shul known as "Aptov's Kloyz," and was under the guidance of Rabbi Yitzchok Ushpol. Rabbi Hirsch Kotlarsky managed the finances.



The Lubavitch Yeshivah in Vilna. Rabbi Raichik is front row, twelfth from left.

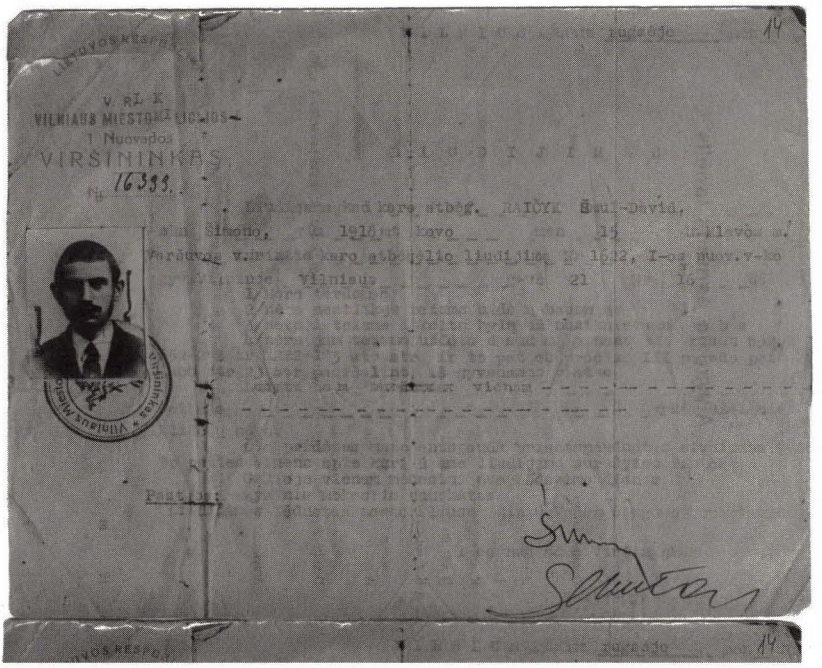
Travel within the Baltic states was still possible. Rabbi Yehoshua Isaac Baruch, a teacher and mashpia of the Chabad community in Kaunas, went to see the Rebbe Rayatz in Riga. The Rebbe asked him to serve as the mashpia in the Vilna yeshivah. Rabbi Yehoshua Isaac began to cry, telling the Rebbe that he was not fit for such a role, but the Rebbe overrode his objections.

Reb Yehoshua Isaac would tell his students that before he departed, the Rebbe gave him a message to relay to all of the chassidim: "The ocean is not one that divides us, but one that unites us. Everyone should strengthen themselves with *emunah* and *hiskashrus* as it used to be."

The Rebbe wished him well and said, "We will meet again with Moshiach." The message was clear. He would have to accustom himself to live without the Rebbe's presence until the coming of Moshiach.

Compared to Poland, where there was open hostility toward Jews, Vilna seemed like paradise. They could walk in the street without fear of ridicule or violence by the local populace, and there was no food shortage or rampant poverty.

"Thank G-d, we found many bochurim from Otwock here [in Vilna]," Rabbi



Rabbi Raichik's certificate of residency in Vilna.

Raichik wrote to the Rebbe. "The yeshivah is settled and organized materially and spiritually.... It is our hope that, with time, the yeshivah will be at the level that it was in Otwock, at the standard that it is supposed to be. Hashem should bless us that Tomchei Tmimim should continue until Moshiach comes."

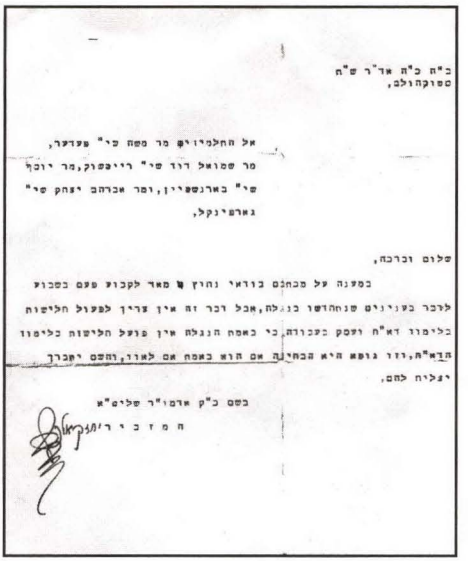
During their time in Vilna, the Rebbe Rayatz wrote to the students (Teves 20, 5700 [January 1, 1940]), encouraging them to adhere to their study schedule and not to become distracted or disheartened by the war.

The Rebbe continued, "The students should continue to dress in their normal weekday and Shabbos clothing. Do not forgo your customs. Let us unite together in the path established by the founder of Tomchei Tmimim [the fifth Chabad Rebbe, known as the Rebbe Rashab]. My hope is that my request in this letter will be accepted with your great love and connection to me.... I want to know in detail how each of the students is doing." (*Igros Kodesh Admor Maharayatz*, vol. 5, p. 14)

The students did their best to follow the Rebbe's directive. However, when they learned that their families in Poland were in dire circumstances, they found

it difficult to concentrate. They sent food packages home as often as they could, and because it was easier for a Lithuanian citizen to ship packages, Reb Yehoshua Isaac would go to the post office for them.

Rabbi Raichik reported to the Rebbe about the influence the Lubavitch students were having on other yeshivah students in Vilna. "One can see the effect the yeshivah has on the other yeshivahs," he wrote. "A new world has opened up for some students in other yeshivahs, who come nightly to learn Chassidus. On Shabbos, when we review Chassidus, there is a large crowd."



The Rebbe Rayatz's letter to the bochurim in Vilna (see p. 322).

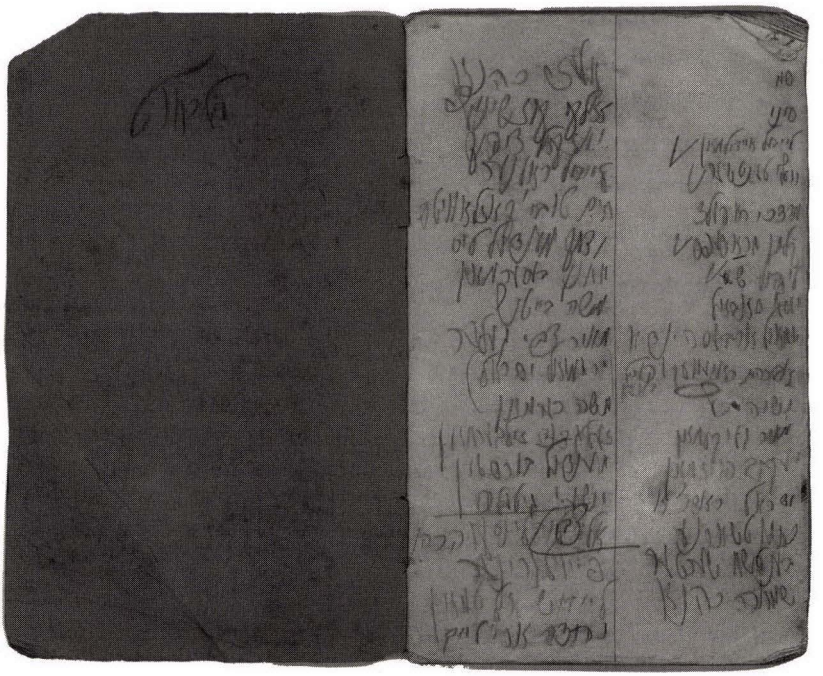
Rabbi Ushpol, along with Rabbis Shmuel Zalmanoff and Moshe Leib Rodstein, left for America in the winter of 1940. The yeshivah was then run by senior students, including Rabbis Yosef Rodal, Yosef Wineberg, Yitzchok Hendel, Leib Kramer, and Hershel Kotlarsky.

In Stockholm, en route to the United States, the Rebbe sent a letter to Rabbis Raichik, Yosef Bornstein, Moshe Feder, and Garfinkel, instructing them to orally review their *chiddushim* (innovative teachings) in Gemara once a week. They were to take care, however, that this practice not detract from their studies in Chassidus.

"I still remember the *pilpul* your father said in Vilna," Rabbi Feder told Rabbi Raichik's son Shimon three decades later.

Even aboard the *SS Drottningholm* bound for America, the Rebbe continued to write to the students (Adar I 5700 [March 1940]):

> *I am traveling with the hope that the students, especially the older students, will take upon themselves the responsibility of running the yeshivah, the learning of Gemara, Chassidus, davening, and farbrengens. The yeshivah*



A list of the students Rabbi Raichik wanted to persuade to leave Poland and come to Vilna.

> *should be run in the spirit of the yeshivah in Otwock.... The older students should run the yeshivah physically and spiritually, and make sure everything is proper. They should write me weekly reports, via airmail.*

"Write to them!"

For months after the war began, the Rebbe urged his students in Vilna to write to fellow students in Poland, telling them of the imperative to leave immediately for Vilna. A review of the Rebbe's own correspondence from the period shows the great effort he made to save and smuggle across the border anyone possible, despite the lack of financial resources.

In one letter he wrote:

> *Surely you are writing to your brothers [fellow students] who remain in other places that they should come quickly to Vilna. Nothing should hold them back in Poland. You should strengthen their trust in Hashem that He will help them. They will make the journey successfully.... Send me exact accounts of those to whom you wrote. Keep on writing to encourage them, because time is of the essence.*

In another letter (3 Adar I), the Rebbe pressed:

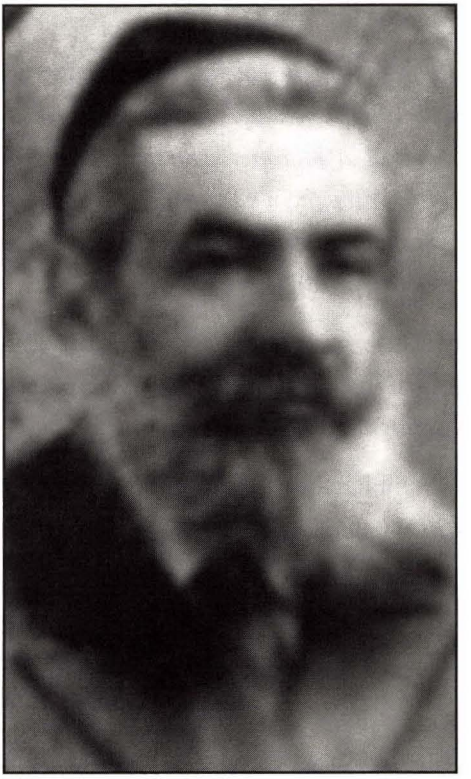
> *Each student should try to search for and find the students whose addresses are unknown. They should speak to those who are hesitating to come, whatever their reasons may be. They should have mercy on their souls and stand strong against anything that is holding them back. This also needs to be stressed to those who study at smaller yeshivahs like Chelm and Lodz. (Igros Kodesh Admor Maharayatz, vol. 5, p. 26)*

Before leaving to the United States, the Rashag visited the yeshivah in Vilna and strongly demanded, again, in the name of the Rebbe, that the students send letters to everyone they knew in Poland, urging them to leave for Vilna at once.

Rabbi Yosef Wineberg, together with Rabbi Raichik, began sending letters to the bochurim in Poland, signing them "Yossel Raichik" or "Shmuel Wineberg" as a safety precaution. They used these pseudonyms in their telegrams and letters to the Rebbe in New York as well.

In one letter they reported on the progress of the campaign to bring students to Vilna:

> *I wrote letters to the students Yitzchak Noach Lieberman, Zalman Feivel Blizinsky, Yaakov Leib Markovitz, and the Goldberg brothers.*
>
> *From Noach Yitzchak I received a response stating that he is healthy. Since I wrote to him in a disguised manner, he didn't understand exactly what I was referring to, so I wrote to him once again more explicitly.*
>
> *At the [Lithuanian] border [village] of Ushmina are the students Shlomo Moshe Eisenberg, Yosef Sabol, Yaakov Friedman, Benzion Schechter, and Meir Glucksman. We already sent them money.*
>
> *In Lida [Russia], there are the students Leibel Kramer and Nachman Kranenberg.*
>
> *Chaim Tuvia Kaslavich is in the [Lithuanian] city of Švenčionys.*
>
> *Also, the student Meir Hendel traveled to the Russian border. [Meir Hendel was unsuccessful in crossing the border; he returned to the city of Radom and opened a Lubavitcher yeshivah. Tragically, he was killed during the liquidation of the ghetto of Radom.]*



Rabbi Hershel Gurary. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

We also received a letter from Rabbi Yehuda Eber in which he notified us that Shmuel Arbis and Notte Mandelnuch are traveling to the Russian border.

G-d should help that all arrive peacefully without any obstacles.

The letter continued in this tone, even suggesting that one of them cross the border to assist the other students in escaping to Vilna.

One issue that lay heavily on Rabbi Raichik's mind, and about which he wrote personally to the Rebbe, was the expenses of the bochurim escaping Poland. Previously the Rebbe had given each student 100 to 150 zlotys to help them escape, but the Rebbe was no longer nearby to assist.

The Rebbe's response was sent from Stockholm to Riga, and addressed to his personal aide, Reb Chatche Feigin, who back in Otwock had been a part of the administration of the yeshivah. Reb Chatche typed up the letter and sent it on to Vilna.

In the first part of the letter the Rebbe acknowledged Rabbi Raichik's arrival in the yeshivah, and blessed him in his learning and spiritual growth.

At the bottom of the letter Reb Chatche added (see p. 323):

> *I received the answer to your letters from the Rebbe, [who is] in Stockholm. Your letter I did not see, but it's clear that you wrote an additional letter, for in another paragraph the Rebbe addresses this response specifically to you:*
>
> *You should inform the students to contact Reb Tzvi [Hershel] concerning their expenses. They should not approach him with demands. This should*



A group of students in the Vilna Lubavitch Yeshivah during WWII with their teachers (sitting center, from left) Rabbis Ushpol, Rodstein, and Zalmanoff. Rabbi Raichik is in the third row, extreme left. *Courtesy of Rabbi Ushpol archive*

> *be done discreetly and not publicized. I wrote to him about this, and there's a possibility that he will be able to help them.*

One student who was encouraged to leave Poland, Shlomo Hochler, received a postcard from Rabbi Kotlarsky: "Our father [the Rebbe] wants you to come. Nothing should hold you back. For expenses, go to Hershel Gurary." He followed the Rebbe's advice. Hershel Gurary sent him to his brother-in-law, who gave him the money to escape.

All those who fled Poland placed their fate in the hands of strangers, who could easily give them up to the police. They were frequently abandoned halfway to their destination, not knowing where they were or which direction to head in. It took time to find trustworthy people with whom to cross the border.

Often the students on the Russian side notified the students in Vilna that they were coming, and requested that someone wait for them in order to pay for the journey. This was done to ensure that they would actually be delivered to their destination, and not robbed or abandoned.



Rabbi Herschel Kotlarsky. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbi Raichik was once caught by the Lithuanian border patrol while waiting for bochurim who were coming over, and was subsequently imprisoned for two days. Whenever anyone asked him what happened while he was imprisoned, his answer was always *"gornisht"* ("nothing").

The last students to cross the border were Rabbi Bukiet, Rabbi Kramer, Shlomo Hochler, and Moshe Lederhandler. They crossed the border on Pesach Sheni, and Rabbi Raichik was waiting to pay their guide.

The guide demanded an exorbitant sum of money. Rabbi Raichik told her, "If you won't agree to the price, just take the merchandise back!" He knew full well that she would not.

During that period he received a postcard from his sister back in his hometown. She described how the family had tried to run away from the invading Germans. They were spotted, however, and the Germans began to bomb the roads. Their mother was killed and, realizing that they had nowhere to run to, the family returned home.

Under Communist Rule

The yeshivah in Vilna functioned normally until just after Shavuos 5700 (June 15, 1940), when the Soviets marched into Lithuania and annexed it. Immediately the situation changed. Food became scarce; basic commodities were hard to find; and people, frightened of the Communists, began to flee.

Rabbi Hendel related that when the Soviet troops occupied Vilna, he advised

the students to purchase nonperishable items such as light bulbs and soap. They stored the items in the shul. When necessary, they would sell them on the black market. This kept the students financially secure during the remainder of their stay in Vilna.



Rabbi Yitzchak Hendel. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Many consulates closed after the Soviets annexed Lithuania, and moved to Moscow instead. A scarce few kept their offices open, one being the Japanese consulate in Kaunas. The Japanese vice-consul, Chiune Sugihara, had arrived two months into the war. He had originally been assigned to be a diplomat in Moscow, but the Soviets had refused to admit him into the country, and so he remained in Lithuania, where he would eventually save some 6,000 Jews by issuing visas to almost anyone who asked.

"That Sugihara was there didn't make sense," Rabbi Raichik would say. "Here you see how Hashem planted the seeds. He was there to save many Jews."

The Japanese visas were temporary travel visas, requiring the refugees to have a final destination outside Japan. Two Dutch students from the Mir Yeshivah learned that Curaçao, a Dutch-controlled island, allowed people in without a visa.

While the Chabad students debated what to do, Rabbi Raichik decided to collect more information. As he later related to Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, he stood in a corner of an official city building for two days and pretended that he was completely clueless about what was going on around him. After a while, people



The Japanese vice-consul to Lithuania, Chiune Sugihara

assumed that he didn't understand what they were talking about, and began speaking openly in front of him. In this way he learned how to proceed in leaving the country, and relayed the information to his companions.

The plan was to reach Curaçao via Japan. All they needed was proof of identity. While some had birth certificates or military documentation, many had escaped Poland with nothing. It was possible to obtain proof of identity by visiting the Polish government in exile, located in the British embassy, with two Polish citizens serving as witnesses. If their testimony was satisfactory, a document was issued that attested to the person's identity and citizenship. Some, like Rabbi Raichik, got documentation of identity and citizenship from the Lithuanian police.

The Japanese consulate also required proof of residency in Lithuania. One method the authorities used was to examine the official register of residents in each housing complex. Hundreds of Jews wrote their names on the rosters, far more than could have populated the complexes, and backdated the records.

When all of the students of the Chabad yeshivah had their identification papers, Rabbi Kramer became their "ambassador." Each document was stamped by the Dutch with the words "No Visa Required" to enter Curaçao. Then Mr. Sugihara gave temporary 60-day visas to travel through Japan to Curaçao.

Because of the Soviet occupation, the Japanese government wanted their branch in Lithuania to be shut down immediately. Mr. Sugihara defied the order and continued to approve transit visas for refugees, including some for those



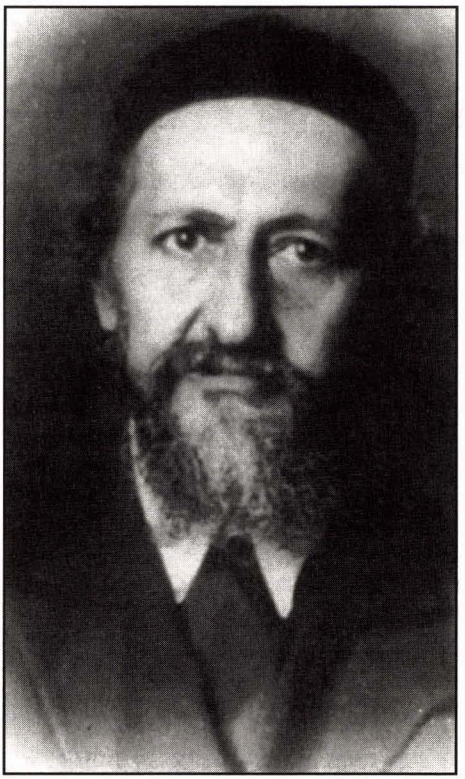
Students and teachers say goodbye to Rabbis Ushpol, Rodstein, and Zalmanoff who were going to the United States. Rabbi Raichik is second from the left.
Courtesy of Rabbi Ushpol archive

who did not have a final destination. This act of kindness saved thousands of lives, although Mr. Sugihara was severely reprimanded by his government for acting without authority, and his career was terminated.

The process of writing and signing each form by hand was time-consuming. Moshe Horowitz related that the Jews offered to make it easier for Mr. Sugihara by creating a ready-made form. He agreed, and they made one that required only the names of the people and a rubber stamp, which expedited the process substantially.

The plan was to take the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, where the students would set sail for Kobe, Japan. Their itinerary was approved by the Rebbe Rayatz; however, rabbinic leadership was divided about reaching Japan via the Soviet Union. Rabbi Raichik would painfully relate that the Litvishe rosh yeshivahs felt it was too dangerous to apply to the Soviets for exit visas, and advised their students to stay put.

Their fears were well-founded. In the winter of 1939, when Poland was split between German and Soviet control, many refugees escaped to Soviet-controlled areas, believing it was the safer option. The Soviets had promised that any Jew



Rabbi Zev ("Reb Velvel") Soloveitchik, the Brisker Rov. Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

wishing to someday return home to Poland would be able to do so after the war, as long as they registered with the Soviet police. The police collected the paperwork, captured the applicants, and sent tens of thousands to the punishing climate of Siberia.

Knowing this, the rabbis were left with a challenging decision as to whether to allow their students to apply for Soviet exit visas. The Rebbe Rayatz, the Amshinover Rebbe, and several others advised that everyone exit through Russia, but many rabbis disagreed. The older students of the Mir Yeshivah ignored the advice of their rabbis and obtained visas for the Mir students, roshei yeshivah and mashgichim.

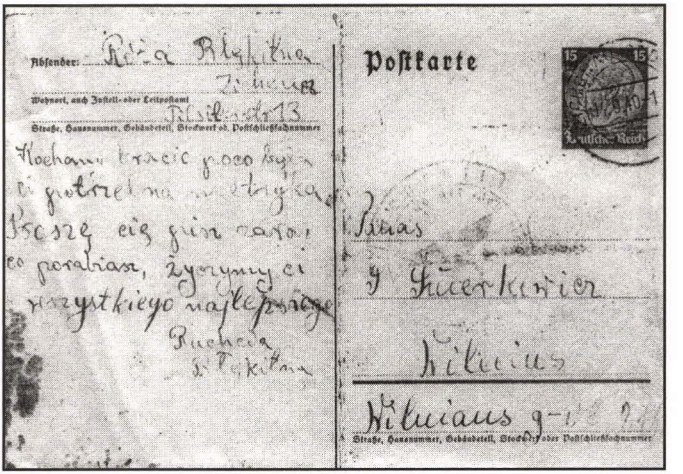
(At the war's end it was clear that many Jews sent to Siberia were saved from the Nazis, since following the war, the USSR permitted anyone with Polish papers to leave the country. Moreover, this also aided thousands of Russian Jewish families who were being persecuted by the Communists, and who left then on forged Polish passports.)

The exit visas were being issued by the NKVD, the infamous Soviet secret police. Applicants were required to spend hours waiting in the offices, and the students were loath to lose time they could spend studying. Therefore, it was arranged that one student would wait on line for all of them.

The officer in charge of the exit visas was a Jew named Rabinovitch. Rabbi Herschel Fox related that when Mr. Rabinovitch met the designated "waiter," he asked, "Where are the other Lubavitchers? Are they all sleeping?"

Many people obtained forged visas of varying levels of quality, which they

presented at Soviet offices. One visa officer was a Jew named Mr. Schlossberg. Mr. Horowitz related that once Mr. Schlossberg noticed a visa full of irregularities, but still let the person through, commenting, "Next time, use a better forgery!"


Postkarte

One of several postcards Rabbi Raichik's sister Sarah sent to him while he was in Vilna. She was later murdered by the Nazis, along with the rest of his immediate family.

Unfortunately, some students came after the Japanese consulate was closed, and without a visa to Japan they could not receive Soviet transit visas either. Most of them perished in the Holocaust.

Four Esrogim

The students made efforts throughout the summer to find esrogim. They sent telegrams to Rabbi Mordechai Dov Teleshevsky in Helsinki, Finland; Rabbi Yaakov Yisroel Zuber in Stockholm, Sweden; Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schmerling in Switzerland; and Rabbi Eliezer Karasik in Israel, then Palestine.

In total, the students obtained four esrogim. The plan was to divide Vilna into quadrants and share the esrogim among all the Jewish residents. The Brisker Rov approached the Lubavitch students and requested a private esrog for his individual use. The bochurim initially refused, but when he told them that the previous year, when he was in Warsaw, he had been sent one by the Rebbe Rayatz, they immediately relented and gave him one of the four precious esrogim.

Although they made great efforts, the students could not find any of the preferred hadasim, known as *meshulashim*. Rabbi Raichik would relate that Reb Yehoshua Isaac farbrenged the entire night of the first night of Sukkos, repeating over and over, *"Hadasim meshulashim, hadasim meshulashim."*

[PART III]

Asian Oasis

In January and February (Shevat) of 1941 the refugees began leaving Vilna for Japan. The students left with heavy hearts. Smuggling across the borders into Lithuania had been almost impossible. Every student who had made it across was a miracle. They were leaving their families behind. Their beloved teachers' whereabouts were unknown. The group was less than ten percent of the original yeshivah. Would they ever meet their fellow students again?

In addition, there was the fear of the Soviets. Chabad-Lubavitch followers, in defiance of the Communist regime, were at the forefront of spreading Judaism in the Soviet Union. At one point the Soviets had placed the Rebbe Rayatz in prison to be executed. Only with great miracles and under intense international pressure did they commute his sentence to exile, and eventually release him. He left the USSR immediately after his release and settled in Latvia, later moving to Poland.

This fear was shared by Chabad leaders in New York. In one letter to an official helping to secure the students' passage through the Soviet Union, the Rashag, who was heading the effort to assist Jews stranded in Europe, wrote, "Kindly note that we must be very careful when going to get the Russian visas, and that nothing should be said that these students have any connection with Rabbi Schneer-



Rabbi Raichik (left) with members of the committee appointed to oversee the yeshivah's financial affairs (from right): Rabbis Garfinkel, Borenstein, and Feder.

sohn or Chabad, for this information is not advisable for Russia and it would bring much harm to these students."

For this reason, before going to the USSR, Rabbi Raichik tore the letterhead off the letters from the Rebbe Rayatz that were in his possession.

To get to Vladivostok from Vilna would take them two weeks. There would be a stop in Minsk and a three- or four-day layover in Moscow.

Funds were scarce. The Soviet government charged around $500 per person for travel expenses, accommodations and a visa. Some of the money was supplied by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and the rest came from Chabad in New York.

During that period the Rebbe Rayatz was working to get American visas for many people, including the students. Some of the students were issued visas while they were already en route to Vladivostok. They were told that the visas would be waiting for them at the United States consulate in Moscow.

In Moscow the bochurim were treated like respected tourists by the Soviet government. They were placed in the finest hotels frequented by diplomats, and



Lubavitch bochurim arrive in Kobe, Japan. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

given escorted tours of the famous city. To their chagrin, they were also brought to shrines for Lenin, who had inflicted so much suffering on the Rebbe Rayatz and their fellow chassidim. They were offered meals in the fanciest restaurants, but requested only raw eggs, fresh fruit, hot water, and cans of sardines.

One morning, while waiting in line to purchase food for the remainder of their journey, they were escorted to the front of the bread line by the police. The Soviets did not want it to become known that their Communist "utopia" had such long lines for rationed food.

The bochurim made contact with the Lubavitcher community in Moscow, and did everything they could to aid them. Realizing that their every move was being watched, they visited the Marina Roscha shul without speaking to anyone, and unassumingly left siddurim and mezuzahs on the tables. At times they met people in the mikvah in order to speak privately. They knew that at any moment they could be charged with espionage and sent to Siberia.

When they went to the American consulate in Moscow, they were told their visas had been approved, but that the necessary paperwork had not yet arrived.

They were instructed to continue on to Kobe, where their visas to the United States would be waiting for them. Not wanting to remain in the USSR any longer than necessary, they left the city without the precious documents.

From Moscow they traveled to Vladivostok by train. At each stop on the long ride they asked for hot water and raw vegetables. They did not always manage to obtain food, but at the very least they had hot water.

After arriving in Vladivostok, before boarding the ship to Kobe, the refugees were carefully screened again by the Soviet authorities. One bochur had a small Sefer Torah, which was confiscated. Their boat to Kobe was escorted by the Soviet coast guard for some time, during which the students were on edge – their escape still remained uncertain.

When they finally reached international waters, the Soviets left them, and cheers of joy erupted on the ship.

Yeshivah in Kobe

Upon reaching Japan the refugees were astounded. The markets were brimming with food, especially fresh fruit and vegetables. Racks in the clothing stores were stocked with suits, jackets, and belts, rare commodities in the cities and villages they had escaped. The local dress and manner were completely foreign to them. Nonetheless, they were treated kindly by the local population.

The students first arrived in Nagasaki, and from there took a train to Kobe, which had an established Jewish community. There was a shul, a chazan and a shochet. The Kobe Jews took good care of the young men, striving to meet all their needs, including housing and food.

Initially the community put them up in a hotel, where the custom was to sleep on mats and eat while sitting on the floor. They later rented a suitable two-story building for the students. Another building served as the yeshivah.

On the upper floor of the yeshivah lived the Amshinover Rebbe, who had a close rapport with the Lubavitch students. In fact, the Rebbe Rayatz advised the students that if communications with him failed, they should ask the Amshinover Rebbe for advice. The Amshinover Rebbe had his own Sefer Torah, and would participate in the yeshivah's minyan. Rabbi Garfinkel recalled that if the Amshinover Rebbe wasn't feeling well enough to come down to the minyan, a

minyan would go upstairs to read the Torah for him.

The students began to host farbrengens for the general community. "For the 12th of Tammuz [the day the Rebbe Rayatz had been freed from exile in the USSR] we made a very big farbrengen," the students wrote in a report. "The Amshinover Rebbe spoke at the farbrengen. We were able to get many to attend. The yeshivah was full, and everyone wondered how such a small number of bochurim could organize such a large event."

The students were not accustomed to indigenous Asian foods, and had never cooked basic staples like rice. They took turns cooking in the kitchen, and it is told that for one meal a student calculated that one cup of raw rice per student would be adequate. Needless to say, the kitchen was inundated with a bounty of cooked rice.

The weather in Japan was hot and humid. With no refrigeration, food often spoiled. Once, a few students came down with a serious case of food poisoning. "It was on a Shabbos," Yossel Borenstein later recalled. "It was frightening. We were trying to save their lives, trying to flush their stomachs with water." Dr. Abba Seligson, a Lubavitcher known as the "doctor of the refugees," instructed the students what to do, and through his assistance, tragedy was averted.

According to some opinions, the halachic date line is located just east of meridian 125° east, which extends from the North Pole across the Arctic Ocean, Asia, Australia, the Indian Ocean, the Southern Ocean, and Antarctica to the South Pole. When the students traveled, they passed over the line, and Monday became Sunday. This raised the question of whether they should observe Shabbos and Yom Tov as they had in the place they came from, or according to the local calendar.

Rabbonim held differing views. The majority opinion, however, was that the days should be observed according to the local Japanese calendar. A minority opinion held that Shabbos should be observed on the local Sunday.

The Mir Yeshivah was advised to keep Shabbos on Sunday. Because of this, Rabbi Raichik said, even though the Lubavitch students kept Shabbos on the local Saturday, for several weeks he put on tefillin on Shabbos afternoon, because of the lack of clarity over which opinion should be followed. After being informed that most of the rabbonim disagreed with that opinion, he ended the practice.

Nonetheless, many refused to violate any biblical Shabbos prohibitions on the local Sunday.

The Mirrer mashgiach came to the Lubavitch yeshivah on the local Saturday to listen to the Shabbos Torah reading, even though his yeshivah kept Shabbos the next day.



Rabbi Yossel Borenstein. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

American Visa Issues

Several weeks after the students arrived in Kobe, the U.S. Department of State changed its policy, and the students' visas became null and void.

In a letter to Chabad in New York, the bochurim explained their situation: "Shimon Goldman went to be fingerprinted, and he had all his papers and a visa. Additionally, contact was made with Washington, D.C., about his case, and they promised him a visa within seven days. But a new policy change stated that no visas were to be issued to people with relatives in the occupied European countries. This is a new obstacle."

The Polish ambassador called a meeting with all the yeshivahs and rabbis, wanting to assist them with immigration to other allied countries. He promised 100 Canadian visas within a few weeks. He wanted a complete list of the students, and the number of individuals who would want to go to Canada, South Africa, and so forth.

Through much effort, some Lubavitch students managed to add their names to the Canada list, though it would be a long time until they would leave Asia.

Efforts to Save the Stranded

The students also worked tirelessly to obtain visas for those stranded in Riga



The Amshinover Rebbe (third from left) after a meeting with Japanese officials. *Courtesy of Yivo*

and Vilna. Among them were Reb Chatche Feigin, Reb Yehudah Eber, Reb Leib Sheinin, and their families. One of the families they were trying to save was comprised of thirteen individuals.

The message from their trapped teachers and friends was desperate and repeated: "Do everything you can to save us."

A formal committee had been established in Kobe to save rabbis and yeshivah students, but to the dismay of the Chabad students, those whom they were trying to save were not included in the committee's mission.

The students then petitioned Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi, a Lubavitch chassid who was serving as a rabbi in Shanghai, to do everything in his power to assist the stranded.

A delegation was formed to handle pressing immigration issues, including dealing with the students' visas to the United States, and with those stranded in Latvia and Lithuania.

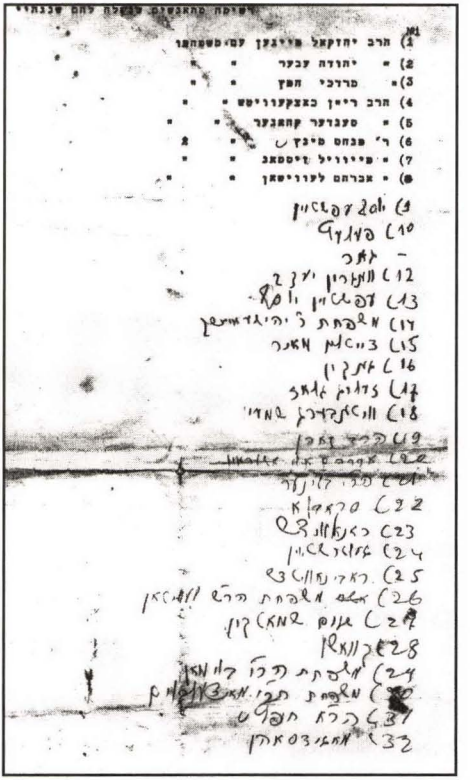
The students had lists of people who were trying to escape, but they needed to be traced to relevant addresses in Europe, a time-consuming process. Once visas were furnished, they began working to obtain permission from the Soviet travel bureau, Intourist, to allow them passage through the Soviet Union. However, these efforts collapsed when Germany entered into war with the Soviets.

"All our expense and efforts became worthless," the students wrote to Chabad's offices in New York. "G-d had different plans. He should protect and

save all of them from distress.... What should we do?"

With few local connections, the students had not had any established source of funds for their rescue activities. Instead, they turned to private individuals who gave them short-term loans. In the summer of 1941, via Rabbi Ashkenazi, they asked Chabad in New York for assistance repaying the loans.

The requested sum came as a shock to the Rashag. He voiced his surprise in a letter. In response, the students explained why they took the loans:



In Japan the students made a list of people they wanted to rescue from Europe.

> *It may have been a mistake on our part that we didn't inform you of our activities.... You write that "It is not proper to borrow money and then come to request payment." You have to understand our situation.*
>
> *There was no time to wait, because this was a question of saving people. By the time a letter or even a telegram would be written, sent, received, and responded to, time would be wasted...*
>
> *Those in Riga told us to ignore any expense and just try to save them. We had no doubt that you would agree to this. It was a matter of saving lives.... What should we have done? Sit and fast? Start writing letters? We already have enough experience to know that time is of the essence. If war had not broken out between Germany and Russia, everything would have ended properly.*
>
> *Surely you will forgive us for not informing you earlier of our activities. When it comes to saving lives, one must sometimes ignore the formalities.*

Shanghai

Mr. Sugihara's 60-day visas quickly expired. Leaders in the Kobe Jewish community arranged for 90-day extensions, but they expired too, and the Japanese wanted the refugees out.

The Japanese decided to send them to Shanghai, which was an international city where no visas were required. On Av 23, 5701 (August 16, 1941) the Rebbe Rayatz sent a telegram to the Jewish community in Kobe, begging them to make a last-ditch effort to convince the Japanese officials to delay evicting the students until visas to America were acquired. Some efforts were made, but to no avail.

That month the Japanese expelled the Jewish refugees from Kobe. After a four-day trip, the students arrived in Shanghai just a few hours before Shabbos. At the port they were warmly greeted by Rabbi Meir and Rebbetzin Kayla Ashkenazi.

The situation in Shanghai was quite different than in Kobe. Most of the city was divided into French, American, British, and Chinese quarters. Europeans had a stronger presence there, including 20,000 German Jews who had fled from the rising Nazi party.

The Jewish community supported two Sephardic shuls and one shul for the



The Lubavitch Yeshivah in Shanghai with Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi (center) and local philanthropists. Rabbi Raichik is sitting, third from right. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Russian Jews. Rabbi Ashkenazi served as rabbi for the Europeans. Shanghai had kosher food, shechitah, and other cornerstones of an established community.

The Ashkenazis were committed to aiding all the city's refugees, but they had a special fondness for the Lubavitchers in their care. The bochurim initially stayed in one of the Sephardic shuls, later moving to the Jewish community center in the American quarter. As soon as it was possible, they resumed their studies.

A month after their arrival, nine Chabad students, out of a group of approximately 100 refugees, were granted Canadian visas. It was decided that the oldest students would travel to Canada. Rabbi Hendel asked Rabbi Ashkenazi to assist with arrangements for their immediate departure.

Rabbi Ashkenazi was somewhat reluctant. It was just before Yom Kippur, and the older students were running the newly established yeshivah. A short while later, however, he called the bochurim and told them: "You won. The Rebbe telegraphed and told me to do everything in my power to help you leave."



Dr. Avrohom Abba Seligson, "doctor of refugees". Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

After the older students departed for Canada, Rabbis Garfinkel, Feder, Bornstein, and Raichik shouldered the responsibility of managing the yeshivah.

While in Shanghai, the students attempted to keep the same learning schedule they had in Otwock. According to their reports, they studied Kesubos, Bava Basra and Gittin. They also had a regular study schedule for the Chassidus of the Rebbe Rashab. Rabbi Ashkenazi would frequently deliver shiurim for them, and loaned them many seforim.

Summer Heat and Other Obstacles

The European students were unaccustomed to the oppressive heat and humidity of the Shanghai summer, and learning in such conditions was a challenge. Many students became ill from the heat. "The summer here is unbearably hot during the day and night," they wrote in a report. "Therefore it has been impossible to keep a regular study schedule during that time."

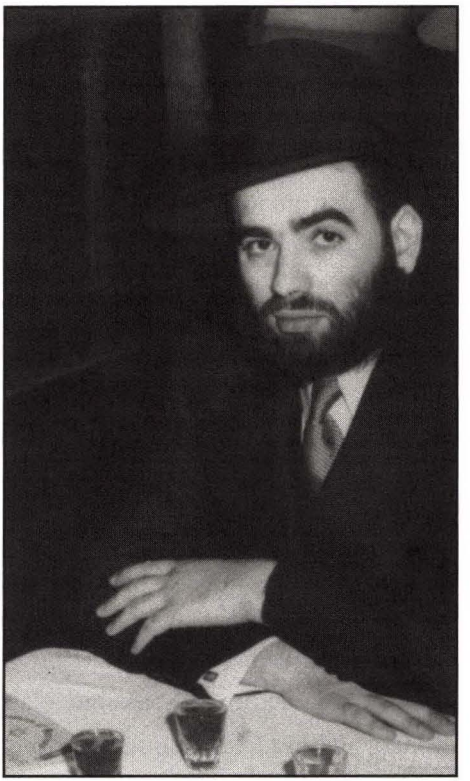
Dr. Abba Seligson, who had been forced to leave Kobe as well, davened every day in the yeshivah. Observing the toll the climate and the new diet had taken on the students, he did his best to treat their health issues.

The emotional strain of being a young teenager stranded in China was difficult. Many of the students had no idea how the war in Europe was affecting their families, or even if their loved ones were still alive.

Their environment also posed challenges to religious observance. Rabbi Ashkenazi had asked one of the community members to plant an esrog tree,

which provided the community with esrogim for years, until it was mysteriously cut down. Rabbi Fox related that before Sukkos, Rabbi Raichik searched far and wide for an esrog, but only found a fingered citron, known as a Buddha's hand. Whether it was suitable for use as an esrog was questionable, so the students used it without saying the berachah.

There were some consolations, however. The students benefited from Chinese innovations, such as the printing process called "photo-offset," which made reprinting texts much easier. One such press was donated to the Lubavitch yeshivah in Shanghai, and the students began a printing operation, which was maintained through donations.



Rabbi Shimon Goldman. *Courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Klein/Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbis Mordechai Bryski and Nochum Prager assisted in printing many seforim. The students also reprinted texts from the Rebbe Rayatz. Some copies were sent to other cities in China, such as Harbin and Tianjin. In Harbin, Avrohom Koifman reprinted them for local distribution.

In an effort to encourage the community members and the students of the other yeshivahs to study Chassidus, the bochurim organized farbrengens on 19 Kislev and 12 Tammuz in the largest shul in Shanghai. In 1942 the printing press was used to print mementos for the gatherings. At one they distributed copies of the *Tanya*, and for another, the Rebbe Rayatz's *Likkutei Dibburim*.

In late autumn of 1941 Rabbis Avrohom Garfinkel and Shmuel Moshe Lederhandler traveled to Tianjin to fundraise for the yeshivah. They had a very successful trip, and the community offered to host the yeshivah and cover their

expenses. In the meantime they gave some money to Rabbi Garfinkel, who departed back to Shanghai. Mr. Lederhandler remained in the city to iron out the details.

Unfortunately, during the train ride back to Shanghai, soldiers confiscated the money from Rabbi Garfinkel. Only after much pleading did they agree to return half the sum.

Buoyed by the generous offer of the Tianjin community, the Lubavitchers began preparing to relocate. On the day after the gathering of the 19th of Kislev, however, they learned of the attack two days earlier: the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, and America had entered the war.

The news came just as some semblance of stability was returning to their lives, and threw everything once more into chaos.

A New Quarter

After Pearl Harbor, the situation in Shanghai changed dramatically. Travel within China became impossible. Plans to move the yeshivah to Tianjin were dashed, and Mr. Lederhandler was trapped in the city for the remainder of the war.

"Although we were broken by the news [of Pearl Harbor], we strengthened ourselves [in our studies]," the students wrote in a report to the Rebbe Rayatz.

Toward the end of the winter they learned of a Japanese edict to create a ghetto in Shanghai for refugees from Germany and Poland. The students of the Lubavitch and Chachmei Lublin yeshivahs were ordered to move within 90 days. Shortly after Pesach the students moved to the ghetto, located in the Hongkew district, a poorer area with fewer Europeans.

During this period Shmuel Chanowitz, a student at the Lubavitch yeshivah, passed away at the age of 24 from health issues related to their stay in the city.

As a last resort, students of several yeshivahs shared a study space. The Lubavitchers explained in a letter: "Living quarters were very hard to find, and expenses were very great. Thus, we were forced to combine with Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin and with another small yeshivah in one building." Their study schedule then became even more difficult to maintain, and morale was low.

Word had been trickling in about the devastations in Europe. "The news and worry for our families broke us entirely," the students wrote. "Nevertheless we celebrated Purim and Pesach with an inner strength and belief that Hashem, who protected us until now, will protect us further from the birthpangs of Moshiach."

Throughout their ordeals they kept the directives and customs of Lubavitch yeshivah students. "We chose a student who ensured we kept the study schedule," they wrote, "and who organized study partners, the recitation of Chassidus, davening with our nusach and minhagim."

Around this time Rabbi Ashkenazi's health deteriorated. His ability to contribute to the yeshivah's daily routine became limited, yet he still came to farbreng as often as possible with the students.

While in China, two Chabad students married. Yosef Protovitz married a Shanghai Jewish girl of German background, and Pesach Rabinowitz married a Lithuanian immigrant.

Rabbi Raichik needed to meet with Rabbi Ashkenazi, who lived outside the ghetto, almost daily to discuss the affairs of the yeshivah, which required special permission and a pass.

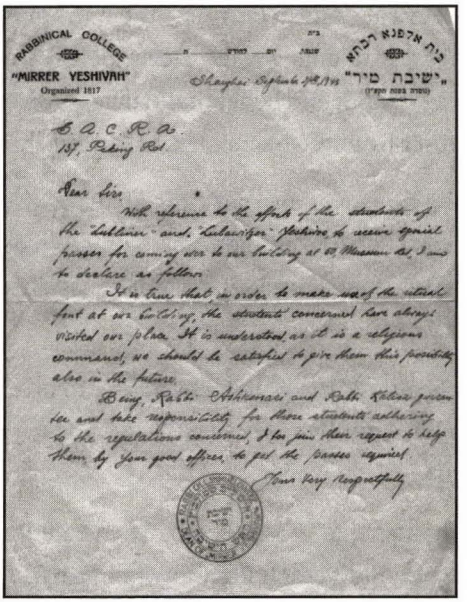
Rabbi Ashkenazi wrote to the officials of the new ghetto:

> *I, as Dean, therefore kindly request the permission of two members representing the Colleges of Lubavitse and Lublin, Rabbis Rajczyk and Zytman, to remain outside the designated area in order to help in leading the College, besides being a necessity for the welfare of the Jewish City in Shanghai.*

Getting a pass entailed visiting a Japanese government official named Goya. Short and heavyset, Goya did not appreciate the tall, fair-skinned Europeans. He had a unique way of "charging" for a transit pass. He would stand on a chair and slap the applicant in the face.

Rabbi Raichik seemed to receive this treatment with equanimity. Though unpleasant, he would say that the humiliation was not life-threatening, and was a small price to pay to keep the yeshivah financially viable.

At one point the Germans pressured their allies, the Japanese, to destroy the Jews under their control. The Japanese did not want to set up extermination camps, but someone proposed the idea of placing all the Jews on ships and aban-


RABBINICAL COLLEGE
"MIRRER YESHIVAH"
Organized 1817
ישיבת מיר

A letter from the Mir Rosh Yeshivah, Rabbi Chaim Leib Shmuelevitz, requesting permission to leave the ghetto in Shanghai.

doning them to die in the ocean.

When the Jewish community heard of the plan, they asked the Amshinover Rebbe to approach the military command. The high-ranking Japanese official curtly asked the Rebbe why the Germans had this deep hatred for the Jews. Without a pause, the Amshinover Rebbe answered, "They hate us because we are Orientals. They believe that all Orientals, including the Japanese, are inferior to them."

With that concise reply, the attitude of the Japanese officer immediately shifted, and the idea was ultimately abandoned.

Outreach

One day a letter arrived from Rabbi Greenglass, informing them that he had arrived safely in Canada along with the other eight students. He enclosed a copy of the Rebbe Rayatz's letter to the older students, which stated their responsibility to awaken the slumbering Jews in Canada and tasked each student to do his part. After receiving the letter in Shanghai, the students made a farbrengen and resolved anew to keep their study schedule. They decided that when they were sitting together with the other yeshivahs at the Shabbos meal, one of them would review Chassidus at the table.

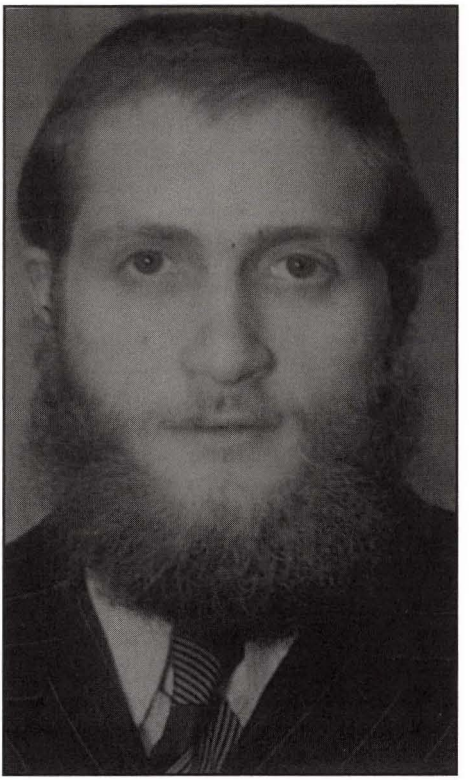
"The students from the other yeshivahs were moved to study Chassidus because of this," they reported to the Rebbe. "If it weren't for our financial hardships, which are greater than the other yeshivahs, many bochurim from other yeshivahs would have wanted to learn with us."

They also resolved to reach out to the Jewish community in Shanghai, and one of the older Lubavitch chassidim there, Rabbi Elya Liss, established a Talmud Torah that comprised hundreds of students, "to the extent that a yeshivah

was established and dozens of boys studied Gemara with Tosafos," they wrote.

Inspired by the Rebbe's words to their peers, the bochurim succeeded in enlivening Judaism in the city. Their activities "changed the attitude of the Jewish refugees already there, bringing them closer to Yiddishkeit," they wrote. "Many of them have become more observant."

The students created an organization to strengthen Judaism, calling it Machzikei HaDas. They encouraged Jewish store owners to close their stores on Shabbos and Yom Tov, and organized classes for young men in Chumash and Mishnayos. One of the students also gave a daily shiur in *Ein Yaakov* in one of the large shuls.



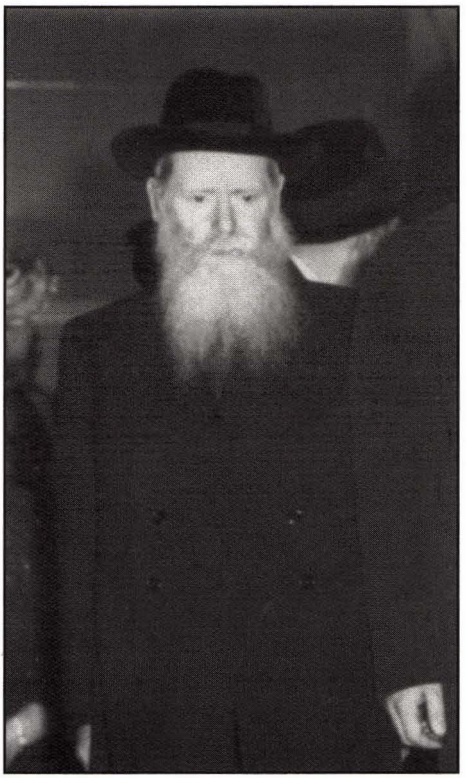
Rabbi Mordechai Bryski. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Together with the students of Yeshivah Chachmei Lublin, they studied one-on-one with various members of the Jewish community, enlivening Judaism in Shanghai.

Japanese Censorship

During their time in Japan and China, the Lubavitch students were virtually cut off from the Rebbe Rayatz. Communications, usually via telegram, were few and infrequent. Most telegrams came through Rabbi Zuber in Stockholm, Sweden.

Whenever they telegraphed, they did so in code. For example, the Rebbe was referred to as "Davidson." From the telegrams it is obvious how much the students yearned to hear about the wellbeing of the Rebbe and to receive his



Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi. *Courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Klein/Lubavitch Archives*

teachings.

In their report they described the pain of this disconnection:

We did not receive any letters from the Rebbe, and felt we were so far away from the Rebbe physically and spiritually. Then the older students left to Canada; we were a small group of young students without a mashpia, a madrich, elder chassidim, or anash [fellow Chabad chassidim] to awaken our spirit, to guide us and infuse us....

Thus, from time to time, our inner spirits became weaker and our souls became dry in this "dry and weary land" [Tehillim 63].

Leo Hanin, who lived for a time in Kobe and Shanghai, recalled a story of Japanese censorship. If a letter or cable was sent in Hebrew, a translation into English, French, or German would need to be enclosed. Once, he was called to the Kobe post office to decipher a telegram. It was written in English, but the words were Hebrew.

The cable read, "*Shishah talmidim miskasin b'tallis echad.* [Signed,] Rabbi Kalish."

He told the authorities that the words were referring to a Jewish law that allowed six people to pray under a single prayer shawl. The explanation satisfied the censor, and the cable was sent. However, Mr. Hanin was curious what the words had actually meant, so he approached the sender, the Amshinover Rebbe.

The Rebbe seemed puzzled that he had not understood the deeper meaning.

"Six persons can travel with one visa," he explained.

It was a telegram to someone in Lithuania, trying to explain that while it



The Talmud Torah established by the Lubavitch bochurim in Shanghai, 5706 (1946).
Courtesy of Agudas Chasidei Chabad Library

would take time to arrange individual visas for all the people seeking refuge, the process could be expedited if several families would apply to the consul as one family.

Sustenance

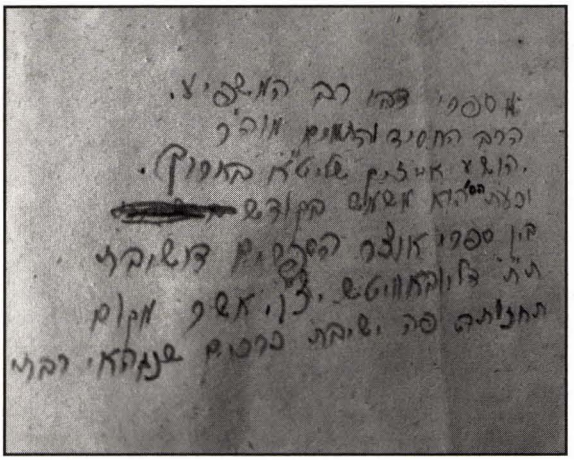
Of all the hardships the Lubavitchers endured during their time in Shanghai, the problems with food were perhaps the most difficult.

Shortly after the students' arrival, like many refugees, their lips began swelling and their tongues blistered. Dr. Seligson diagnosed them with beriberi, a thiamine deficiency caused by their meager diet of mostly white rice. He ordered them to add raw yeast to their diets. It didn't taste good, but their symptoms disappeared in short order.

There were other problems as well. The flour was infested with worms and needed to be sifted numerous times. After breads or cakes were baked, they were sliced into small pieces to be reexamined.

From time to time, money for all the yeshivah students would arrive from New York, via Switzerland, to Rabbi Ashkenazi. From those funds the Lubavitch Yeshivah did not receive as much as the other yeshivahs, which resulted in a critical shortage of food.

Despite the situation, Rabbi Raichik tried to calm the younger students.



The inscription on a sefer the bochurim used in Shanghai reads: "From the library of the mashpiah, chassid, rabbi, and student of the Chabad yeshivah (tomim)*, our dear Rabbi Yehoshua Isaac, may he live long, Baruch. Currently, this sefer is being used among the holy volumes in the library of Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch that is currently in a suburb [the ghetto] of greater Shanghai."*

"Mottel, sit and learn, I will take care of you," Mordechai Lurie recalled Rabbi Raichik telling him.

At first Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz, rosh yeshivah of the Mir Yeshivah, graciously offered to absorb the Lubavitchers. He planned to tell his committee that he had 30 more students who required additional stipends.

However, the students decided that they did not have the authority to dismantle the Rebbe's yeshivah. The study schedules of the two schools were also quite different. For these reasons they decided to maintain the Lubavitch Yeshivah and hope for better days.

Additional funding came from Rabbi Ashkenazi. He would keep detailed records of monies collected and how they were dispersed. This became the preferred channel for the local Jewish community to contribute to the yeshivah.

One donor was Mr. Aryeh Leib Braluvsky, a Russian expat. Rabbi Raichik became very close to both Mr. Braluvsky and his son. Rabbi Bryski recalled that once, after Mr. Braluvsky donated funds to the yeshivah, they had enough money to cook a soup. That day was one of celebration.

Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet recalled that one of the local community members came to Rabbi Ashkenazi and told him: "I had a dream where an honorable-looking rabbi asked me, 'Why are you not taking care of my children?'"

Rabbi Ashkenazi showed him a photograph of the Rebbe Rayatz and asked, "Was this the man in your dream?"

The man confirmed that it was, and he too became a supporter of the yeshivah.

Rabbi Shmuelevitz of the Mir Yeshivah still concerned himself with the welfare of the Chabad students. He arranged for two of his students to meet the Lubavitchers in the early morning hours in order to give them basic provisions.

Rabbi Bukiet was one student assigned to pick up rice and onions from the Mir commissary. Many years later, in Chicago, Illinois, Rabbi Bukiet encountered the Mir student who would meet him with sacks of food. They hugged and reminisced about their shared experience as students in Shanghai.



Ledger for income and expenses from the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Shanghai.

War in Shanghai

After Pesach of 5705 (1945) war came to Shanghai. Bomb shelters were constructed to protect the population from American air raids. For the students' safety, a makeshift shelter was created in the basement of their building.

The yeshivah was near many military factories targeted by the American bombers. The ghetto buildings were weak, and the impact of the bombs caused the structures to collapse. The students were forced to leave the yeshivah study hall and search for shelter.

Daily, innocent people were being killed in the streets, including a number of Jews. At one point the local Chinese were evacuated from the city, but the foreigners in the ghetto were forced to remain.

Despite these difficulties, the students still held a 12 Tammuz farbrengen at the yeshivah, and in the local shul the following day. They reviewed Chassidus and prayed that they would be saved from the war and live in peace.



Lubavitch bochurim farbreng with students of the other yeshivahs. Rabbi Raichik is in the third row, extreme left.

On August 14, after atom bombs had decimated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese agreed to surrender. For the students, their years of hunger, impermanence, and doubt were coming to a close.

In their report they described hearing the good news:

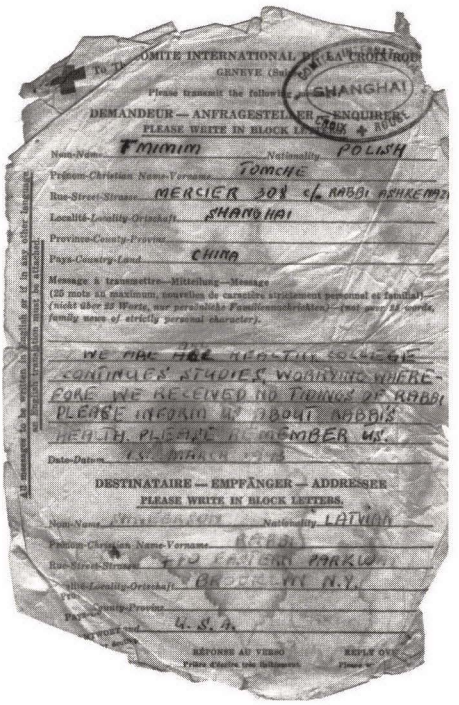
> *On the first day of Elul, we held a meeting to determine how to return to our regular study schedule. We decided to find a building far from the munitions factories but close to a shelter, so that when we would hear the sirens we could run to the shelter.*
>
> *However, that night, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim, we heard the news that the war was ending.*

When the Japanese were defeated, the Americans took over Shanghai. The refugees were delighted to find Jews among the soldiers, and were astounded when some of them even spoke Yiddish.

Arrangements were made for Moshe Shmuel Lederhandler, who had been stranded in Tianjin, to rejoin the group.

Yearning to Reunite

Throughout their time in the Far East the students suffered due to their separation from the Rebbe. Most of the letters they sent to North America never reached their destinations, and in their isolation they worried about the Rebbe's health and about the health and wellbeing of their fellow students in Canada.



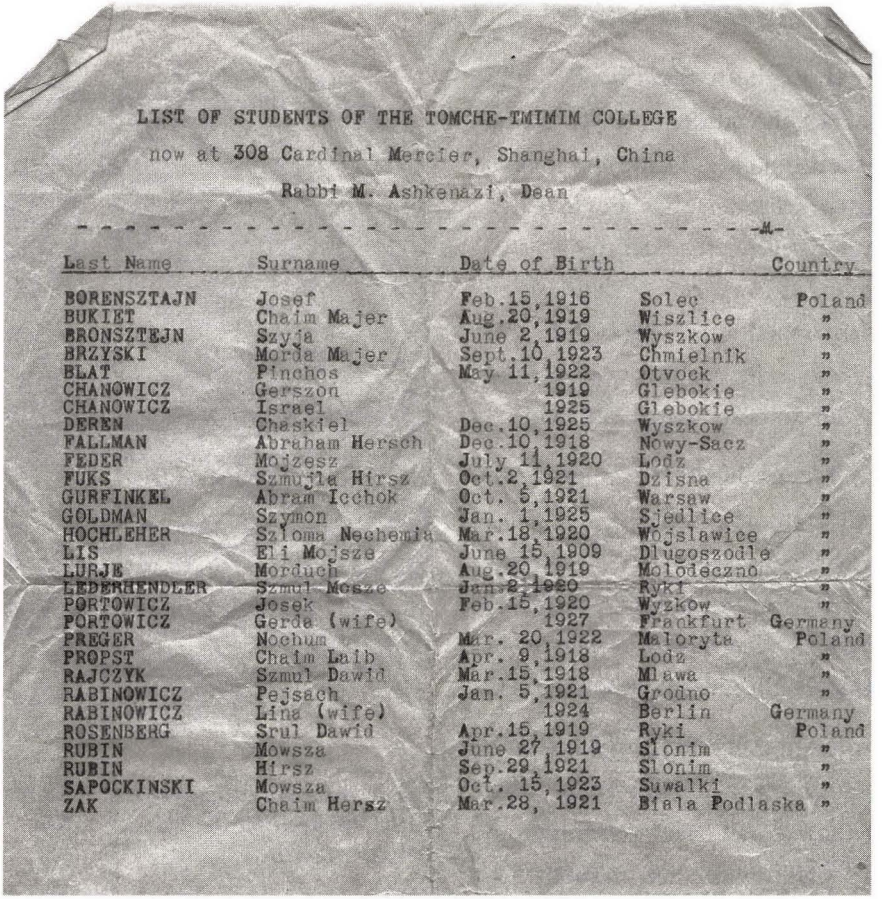
The students pleaded for news from the Rebbe in a telegram sent via the Red Cross to New York, 5703 (1943).

"We are healthy[.] college continues studies," read a telegram from Nissan 5703 (1943) that was sent via the Red Cross. "Worrying [why] we received no tidings from rabbi's health. Please remember us."

In another telegram to the nine bochurim who had arrived in Canada, they wrote: "Have you forgotten us[?] Cable immediately about Admur Dawidsohn ["The Rebbe, son of David," referring to the Rebbe Rayatz]. Write instantly everything detailed[.] Send [the] akriowakdiszo [*Hakeriah V'Hakedushah* periodical] Mamorim [and] Sichos[.] We [are] well. [signed] the Tmimim[.]"

Shortly after the liberation of Shanghai the students wrote several reports to the Rebbe Rayatz. When they did not hear back, they wrote again a month later:

> *We have sent many letters to the Rebbe telling him of our situation here, about the past four years up to the present. As we have not received any information until now, we are hoping any moment to receive information about the Rebbe, the Rebbe's family, the Chabad students, and the community's wellbeing.*
>
> *We are hoping and waiting for the salvation from Hashem to take us out of*



LIST OF STUDENTS OF THE TOMCHE-TMIMIM COLLEGE

now at 308 Cardinal Mercier, Shanghai, China

Rabbi M. Ashkenazi, Dean

-M-

Last Name	Surname	Date of Birth		Country
BORENSZTAJN	Josef	Feb.15,1916	Solec	Poland
BUKIET	Chaim Majer	Aug.20,1919	Wiszlice	"
BRONSZTEJN	Szyja	June 2,1919	Wyszkow	"
BRZYSKI	Morda Majer	Sept.10,1923	Chmielnik	"
BLAT	Pinchos	May 11,1922	Otvock	"
CHANOWICZ	Gerszon	1919	Glebokie	"
CHANOWICZ	Israel	1925	Glebokie	"
DEREN	Chaskiel	Dec.10,1925	Wyszkow	"
FALLMAN	Abraham Hersch	Dec.10,1918	Nowy-Sacz	"
FEDER	Mojzesz	July 11,1920	Lodz	"
FUKS	Szmujla Hirsz	Oct.2,1921	Dzisna	"
GURFINKEL	Abram Icchok	Oct. 5,1921	Warsaw	"
GOLDMAN	Szymon	Jan. 1,1925	Sjedlice	"
HOCHLEHER	Szloma Nechemia	Mar.18,1920	Wojslawice	"
LIS	Eli Mojsze	June 15,1909	Dlugoszodle	"
LURJE	Morduch	Aug.20,1919	Molodeczno	"
LEDERHENDLER	Szmul Mesze	Jan.2,1920	Ryki	"
PORTOWICZ	Josek	Feb.15,1920	Wyzkow	"
PORTOWICZ	Gerda (wife)	1927	Frankfurt	Germany
PREGER	Nochum	Mar. 20,1922	Maloryta	Poland
PROPST	Chaim Laib	Apr. 9,1918	Lodz	"
RAJCZYK	Szmul Dawid	Mar.15,1918	Mlawa	"
RABINOWICZ	Pejsach	Jan. 5,1921	Grodno	"
RABINOWICZ	Lina (wife)	1924	Berlin	Germany
ROSENBERG	Srul Dawid	Apr.15,1919	Ryki	Poland
RUBIN	Mowsza	June 27,1919	Slonim	"
RUBIN	Hirsz	Sep.29,1921	Slonim	"
SAPOCKINSKI	Mowsza	Oct. 15,1923	Suwalki	"
ZAK	Chaim Hersz	Mar.28, 1921	Biala Podlaska	"

the Shanghai exile and bring us to the place we want to be, next to the Rebbe, to prepare for the arrival of Moshiach.

All 26 of us are, thank G-d, well...

We sent a telegram through Rabbi Zuber. We cannot apply here for visas, as the American Consul as of yet has not received applications from New York. Our request is, if possible, to prepare all the applications in America and do everything necessary for us before we apply for the visas here.

We do not know whether our previous telegram reached America, so we telegraphed again. Now we have a question: should we apply from Shanghai or another city?... There are many refugees here wanting to leave to America. Daily there is news that affidavits are being issued locally; thus perhaps Shanghai is the place to apply.



Bochurim of the yeshivah in Shanghai, 5706 (1946). Rabbi Raichik is sitting, second from left. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

> *However, it all depends on the consul; if he is not in a good mood, he will decline the request. In the cities of Tianjin or Yokohama the consul has given many visas. Perhaps there the consul would be more favorably disposed to us.*
>
> *[In spite of the above,] it is now dangerous to travel to Tianjin, and we feel that ultimately we will have to apply here in Shanghai.*

They finally did receive news in September, and wrote once more on Tishrei 25, 5706 (October 2, 1945), to express their joy:

> *We are very happy to have contact with the Rebbe and [to hear] that the Rebbe is working to obtain visas so we can be close to the Rebbe. We are delighted to hear of the wellbeing of the Rebbe and the chassidim.*
>
> *With prayers to Hashem that all the obstacles be removed and the will of the Rebbe be fulfilled.... We should be able to be close to the Rebbe, throw ourselves into the work the Rebbe will assign us, and prepare ourselves for the coming of Moshiach soon.*


Six-Year Flight From Persecution Ends

JOURNEY ENDING FOR JEWISH SCHOLARS — Rabbi Baruch Shapiro (right) of Seattle at King St. Station welcomes Rabbi Joseph Weinberg, leader of a group of nine Jewish religious scholars enrolled in the rabbanical college of Lubavitz. Completing a hegira halfway around the world after their exodus from Poland, the students, six of whom are now rabbis, came to the United States last Thursday from Shanghai after six years of flight. (Story on Page 8.) —(Post-Intelligencer Photo.)

At the Rebbe Rayatz's request, some of the bochurim visited Seattle, Washington, after arriving in San Francisco. Rabbi Raichik is fourth from right. Also seen on the right, shaking hands, is Rabbi Baruch Shapiro, rabbi of Congregation Bikur Cholim Machzikay Hadath, and Rabbi Yosef Wineberg.

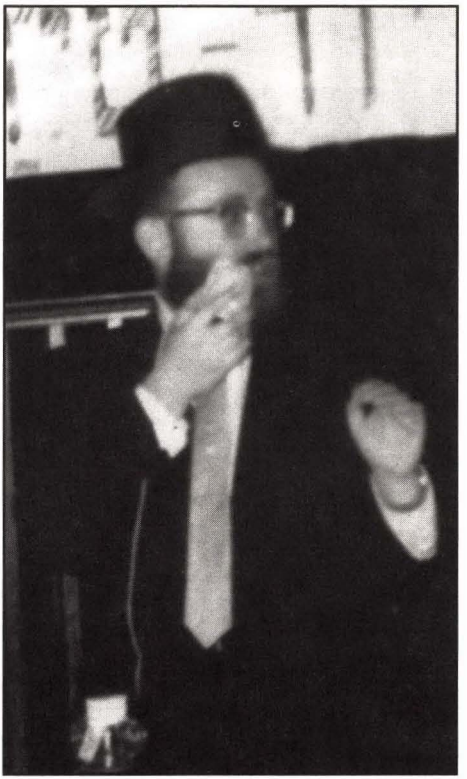
> *On the day that we received this news, we wished each other mazal tov, and the joy was obvious that we made contact with the Rebbe.... The joy poured over on Motzaei Yom Kippur and Simchas Torah.*

The first letter they received from the Rebbe Rayatz himself was dated Kislev 2, 5706 (1945). In it he acknowledged their letters and assured them that their visas were coming.

The months dragged on, however, and their situation became more and more difficult. On December 16 the students sent a telegram to the Rashag:

> *Our situation requires soonest departure[.] Impossible [to] stay here lon-*

ger[.] Please do utmost [to] get quickly your [sic] visas stop[.] Obviously with strong efforts can get Canadian visas quickly[.] Therefore endeavor hard also about these[.] Contact Tmimim [in] Montreal stop[.]... Awaiting reply cable.



Rabbi Avrohom Garfinkel. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Heading to America

After intense efforts by the Rashag and others, and the use of some political leverage, the American visas finally arrived a year later.

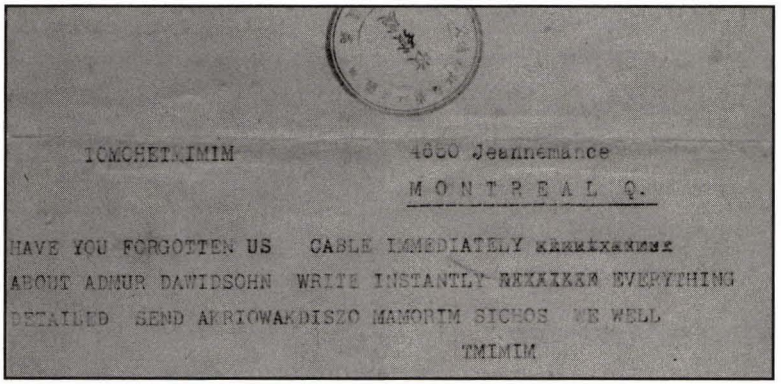
Now the students had to find a means of transportation. Regular ships were not yet crossing the Pacific, and flights were prohibitively expensive. Three students who urgently needed to get to America – Mr. Prager and Rabbis Bryski and Garfinkel – did fly, but the rest would have to look for a more affordable option.

They finally procured passage on an American warship, the *USS General M.C. Meigs*, on July 4, 1946. Accommodations on board were far from luxurious. The refugees slept on military cots, and many of the students became seasick.

On July 17 the group arrived in S. Francisco, California, where they were greeted by their fellow student Rabbi Yosef Wineberg and the American Rabbi Moshe Hecht, who was at the time a Chabad representative in Connecticut. The local Jewish community hosted a grand celebratory banquet in their honor.

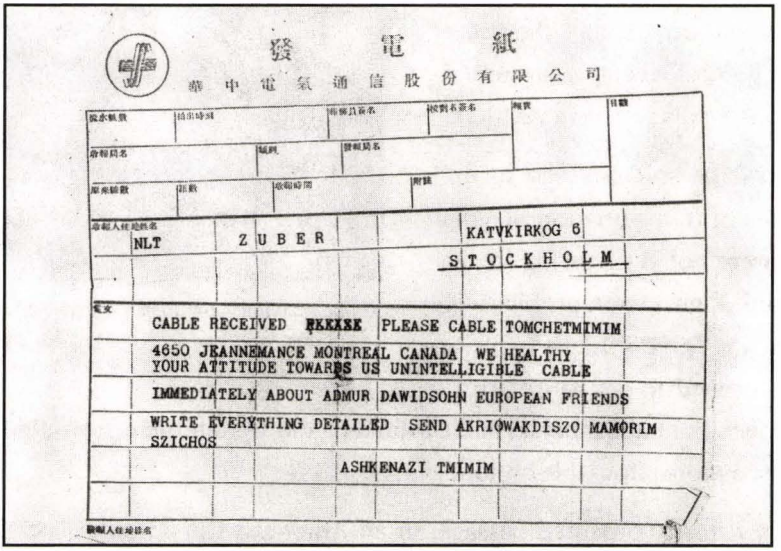
"It's taken them a long time, but 26 rabbinical students who started from Poland for a theological seminary in Brooklyn, N.Y., more than five years ago, arrived here yesterday on the last leg of their journey," reported the *Los Angeles Times* on July 22, 1946.

Painful Telegrams



TOMCHETMIMIM 4650 Jeanmemance
MONTREAL Q.

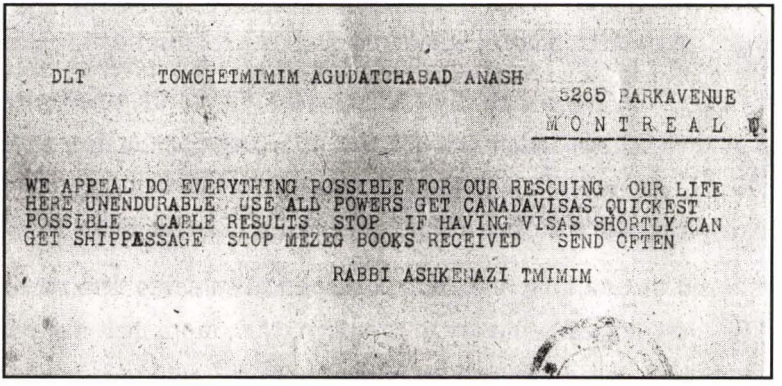
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN US CABLE IMMEDIATELY
ABOUT ADMUR DAWIDSOHN WRITE INSTANTLY EVERYTHING
DETAILED SEND AKRIOWAKDISZO MAMORIM SICHOS WE WELL
TMIMIM



發 電 紙
華中電氣通信股份有限公司

NLT ZUBER KATVKIRKOG 6
STOCKHOLM

CABLE RECEIVED PLEASE CABLE TOMCHETMIMIM
4650 JEANNEMANCE MONTREAL CANADA WE HEALTHY
YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS US UNINTELLIGIBLE CABLE
IMMEDIATELY ABOUT ADMUR DAWIDSOHN EUROPEAN FRIENDS
WRITE EVERYTHING DETAILED SEND AKRIOWAKDISZO MAMORIM
SZICHOS
ASHKENAZI TMIMIM



DLT TOMCHETMIMIM AGUDATCHABAD ANASH
5265 PARKAVENUE
MONTREAL Q.

WE APPEAL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE FOR OUR RESCUING OUR LIFE
HERE UNENDURABLE USE ALL POWERS GET CANADAVISAS QUICKEST
POSSIBLE CABLE RESULTS STOP IF HAVING VISAS SHORTLY CAN
GET SHIPPASSAGE STOP MEZEG BOOKS RECEIVED SEND OFTEN

RABBI ASHKENAZI TMIMIM

The Rebbe Rayatz suggested that Jewish communities in cities across the United States hold welcoming celebrations for the students. The bochurim divided into three groups to visit as many communities as possible before heading to Brooklyn. One group remained in the S. Francisco area; another went to Los Angeles; and Rabbi Raichik went with the third to Seattle, Washington.

The group then took the train to Chicago for yet another celebration. From Chicago they went to Brooklyn, where they were reunited with their Rebbe and the Chabad community. On August 12, 1946, the Rebbe Rayatz wrote to them (*Igros Kodesh Admor Maharayatz*, vol. 9, pp. 152ff):

> *Bless your arrival here materially and spiritually...*
>
> *Do not become indulged and sunken into the materialism [of America]. Understand the inner meaning of why Hashem brought you here. It is to warm up the indifferent and materialistic American attitude with the fear of Heaven and the warm chassidic feeling of love for your fellow. Become involved in pleasantly bringing people closer [to Yiddishkeit]; as the saying goes, "In ourselves we need to see the defects, and in others their virtues."*

The Rebbe also sent letters of appreciation to Rabbi Ashkenazi and all who aided the refugees in Shanghai (ibid., vol. 9, pp. 275 and 279).

[PART IV]

New Country, New Mission

Rabbi Raichik arrived in the USA in his late twenties without resources or family to speak of. He had only distant relatives in America, so his life centered around the Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch Yeshivah at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, headquarters of the Chabad movement.

Most of his immediate family had been murdered. Realizing that it was the Rebbe Rayatz who had saved him from the same fate, he turned to him for advice concerning how he should rebuild his life. He wrote:

> *Thank G-d, who saved and enabled me to now have the merit to be with the Rebbe.*
>
> *From 1936 I learned in the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Otwock, Poland. In Shanghai, China, the students gave me the responsibility of running the yeshivah, and I did not have the ability to learn Gemara or Chassidus studies properly.*
>
> *Now I am 28 years old, and I ask the Rebbe how I should proceed further. I ask that G-d help me reestablish my life physically and spiritually, and to fulfill the purpose for which I arrived to the United States.*

The students from Shanghai longed to meet the Rebbe in a private audience,



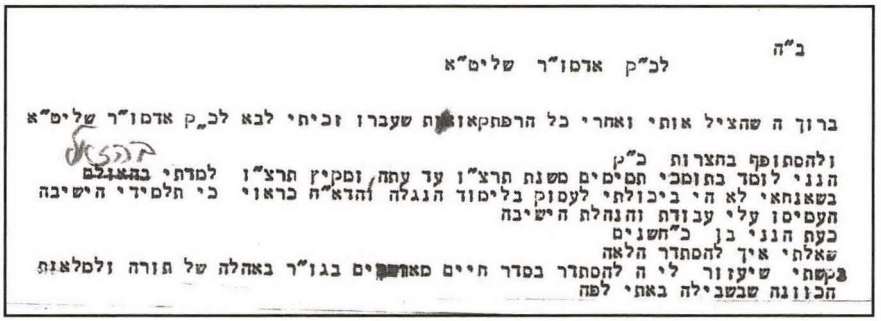
Rabbi Raichik (left) at a meeting of the Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education, 5707 (1947). Speaking is Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi. *Courtesy of Yitzchak Neparstak/Lubavitch Archives*

yechidus. However, the Rebbe's health had declined, and each day they were told that perhaps the next day, or the one after, would be the momentous one. The postponement of their audience continued for close to two months, until the Monday before Rosh Hashanah, when the group entered the Rebbe's office for a few short minutes.

During the Rebbe's prolonged illness, he was too weak to attend regular davening, and a minyan was arranged in his private office, which was located on the second floor of "770," as the building became familiarly known. On Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Raichik was among the chosen few who participated in the minyan.

"Before the blowing of the shofar, the Rebbe's face flowed with tears, and it is hard to describe the Rebbe's appearance after the blowing," he said.

He also had fond memories of Tashlich. "We all marched like soldiers, two by two," he would recall. "The Rebbe stood near the window [of 770] and smiled as we walked by and sang niggunim. From all sides, people saw us and were reminded that it was Rosh Hashanah. When we reached the Brooklyn Botanical



ב"ה

לכ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

ברוך ה שהציל אותי ואחרי כל הרפתקאות שעברו זכיתי לבא לכ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

ולהסתופף בחצרות כ"ק

הנני לזכר בתומכי תמימים משנת תרצ"ו עד עתה ומקיץ תרצ"ו למדתי בהאנלם

בשאנחאי לא ה' ביכולתי לעסוק בליסוד הנגלה והדא"ח כראוי כי תלמידי הישיבה

העסיסו עלי עבודת והנהלת הישיבה

כעת הנני בן כ"חשנים

שאלתי איך להסתדר הלאה

בקשתי שיעזור לי ה להסתדר בסדר חיים מאושרים בגו"ר באהלה של תורה ולסלאזת

הכזונה שבשבילה באתי לפה

A draft of the letter Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz after his arrival in New York.

Gardens, we said Tashlich at the lake, and then we marched back and danced into 770."

Many were turned away from the Rebbe's farbrengens that Tishrei because of his frail health, but the Shanghai students were permitted to attend.

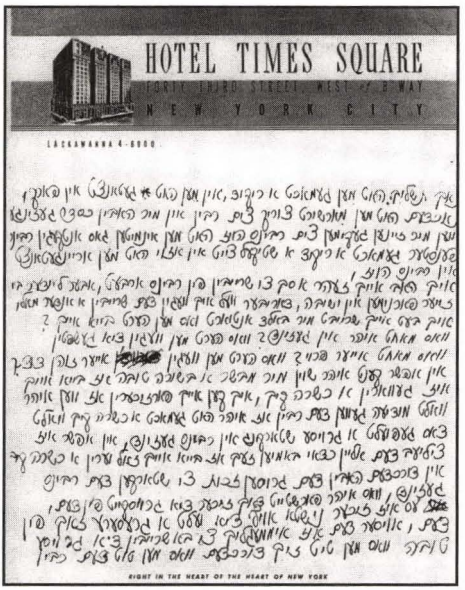
At a Sukkos farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the hardships they endured, concluding, "You were in many places, but a Jew doesn't travel on his own. A Jew is led by Divine Providence, and in every place there is a reason you were brought there. Hashem should grant you success."

In New York, Rabbi Raichik maintained contact with Mr. Braluvsky, who had supported the yeshivah in Shanghai. Mr. Braluvsky had asked him to present some questions to the Rebbe Rayatz, but the Rebbe was too weak to answer immediately. In the meantime, Rabbi Raichik suggested that Mr. Braluvsky decide upon a New Year's resolution – to keep a kosher kitchen – which would undoubtedly bring the Rebbe great joy.

"This would strengthen the Rebbe's health," Rabbi Raichik wrote. "You should try your utmost in this matter. Can you imagine the great merit that one has to strengthen the Rebbe's health? The *nachas ruach* [spiritual satisfaction] you provide the Rebbe is repaid with health, children, and sustenance."

The young man immersed himself in his studies. Even his fellow students marveled at how he was able to learn all day without interruption. Anyone with questions on *Ketzos Hachoshen*, a complex work on the Jewish laws of business and finance, came to Rabbi Raichik, who had no difficulty explaining it, regardless of the page to which the volume was opened.

Rabbi Shea Bronchtain recalled that Rabbi Raichik had done the same in Otwock before the war. Any student who had difficulties on a subject knew they could approach him. He would review the material for half an hour and return with a full grasp of the concept and an answer to the query.


HOTEL TIMES SQUARE
FORTY EIGHT STREET WEST OF B'WAY
NEW YORK CITY
LACKAWANNA 4-8000
RIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE HEART OF NEW YORK

Rabbi Raichik's letter to Mr. Braluvsky.

One of his roommates in Brooklyn, Rabbi Peretz Hecht, remembered how Rabbi Raichik would spend his evenings reviewing the day's events and determining how they could be improved, whereas most students, tired after a long day of study, would simply say the Shema and retire.

Rabbi Raichik would recite the Shema prayer fervently and continue learning until he fell asleep in a chair, a practice he continued even after he had a family. "I have no memory of his going to bed," his son Shimon said. "If I awoke in the middle of the night, I would find him at the table, learning."

He spent hours davening in the morning, enunciating each word and contemplating its meaning. During his time at the yeshivah in New York he davened in a small room adjacent to the upstairs shul in 770.

Once, after finishing his morning prayers at two in the afternoon, he spotted some fellow students returning from lunch and eating ice cream. "*Taivos* [physical delights] in Tomchei T'mimim!?" Rabbi Leibel Groner remembers Rabbi Raichik asking in shock. To him the yeshivah was no place for indulgences.

In 5700 (1940), when the Polish students were learning in the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Vilna, Lithuania, they were instructed by the Rebbe Rayatz not to change their style of dress. Rabbi Raichik adhered strictly to this request. Even as a bachelor he wore a long *kapote* (frock coat) during the week and on Shabbos,



Rabbi Zalman Posner. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

though most Chabad chassidim in America wore short jackets.

His dress would serve him well. On one Yom Kippur the Rebbe's family and aides, concerned about the Rebbe's health, had to limit the number of people who could daven outside his room. During the break between Musaf and Minchah many were asked to leave.

Rabbi Raichik was seated in a corner, bent over a book of Tehillim. Because only the most revered chassidim, made distinctive by their long silk kapotes, were allowed to stay, he was assumed to be one of them and therefore was left alone.

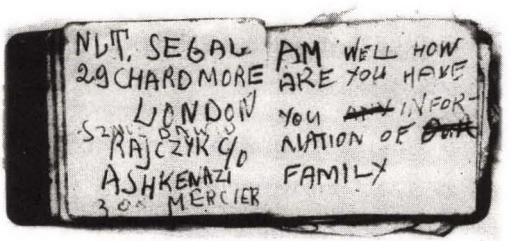
Rabbi Zalman Posner once told Shimon that at a farbrengen the Rebbe Rayatz declared, "One who doesn't daven with great devotion should not repeat a chassidic discourse to the public!" (See Sefer Hasichos 5707, p. 114)

Hearing this reproach, those who customarily reviewed and recorded the Rebbe's discourses hesitated. None of them considered themselves worthy. Therefore, according to Rabbi Posner, among all the great chassidim gathered there, Rabbi Raichik was chosen – pressured, in fact – to lead the review.

Family Remnants

Rabbi Raichik made efforts to locate members of his family who might have survived the Holocaust. His mother's brothers Shalom and Yosef Segal lived in England and Israel respectively. After the war, Rabbi Raichik sent a telegram to Shalom asking if he knew who had survived and where they lived. A correspondence commenced, and in later years he would visit Shalom and his children whenever he was in England.

He learned that there was a Raichik family in Chicago and, not knowing if they were relatives, cabled them that he was going to be in Chicago and wanted to meet. Shabsai Raichik met him there and they spoke for an hour or two. At the end of the meeting Mr. Raichik told his son Michoel, "Exactly how we are related, I don't know, but we are related because we are Raichiks and *leviim*, and I am proud to have such a relative." Rabbi Raichik kept in touch with the family. Over the years they became close.



Draft of a telegram to his uncle in London asking for information about the family

There were also some dis-



Rabbi Raichik with his uncle Shalom Segal of London, at the wedding of Devora Wilhelm, who is named after his mother.

tant relatives from the Weingold family in New York. He arranged to meet his great-aunt, his grandmother's sister, Nicha Goldblatt, who had immigrated to the United States in 1921. She in turn introduced him to his cousins Yocheved (née Weingold) and Joseph Kleinerman, who resided in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. Their daughter Chana Kleinerman-Goldstein vividly remembered her first meeting with Rabbi Raichik, when she was 18. "I was told that he was the only survivor from our family in Europe," she said. "He was not bitter from his ordeal."

Rabbi Raichik related some of his experiences in Shanghai, she remembered, and how pained he had been to see "human beings working like horses, dragging carriages down the Shanghai streets. I couldn't bear it."

This comment made a great impression on her. "He had his own tragedies, yet this was his painful moment during the war," she said.

On the paternal side of his family, an aunt, Sara Lefkowitz (née Raichik), was in a displaced persons camp in Poland. Through the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (the "Joint"), she found Rabbi Raichik by locating the address of the "Lubavitcher Rebbe," who sent her Rabbi Raichik's address when he was still in Shanghai.

"I could only imagine your joy to have reunited with the Lubavitcher Rebbe in New York," she wrote in a January 1946 letter penned in Yiddish. Sadly, in her first letter, she had only horrors to report. She wrote of the hell she had experienced as the Nazis destroyed everything in their town. "Perhaps fifty people sur-

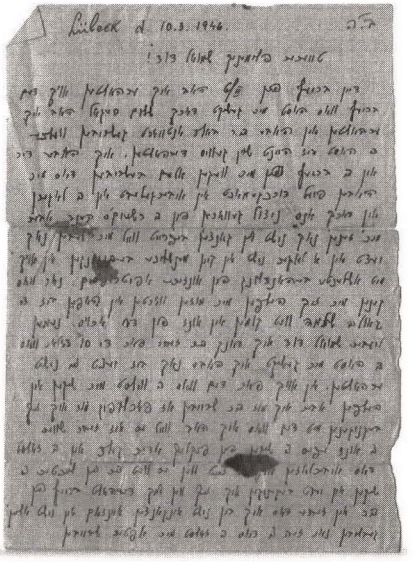
vived. You can only imagine what it was like to survive horrors that no human being should ever have to go through," she wrote. "G-d wanted me to be a memory for generations of my family destroyed in Europe."

She noted that she was not certain about his family's fate, but asked that he should say kaddish for her father, Rabbi Raichik's grandfather, Gershon Raichik. In a subsequent letter dated October 1946 she broke the bitter news about his family. "With heartache I am writing to you about what happened to your brother Leibel, who was shot in the ghetto after he was helping a destitute Jewish family.... Nothing is left from the entire family. They were all burned [in Auschwitz]."

Rabbi Raichik knew the date of his mother's yahrtzeit (the 21st of Elul), and his brother Leibel's (the 27th of Cheshvan). For his father and his other siblings he chose to observe the day that he calculated they arrived at the Auschwitz concentration camp, the 11th of Kislev. He would later dedicate the *Sefer Hama'amarim 5700*, a collection of chassidic discourses of the Rebbe Rayatz, to the memory of his family.



Rebbetzin Raichik with Sara Lefkowitz (nee Raichik).



The letter Sara Lefkowitz wrote to Rabbi Raichik describing how his family had perished in the Holocaust.

The Shadar

In the year of his arrival Rabbi Raichik was appointed an emissary of the Rebbe Rayatz. In a letter the Rebbe advised him to continue studying in yeshivah, but also to begin traveling to shuls in New York and around the country to both raise funds and inspire the Jews he met to set aside time to learn Chassidus. The Rebbe wrote a separate letter encouraging those communities to organize farbrengens and times for learning, thus preparing them for the visits.

Rabbi Raichik's new mission was similar to what today is known as Merkos Shlichus, a program that sends Chabad students to remote communities around the world every summer and holiday season to spread Yiddishkeit.

In the 1940s most Jews were concerned with establishing themselves financially and socially in secular America. Observance, including yeshivah education for children, was not high on their list of priorities. Rabbi Raichik traveled around the East Coast speaking about the importance of establishing regular Torah classes. He also stressed kashrus, Shabbos, and yeshivah education. His message was always the same, though he tailored it to his listeners.

Most of those he met still spoke Yiddish, and it was easy for him to communicate with them. Once, in Detroit, he was introduced to two American brothers who did not speak any Yiddish. Rabbi Raichik spoke to them in broken English.



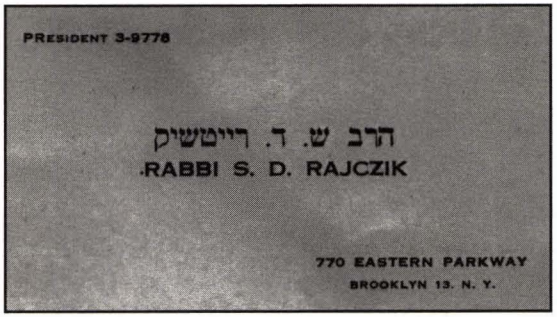
On a visit to S. Louis, Missouri, 5712 (1951). Courtesy of Dr. Moshe Sussman

"But he had a great impact on them," said Rabbi Shlomo Hochler, who was present at the meeting. "At first it was hard to believe, with his broken English, he could have such an impact. I came to realize that it was because of his sincerity, the *emes* that they saw."

Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz about his work urging parents to send their children to a Jewish day school. The Rebbe responded, encouraging him to continue (Cheshvan 12, 5707 [1946]): "I know and value your dedicated work to inspire interest about learning in yeshivah.... You should especially stress how important it is to the child's life that the teacher be a G-d-fearing Jew."

At the Rebbe's request (Kislev 2 and Teves 24, 5707 [1946–7]), Rabbi Raichik began sending frequent reports elaborating on his activities. A typical report would include details of his travels – where he spoke, the content of local Torah classes, people he met, what he spoke about, and the spiritual needs of the community.

In one report he described a talk he gave in Cong. Anshei Sfard in Borough Park: "I spoke about learning Torah, Jewish education, keeping kosher, and



[shared] other words of inspiration. Over 100 men were there. After davening, I encouraged them to say Tehillim. As our student Avrohom Weingarten told me, his father attends the shul there... and my words made a great impression."

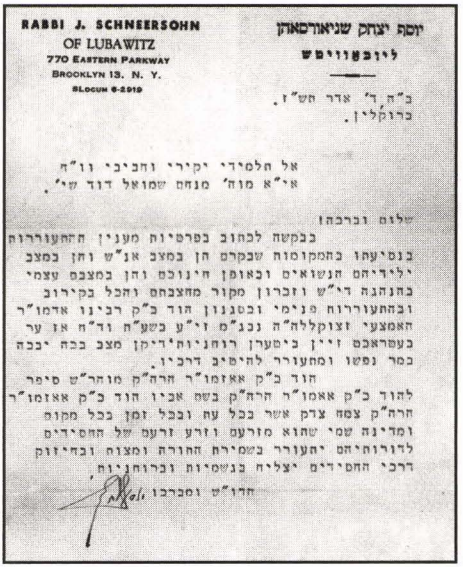
The Rebbe replied (Nissan 2, 5707 [1947]): "I read everything you wrote about the spiritual awakening in the Shomrei Shabbos Nusach Sfard shul. I appreciated it; however, you must know that a temporary arousal is not sufficient. There must be a practical outcome in the form of regular public shiurim, with each person inspiring others to attend the classes. Please also encourage them in the areas of the conduct of the members of their household and their children's Jewish schooling. Hashem should make you successful."

In another letter (Adar 4, 5707) the Rebbe explained how to influence others: "[All of your interaction with them] should be in a way of bringing [them] closer [to Judaism] and result in a deep awakening. As the Mitteler Rebbe would say, when a person will think of his lowly spiritual situation, he will weep from the bitterness in his heart and be inspired to rectify his ways."

A report from Rabbi Raichik's visit to Scranton, Pennsylvania, describes the chassidic discourses he recited in the local shuls. "I addressed the congregants," he wrote, "about the work of the Rebbe and the importance of learning Torah, keeping Shabbos, and proper Torah education of the children. In one of the shuls I also spoke to Tzvi Harris, who knows how to learn. He promised me that he will try to teach."

The Scranton community wanted to open a branch of the Achei Tmimim Lubavitch yeshivahs. "They are constructing a big building with a shul, a mikvah, and classrooms for a Talmud Torah," he wrote. "They are eager to finish the classrooms first, for they have no Jewish school for their children. They very much want to open a yeshivah.... The level of Yiddishkeit is higher than in the surrounding towns around, but they have no schools at all."

Rabbi Raichik also went out of his way to meet forlorn Jews in need of encouragement. Regarding one such visit he wrote to the Rebbe, "I visited... he lives a bit far from the city. I farbrenged with him, and it had an impact. Later he took me to shul for Maariv – which he hadn't davened in ten years – and I spoke to him about the necessity of putting on tefillin every day.... I hope he will."


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה ד' אדר תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

בבקשה לכתוב בפרטיות מענין התעוררות
בנסיעתו בתמקומות שבקרם הן במצב אנ"ש והן במצב
ילדיהם תנשואים ובאופן חינוכם והן במצבם עצמי
בהנהגה ד"ש וזכרון מקור מחצבתם והכל בקירוב
ובהתעוררות פנימי ובטענון הוד ב"ק רבינו אדמו"ר
האמצעי זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע בשע"ח וד"ח אז ער
בעפראמפ זיין בימערן רוזניוויטשיזשן מצב בכח יבכה
בסר נפשו ומתעורר להיותם דרכיו.

הוד ב"ק אאזמו"ר הרה"ק מוהר"ש סיפר
להוד כ"ק אאמו"ר הרה"ק בשם אביו הוד כ"ק אאזמו"ר
הרה"ק צמח צדק אשר בכל עת ובכל זמן בכל מקום
ומדינה שמי שהוא מזרעם וזרע זרעם של החסידים
לדורותיהם יתעורר בשמירת התורה ומצות ובחיזוק
דרכי החסידים יצליח בגשמיות וברוחניות.

חדו"ש ומברכו

Instructions from the Rebbe Rayatz about Rabbi Raichik's travels.

His travels brought him to scores of cities and communities throughout North America: Buffalo, New York; Houston and Dallas, Texas; Portland, Oregon; Chicago, Illinois; Indianapolis, Indiana; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio; Kansas City, Kansas; S. Francisco, Modesto, Oakland, and Lake Elsinore, California; Milwaukee and Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Seattle, Washington; Denver, Colorado; Des Moines, Iowa; Norfolk, Virginia; S. Louis, Missouri; Detroit, Michigan; Toronto, Ontario; Dorchester, Massachusetts; Omaha, Nebraska; Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; and Vancouver, British Columbia.

This whirlwind touring would have been taxing on anyone, but Rabbi Raichik's strict standards of kashrus and his consequent minimal food intake while traveling made it even more difficult. He once wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz, "According to the schedule, I am expected to travel this week, G-d willing, to Washington, D.C., and Norfolk, Virginia. But since I am weak and tired, I am thinking of going for one week to Lakewood [New Jersey] to rest."

The Rebbe responded (Nissan 4, 5707 [1947]): "To answer your question, it is proper that you go to Lakewood for a week for good air. It says that abstaining from work is contrary to what our sages say, that 'we are day workers.' The meaning of the verse, however, is that we must bring light – the light of Torah and Divine service – into ourselves, and also illuminate others. These are two differ-



Rabbi Raichik's poor English did not prevent him from speaking to people's hearts: S. Louis, Missouri, 5712 (1951). *Courtesy of Dr. Moshe Sussman*

ent tasks, but the effort is the same. It has to be done with the internal approach of giving yourself over entirely. And this is the path of chassidim, those who are dedicated to the service of G-d. From generation to generation they devoted themselves to this work with all their strength, and in it found their true success."

Rabbi Raichik's frequent travels and meetings made him a familiar figure in many communities. When Rabbi Sholom Rivkin was sent to S. Louis to head the Lubavitcher shul, the Rebbe Rayatz told him that Rabbi Raichik knew the community and would help him get settled.

The first morning Rabbi Rivkin arrived, he received a phone call from Rabbi Raichik. He helped Rabbi Rivkin find a place to live and introduced him to many community members. The same thing happened when Rabbi Rivkin later moved to Seattle. Rabbi Raichik was always available to help him.

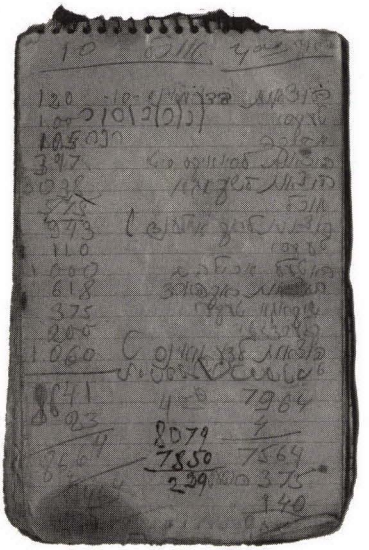
When the Raichik children were young, they heard stories from many friends and acquaintances about how they had been their father's roommate when he was in New York. The children always imagined that Rabbi Raichik must have slept in a very large room, until it dawned upon them that every time he traveled for the Rebbe, his bed would be taken by someone else. When he returned he would simply find another room, becoming someone else's roommate.

Beloved Student

Rabbi Raichik's achievements were greatly appreciated by the Rebbe Rayatz. In a letter from 5708 (1948) (*Igros*, vol. 9, p. 480) the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, the famed *mashpia* in the Chabad yeshivah in Lod and later in Kfar Chabad, to visit communities in Israel as Rabbi Raichik was doing

in the United States. He added that just as Rabbi Raichik, who was not a native-born American, was successful, Rabbi Kesselman, who was not Israeli, could succeed.

"Rabbi Shmuel Dovid, one of the students who escaped Shanghai, travels throughout the United States and Canada and visits many different people not of the Lubavitch community," the Rebbe wrote, "to awaken and strengthen them in their Jewish observance and establish an organized pattern of learning; he has had great success. May G-d help him physically and spiritually."



A page from a notepad of expenses and contacts Rabbi Raichik used on his trips around the United States

The Rebbe's esteem for Rabbi Raichik was also evident in a letter from Rabbi Zev Volf Greenglass, then the mashpia at the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Montreal, on the occasion of Rabbi Raichik's engagement. In his unique way Rabbi Greenglass described his delight at hearing the news, with blessings for physical and spiritual success.

Rabbi Greenglass continued: "I wrote to the Rebbe about the activities you did here, and how you put your own needs aside for others. I did not know whether I should write to you what the Rebbe responded to me, but since we are at a joyous occasion, I am informing you..."

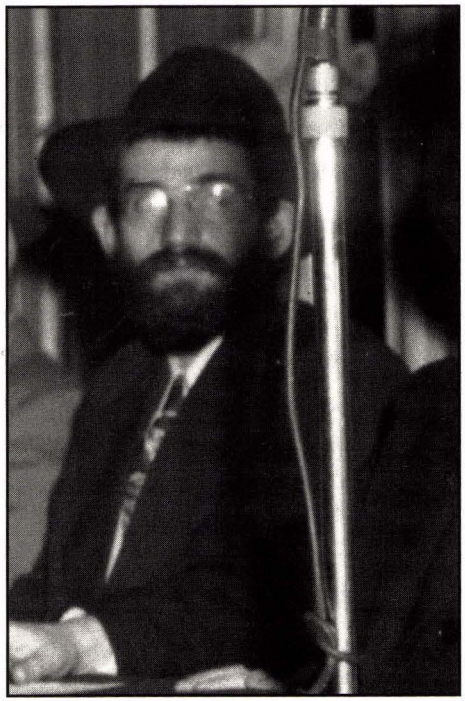
The Rebbe Rayatz had written to Rabbi Greenglass: "Regarding what you write about my dear honored student, Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik, I was very pleased that my students and other Lubavitchers understand who needs to be treasured and genuinely revered."

[PART IV]

Marriage

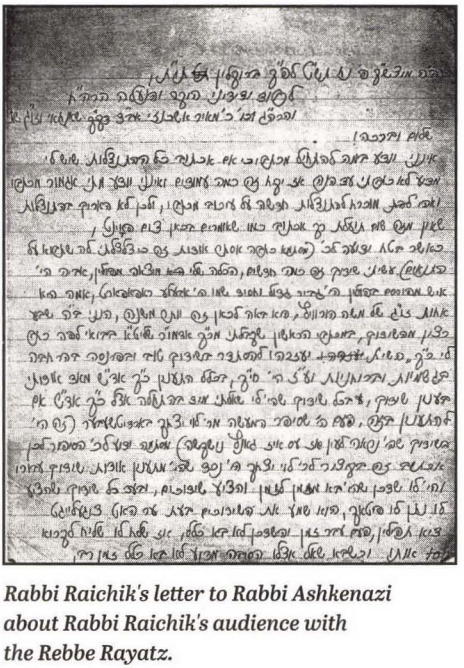
After each of his trips, Rabbi Raichik would return to New York and continue his studies while he resided in the yeshivah dormitory. At 28 he already reached the age for marriage, but with no family, money, or connections, he had difficulty navigating the dating process. He turned to the Rebbe Rayatz for help, and the Rebbe willingly assisted him at every stage.

Every time someone suggested a potential match, Rabbi Raichik asked the Rebbe, who would reject the idea. Noting Rabbi Raichik's despondence, the Rebbe related the following story, as Rabbi Raichik recorded in a letter to Rabbi Ashkenazi:



Rabbi Raichik in New York around the time he started dating. *Courtesy of Yitzchak Neparstak/Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev had a grandson of marriageable age. Often after morning prayers, as Rabbi Levi Yitzchok removed his tallis and tefillin, a matchmaker would approach him and suggest suitable girls for his grandson. After the prospective girl was turned down, the matchmaker would present another name. This cycle repeated itself several times, until the matchmaker stopped proffering suggestions.



Rabbi Raichik's letter to Rabbi Ashkenazi about Rabbi Raichik's audience with the Rebbe Rayatz.

One day Rabbi Levi Yitzchok sent a message to the matchmaker, asking him for a meeting. "Why haven't you been bringing new prospects to me?" Rabbi Levi Yitzchok asked.

The matchmaker explained that because of the many rejections, he had decided to withdraw from the search.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok explained the man's error. "The names of couples are declared in the heavenly spheres before the children are born: 'The daughter of this person should marry this person.' The angels then repeat the Divine announcement."

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok then posed a question. "After such a resonating announcement is made, why would the first suggestion for a fiancée not be the destined match? Why is there a need to hear so many different shidduch suggestions?"

He explained that some angels lack adequate hearing, and that others do not speak well. [It is known that each time one does a mitzvah, a new angel is created. If the mitzvah is not performed properly, the angel is formed



The Rebbe Rayatz delivers a talk shortly after his arrival in the United States, 5700 (1940).
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

> *with a blemish.] Therefore, some of the angels had heard the proclamation incorrectly, or mispronounced the names.*
>
> *"Until the correct prospect is found," Rabbi Levi Yitzchok concluded, "all the misheard names must be mentioned for consideration. Therefore, every proposed match brings us that much closer to the correct, heavenly proclaimed prospect."*

The Rebbe Rayatz concluded, "*This name can be attached to the list of 'names heard incorrectly.'*"

Rabbi Raichik's cousin Mrs. Kleinerman once recommended her neighbor's daughter, a staunchly religious young woman from Austria, for a shidduch with the young rabbi. For several reasons it did not work out, and Mrs. Kleinerman was heartbroken for having caused him disappointment.

Echoing the Rebbe's words, Rabbi Raichik calmed her by saying, "Please don't worry. Each step in the process of finding a wife is a step in the right direction."

Rebbetzin Lea Raichik

Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanoff, editor of several Chabad publications, knew Rabbi Raichik from his studies in Otwock and suggested that Lea Rapaport would be a suitable match for him. Rabbi Zalmanoff's wife, Raizel (nee Rapaport), was Lea's niece.

Born in Bielsko ("Bielitz" in Yiddish), Poland, Lea was the daughter of Reb Avraham "Abele" Rapaport, a renowned Talmudic scholar and an important figure in the court of the Gerrer Rebbe. Reb Abele was a direct descendant of Rabbi Shabsi Cohen, known as the Shach after his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch. (Many of the Rapaport descendants are named Shabsi for this reason.)



Young Lea in her hometown of Bielsko.
Courtesy of Avery Stok

Reb Abele's first wife, Toba Shprintze, with whom he had eight children, passed away on the 15th of Tammuz 5684 (July 17, 1924).

Nine months later he married his second wife, Sima ("Sabine"), who was a descendant of the Shach's daughter Esther Rivkah (whose story Marcus Lehmann fictionalized in *The Adopted Princess*). The Rapaports named one of their daughters (Esther Rivkah Stok) after her.

Lea was the eleventh of twelve children born to Reb Abele. By the time she was born, some of her half-siblings already had grandchildren – the eldest was 37 years Lea's senior. She was called Dzi Dzi (pronounced "Gigi"), a nickname for "baby" in Polish. "Lea was called that way because they did not expect to have any more children," said her nephew Avery Stok, though they did eventually have one more, Esther.

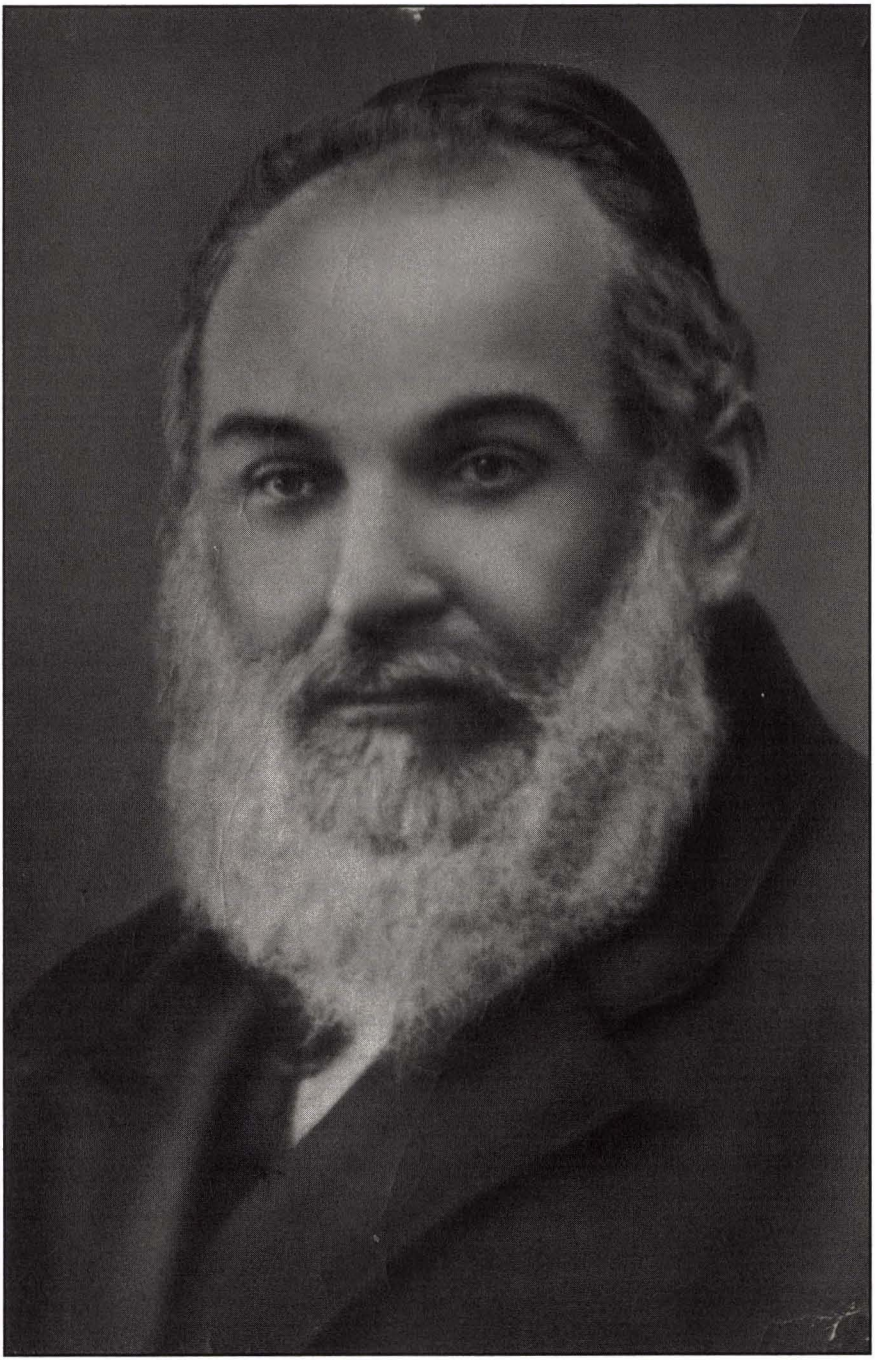
In Jewish Poland at the time, "Abele Rapaport" was a household name. He was a major manufacturer and wholesaler of textiles, and an economic adviser to the prewar Polish government.

Despite his financial success, Reb Abele continued his daily schedule of Torah study. He rose at four in the morning to spend two hours studying Torah alone. Then he spent the next two hours delivering shiurim before attending to his business. At night he would deliver another in-depth class in Gemara.

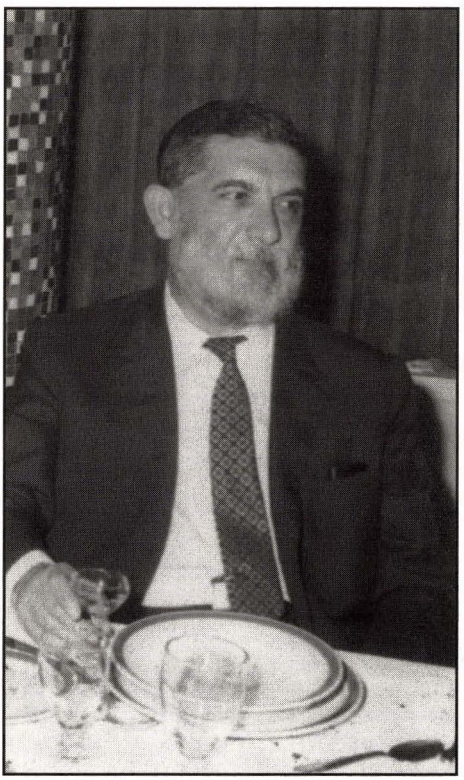
Over several generations, many members of the Rapaport family had married into the Gerrer dynasty. Rebbetzin Raichik would recall how her father once met a grandchild of the Gerrer Rebbe on a station platform shortly before the train departed. Reb Abele, despite being affluent, headed to a second-class carriage. When the Gerrer grandchild asked him why he planned to sit in second class, Reb Abele responded, "So that you can go to first class."

Throughout the years Rebbetzin Raichik would discuss her childhood memories, both the sweet moments and the frightening ones. She remembered how all her siblings and their families were extremely close, and lived in the same vicinity. Weddings were celebrated on Fridays. She also remembered the time there was a pogrom in her town on Sukkos.

Her grandfather, Yitzchok ("Itchele") Rapaport, who lived with them, would walk to shul on Yom Kippur accompanied by 50 or 60 of his children, grandchil-



Reb Avraham "Abele" Rapaport. *Courtesy of Avery Stok*



Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanoff. Courtesy of Avery Stok

dren and great-grandchildren, many of who were kohanim.

At the end of his life, Reb Itchele's finger needed to be amputated, she said, but he did not let the doctors do it, since such a blemish would render him unfit to serve in the Beis Hamikdash when Moshiach comes.

There were nannies, cooks, and many servants in the house, but her mother always served her father his food out of respect, she recalled. On Shabbos and Yom Tov they hosted many guests, such as the Jewish soldiers who fought in the Polish army during World War I.

There were no stores for ready-made clothes in their town. Everyone made their own clothes, including the poor people. Because many people would die young, there were a lot of orphans, and extended families would spread their meager earnings to provide basic necessities for them. The orphans and poorer children could be immediately identified by their shabby clothing.

Mrs. Sima Rapaport was on the committee that would go to the schools and look for children who needed clothes, particularly winter coats, and arrange to provide them. Reb Abele told his wife that they should make the same coats for their children that they made for the orphans, so that the Rappaport children "should not feel that they are any better."

Reb Abele was also a mohel and shochet. Rebbetzin Raichik described how eager he was to perform *brissim* for needy families. He did not simply show up with his tools, however. "There is a bris tomorrow, and the family has no food in

the house," he would tell his wife. "We need to prepare." The house chef would cook, and Reb Abele would bring the seudah with him.

As a man of means, he could afford to travel from place to place, even on short notice, to be the mohel in towns where there was none, said his nephew Shabsi Frankel, a philanthropist and the famous publisher of Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*.

The Rebbe's Berachah

The Rapaport family's first meaningful connection with Chabad came when Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanoff was suggested as a match for their granddaughter Raizel, Rabbi Shabsi Rapaport's daughter. Rabbi Zalmanoff was very involved in Chabad activities in Poland. He was a learned man and, among other positions, was one of the editors of *Hatomim*, a Chabad periodical of scholarly essays, Chassidic thought, commentary, and Chabad history.

Reb Abele met him and, recognizing his virtues, gave his blessing to the match. Rabbi Zalmanoff and Raizel met, and in 5693 (1933) they married.

After their marriage Rabbi Zalmanoff joined the family textile business, though he continued his involvement with the Lubavitch Yeshivah.

Rabbi Herschel Ryzman, who studied at the yeshivah in Otwock, recalled once seeing the Rebbe Rayatz's son-in-law, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, known then as the Ramash, deep in conversation with Rabbi Shabsi Rapaport, who was vacationing in the resort town with his family. "They talked for three hours," Rabbi Ryzman said, "throwing around many *sugyos* in Shas. The Ramash had one foot on the floor and one foot on the bench."

For many years after their marriage, the Zalmanoffs were not blessed with children. Eventually the Rebbe Rayatz gave them a berachah, and they had a son shortly before the war in 5699 (1939), whom they named Yosef.

Rabbi Shabsi and the Zalmanoffs came to Otwock to thank the Rebbe for the berachah. At one point during the private audience, the Rebbe said, "By you [the Rapaport family] there is 'Torah and greatness in one place' (Gittin 59a)."

On the Run

When war broke out, most of the Rapaport family was on vacation in Rabka,



Reb Abele Rapaport and Sima (right) in Rabka, Poland, shortly before Germany invaded in September 1939. Their daughter Shaindel is on the far left. Courtesy of Avery Stok

Poland. Immediately the four Rapaport sisters were transported some 80 miles to what was thought to be a safer location, the town of Pińczów, where their half-brother Rabbi Shabsi Rapaport was the rabbi.

Rebbetzin Raichik recalled that Rabbi Shabsi's household was so steeped in Torah that when someone would bring a freshly slaughtered chicken to see if it was kosher, the non-Jewish maid would take a look and predict what the *rov* would say.

Unfortunately, Pińczów was no safer than any other place in Poland. As the Germans advanced toward the village, the inhabitants burned down the bridge over the Nida River. This slowed the Germans down, but also angered them greatly. When they entered the village on September 7, 1939, they vented their rage.

Everyone was gathered in three locations. The Rapaport girls were brought to the courtyard of the church. Esther Stok, Rebbetzin Raichik's sister, recalled how on three sides of the courtyard, houses were burning, and the heat terrified them. "For the rest of her life, my mother was scared of fire," said Avery Stok.

When the fires died down, they emerged from the courtyard to find that most of the people in the village had been murdered or taken away. "The shul was burned; the house of my brother was burned," recalled Esther. They found refuge in an apartment that was also used as an improvised shul. Those who survived were devastated. "Every morning I heard them saying kaddish for their murdered family members," Esther said.

Slowly, more residents of Pińczów emerged from their hiding places. To flee seemed futile, so they remained in the city and waited to see what would happen. Rebbetzin Raichik would say that despite the destruction, it seemed to her that the Simchas Torah of 5700 (1939) was celebrated with joy.

Reb Abele and his wife stayed in Rabka until Poland surrendered, when they went to Warsaw. The Rapaport parents made the dangerous journey by car, while the rest of the family took a bus. On the way, the family patriarch suffered a mild stroke.

They arrived in Warsaw to find that food was even more scarce there than in the towns. In Teves 5740 (December 1939) Raizel Zalmanoff traveled to Pińczów to visit her parents, obtain some food, and bring her four young aunts back with her to Warsaw, where they were reunited with their mother and father.

Tragically, after contracting pneumonia, Reb Abele passed away on the third of Nissan 5700 (April 11, 1940), at the age of 70.

Esther recalled that, having already witnessed so much bloodshed, she was emotionally numb and could not shed a tear. Mrs. Rapaport turned to her younger daughter and said, "Esther, why don't you cry? Your father is not alive."

Fleeing the Nazis

Mrs. Rapaport remained in Warsaw until the autumn of 1940. Right after Yom Kippur, one of her children informed her that the Germans were erecting walls around the Jewish quarter to create a ghetto where all the Jews in the city would be forced to live. "Why do you need to tell me this news on Motzaei Yom Kippur?" she asked her daughter with dismay.

Mrs. Rapaport was from Vienna, and knew German, which allowed her to obtain passes for her family, including her mother, to leave the ghetto in Cheshvan (November).

They left Warsaw and made their way to Kielce, where they remained for four months. When the Germans began to erect a ghetto there, Mrs. Rapaport packed up her family and traveled to her stepson, Reb Shabsi, who was still in Pińczów.

"My mother was quite a lady," said Esther, noting that, despite the war, she insisted that her daughters continue to study as much as possible.

The family remained in Pińczów until Sukkos 5703 (1942).

One day they heard that there was going to be an *aktzia*, a roundup of Jews for deportation to labor camps or execution. The owners of the home where they were living hid them in the attic, while most of the Jews in the town were taken to concentration camps.

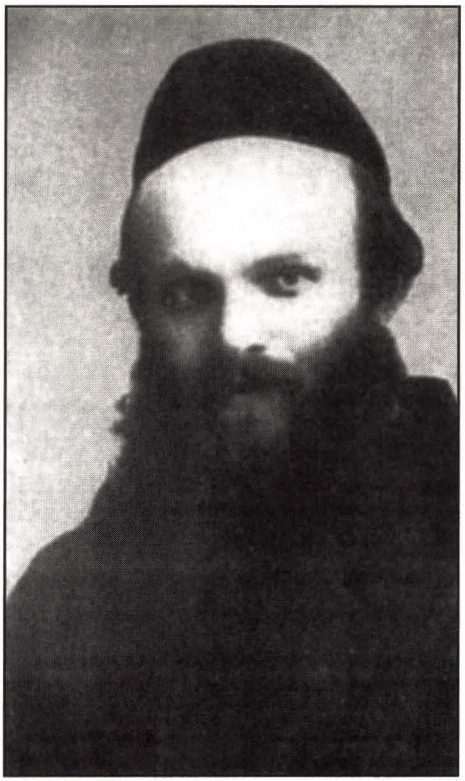
They learned that Reb Shabsi and his family had received forged papers from Shaul Weingort, a cousin who lived in Switzerland, stating that they were citizens of Paraguay. With the papers, they were permitted to remain in the town. Reb Shabsi and his family were then transferred to a prison in Warsaw as POWs to be exchanged for captured Germans. There they met up with other Rapaports who had the same papers. Later they were sent to an internment camp in France.

Three days after the roundup, Jews in Pińczów who had managed to hide themselves slowly began to emerge. "The town was so little that, as the rabbi's siblings, we were well known," said Esther. "People knew that we were hiding." Fearing that they would be reported, Mrs. Rapaport decided they would have to leave. They paid someone to take them to a nearby town where the Jews had not been deported yet.

It seemed inevitable that they would be deported, but Mrs. Rapaport was not giving up so fast. She found someone to take them at night to the town of Dzialoszyce. There her second daughter, Rutka, befriended a young man named Jack Lefkowitz, who introduced her to his family. When his father, Shmuel Lefkowitz, heard Rutka's story, his heart broke. He immediately went to meet Mrs. Rapaport, realizing that she was the widow of the famed textile manufacturer. "He was an extremely sensitive person," said Esther. "It was all heart."

One day Shmuel Lefkowitz met a Polish man from Toporów, who told him that he was looking for a rich Jew who would pay to be hidden during the war.

The Pole had amassed wealth during a stint in Detroit, Michigan, after World War I. When he returned to Toporów, a small town where there were 22 farms and some seven streets, he purchased the largest farm.



Rabbi Shabsi Rapaport.

"I don't want money now," he told Mr. Lefkowitz. "After the war, I want them to give me part of their properties as payment." He feared that the currency would collapse, as he had seen happen after World War I.

"[Mr. Lefkowitz] exaggerated our wealth," said Esther, "saying that we had untold riches, with stocks in London."

A contract was drawn up between Mrs. Rapaport and the farmer. "The family is risking their lives [to hide us]," Mrs. Rapaport wrote in the contract. It was agreed that she would pay 25 percent of their properties, which she listed:

1. *House in Bielsko, 7 Place Smolki*
2. *Factory at 8 Fabryczna Street*
3. *House in Vienna, Praterstrasse 52 (Hotel Austria)*
4. *Financial documents deposited in Copenhagen...*
5. *Savings of 150,000 złoty*

As payment for food, she guaranteed in cash 129,658.36 Polish złoty, half which she paid when the contract was signed.

In Kislev 5703 (November 1942) the mother and her daughters traveled to the Polish man's farm with Mr. Lefkowitz. At first they slept openly in the barn



Rebbetzin Raichik in France after the war. *Courtesy of Avery Stok*

and spent their days in the farmer's house. When visitors arrived, they would hide behind a board in the home.

Eager to amass more wealth, the farmer hid another well-to-do Jewish man with them.

Their presence was kept a secret from the farmers in the area, and even from the man's own children, who were anti-Semitic and might inform on him.

During this time, Mrs. Rapaport heard that some papers had arrived at their old address in Kielce. It turned out that Mr. Weingort was slowly sending Paraguayan papers to the entire family. When Mrs. Rapaport learned this, she dressed Rutka to look like a non-Jew and sent her to bring the papers to their hiding place.

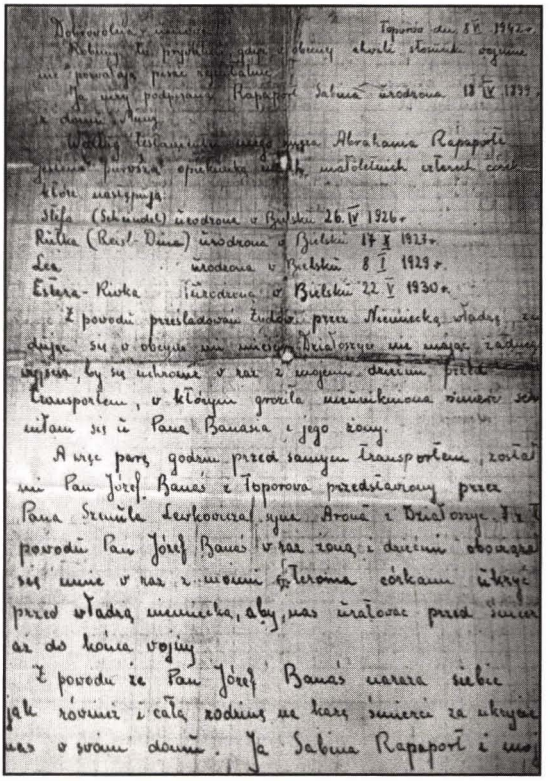
When Rutka returned, Mrs. Rapaport discussed the situation with her daughters. "We could come out with the papers and say we are foreigners, and they may send us to an internment camp," she said. "But it will not look good. 'If you are a foreign national,' they will ask, 'why were you hiding until now?'"

In the end, she decided that they would remain in hiding and keep the pa-

pers to use as a last resort.

Life Underground

Hiding a Jewish family in such a small town was difficult. People in the town began to suspect something, and things became more dangerous. The farmer dug a trench in the barn, four by six feet. "We were sleeping like sardines in a box," said Esther. "You could sit down, but you could not stand up." Because the space was so small, the family and the other Jewish man who was hiding with them would lie on their sides. Mrs. Rapaport asked that a board be placed between them and the man.



The contract that Sima Rapaport drew up with the Polish farmer who hid her and her daughters for over two years.

They stayed in the trench during the day, when the board on top was covered with hay and bundles of grain. At night they made small excursions for fresh air. From time to time Mr. Lefkowitz, who was also in hiding, would come check on Mrs. Rapaport and her daughters.

Life in hiding had many perils. During the entire period, they did not bathe. The children got fevers, infections, and cramps. Esther described how she got an infection in her foot and was in great pain. "We would go crazy from the pain, but there was nothing to do," she recalled in an interview with Aviva Segal.

To keep themselves busy, they would play games and tell stories. Lea had a great memory, and she would retell the stories of the books she had read. One game they played was that someone would write a word with her finger in the air, and the others would try to guess what it was.



Rebbetzin Raichik (top row, second from left) with her sisters and other refugee children after they escaped over the Olza River.

Of course, there were endless talks about what they would do after the war. Mrs. Rapaport had big plans for them, beginning with the girls finishing their education. They also discussed what they would eat after the war. "We were planning six different courses, all from potatoes," Esther said. Time was also spent removing lice from each other's hair.

The farmer gave them their daily meals, which were consistent: potatoes, beans, and barley.

On every Monday and Thursday they would fast for half the day. To explain why her mother instituted the practice, Esther said simply, "When you are in danger, you fast."

Close Call

One night, while they were taking some fresh air, they saw people coming. Immediately they returned to their trench, but the farmer did not have time to cover the top with hay. It turned out to be the police, who had been tipped off to the presence of Jews in the barn. They had little light to guide them, and did

not see the cover of the trench. Mrs. Rapaport and her daughters heard the commander tell the soldiers, "They are under the hay." The officers began raking the hay onto the trapdoor under which they were hiding, never finding their small makeshift bunker.

The police came back the next day and offered the farmer to hand over the Jews or face the consequences. This method had been successful with others who were hiding Jews, but since the Rapaports had not yet paid in full, the farmer did not give them up.

At this time the farmer would often tell them how dire the war had become, in order to prepare them for his request for a larger percentage of their properties. After the Germans bombed England he threatened to evict them, saying, "The English stocks are now worth nothing."

By the time the war was over, they had promised him another 25 percent of the family's properties.

Back in Kielce, Mrs. Rapaport had had her teeth hollowed out and hidden diamonds inside, which she used to pay the rest of the money to the farmer throughout the 27 months they spent on his property.

Her Family's Fate

On January 20, 1945, Soviet forces liberated the town where the Rapaports were hiding, and for the first time in over two years they saw the light of day and bathed themselves.

Slowly they learned what had become of the rest of the Rapaport family while they were in hiding. The family members who had South American papers had been detained first in the Pawiak prison in Warsaw and then, in Shevat 5703 (1943), transferred to the internment camp in Vittel, France.

At Vittel the refugees were able to send and receive mail, have visitors, and supplement their meager rations with Red Cross packages. They did not perform forced labor, and were permitted to organize classes and lectures. The camp had tennis courts, a library, a hospital, and stores for shopping.

The identity papers that the Rapaports had received from their cousin were issued by Rudolf Hugli, the Paraguayan consul in Zurich, who at that time was



Shaul and Mina Rapaport in Prague. Courtesy of Avery Stok

selling passports to anyone willing to pay an exorbitant fee. When Walter Meyer, consul general of Paraguay in Zurich, found out about Mr. Hugli's activities, he informed the government in Paraguay.

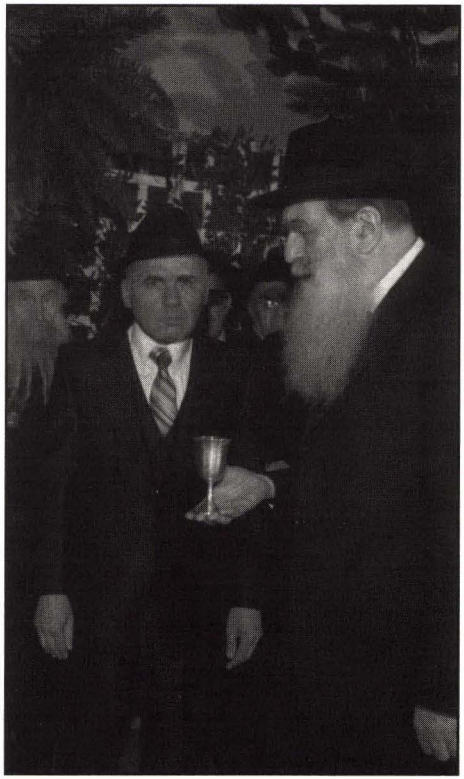
Mr. Hugli was dismissed from his post, and the Paraguayan government informed the Germans that there were false papers being sent to Polish citizens. They also provided a list of the legitimate Paraguayan citizens then in Europe. The papers of anyone who was not on the list should be assumed to be forgeries, they wrote.

In the spring of 5704 (1944) the Nazis in charge of Vittel began to examine the documents of those who claimed they were Paraguayan citizens. Those whose names did not appear on the list were taken to a local hotel and given a chance to contact any government that could vouch that they were a citizen of that country.

The news that Mr. Hugli's forgeries had been discovered spread through the grapevine among those working on rescue efforts. Unfortunately, there was very little they could do. When Mrs. Zalmanoff, who had miraculously made it to safety in New York, found out about the situation, she wrote to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, begging for her help: "May I turn to you, as our First Lady, with a plea on behalf of my father and his family?"

At one point the Germans gave the families another day to prove that they were in fact the South American citizens they claimed to be. It was the first night of Pesach, a Friday night, when their cousin Rabbi Shabsi Frankel found out about this last opportunity for a reprieve. On Shabbos morning he immediate-

ly took the train from New York to Washington, D.C., in a desperate effort to find someone who would vouch that the Rapaports were citizens of any willing country. All the government offices were closed for the weekend, however, and his attempt was unsuccessful.

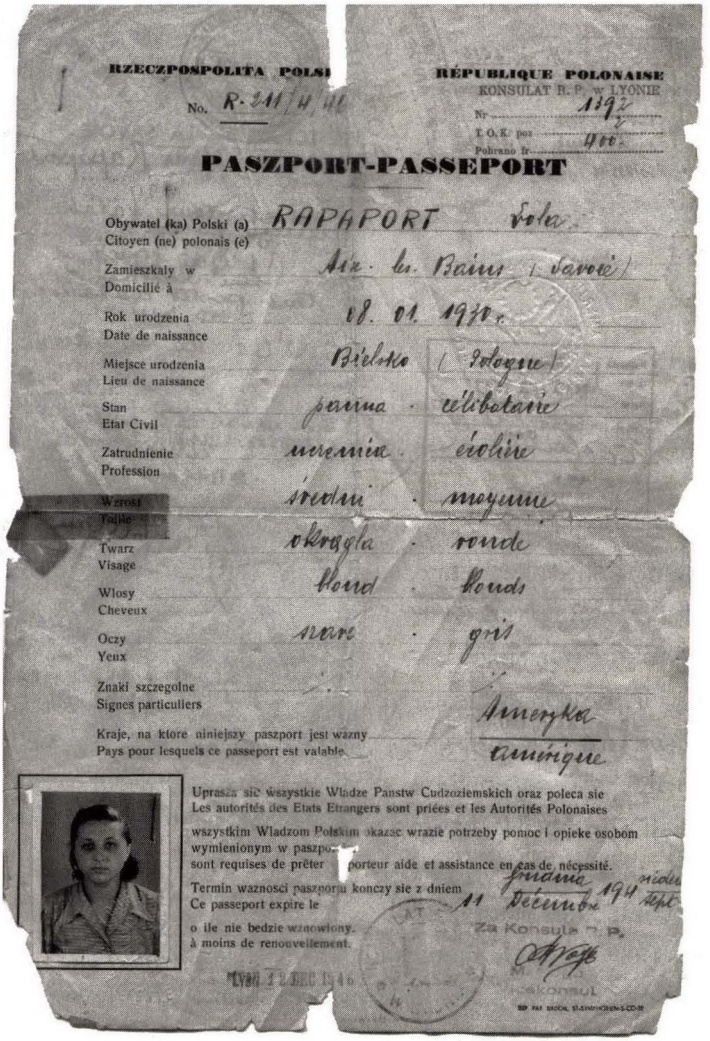


Rabbi Shabsi Frankel (right) at the wedding of Avery Stok. *Courtesy of Avery Stok*

Fifty members of the Rapaport family were transferred to the infamous Auschwitz extermination camp, where the Germans murdered them. Besides for the four sisters, some nieces, nephews, and cousins, only one brother, Shaul Rapaport, survived the war. Shaul was in business with his nephew Moshe Mendel, the son of his older brother. Moshe Mendel was detained by the Soviets, and when the war broke out, Shaul was making his way east to try to help him. Thus, at the end of September 1939, when Germany and the Soviet Union divided Poland, Shaul found himself on the Soviet side. The Soviets sent him, together with his nephew, to Siberia. Despite the harsh conditions, they both survived the war there. His wife and children, who ended up in Warsaw, perished.

After the war Shaul made his way to Prague, which had become a hub of Jewish life as refugees arrived in droves. There he met Mina Fortgang, the secretary of Rabbi Zev Vorhand. Rabbi Vorhand was caring for Jewish orphans in the city, providing them with food, clothing, and schooling.

In addition to these basic services, Rabbi Vorhand was secretly forging passports for the children so that they could leave the USSR. Ms. Fortgang, who spoke several languages and had connections in government, was instrumental in these efforts. Shaul was deeply impressed with Ms. Fortgang's dedication and



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PASZPORT-PASSEPORT

Obywatel (ka) Polski (a) / Citoyen (ne) polonais (e): RAPAPORT Sola
Zamieszkały w / Domicilié à: Aix-les-Bains (Savoie)
Rok urodzenia / Date de naissance: 18. 01. 1910 r.
Miejsce urodzenia / Lieu de naissance: Bielsko (Pologne)
Stan / Etat Civil: panna · célibataire
Zatrudnienie / Profession: urzędnik · écolier
Wzrost / Taille: średni · moyenne
Twarz / Visage: okrągła · ronde
Włosy / Cheveux: blond · blonds
Oczy / Yeux: szare · gris
Znaki szczególne / Signes particuliers:
Kraje, na które niniejszy paszport jest ważny / Pays pour lesquels ce passeport est valable: Ameryka · Amérique

Uprasza się wszystkie Władze Państw Cudzoziemskich oraz poleca się wszystkim Władzom Polskim okazać wrazie potrzeby pomoc i opiekę osobom wymienionym w paszporcie.
Les autorités des Etats Etrangers sont priées et les Autorités Polonaises sont requises de prêter [illegible] porteur aide et assistance en cas de nécessité.

Termin ważności paszportu kończy się z dniem / Ce passeport expire le: Środa 11 Grudnia 1946 roku
o ile nie będzie wznowiony. / à moins de renouvellement.

Za Konsula R. P.
Wicekonsul

LYON 12 DEC 1946

Rebbetzin Raichik's post-war transit papers.

virtue, which reminded him of the way his father had lived before the war. The two decided to wed.

Rabbi Vorhand officiated at their marriage in Prague. The couple eventually moved to Israel, though they kept in touch with Rabbi Vorhand for years afterward.

After the war, Shaul visited New York and went to see the Rebbe Rayatz together with his nephew Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanoff. "I saw a broken body, but

his two eyes were like fiery coals, a G-dly angel," Shaul said of the Rebbe.

"Shaul came to the Rebbe after the war very broken," Rabbi Zalmanoff told his family. "The Rebbe spoke to him with love about how it is a special responsibility on those who were saved from the inferno to follow the ways of their ancestors." Rabbi Zalmanoff said the Rebbe's words inspired Shaul and gave him the energy to lead a productive life. In Israel, Shaul started *Arigah Rapaport*, a textile company, with his nephew Moshe Mendel. Sadly, Shaul and his wife never had children of their own.



Rebbetzin Raichik (top right) with two of her sisters in France. *Courtesy of Avery Stok*

Returning Home

A week after the war ended, Mrs. Rapaport made her way back to Bielsko alone. During the war, Germans soldiers had lived in the family villa, but they fled when the war ended. The matriarch began to assess the family's situation to see what was left of their properties. Their textile factory had been nationalized, but their other holdings were still intact. She gave some of them to the farmer who hid them.

Mrs. Rapaport brought her daughters to join her, and immediately registered them in school. They quickly discovered that Poland was not a safe place for Jews, however. Returning to their prewar homes, Jews were met with severe outbursts of anti-Semitism and violence. Esther said her mother could not travel alone and needed protection in their home. Young orphans, with no one to protect them, were especially vulnerable.

Recha Sternbuch, a Swiss woman who had saved many Jews during the Holocaust, came to their city with blank passports in order to smuggle Jewish orphans



Dancing with family members at the wedding of his son Shimon (left to right): Shaul Rapaport, Sholom Raichik, Mark Stok, Rabbi Raichik, and Yankee Raichik, 13 Adar I, 5738 (February 20, 1978).

and young adults out of Poland. She made the Rapaport home her headquarters. The entire family became involved in filling out blank passports. Mr. Lefkowitz took an integral part in the effort as well, organizing papers and routes for them to escape to France.

Separating the two countries was the Olza River. When the first group was ready to depart, they approached the bridge. They had a few Czechoslovakian passports, but not nearly enough for everyone. Lea, together with several of the older women, took those passports and walked across the bridge with one or two children at a time. (The children were not required to have passports.) "On the other side we would hand over the children to those responsible for them there," Rebbetzin Raichik told Mr. David Tessel, a philanthropist and friend of the Raichik family. "We waited until the guards changed, and we did it again." The group of some four hundred youth made their way to Cieszyn, a border town in southern Poland near Czechoslovakia.

Eventually, when the authorities caught on, they had to find another way to cross the river. In certain places the water was shallow enough that an adult could wade across. They found a man to carry the children over between the

shifts. "The guy carried us on his back through a shallow stream," Esther recalled. Mrs. Rapaport sent her daughters in one of the groups, while she herself remained behind to help others.



With her sister Esther.

On safer ground, they breathed a sigh of relief. "I didn't want a bigger house," Esther said. "I didn't want more shoes or clothes. We were just happy to be alive."

The group then traveled to Bratislava, Slovakia, and from there to Prague, then finally to France. First they were in Strasbourg, and then in Aix-les-Bains, in eastern France. After several months Mrs. Rapaport arrived in the town, where she made sure to register her daughters for classes in French so that they could study in school.

Around this time the two older girls, Rutka and Shaindel, fell ill. Their diseases were complicated by the physical toll their time in hiding had taken. Rutka had rheumatic fever, a life-threatening disease caused by untreated strep throat. She traveled to her cousin in Switzerland in the hope of receiving better treatment, but passed away soon afterward and was buried there.

In France, Mrs. Rapaport received papers to immigrate to the United States. But there was one catch: the officials told her that she could take only her two youngest children with her. So she took Lea and Esther, while Shaindel made her way to Israel alone. Shaindel met and married Dovid Backenroth in Elul 5710 (August 1950), and settled in Tel Aviv.

New Life

Lea arrived in the United States in 5707 (1947), at the age of 18. She lived with her mother and sister in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, not far from her niece and nephew, Rabbi and Mrs. Zalmanoff.

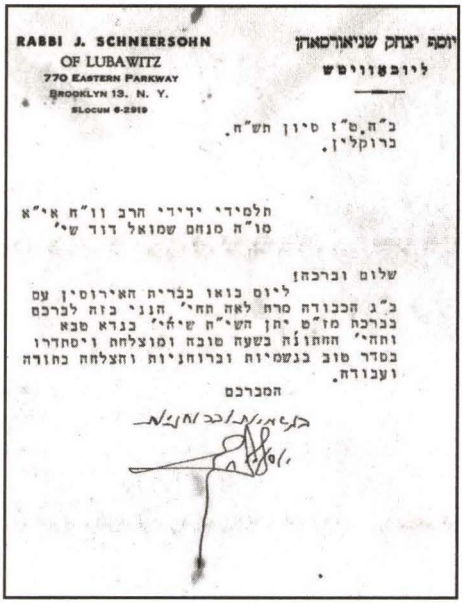
At first, all three worked at a seforim store on the Lower East Side in Manhattan, where they made tzitzis. After that, Lea got a job in a factory making holes in belts. At night the sisters attended the Beis Yaakov in Williamsburg, where they continued the Jewish education that had been interrupted by the Nazis eight years before.

Several family members urged Lea to marry a student from the Mir Yeshivah whose future would be in the business world. They felt she needed someone who would support her respectably. But Lea did not like the idea. "As I recall my father," she said, "he would want that I should marry a *chassidishe bochur* with a full beard."

When Rabbi Zalmanoff suggested the shidduch with Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik, the Rebbe Rayatz asked Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet, a close friend of Rabbi Raichik's and a faculty member at the Lubavitch Yeshivah, to meet with Lea before they began dating.

Rabbi Bukiet called Mrs. Rapaport and asked if he could visit for some cake and coffee. She agreed, and he came with his new wife, Esther. They spent a few minutes talking with the mother and daughter, and left.

Mrs. Bukiet later recalled, "I didn't say a word in the conversation, because the Rebbe Rayatz told my husband to speak to her, and not me." Rebbetzin Raichik later said that she never knew who sent the Bukiets and what their visit was all about.



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ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי חרב וו"ח אי"א
סו"ח מנחם שמואל דור שי'

שלום וברכה!
ליום בואו בברית האירוסין עם
ב"ג הכבודה מרת לאה תחי' הנני בזה לברכם
בברכה מז"מ יתן השי"ח שיחי' בנדא סבא
ותחי' החתונה בשעה טובה ומוצלחת ויסתדרו
בסדר טוב בגשמיות וברוחניות והצלחה בתורה
ועבודה.

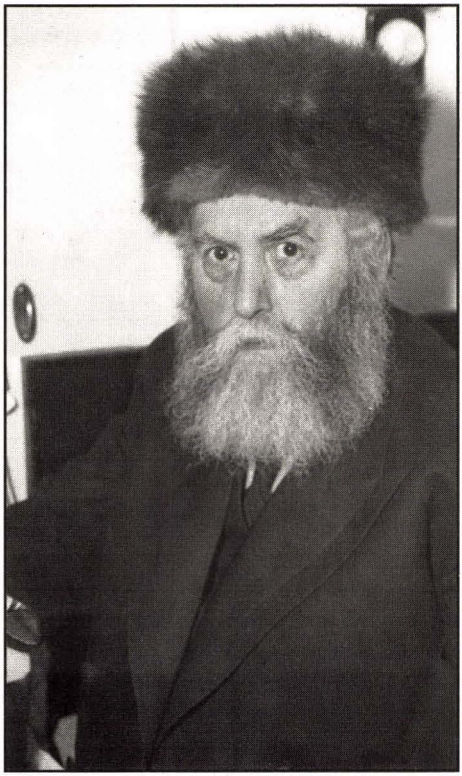
המברכם

The Rebbe Rayatz's berachah for the engagement of Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik.

"He came with his wife and I answered the questions," she said. "Though it was an unusual social visit, I didn't ask any questions." When Rabbi Bukiet returned with a good report, Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe, who responded: "Regarding your inquiry about the suggestion for a shidduch with Miss Lea Rapaport, the general idea is good.... Hashem should give both of you success, materially and spiritually."

On Erev Shavuos 5708 (1948) they agreed to marry. (For many years Rabbi Raichik would commemorate this date by purchasing Rebbetzin Raichik flowers.) Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe about their planned engagement, and received the reply (Sivan 8, 5708 [1948]), "In response to your question, it is good [to become engaged]. It should be with mazel tov in material and spiritual matters."

Once the engagement became official, the Rebbe wrote another letter (Sivan 16): "On the day you became engaged to your fiancée, the esteemed Miss Lea, I want to bless you with mazel tov. May G-d make it [the engagement] in good mazel. The wedding should be in a good and auspicious time, and may you settle in good order, materially and spiritually, with success in Torah and service of Hashem."



The Rebbe Rayatz, 1940. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

Rabbi Yosef Wineberg related that he heard the Rebbe Rayatz remark that if the young woman agreed to the marriage, she was obviously "a maven in quality."

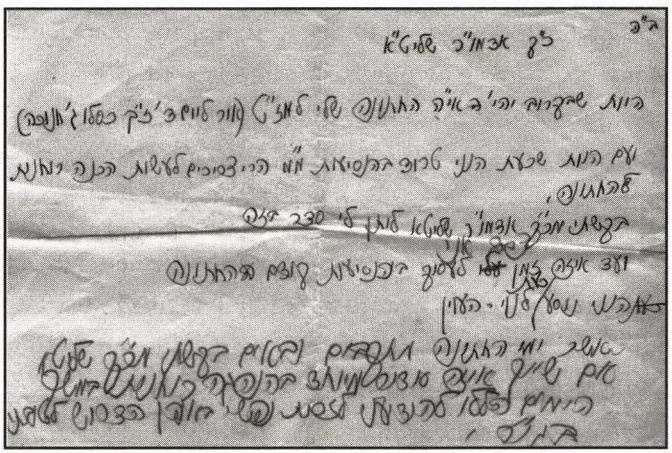
In a private audience immediately following his engagement, Rabbi Raichik asked the Rebbe about a wedding date.

"The month of Kislev," the Rebbe replied.

"Could I continue my travels?" Rabbi Raichik asked.

"Not only could you, but you should," the Rebbe said.

In a letter to Rabbi Ashkenazi, Rabbi Raichik explained, "I wanted to be with the Rebbe for 12 Tammuz. However, I was told that if the Rebbe advises you to travel, you should travel as soon as possible and not wait. So I left on the first day of Tammuz, and returned a few days before Rosh Hashanah."



A draft of Rabbi Raichik's letter to the Rebbe about his upcoming wedding ***(see p. 336).***

The engaged couple set the wedding for Chanukah, to which the Rebbe gave



Placing the veil over Rebbetzin Raichik's face.

his blessing (Tishrei 25, 5709 [1948]). When Rabbi Raichik asked again if he should continue his travels after the month of Tishrei, the Rebbe responded with an emphatic *yes* (7 Cheshvan): "I am requesting that you visit various locales, and in each place, go to the shuls and study halls and inspire the people there to set aside time to learn Torah, each according to their ability. You are asked especially to speak publicly about the education and conduct of the children. Convey to them my blessings that G-d will help them in all their necessities, materially and spiritually."

As the wedding day approached, Rabbi Raichik penned a letter to the Rebbe:

> *My wedding day is approaching, to mazel tov (on the 27th of Kislev, the third day of Chanukah), and currently I am busy with traveling [for the Rebbe]. However, there are spiritual preparations to do before the wedding. Until when should I continue my travels?*
>
> *I would also like to ask the Rebbe if there is some kind of regimen in spiritual matters [that I should follow] during these days. Give me merit by telling me the way to benefit materially and spiritually.*



The head table at the wedding during the saying of the Sheva Berachos.

The Rebbe advised him to continue traveling until the 15th day of Kislev; then, he wrote, "do all you need to for the wedding, to a mazel tov, materially and spirituality." That left Rabbi Raichik 12 days to prepare.

Shortly before the wedding he asked the Rebbe if he should observe the custom of fasting on one's wedding day, since fasting is forbidden during Chanukah. The Rebbe replied (20 Kislev), "You should arrange to fast on Friday [preceding Chanukah]."

Several days before the wedding, Rabbi Raichik had a private audience with the Rebbe to receive a berachah. The next day Lea went with her mother for a berachah. At the beginning of the audience the Rebbe asked Mrs. Rapaport to please sit. She knew that it was not the custom to sit in the presence of a Rebbe, and refused. However, Rabbi Simpson, the Rebbe's aide, told her, "When the Rebbe says to sit, one should sit." She did.

The day before the wedding, the Rebbe wrote another letter to the couple, showering them with blessings for their future life and work to strengthen Yiddishkeit. "On the day of your marriage, I bless you with mazel tov, mazel tov.



Dancing at the wedding.

May the wedding be in a good and auspicious time. May you settle into a good and fortunate life with an abundance of livelihood and success in your activities."

The wedding was held in Little Hungary, on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Sadly, there were few family members to attend on either side; it was mostly Chabad chassidim who came.

"They danced like nothing I have ever seen," recalled the groom's cousin Chana. "They danced with such intensity that the floor shook. They danced with such kavanah; they were dancing with tears of joy in their eyes. Most of them were orphans, with no families, yet they all hoped for a bright future."

Following their sheva berachos, the Rebbe advised the new couple to go to a resort (3 Teves): "In response to your letter, surely you are going with your wife, the rebbetzin [to a resort]. It is proper to go for a while to rest in Lakewood. While you are there, I am certain that you will find of interest a visit to the yeshivah [Beth Medrash Govoha] and the students who learn there."

Lea's sister Esther later married Mr. Mordechai Markel (Mark) Stok in 5712 (1952).

[PART V]

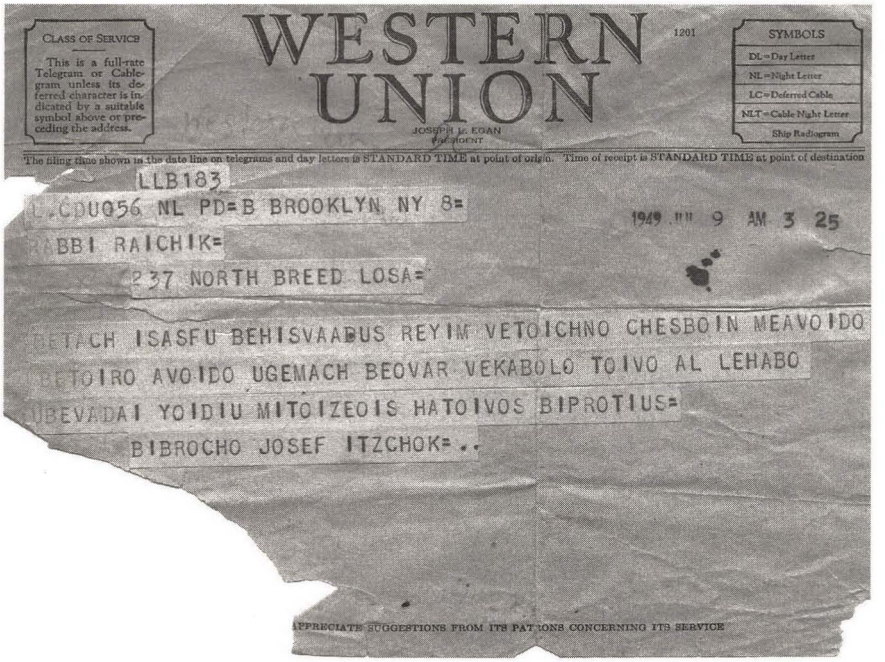
"The Rebbe Sent Us"

After the wedding, Rabbi Raichik needed a base from which to continue his work. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (who later became the seventh Chabad Rebbe), known as the Ramash, and Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodstein, secretary of the Rebbe Rayatz, suggested that the Raichiks move to California.

They might as well have suggested Australia. At that time the West Coast was a wasteland as far as Jewish life was concerned. Establishing a chassidic home there would have been a monumental challenge for anyone, but for two Holocaust survivors with almost no family support, it seemed impossible.

Rabbi Raichik, however, did not hesitate. Having visited S. Francisco several times, his first thought was to move there. Around that time he wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz about his travels in the New York area, without mentioning California, and the Rebbe replied, acknowledging his activities and mentioning that his future lay in California. The Raichiks were given a choice between S. Francisco and Los Angeles. "My father gave the choice to my mother, who chose Los Angeles, since there was a larger Jewish community," said their daughter Suri Klyne.

"From time to time you should travel to outlying areas of Los Angeles, as is appropriate for your work," the Rebbe wrote (Shevat 2, 5709 [1949]), "May Hashem strengthen your health and give you success in your work to awaken the


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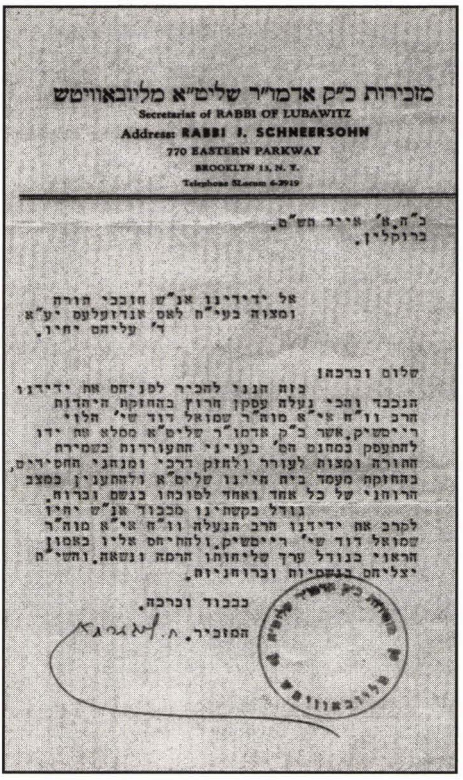
The Rebbe Rayatz's telegram to the young couple, who had moved to Los Angeles just a month earlier.

hearts of our dear fellow *anash* and G-d-fearing Jews, and to help strengthen the ways of Chassidus."

As the newlyweds were making their travel plans, Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Isaac Hodakov, an aide of the Rebbe Rayatz, informed Rabbi Raichik of the Rebbe's recommendation that they travel via train in a sleeper car. They purchased tickets for the Pennsylvania Railroad to Chicago, and planned to take the Santa Fe Railroad from there to California.

In a private audience before they left, Rabbi Raichik told the Rebbe that he wanted to stop in Chicago for a week to visit relatives and nearby communities in Illinois and Wisconsin. Rebbetzin Raichik was present as well, and perhaps the Rebbe sensed that she was not excited about the idea. She recalled how he smiled and said to her, "What's the hurry? You will be with family in Chicago. Why can't you stay?"

For Rebbetzin Raichik, moving to California was a very difficult decision. "I didn't want to be so far from my family," she said. "In New York I had a moth-



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ומצוה בעי"ת לאס אנדזשעלעס יע"א
ד' עליהם יחיו.

שלום וברכה!
בזה הנני להכיר לפניכם את ידידינו
הנכבד והכי נעלה עסקן חרוץ בהחזקת היהדות
הרב וו"ח אי"א מוה"ר שמואל דוד שי' הלוי
ריישיק, אשר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א מסלא שת ידו
להתעסק בכמה חס' בעניני חטעוררות בשמירת
התורה ומצות לעורר ולחזק הרבי ומנחגי החסידים,
בהחזקת מעמד בית חייבו של"א ולהתעניין במצב
הרוחני של כל אחד ואחד למוכחו בנעם וברוח.
נגדל בקשתינו מכבוד אנ"ש יחיו
לקרב את ידידינו הרב הנעלה וו"ח אי"א מוה"ר
שמואל דוד שי' ריישיק, ולהחיסס אליו באסוף
הראוי בגודל ערך שליחותו הרמת ונשגב, וחש"ח
יצליחם בגשמיות וברוחניות.
בכבוד וברכה.
המזכיר.

Letter from the Rebbe Rayatz's secretariat welcoming the Raichiks to Los Angeles (see p. 342).

er, sister, and some cousins. And I was tired. It was after the war. We had just come from Poland and had been in New York only a year at that time. But my mother pushed me to go."

On Thursday, Adar 2, 5709 (March 3, 1949), the Raichiks arrived in Los Angeles. They were the first shluchim on the West Coast (although the concept of shlichus, as it is known today, did not yet exist).

The Rebbe Rayatz sent them a telegram (24 Adar):

> *Surely you organized a chassidic gathering where you discussed your activities in Torah, avodah and good deeds of the past, and the acceptance of good resolutions for the future. Certainly you will report the good outcomes in detail.*

"Shluchim. Shliach. What is this word 'shliach'?" Rebbetzin Raichik said in a 5742 (1982) interview, describing her first reaction to hearing about their mission to Los Angeles. "Such an important-sounding word. I didn't coin it, and I didn't make it up. My husband told me, *'Der Rebbe hot unz geshikt,'* the Rebbe sent us, so I packed two suitcases. My clothing [was] in one and my linens in the other, and I came [to Los Angeles]."

She recalled traveling three days by train: "We got off the train, and what do you typically see when you get off at Grand Central in New York? A tunnel, buildings. And as soon as we got off here, we saw an island with palm trees. It was very nice. That was the first thing I saw – the palm trees."

Though there was little Jewish infrastructure in the city, there were several

Jewish neighborhoods – Boyle Heights, West Adams, and the "West Side," now called Beverly-Fairfax.

Having made the decision to come, Rebbetzin Raichik graciously accepted her new life far from her family. "I did not consider it hard, but some would," she said in 2007. "In past generations, physical reality was hard, but people still accomplished so much. They'd travel hundreds of miles by horse and buggy just to see someone. Their accomplishments give us inspiration, because we have it so much easier."

Initially the Raichiks stayed at the Lebow Hotel in Boyle Heights, while they looked for more suitable housing.

"On our first Purim," Rebbetzin Raichik recalled, "my mother sent me cakes by train from New York, because I couldn't bake in the hotel."

The Rebbe Rayatz guided them throughout. In a letter (20 Adar), the Rebbe wrote: "Concerning the question about the type of apartment to get, you should select a furnished apartment. If on Shabbos you need to be on the other side of town, you can surely find a place to stay there."

After several weeks they moved into a small house next to the Breed Street Shul in Boyle Heights. Among their neighbors were Moshe and Dassy Weiss. Mr. Weiss assisted Rebbetzin Raichik with koshering her stovetop grates.

On Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5709 (1949) Rabbi Raichik received his official credentials as a representative of the Rebbe Rayatz sent to strengthen Torah and mitzvos, as well as to raise funds for Chabad activities.

The Breed Street Shul, also known as Congregation Talmud Torah of Los Angeles, was the largest Orthodox synagogue on the West Coast from 5675 (1915) to 5711 (1951). Headed by Rabbi Osher Zilberstein, the shul had an afternoon Talmud Torah, where children who attended public school would come to learn Jewish subjects.

Also in Boyle Heights was the Kornwalt Shul, under Rabbi Tzeirlin, a Lubavitcher chassid whose position Rabbi Zilberstein had arranged. Rabbi Tzeirlin had lived in the home of the Rogatchover Gaon, Rabbi Yosef Rosin, for seven years, and was himself a renowned Torah scholar. Celebrations for chassidic holidays were held frequently in his shul's social hall.

Boyle Heights was the city's most populous Jewish community. Postwar Los Angeles was attracting young American Jews from the East Coast, as well as Holocaust survivors. Rebbetzin Raichik recalled that it was a nice, diverse community, but that Jewish observance was weak.

"People didn't know what it meant to have a mezuzah on the door," she said, "to not be ashamed to be Jewish."

One local was Berel Weiss, who had moved to Los Angeles in 1948 from New York. In New York he never had a chance to meet the Rebbe Rayatz; however, he would say that he was delighted to meet the Rebbe's shliach. Mr. Weiss immediately grew close to Rabbi Raichik. "The Rebbe Rayatz sent Rabbi Raichik to fundraise for Chabad in New York and to strengthen Yiddishkeit [in California]," he said. "But Rabbi Raichik did much more than he was asked to do."

He described what it was like for the survivors to meet the Raichiks: "When we looked at Rabbi Raichik, we recalled our homes and lives prior to World War II. His entire life was encompassed by Torah and Chassidus. We were especially impressed with the Chabad approach to davening. We saw him as a holy Jew."

One woman who met Rabbi Raichik in the 1950s would regularly recall how she and her sister-in-law used to sit on their front lawn during the hot summer days in typical Los Angeles attire. "We came from Europe, but after the war, people were very lax with many matters of *tznius* [modest attire]," she said.

Rabbi Raichik would come to their home and learn with her husband. The first time they saw him approaching, the two women rushed into the house to change their clothing. Two days later, when he returned, the scenario repeated itself. From that point on, they became more mindful of dressing modestly.

At the time Rabbi Raichik was in his early thirties, yet the community in Los Angeles viewed him as a trusted father figure in whom they could confide.

"We all came to Los Angeles without parents," said Holocaust survivor Aharon Leibowitz (Weiss). "Rabbi Raichik was like a father to us. He cared for every one of us and loved us, and we loved him."

Yitzchok and Frieda Bastomski arrived in Los Angeles from Europe around the time the Raichiks moved to the city. Mrs. Bastomski recalled that on their first day in Los Angeles she had a question for a rabbi. "I turned to Hashem and asked,



Rabbi Raichik with Mr. Berel Weiss. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

'Who is a proper rabbi here?'"

She looked out her window and saw Rabbi Raichik hurrying by. He looked like the rabbis she remembered from her hometown in Europe. Thus began a close relationship between the Raichik and Bastomski families that endures to this day.

"Our community was home to so many broken Jews who survived the war and had lost everything," said Rabbi Chaim Baruch Rubin, rabbi of the Etz Chaim synagogue of Hancock Park and a longtime resident of Los Angeles. "Rabbi Raichik himself was a *yid* who suffered immensely through that period, yet he settled in Los Angeles with the purpose of strengthening other Jews. On a daily basis, through the joys and tragedies, he was there. You didn't have to be a Lubavitcher. He was at your side through all the very important times in one's life."

Los Angeles Guidance

The Raichiks' mission was twofold: they were to work as a couple to organize Jewish activities in the city with the aim of strengthening observance, and Rabbi Raichik was to continue his visits to various cities.

He would travel frequently and hold impromptu chassidic gatherings with many people. One individual whom he met wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz about the encounter, and the Rebbe expressed his delight that the man had established a relationship with Rabbi Raichik (*Igros*, vol. 10, p. 145).

After Rabbi Raichik sent the Rebbe a report, he thanked him for his good work (17 Sivan): "You should expand the numbers of those with whom you are in touch and their families, and you should seek virtue in each individual. The central concept for a devoted student of Chabad is to cherish his fellow Jew and bring him closer to Judaism, to give him a wise path and means of his own to increase his diligence in goodness, and to properly guide his family."

Two days later the Rebbe wrote again, this time referring to Rebbetzin Raichik's activities: "Your letter from last Motzaei Shabbos gave me much satisfaction. I bless my colleague and his wife, the rebbetzin, with success in all of the detailed activities. I was especially happy that you are organizing a women's group. This is very important."

He also gave more detailed advice about the approach they should take: "It is not necessary to make it burdensome for the women by making many demands on their daily conduct. Rather, explain to them that there are certain actions that can never be rectified – for example, when a child is born without the mother properly observing the mitzvah of mikvah. Speak to them in a warm and friendly way."

Ten days later the Rebbe encouraged her to establish a regular women's group, using "all forms of publicity to widen the impact of her work." They should also be working with the youth, he wrote, doing activities that are "appropriate for them."



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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ז סיון תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

ידידי תלמידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!
מכתביך וכון הגיעני והתענגתי
מפעולותיך תסוכות ובברי ההתעוררות ברבים
ועם יחידים.
חש"ח יצליחך בעבודתך הכי
גדולה ורצוי' למקום ב"ה ותשתדל להרחיב חוג
ההיכרות עם הבעלי בתים ובני ביתם, בעפ"נען
אין יעדערן א מעלה.
דער עיקר העיקרים פון א חב"ד
חסידות'ן עובד אין, קענען און לינן אין מקרב
זיין און מחבב זיין א איד'ן און נעבן איס
א קלונען דרך ואופן ווי אליין צו שפיינן
אין סוב און ווי צו מדריך זיין כני ביתו.
חש"ח יחזק את בריאותך ובריאות
זוגתך תרבנית תחי'

The Rebbe Rayatz wrote to Rabbi Raichik about his shlichus in Los Angeles.

Outreach with Holocaust survivors, in particular those who had chassidic backgrounds, remained one of Rabbi Raichik's central activities. He constantly urged them to reconnect to their roots.

Last Tishrei with the Rebbe Rayatz

In Av 5709 (1949) Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe, asking if they could spend the month of Tishrei with him in Brooklyn. The Rebbe answered, "I agree to your proposal about traveling for the forthcoming Elul and Tishrei. May G-d aid and bless you and your rebbetzin with all of your needs."

When Rabbi Raichik arrived in 770, the Ramash asked him, "Why did you come?" He answered that the Rebbe had given him permission to come, to which the Ramash responded, "If I would be in charge, I would not have given you permission."

From that Tishrei, the last before the Rebbe's passing, Rabbi Raichik had



Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (who later became the seventh Chabad Rebbe), known as the Ramash. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

many lasting memories. On the first night of Rosh Hashanah the Rebbe spent many hours praying upstairs in his living quarters; the tablecloth was wet with tears. Afterwards the Ramash came down to the shul on the first floor of 770, announcing that all were permitted to go upstairs and wish the Rebbe a *shanah tovah*. On Yom Kippur eve the Ramash announced that anyone who wished to receive the customary *lekach,* honey cake distributed with a blessing for the year, could go to the Rebbe Rayatz's room.

Rabbi Raichik would tell how Rabbi Rodstein, one of the Rebbe's aides, went in before him, and Rabbi Raichik heard him weeping uncontrollably in the Rebbe's presence. Rabbi Rodstein, who had no children, seldom showed his feelings, and Rabbi Raichik surmised he had been asking for a blessing to have children.

That year the arrangements for davening were radically different. In past years it had been the Rebbe's custom to daven in his room, with the door open, during the Shacharis and Musaf prayers of Yom Kippur. After a break, he would usually come to the main room to receive an *aliyah* during Minchah. That Yom Kippur, however, the Rebbe's door remained closed for many hours, and people began to worry.

Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson said, "The sun is about to set, and we haven't davened Minchah."

In reply, Rabbi Yochonon Gordon quipped, "G-d has two *zuns* [Yiddish for

sun and *son*]; one is in the sky and one is on earth. The sun in the sky will obey the wishes of the son on earth."

Shortly thereafter a small minyan was called into the Rebbe Rayatz's room, and the Rebbe received his aliyah. When the Ramash urged the *chazan* to hurry during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh, the Rebbe signaled that he should continue at a regular pace. Again, during Neilah, he requested that the normal pace be maintained, though the fast was nearly over. "Napoleon's March," which preceded the blowing of the shofar at the end of Yom Kippur, was sung in a loud and unhurried fashion, at the Rebbe's request.

While breaking the fast, the Rebbe described the unique ability of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, to verbally convey an image so vivid that the subject almost came alive (*Sefer Hasichos 5710*, p. 346). The Rebbe continued that the Rebbe Rashab said, "Until now I knew it, but today I experienced it tangibly!" When asked what he meant, the Rebbe Rashab cryptically replied, "Seeing the face of the Rav."

The Ramash later commented that the Rebbe Rayatz's retelling the story about his father seeing "the Rav" indicated that the Rebbe Rashab was at his son's, the Rebbe Rayatz's, side at that time. This was why the Rebbe had refused to leave his room for the duration of Minchah.

After Yom Kippur, Rabbi Raichik was to go to New Haven. At the time a lulav and esrog set cost $18, a substantial sum. Often two people would buy a set to share. Rabbi Raichik asked someone to arrange this for him, since he would be away.

When he returned to 770 on Erev Sukkos, however, he was told to go upstairs to the Rebbe, where to his surprise he received a lulav and esrog from the Rebbe Rayatz. From then on, each year he was given a set by the Rebbe (the Ramash) as well.

That Simchas Torah, the Rebbe asked that the customary farbrengen before Hakafos be held in a larger room to accommodate more people. The room was packed to capacity, and many waited outside, hoping to gain entrance. Some stood outside throughout the entire farbrengen just for a chance to see the Rebbe. Rebbetzin Raichik recalled Yisroel Chanowitz, who had been in Shanghai with her husband, scaling the outside wall of 770 to reach a window on the second



Reb Pinye Althaus. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

floor in order to get inside.

That farbrengen was unique; many people asked for berachos, and the Rebbe, seated at the front of the room, urged many to make a *l'chaim*. The Rebbe wept when the chassidim sang the Alter Rebbe's niggun. He watched Rabbi Raichik make kiddush and say l'chaim.

Afterwards the Rebbe asked him if he had eaten, and when he didn't reply, the Rebbe pushed his own plate of chicken toward Rabbi Raichik, motioning for him to eat. The Ramash, seated at the Rebbe's side, urged Rabbi Raichik to stay where he was and eat the food. But, unwilling to eat in front of the Rebbe, he stepped back.

Seizing the opportunity, Rabbi Pinye Althaus, a Chabad activist in Israel, stepped quickly forward, took the chicken and ate it. Rabbi Moshe Groner described how, when the Rebbe Rayatz saw Rabbi Raichik's empty plate, Rabbi Althaus' two full cheeks, and Rabbi Raichik asking for a piece to be returned, he burst into laughter. Since his health was in severe decline and he did not normally laugh heartily, this humorous occurrence brought some respite.

(Rabbi Raichik's son Abi said that he heard that in 5713 (1953) the Rebbe asked Rabbi Althaus, "When a Rebbe [Rayatz] gives his food, it is for a blessing. Why did you grab it away [from Rabbi Raichik]?" Rabbi Althaus answered, "The blessing is working! I just heard that the Raichiks had twins!")

After Hakafos, the Ramash entered the shul on the first floor and danced with all present. When asked by family members to come upstairs to eat the Yom Tov meal, he evaded the request and continued to dance.

On the day of Simchas Torah, although physicians warned the Rebbe to keep



Rabbi Raichik speaks at a Lubavitch Youth Organization gathering, circa 1960. Also seen on the right are Rabbis Dovid Raskin and Moshe Pesach Goldman.

the farbrengen short, he spoke at great length. His daughter Chana Gourary sent a wristwatch to the table to remind him of the time. The Ramash took the watch and placed it in his pocket.

When Mrs. Gourary returned to the farbrengen again, the Rebbe Rayatz asked, "Chanale, what do you want?" When she reminded him of the medical warnings, he answered, "What can I do? It is hard to part from chassidim. I will finish soon."

Choosing a Name

Because the Raichiks were expecting their first child, they did not return to Los Angeles immediately after Tishrei. Instead Rebbetzin Raichik stayed with her mother in New York while Rabbi Raichik resumed his travels on the East Coast.

On Chanukah she gave birth to a son. The Rebbe Rayatz immediately sent a letter blessing both mother and baby.

A dilemma then presented itself. The parents could not decide what to name their baby. Rabbi Raichik wanted to give the name Sholom Dovber, after the Rebbe Rashab, while the grandmother Mrs. Rapaport felt strongly that the baby should be named after a family member.

Rabbi Raichik withheld their predicament from the Rebbe. But the grandmother apparently mentioned it to the Zalmanoffs, and word traveled along the grapevine until it reached the Rebbe.

In a private audience that same week, the Rebbe suggested to Rabbi Raichik that the baby be named after his maternal grandfather, Mrs. Rapaport's late husband. When Rabbi Raichik asked if the baby should also be given the name of his father, the Rebbe told him that there would be other opportunities.

The bris was held on Shabbos, and the baby was named Avrohom Abba.



Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik with their first child, Abi.



Mrs. Sima Rapaport in the United States, circa 1960. *Courtesy of Avery Stok*

Everyone present was ecstatic, especially the grandmother.

When the Raichiks had another son in 5714 (1954), their daughter Suri said that Mrs. Rapaport wanted to name him after Rabbi Elazar of Worms, known as the Baal Harokeach, an ancestor of the Rapaport family. Family tradition tells of the Rokeach assuring his descendants that he would intercede on their behalf if they visited his grave. When the war began, Mrs. Rapaport had sent a messenger to daven at his grave. "My grandmother credited him with arousing Divine intervention to be saved from the Holocaust," said Suri.



Rebbetzin Raichik with her son Elozor.

Rabbi Raichik again wanted to name the child after the Rebbe Rashab, but the Rebbe sided with the grandmother, echoing the Rebbe Rayatz that there would be more children. Finally, in 5724 (1963), they named their sixth son Sholom Dovber. In the family, Rabbi Raichik's desire became an ongoing joke: "We would have continued to have boys until we gave the name Sholom Dovber."

It should be noted that when the Raichik twins were born in 1953, the Rebbe wrote that he could not suggest which names to give. "From Above they give the father and mother the idea of which name to give their children, as befits their soul," the Rebbe wrote on Shevat 6, 5713 (January 21, 1953). "You should call the children whatever names you agree upon with your wife." They named the twins Shimon, after Rabbi Raichik's father, and Yosef Yitzchak ("Yossi"), after the Rebbe Rayatz.

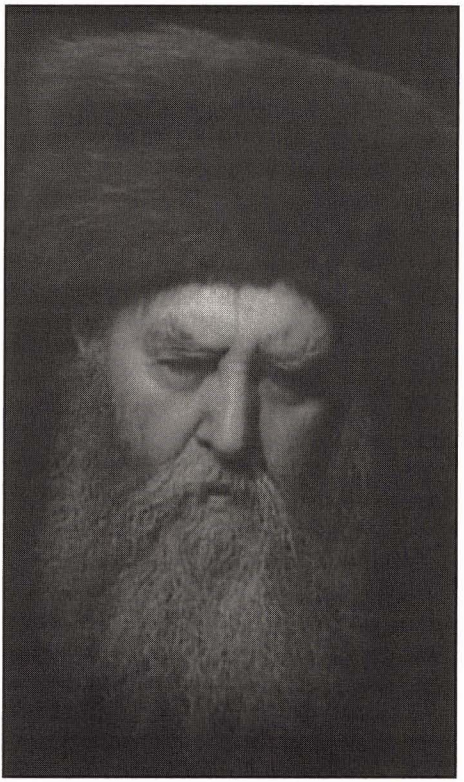
[PART VI]

Setting & Rising Suns

Rabbi Raichik received his last letter from the Rebbe Rayatz (dated Teves 27, 5710 [1950]) just two weeks before the Rebbe's *histalkus* (passing). He devoted the rest of his life to fulfilling the tasks the Rebbe outlined in it:

> *May you succeed in your work and travels. Surely you will remain in contact with everyone you met on your visits, and encourage them to join chassidic gatherings, and inspire them in the learning of Chassidus and reading the talks [of our Rebbes].*
>
> *They should make an effort that their children read from printed material such as* Talks and Tales *and other publications [for children] that they can comprehend.*
>
> *You will surely remain organized about to whom, when, and what you need to write.*
>
> *May G-d make you successful.*
>
> *May the one whom I cherish be successful, materially and spiritually.*
>
> *[From the] one who seeks your welfare and blesses you in all of your personal matters and matters related to your trips.*

A few weeks after Rabbi Raichik's passing, his wife found this letter in one of his *kapotes*, together with the 5712 (1952) letter from the Rebbe mentioned earlier. It had been folded and unfolded so many times that it had fallen apart and been taped together.



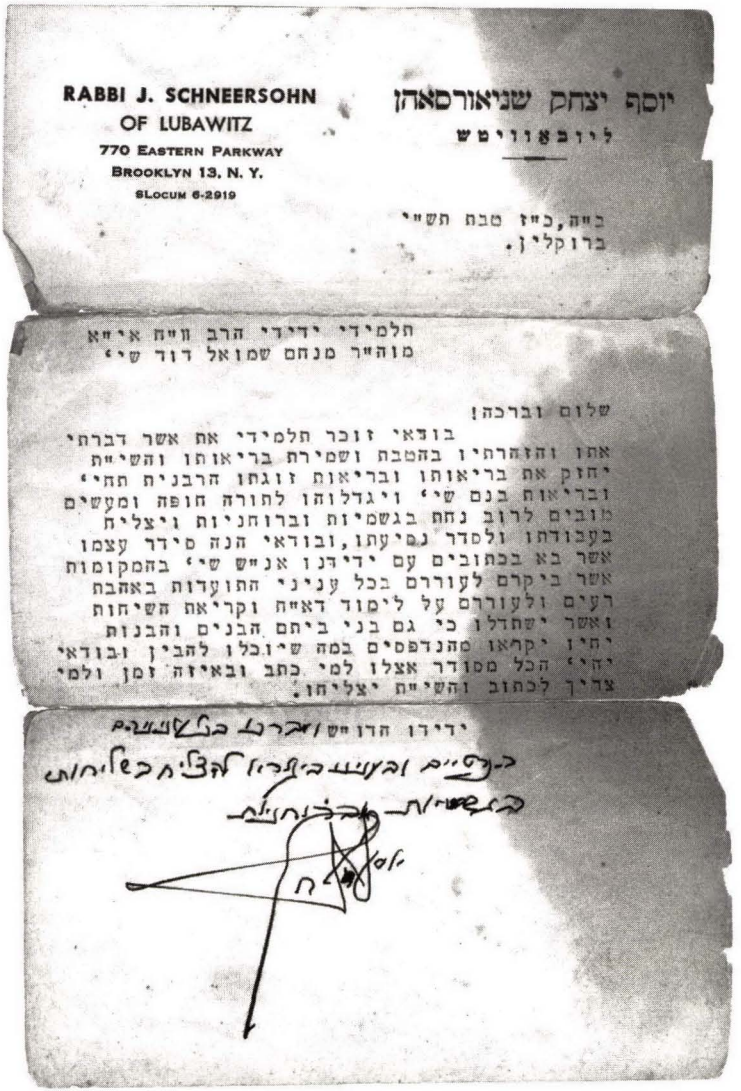
The Rebbe Rayatz in the United States. Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

On Shabbos, the 10th of Shevat, Rabbi Raichik was in Chicago, staying with Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht, the local Chabad representative. After Shabbos they received the news that the Rebbe Rayatz had passed away. Immediately, together with several others, Rabbi Raichik caught a plane to New York to attend the funeral.

Despite his grief, Rabbi Raichik continued his work uninterrupted. In a letter to Rabbi Rodstein, an aide of the Rebbe Rayatz and later of the Rebbe, he described his commitment to the Rebbe Rayatz's legacy. He wrote that he was awaiting Rabbi Hecht, who would join him on a trip to Milwaukee, and that he would be stopping in various cities – Manitowoc, Minneapolis, Kansas City, and Wichita – before returning to Los Angeles after Purim.

A month later he had already composed a report of his activities to the Ramash, who would soon become the Rebbe, describing his accomplishments in S. Louis, Kansas City, and Detroit, as well as the dedication of a publication.

Rabbi Yisroel Gordon recalled that during the visit to S. Louis, Rabbi Raichik met with Rabbi Menachem Zvi Eichenstein, the city's chief rabbi. When Rabbi Eichenstein asked why he was visiting S. Louis, Rabbi Raichik replied that he was raising funds in support of the Rebbe Rayatz, *hakam* (an honorific title used



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ב"ה, כ"ז טבת תש"י
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ר' אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

בודאי זוכר תלמידי את אשר דברתי
אתו והזהרתיו בהטבת ושמירת בריאותו והשי"ת
יחזק את בריאותו ובריאות זוגתו הרבנית תחי'
ובריאות בנם שי' ויגדלוהו לתורה חופה ומעשים
טובים לרוב נחת בגשמיות וברוחניות ויצליח
בעבודתו ולסדר נסיעתו, ובודאי הנה סידר עצמו
אשר בא בכתובים עם ידידנו אנ"ש שי' בהמקומות
אשר ביקרם לעוררם בכל ענייני התועדות באהבת
רעים ולעוררם על ליסוד דא"ח וקריאת השיחות
ואשר ישתדלו כי גם בני ביתם הבנים והבנות
יחיו יקראו מהנדפסים במה שיוכלו להבין ובודאי
יחי' הכל מסודר אצלו למי כתב ובאיזה זמן ולמי
צריך לכתוב והשי"ת יצליחו.

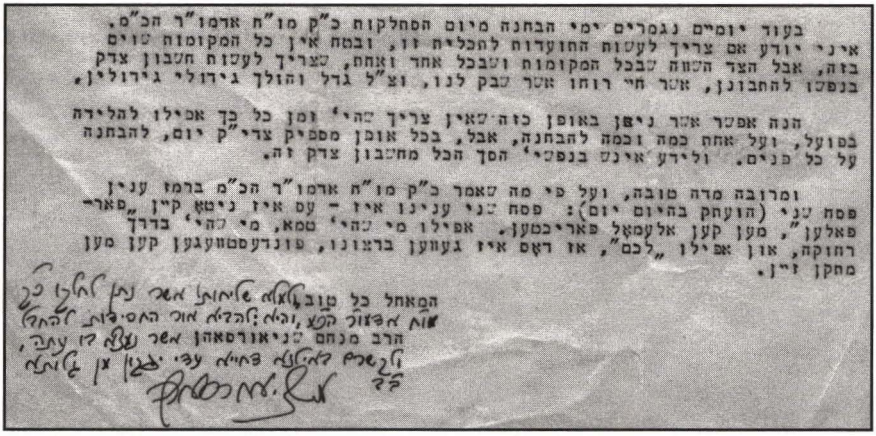
ידידו הדו"ש

The Rebbe Rayatz's last letter to Rabbi Raichik, which he kept in his pocket for over four decades (see p. 353).

during the first year after someone has passed away).

"How can you collect funds for a person who passed away?" Rabbi Eichenstein asked.

The simplicity and sincerity of Rabbi Raichik's reply touched him deeply: "I cannot say what level the Rebbe has attained in heaven, but his work here still continues. This is why I am raising funds."



The Rebbe's first letter to Rabbi Raichik, telling him that he should continue his shlichus.

At the time there was some concern that the Chabad movement would not survive the loss of its leader. In response, a group of chassidim traveled to numerous Jewish communities to assure local leaders that Chabad would remain vibrant.

As part of this initiative, Rabbi Raichik went to Buffalo with another chassid. From previous trips he knew of a guesthouse that had a designated apartment for fundraisers. When they entered the building, his companion was appalled by its state of disrepair. Reb Shimon Goldman, who was present as well, told how Rabbi Raichik tried to calm the man by explaining that they would be there only a night or two.

"What do you mean?" the man exclaimed. "One's entire sojourn in this world is only a night or two."

When this story reached New York, Rabbi Shmuel Levitin, a mentor at the 770 yeshivah, held a farbrengen with the students during which he used the chassid's words to make the opposite point. He explained, "One's journey in this world is but 'a night or two.' Even if one lacks physical comfort, life is only one or two nights long, and we need to fulfill our mission."

Back in Los Angeles, Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Ramash, asking what his mission should be after the Rebbe Rayatz's passing. In a return letter, the Ramash added in his own handwriting (Iyar 10, 5710 [1950]): "Wishing you the best in fulfilling the mission which my father-in-law, the Rebbe, of righteous memory, has given to you, to bring the light of Chassidus to the area you currently find your-



A farbrengen of the Rebbe, 1952. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

self in, to connect those around you to the Tree of Life, until we are redeemed from this exile, may it be speedily in our days."

On the 24th of Av the Ramash wrote that he should also encourage communities to study practical halachah, so that the inspiration he provided would have a lasting impact on their lives. He added that they should be encouraged to give tzedakah.

"In addition to the results that you clearly see *during* your visits in a city or town," he wrote, "more changes take place without your immediately being aware of them. Later fruit comes as a result of your 'sowing' during your actual visit. For holiness produces fruit, and fruit from that fruit, until eternity.... As the Rebbe [Rayatz] stated, 'Holiness is infinite.'"

As the first yahrzeit of the Rebbe Rayatz approached, pressure on the Ramash to accept the official leadership of Chabad was at its height. He, however, seemed to be resisting the idea strongly.

At one point he said that all the movement's debts needed to be paid before he would even consider accepting leadership. A meeting was called to discuss

this issue. Rabbi Raichik, then 31, was a youngster in a room filled with elder chassidim.

He was not bashful, however. When the meeting devolved into frantic speculations about how they could pressure the Ramash into becoming the Rebbe, Abi heard others describe how his father stood up and said: "I don't understand why we are even discussing this. The Rebbe gave us a choice. Let's discuss how to pay up the debt."

On the 10th of Shevat 5711, exactly one year after his father-in-law's passing, the Ramash accepted leadership of the movement and became the seventh Chabad Rebbe. Under the leadership of the Rebbe, Rabbi Raichik continued his work as a shadar. Later the Rebbe appointed him to the boards of three central Chabad organizations: Agudas Chasidei Chabad, Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, and Machne Israel. In that capacity Rabbi Raichik discreetly took part in mediating and resolving sensitive internal conflicts within and between the organizations.

Assistance Arrives

After the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, Rabbi Raichik returned to Los Angeles to pursue his work. He continued to see success in his travels, but building Jewish life in Los Angeles proved challenging, particularly as he was often absent.

In the city at the time there was a pair of well-respected Jewish activists, Moshe Weiss and Yisroel Meir Schwartz. They were the caretakers of a shul on Houston Street attended by many Holocaust survivors. These two men, jocularly known as *"Shvartz und Vaise,"* were determined to bring more Torah Judaism to Los Angeles. They contacted Chabad in New York about filling a teaching post for a *cheder* they wanted to establish.

Rabbi Hodakov, the Rebbe's chief aide, wrote to Rabbi Raichik, asking about the men and their intentions. He wanted to know the ages of the potential students, whether it would be an afternoon or day school, the number of daily hours, the teacher's salary, and who would be financially responsible.

Around the same time the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Raichik about the idea of establishing a Chabad shul in Los Angeles (24 Av): "In essence, it is proper, but not for you personally, since your position and job cannot be connected to only one shul, because your net must be spread out over the entire city and its surround-



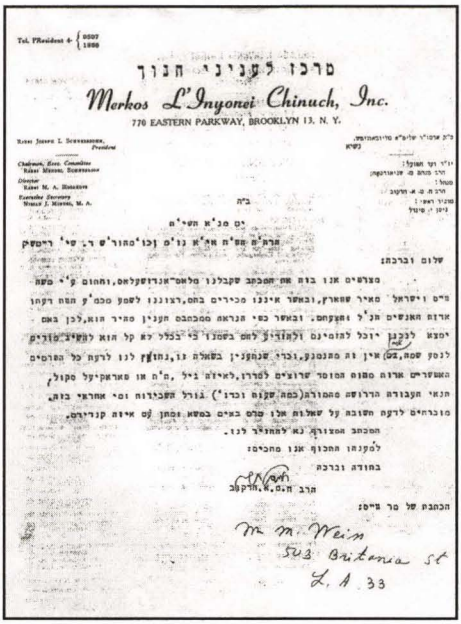
The Rebbe at the wedding of Rabbi Posner (right).
Courtesy of Rabbi Levy Garelik/Lubavitch Archives

ings. Thus I am searching for an appropriate person to be sent to Los Angeles to be a rabbi, to give classes in that [Chabad] shul. With your help, it will be established, and he [the person] will work under your auspices. As of now I have not found him, and I will continue to search."

It was now clear that Rabbi Raichik would neither accept a rabbinic post nor open a new Chabad shul. However, this request for a teacher in the new cheder gave the Rebbe the opportunity to send someone else to the city to help the Raichiks in their efforts to reach out to local Jews.

That summer, Rabbi Yehudah Leib Posner was living with his parents, who ran a Lubavitch day school in Pittsburgh. When he received a call from Rabbi Hodakov asking if he was willing to go west and help Rabbi Raichik, he replied in the affirmative.

First he headed to New York, where Rabbi Hodakov and the Rebbe gave him instructions. He would work for Rabbi Raichik and organize new classes and activities for youth and college students, as well as weekly Shabbos gatherings.



מרכז לענייני חנוך

Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Inc.

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The Rebbe's chief aide, Rabbi Hodakov, writes to Rabbi Raichik, asking for details about Moshe Weiss and Meir Schwartz's request to open a school in L.A. (see page 357).

Rabbi Posner sensed the novelty of this role, a position unrelated to fundraising or running a school. Today it is quite familiar – he would be the Rebbe's first shliach, the director of a Chabad House, although neither term was yet part of the Lubavitch lexicon.

On 17 Elul he arrived in Los Angeles, and at the Rebbe's behest made a farbrengen the very next day at the Wexler home, which three couples attended.

That same month Shvartz und Vaise opened a Talmud Torah, an afternoon learning program, with the hope that it would grow into a full-fledged Jewish school. Unfortunately, in spite of the parents' efforts to meet tuition (around three dollars a week), the Talmud Torah had difficulty meeting expenses. Rabbi Posner, himself running out of cash, needed a raise. Mr. Schwartz, who was then a bachelor, took half of his paycheck and put it toward Rabbi Posner's salary.

Several months later Rabbi Posner married. He returned to Los Angeles with his wife, but the financial problems only worsened. Despite numerous attempts to keep them, the Posners were eventually forced to leave because of the lack of funds.

Rabbi Raichik continued to make efforts to bring someone out to assist him. The Rebbe also suggested that he keep his eyes open for community positions the person could fill, such as a teacher, a *shochet*, or a rabbi in a shul.

Jewish Education

Though the Boyle Heights Talmud Torah had been unable to support the Posners, it continued to function after they left. In 1954 Rabbi Arye Leib Tessler and Rabbi Spector arrived in Los Angeles and taught at the school.

Over the years the Boyle Heights community dispersed as Jews moved to the West Side – Beverly, Fairfax, Pico, and other areas – and many of the Jewish institutions in the neighborhood shuttered or moved with their communities.

On the West Side, a Talmud Torah opened in Fairfax. The two Talmud Torahs eventually merged and evolved into the Toras Emes day school.

Rebbetzin Raichik related that some of the meetings to establish Toras Emes were held at their home. Mr. Weiss, who took Toras Emes under his wing as one of his most beloved institutions, often drove Rabbi Raichik to meetings that took place elsewhere. On the way they discussed their differing approaches to communal tasks, such as fundraising or stimulating interest in the school.

Rabbi Yechiel Yehuda Isaacsohn came to California for health reasons, and spent an entire year at the City of Hope Hospital being treated for emphysema. Later he settled in Los Angeles and established a *shtiebel* on La Brea Avenue. He dedicated his life to Toras Emes. Even in the later years, when he carried

around an oxygen tank, he strove to raise the school's standards of education and strengthen its finances.

Everyone involved was utterly devoted to the school. Parents were asked to volunteer their time. Rebbetzin Raichik related that the day Toras Emes opened, with sixty children, they asked parents to help. Rabbi Raichik went, and when he came home, he told his wife that he sharpened the pencils for the children who needed.

"We made a school, and we all worked together," she said. "Believe me, it was with *mesiras nefesh*. People were poor then, as they had just come from Europe and were only getting started. Today's millionaires were then regular working people."

Rabbi Raichik once mentioned how Toras Emes raised the standard of Jewish education citywide. Since the faculty members were all observant Jews, other Hebrew schools in the city followed suit and hired religious teachers. Before the establishment of Toras Emes, a principal had bragged that his Talmud Torah was superior because his teachers fasted on Yom Kippur!

In the early 1960s the community organized funds to purchase a school building. Cash and pledges were rapidly collected toward buying the Bnei Reuven building, where the Talmud Torah was located, with its sprawling grounds. Mr. Schwartz related that one individual, however, managed to thwart the efforts, and the entire project folded, to everyone's dismay. Thus the school's lease on the building was lost.

During the turmoil, several community members approached Rabbi Raichik suggesting that Chabad purchase the Bnei Reuven property and establish a yeshivah. Rabbi Raichik asked the Rebbe, who referred him to the Rashag, the head of the Lubavitcher Yeshivah. If the Rashag agreed, the Rebbe would send rabbinical students to assist with the school. The Rashag considered the idea, but eventually decided against it.

By then the community was in turmoil. The school year was about to begin, and they had no building. At one late-night meeting, at two in the morning, Rabbi Raichik suggested that Chabad purchase the Bnei Reuven property near the corner of South Edinburgh Avenue and West 3rd Street. He was confident that Rabbi Zilberstein would agree.

The board accepted the suggestion, only asking, "Why didn't you suggest this earlier?"

He never answered that question, but he may have assumed that the idea would be rejected because the neighborhood the building was in was no longer predominantly Jewish.

The next day two board members approached Rabbi Zilberstein, who agreed to host the school. Repairs and cleanup were required, but the school opened on time.



Speaking to Rabbi Dovid Neuwohner, the principal of Toras Emes and Bais Yaakov.

In the two years that followed, the school encountered a combination of difficulties. Initially the children were bussed to East Los Angeles and met at Rabbi Zilberstein's building. Later, due to lack of space, the school divided: some classes met in the back of Rabbi Ganzweig's shul on Beverly Boulevard, others at Rabbi Schick's shul on Melrose Avenue, and yet others in the old Menorah Hall, also on Melrose Avenue.

In 1965 a facility was purchased on Fairfax Avenue, south of Olympic Boulevard, where the school stayed until the late 1970s, when, thanks to Rabbi Isaacsohn's efforts, property was purchased on La Brea Avenue and Clinton Street, and the Torath Emeth Academy formally opened at its new location.

With so much change and turmoil, some families left the school. Those who stayed displayed true self-sacrifice for an authentic Jewish education.

Sending Children to Brooklyn

In the early years, before Toras Emes was founded, whenever he could, Rabbi



With Alan Goldstein.

Raichik encouraged parents to send their children to the Lubavitch Yeshivah in Brooklyn. One such couple was the Goldsteins, who were looking for an affordable school for their two sons, Avraham Aharon (Alan) and David.

"Reb Chaim," he told Mr. Goldstein, *"shik di boys in Brooklyn, un mir vellen nemmen care fun aletz"* ("Send your children to Brooklyn, and we will take care of everything"). Rabbi Raichik arranged for Alan and David to be picked up at Grand Central Station, after a grueling train ride from Los Angeles, and brought to their dormitory. The two brothers studied in the yeshivah for several years.

After completing their studies, the brothers joined their parents in the retirement-home business. "Rabbi Raichik cared for our family, as he did for many others personally," said Alan. He recalled how Rabbi Raichik would call him and say, *"Arke, vos machst du? Vi geit der parnoosah? Vos machen di b'nei bayis?"* ("Arke, how are you? How is the business doing? How are your family members doing?")

"He would take interest in all aspects of our lives, the physical and the spiritual," Alan said, noting that in Rabbi Raichik's well-known mantra, *"Der Aibeshter vet zicher helfen"* ("Hashem will surely help"), "the word 'surely' was so emphasized. He instilled in you a trust in Hashem."

David Goldstein fondly recalled his bar mitzvah at the Lubavitch Yeshivah on the corner of Bedford and Dean in Brooklyn. "It was with a few boxes of Tam Tams and a jar of herring," he said. "Everything I know is thanks to Rabbi Raichik, and the foundation I received in Lubavitch. The man saved my life, and I am



An event at Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad. On Rabbi Raichik's left is Rabbi Simcha Wasserman, who headed the yeshivah for many years. Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung, chief rabbi of Montreal, Canada, is at the podium.
Courtesy of Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad

indebted to him."

Another family Rabbi Raichik convinced to send their children to Brooklyn were the Grunfelds, Aharon and his brother Yoseph (Jeff), ten years old at the time. "He never wavered from taking an active, direct interest in my learning and my spiritual as well as material wellbeing," said Aharon Grunfeld. "Rabbi Raichik was there for us."

Other Schools

Rabbi Raichik also aided the other Jewish schools that opened in the city over the years.

"He used to come to the school to speak to the children," recalled Rabbi Shlomo Holland, former principal of the Yavneh Hebrew Academy. "During assemblies he would give the children money for them to give to tzedakah."

Chaya Mechal Slodowitz recalled how Rabbi Raichik would test her class on



One of the first groups of students in Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad beis midrash.
Courtesy of Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad

the Chumash they were learning.

Rabbi Raichik's daughter Chani Hanoka remembered that before the Yom Kippur War in Israel, when the Rebbe called for gathering children and speaking words of Torah, her father came to Toras Emes and made a gathering.

When Rabbi Moshe Leider first moved to California in 1977, he helped run a Hebrew school in Los Angeles in partnership with Chabad and the shul that housed it.

The shul eventually decided to end their sponsorship, as they did not foresee that the secular families of the Hebrew school children would ever join the shul. Rabbi Leider arranged a meeting between the shul's leadership and Rabbis Raichik and Shlomo Cunin.

"Rabbi Raichik spoke very strongly," Rabbi Leider recalled. "He spoke about the importance of education and the critical necessity of reaching out to nonobservant Jews." The shul ultimately agreed to continue housing and cosponsoring the Hebrew school.

In 1978 Rabbi Simcha Wasserman established a new yeshivah in Yerushalayim, and handed over responsibility for his yeshivah in Los Angeles, Ohr Elchonon, to Chabad. Many of the negotiations between Rabbi Wasserman, philanthropist Berel Weiss and Rabbi Shlomo Cunin were conducted with Rabbi Raichik present. Soon thereafter Rabbi Ezra Schochet was designated the new rosh yeshivah, and the first group of Lubavitch students arrived from New York to study. In the beginning, Rabbi Raichik was the unofficial mashpia.

In the late 1980s and early '90s there was a huge influx of Russian immigrants, and Rabbi Raichik worked with Los Angeles' Jewish schools to absorb the children. Rabbi Holland recalled that Rabbi Raichik encouraged him to open a unique program for the children and helped with the fundraising efforts. "We worked together to ensure that the children did not go to public school," Rabbi Holland said.

When the Russian children were reaching bar mitzvah age, Rabbi Holland turned to Rabbi Raichik to assist with obtaining tefillin for them. "Because I knew Rabbi Raichik had an interest in getting people to put on tefillin," he said. "I made him aware of the need, and he arranged tefillin for them all."

Purchasing a Home

The Raichik family quickly outgrew the small cottage in Boyle Heights, and in late 5712 (1952) they began looking for a permanent home in a location suitable for their activities. Over a two-year period the Rebbe guided them through the process. Rabbi Raichik, consumed with his work and travels, left most of the decisions to Rebbetizin Raichik and other community members, though the Rebbe urged him on several occasions to participate more actively.

On Teves 29, 5714 (1954), the Rebbe told them what to look for in a home:

> *You write that you are still searching for a house. You must invest great effort and enthusiasm in the process, by encouraging others [i.e., the real estate agent and his acquaintances] to work on it. See to it that the house is a proper and spacious one in the right neighborhood, since when you buy it is for the long term, and is difficult to change. Therefore your initial outlook must be broad, especially since it is not merely a private house, but rather a place for farbrengens, meetings, etc.*
>
> *Regarding the funding, experience has shown that the effort required to raise a large sum is the same as that required for a smaller one. It is of great importance to think in broad terms. Nothing good comes of being cheap.*

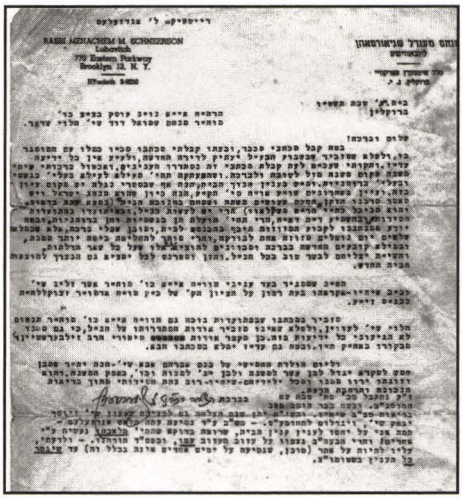


The Raichik family in front of their newly purchased home.

These became the Raichiks' guiding words. When they saw the home they ultimately purchased, all that mattered to them was that it had a large living and dining room, where many people could comfortably gather.

Almost a year after receiving this advice, they signed a purchase contract on the house, and the Rebbe wrote to them (Kislev 24, 5715 [1954]), "I was pleased to receive your letter... informing me that you completed everything required for [the purchase of] the home. It is surprising, even now, that it took so long. It should be the will of Hashem that all delays should be for the good. At least from now on, the process [of moving in and settling down] should be completed in the proper way, and not with the assumption that it will happen on its own. Hashem should give you success that this home should be beautiful for the person who resides in it, materially and spiritually."

In a lengthy letter (6 Teves), the Rebbe addressed several of Rabbi Raichik's questions about the dedication of the house, and gave instructions on affixing the mezuzah. He also reiterated what he had written earlier regarding Rabbi Raichik's involvement in the process:



The Rebbe's letter to Rabbi Raichik about dedicating their new home and when to affix the mezuzahs.

Surely you have already received my previous letter. I received your letter, and the enclosed materials, from the 26th of Kislev. I was surprised to read that you will be moving into your new home next week, since you have not mentioned anything about it until now. I hope that at least from now on you will provide details about how things went [with the purchase].

I repeat my blessings that the move should fulfill the maxim that "changing one's place changes one's mazel for good and for blessing." The move should bring you to a higher standard, materially and spiritually.

Regarding your question about the dedication of the house (chanukas habayis), it is true that based on Talmudic sources there is room to question whether the custom has merit (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, *section 570). Nevertheless, since it is a Jewish custom, and there is a discourse of the Alter Rebbe (which is in the midst of being printed from the manuscript of Reb Pinchus Reizes of Shklov) entitled "The Reason Why Dedicating a Home Is a Joyous Occasion," you should make a chassidishe farbrengen and say Chassidus, and this will help materially and spiritually.*

Surely you know our custom to immediately affix all the mezuzahs without a blessing when you move into a new home. After thirty days you remove one to check, and then it is permissible to exchange it for a nicer one. You affix the new mezuzah with a blessing, having in mind all the others as well....

Regarding what you write about traveling from Los Angeles, I wonder about your attitude towards the purchase of the house. It seems that you specifically want your work to be done by others. The community is commanded to help you [not do the job for you], as the verse states, "You shall surely



The Raichik family in their new home.

> *help along with him" [Shemos 23:5]. In my opinion, you should remain in the vicinity of Los Angeles, apart from making short trips for a few days at a time, until the entire process will be concluded in an auspicious time.*

The Raichiks were faithful to the Rebbe's request that the house be a place for gatherings. The Raichik children always looked forward to hosting the tens of people who came for farbrengens on chassidic holidays and other occasions.

For many years Rabbi Raichik would go to New York for the Tishrei holidays, and spend the subsequent month traveling around the United States. When he returned home at the beginning of Kislev, he would immediately begin calling people to organize a 19 Kislev farbrengen. There would also be one on 12 Tammuz.

In the early years the couple would rent tables for the farbrengens and load them with fish and other delicacies, as well as the matriarch's freshly baked cakes. Such large gatherings were unique at the time, because there were no kosher caterers in the city. Around sixty people would come, and Rabbi Raichik would share words of Chassidus.

Thus the Raichik home became a Chabad House.

Moshiach Seudah

In addition to 19 Kislev and 12 Tammuz, the "Moshiach Seudah" on the eighth day of Pesach was one of the highlights of the year for the family. The event was a novelty in the Los Angeles community and, especially in the early years, people would come from many different shuls.

"The house was small," recalled Rivka Rabinowitz (née Bastomski), a shluchah in S. Monica and a close family friend. Yet somehow, many diverse people "of the Los Angeles Jewish community managed to fit into the two front rooms."

It was likely that no one in the community had heard of the custom before the Raichiks came, she said. It certainly was not part of any Pesach curriculum taught at school. "But the invitation was out, and everyone came. The men, clean-shaven for the most part, *ehrliche*, hardworking *frumme yidden*, suits and hats on, crowding around to hear what Rabbi Raichik had to say."

Rabbi Raichik would farbreng grandly. In one room were the men, and in the other the women, who would occasionally listen in. There was a lot of singing. For Mrs. Rabinowitz the event created a powerful sense of unity and joyful expectation of the redemption. "Magic happened around the table, around the words, around the shoulders of this beloved and holy man," she said.



A farbrengen at the Raichik home. *Courtesy of Chani Hanoka*

As the Chabad community grew over the years, those farbrengens would last late into the night, when people from other neighborhoods came after Yom Tov was over. It was said that no matter how many people showed up, there was always enough room for everyone.

Avraham Zakaria remembered well the one time he went to the Moshiach Seudah in 5756 (1996). "When we walked in, we saw Rabbi Raichik dancing with a walker in a circle," he said. "When he saw me, he let go of the walker and motioned to me to dance with him."

The 20-year-old arrived with a group of Persian Jews that came each year, organized by Rabbi Hertzel Illulian, "to receive a blessing from Los Angeles' oldest rabbi." For a young teenager from Beverly Hills, the sight, Mr. Zakaria said, was "mindblowing."

"There were a lot of happy chassidim in this chaotic environment; people were standing around, others were sitting around, and others were singing. There was no room anywhere. It was my first time seeing chassidim at a farbrengen."

At first he was hesitant to dance with Rabbi Raichik, but Rabbi Illulian en-

couraged him. They both danced until the elderly man got tired.

After Rabbi Raichik bentched, Mr. Zakaria asked for a berachah for himself and his mother. The rabbi gave him some of the wine from his cup and gave him a berachah. When he brought the wine to his mother (who was present), she asked him to get berachos also for his siblings. "Could I get another berachah for my brothers?" he asked Rabbi Raichik.

Rabbi Raichik looked up at him and said, "Put on tefillin and you will have whatever you want."

Mr. Zakaria promised that he would get tefillin the next morning. Looking into the young man's eyes, Rabbi Raichik said, "Don't forget."

Mr. Zakaria never did forget. He purchased tefillin, and began to study with one of the bochurim who were at the Moshiach Seudah. He later traveled to study at Tiferes Bochurim, a Chabad yeshivah for beginners in Morristown, New Jersey.

While he was studying there, Rabbi Raichik passed away. Today Mr. Zakaria and his family are *frum*, and live in Los Angeles.

Kosher Food

Maintaining the highest standards of kashrus was critically important to Rabbi Raichik. Those who knew him were aware that he questioned the kosher status of everything he ate. "You know, your father once drank a tea at my house," an acquaintance once told Shimon, "and you know what it meant for your father to drink a hot cup of tea in someone's house."

In Los Angeles of the 1950s, the variety of kosher food was small and kosher restaurants were non-existent. "There were Jewish bakeries on Brooklyn Avenue [in the Boyle Heights neighborhood]," Rebbetzin Raichik recalled, "but they were open on Shabbos." Therefore the family never ate their products.

"It was harder, because we did not have the products we have now, and had to prepare everything ourselves," she said. "But I did not consider it hard; I came from Europe, where the women did everything themselves. I took it for granted that I needed to run the house and do what had to be done."

"I grew up in a home where going out for pizza wasn't an option, and macaroni and cheese was never served," said Chani Hanoka, the Raichiks' youngest daughter. "Everything was made from scratch. *Chrein* [horseradish] didn't come from a jar; it was grated by hand and mixed with cooked beets. Farfel wasn't made by Osem, but by my mother, and jam was made from fresh strawberries



Rebbetzin Raichik during their first year in L.A.

bought that same morning in the fruit market."

To have Cholov Yisroel milk, someone had to go to a farm and observe the cows being milked. Rabbi Leibel Posner was the first to do this. He would go to the farm and purchase milk for himself, Rabbi Raichik, and several others. Shimon recalled that when he was young, there was a man named Avrohom Kisch, who, after going to the farm, returned with five-gallon containers of milk. Cholov Yisroel cheese was unavailable, and the Raichik children simply grew up without it.

At one point Moshe and Berel Weiss bought a farm and started to produce Cholov Yisroel products. Moshe ran the farm while Berel made home deliveries. Because of their many guests and children, people used to say, "Mrs. Raichik, it would be cheaper to own a cow."

Kosher fish and chicken were easy to obtain, however. Rebbetzin Raichik described: "Chickens were bought in the live market, and the shochet slaughtered them for you. There were chicken markets all over in those days, three in one neighborhood. As for fish, no one bought a jar of fish in those days. You bought a live fish and prepared it yourself."

Until the late 1960s Rabbi Yuda Vetshtein, a pious Jew from Romania, *shechted* chickens in the Boyle Heights Market. Rabbi Isaac Weiss, a Satmar chassid whom Rabbi Raichik had previously flown in from the East Coast to be the mohel at his son Yankee's bris, served as the shochet in the market for many years until it closed around 1974.

Shimon recalled his mother kashering the chickens herself, even when the



Bentching after a meal.

butcher offered to do it for her. Elozor remembered that his mother wanted the shochet to be there when the chickens were opened. She then soaked and salted them.

When Rebbetzin Raichik found problems with the chickens that required a halachic ruling, she would take them to a rabbi. Once, she sent her husband to Rabbi Deitch with a chicken she felt might not be kosher. Even after checking the chicken carefully, the two rabbis could not find any problem. Rabbi Raichik called home and asked his wife to clarify what she thought was wrong. "When I was salting the chicken, I felt something was wrong with the wing," she said. The two rabbis checked again and found that she was right – the chicken was not kosher.

Once, there was a lull in the *shechitah* in Los Angeles. The Raichiks had three chickens left in the freezer. For the next month and a half Rebbetzin Raichik "cooked half a chicken every Shabbos," said Levi.

When Shimon saw beef for the first time, he asked "why the chicken was so dirty." He had simply never seen beef before. At age 11, when he went to New

York for Tishrei, he beheld kosher cheeses, chocolate, pizza, and hamburgers – foods that didn't exist at all in Los Angeles. It was quite a revelation.

Eventually they purchased a freezer, and meat was shipped from New York. When there were no kosher chickens in Los Angeles, they had them shipped as well. Shimon recalled going once with Abi to purchase chickens in New York, packing them in dry ice and giving them to Rabbi Kazarnovsky, who was going to California to fundraise.

Once, there was a controversy about the shechitah in New York, and Rabbi Raichik felt very uncomfortable eating the New York meat. From then on, he wanted to eat meat from a small shechitah. From his travels he knew a shochet in Seattle, Washington, a Belzer chassid, Reb Moshe Luckman, from whom he felt comfortable purchasing meat. When the family needed meat they would call him and order a side of beef.

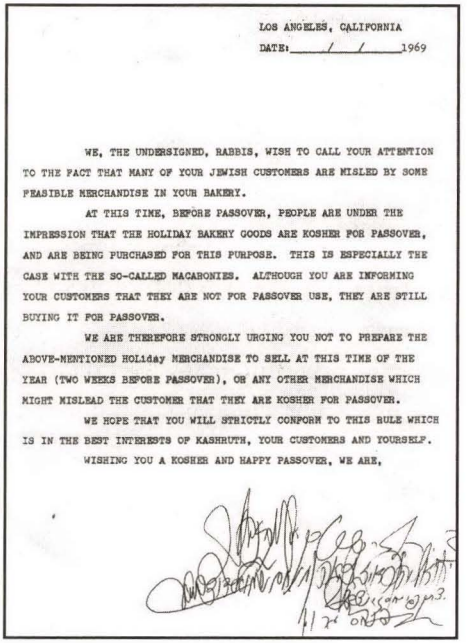
Whenever Reb Moshe found a cow that met all of Rabbi Raichik's high standards, he would go to the butcher himself and make sure everything was done properly before he packed the meat and shipped it to Los Angeles. Later, when Rabbi Zalman Shmukler was shechting in Los Angeles, he would do the same.

Rebbetzin Raichik baked her own challahs and pastries, but since many Jews patronized the existing Jewish-owned bakeries, her husband took it upon himself to visit the bakeries together with Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburg. There was no official kosher certification then, but they considered it their responsibility to speak to the owners about improving their kosher standards. Over the years other rabbis also became involved in reaching out to the bakeries.

Only after Rabbi Raichik convinced the bakeries to bake water challah without eggs (which required checking for blood spots) was the Raichik family permitted to eat the bakery challahs. He often asked the bakers if the pans were used for other baked goods.

Shimon recalled that for his brother Abi's bar mitzvah in 5723 (1963) the family checked all of the eggs to be brought to Herman Schwartz, one of the bakers, who then made challah, honey cake, and *kichelach* with them. Rabbi Raichik would always set aside some of the purchased challah, without a berachah, in case the bakery had neglected the mitzvah of taking challah.

Rebbetzin Raichik related how her husband had once asked one of the bakeries to replace a particular ingredient, whose kashrus was questionable, with a different one. The baker replied, "If I have to change my recipes, I will be forced to shut down." When Rabbi Raichik turned to Mr. Schwartz with the same request, he said that he would find a way to do things differently. He had been raised in Europe, where there were fewer choices, and had learned to compensate. He made the requested adjustment.



LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
DATE:____/____/____1969

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, RABBIS, WISH TO CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT MANY OF YOUR JEWISH CUSTOMERS ARE MISLED BY SOME FEASIBLE MERCHANDISE IN YOUR BAKERY.

AT THIS TIME, BEFORE PASSOVER, PEOPLE ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE HOLIDAY BAKERY GOODS ARE KOSHER FOR PASSOVER, AND ARE BEING PURCHASED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY THE CASE WITH THE SO-CALLED MACARONIES. ALTHOUGH YOU ARE INFORMING YOUR CUSTOMERS THAT THEY ARE NOT FOR PASSOVER USE, THEY ARE STILL BUYING IT FOR PASSOVER.

WE ARE THEREFORE STRONGLY URGING YOU NOT TO PREPARE THE ABOVE-MENTIONED HOLiday MERCHANDISE TO SELL AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR (TWO WEEKS BEFORE PASSOVER), OR ANY OTHER MERCHANDISE WHICH MIGHT MISLEAD THE CUSTOMER THAT THEY ARE KOSHER FOR PASSOVER.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL STRICTLY CONFORM TO THIS RULE WHICH IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF KASHRUTH, YOUR CUSTOMERS AND YOURSELF.

WISHING YOU A KOSHER AND HAPPY PASSOVER, WE ARE,

A letter from rabbonim, written at Rabbi Raichik's urging, asking local bakeries not to sell macaroons that were not kosher for Pesach before the holiday.

Pesach, with its extra laws and stringencies, proved to be particularly challenging in the early years. Yet Rabbi Raichik's focus was always on helping others. "I remember he hired a driver before Pesach," Shimon recalled, "to take him to various acquaintances and business owners around the city, and on to Jewish-owned egg farms in Upland and Chino, in order to deliver matzah and have the owners sell their chametz."

Before Pesach 5729 (1969) the L.A. bakeries sold macaroons that had been prepared on *chametz* utensils in the weeks leading up to the holiday. While they never claimed that the cookies were kosher for Pesach, it was clear they would end up being eaten on Yom Tov. Spurred by Rabbi Raichik, the local rabbis warned people not to eat them, and wrote a letter to the bakeries: "People are under the impression that the holiday bakery goods are kosher for Passover.... We are therefore strongly urging you not to prepare the abovementioned holiday merchandise to sell at this time of the year."

On the last day of Pesach, Rabbi Raichik would send his children to check that the bakeries were not opening early to make bread for those who desired it immediately after Pesach.

Even wine, essential to Jewish observance, was hard to come by. When the Raichiks first came to Los Angeles, Kedem wine was not readily available. Rebbetzin Raichik recalled that one year Rabbi Deitch made wine for Pesach, which the family used. "It was very strong," she would say. "After the second cup, everyone was very 'happy.'" There was no grape juice, so the children had some wine with water.

Later three Jewish bookstores in Fairfax began carrying suitable wine, and the family would go there to buy a large bottle each month. The store owners all knew the procedure: they would have to go to the back, take a bottle from a new box, place it in a bag and give it to Rabbi Raichik. "We went to a different store each month," Shimon said, "because my father wanted everyone to feel good that he was purchasing wine from them."

Once, when Rabbi Raichik was away for Shabbos, and his hosts' wine, though produced by an Israeli company, did not meet his standards, he refused to make kiddush on it and used beer instead.

As the years passed the kosher food industry in Los Angeles grew exponentially. Nevertheless Rabbi Raichik remained very careful about what kind of foods came into the house.

Gita Nagel remembered how, when the Yavneh Hebrew School opened, he would go there and encourage the parents to make their homes kosher.

Though he used every opportunity to encourage Jews to keep kosher, Rabbi Raichik never sought to impose his own high standards on anyone else. On one occasion he discovered that the baked goods at a bris were from a kosher bakery that did not meet his standards. "I watched him wash and pull out a roll from his pocket," recalled Sarah Levin, a member of the Chabad community in S. Monica. "He personally came prepared, but never said a word to anyone. No one noticed."

Maintaining His Health

Food, as a source of enjoyment, was utterly unimportant to Rabbi Raichik. He often ate breakfast in the early afternoon, after he finished davening. For years he traveled from city to city by train without a place to eat, and lived on a meager diet of matzah and sardines.

"Some of us live to eat, and some eat to live," said Dr. Alan Dauer, Rabbi Raichik's longtime physician. "Rabbi Raichik ate to live. Food was something he just put into his fuel tank to keep him going. You could place the food in front of him, and it would sit there for a long time. He was not into eating; he was into talking, relating to people, and giving advice."

The scant attention Rabbi Raichik paid to his health was of great concern to both the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe. In one of the last private audiences he had with the Rebbe Rayatz, the Rebbe stressed the importance of a healthy Jewish body. He gave the example of a bris, a critical covenant and a fundamental aspect of Judaism, which is nevertheless postponed if the baby is not completely healthy.

The Rebbe Rayatz reiterated his concerns in his last letter to Rabbi Raichik (Teves 27, 5710 [1950]): "Surely you remember the warning I gave you about maintaining and improving your health."



Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik.

A few years later, after the Rebbe Rayatz's passing, Rabbi Raichik and his family were in New York. Once, he returned from 770 and told his wife that when he entered 770 the Rebbe uncharacteristically called out to him in front of everyone, "Why aren't you eating? Why don't you care about yourself?" The Rebbe told him that he wished to speak to his wife about it. Rebbetzin Raichik called Rabbi Hodakov to ask if the Rebbe wanted to see her. He responded in the affirmative, and shortly thereafter the Rebbe devoted an entire audience to telling her how she should convince her husband to eat. The Rebbe wanted him to at least eat something in the morning before he went to daven for many hours.

She relayed this all to her husband, and from that time onward, even if he spent a very long time saying Birchos Hashachar and was in a rush, he wouldn't leave the house without having a piece of cake.

The issue came up again in a letter (Teves 4, 5713 [1952]), "According to what we discussed when you were here, surely you are maintaining your health appropriately," the Rebbe wrote. "Please let me know about this, *without concealing any of the details*."

Six months later, hearing that Rabbi Raichik did not look like he was eating

well, the Rebbe wrote, expressing stern disapproval (3 Tammuz):

> *P.S.: I am pained by the information I have received, that your appearance is unhealthy. It seems that you are again following the path of afflicting yourself and neglecting your health, even though you know the ruling of the* Rambam *(*Hilchos Deos, *ch. 4) that "the body should be healthy and complete, as is the way of G-d." Also well known is the ruling cited in the* Shulchan Aruch *of the Alter Rebbe (*Hilchos Nizkei Guf V'Nefesh*] par. 4), regarding the laws of harming the body and soul: "A man is not the governor over his body to hit it, shame it, pain it in any way – even concerning food and drink. Only if the person is doing this for repentance can it be a good thing."*

The Rebbe added that fasting is not the way of Chabad. "The Alter Rebbe wrote in *Iggeres HaTeshuvah* that in our generation *teshuvah* is done in other ways, not through fasting. Therefore the matter is left as the Alter Rebbe wrote in his *Shulchan Aruch* [that it is not allowed].... I am waiting to hear good tidings in this regard."

Less than two months later the Rebbe added a postscript to a letter (27 Av), "I don't know how to interpret your silence concerning your health. Regardless, the priority is that you guard your health, for this is among *the ways of G-d*."

Once, in the early 5710s (1950s), Rabbi Raichik fainted at a farbrengen. When he came to, the Rebbe asked him, "Are you again behaving in your way of not eating?" Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky said that he had seen Rabbi Raichik eat before the farbrengen, but the Rebbe sternly replied, "I did not ask you! Why are you mixing in?"

In 5724 (1964) Rabbi Raichik flew with Rabbi Kazarnovsky to Eretz Yisroel for the dedication of a building in Kfar Chabad by the Lazaroff family, who resided in Los Angeles. The Rebbe instructed Rabbi Kazarnovsky before they left to make sure that during the trip Rabbi Raichik ate, "not according to Rabbi Raichik's standards, but according to your understanding."

The Rebbe was also concerned that Rabbi Raichik did not sleep enough. In 5718 (1958) Rebbetzin Raichik's brother Shaul Rapaport had a private audience with the Rebbe. One of the topics they discussed was austerity. For over a decade Israel rationed food and other necessities, such as shoes and furniture, which



Talking to Rabbi Kazarnovsky (left) at the engagement for his daughter Devora to Moshe Wilhelm.

had an effect on Shaul's textile business. A few minutes into the conversation, however, the Rebbe changed the subject. He asked Shaul to try to persuade his brother-in-law to go to sleep earlier.

"When I came to the Rebbe for my own problems," Shaul later told Abi, "much of the audience was about your father."

Of Rabbi Raichik, the Rebbe said, "I tell him to go to sleep on time, but he does not listen to me." Shaul would joke: "My brother-in-law keeps a yahrzeit on the day the Rebbe instructed him to go to sleep at the proper time. Once a year, on that day, he goes to sleep on time."

Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner, the director of the Chabad schools in Melbourne, Australia, and an old-time friend of Rabbi Raichik, said that in a private audience the Rebbe once told Rabbi Raichik: "Before *chatzos* I cannot tell you anything about going to sleep, but one minute after chatzos I can tell you to go to sleep."

The Rebbe's concerns became public knowledge. Rabbi Raichik often stayed with the Goodman family in Chicago during his trips, and Rabbi Yehoshua No-



Rabbi Raichik (center) and Shaul Rapaport with the Rebbe, 1992.
Courtesy of Avery Stok

chum Goodman used to tell him, "You are not looking good. You need to start eating more. The Rebbe is going to see you and give you over the head."

He once took a mirror and, holding it in front of him, said, "You see, you're not looking good." But Rabbi Raichik simply replied, "No, no, everything is okay."

Shalom Fine, who at times learned with Rabbi Raichik at his home, recalled how he once brought refreshments from a local bakery to a study session. Rabbi Raichik politely refused, stating that he ate only his wife's cooking.

Mrs. Rivkah Zajac, who hosted Rabbi Raichik on his visits to Brazil, said that he ate "like a bird" and was basically vegetarian, since he did not trust the shechitah there. "It took him longer to wash his hands and bentch than it took him to eat the little bit of bread," she said.

To comply with the Rebbe's demand that he not neglect his health, Rabbi Raichik made regular appointments for checkups, said Dr. Dauer. On a visit to Cleveland, Rabbi Raichik once surprised his hostess, Mrs. Devorah Alevsky, with a request for an apple. "The doctor told me that I have to eat an apple every day," he said.

Tishrei Visits

In 5711 (1950), the Tishrei before the Rebbe assumed leadership of Chabad, Rabbi Raichik wished to come to New York for the holidays. The Rebbe (then the Ramash) expressly forbade it, however, making good on the warning he had given before the Rebbe Rayatz's passing. "The season of Tishrei is a time of inspiration," he wrote on 24 Av. "As per the customs of the United States, it is a time to gather, promote [the Yom Tov], etc." The Ramash wanted him to create comprehensive programming in Los Angeles that would use the Yomim Tovim to their fullest potential.

It pained Rabbi Raichik deeply to be away from 770 that Tishrei. The following year he asked the Rebbe if he could come for at least half of Tishrei. The Rebbe agreed, saying he could come for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, or for Sukkos. He picked the first part of Tishrei, understanding that for Sukkos the Rebbe felt it was preferable for him to be in Los Angeles.

That Tishrei the Rebbe did not show any sign of resentment that he was there. On the contrary, he welcomed Rabbi Raichik and showed him *kiruvim* [signs of endearment]. The Rebbe was so warm that he began to think that perhaps he could stay for Sukkos as well.

After Yom Kippur the Rebbe asked Rabbi Raichik why he had not returned



At a Tzach gathering in Tishrei 5730 (1969). Courtesy of Tzach/Lubavitch Archives

home yet. Rabbi Raichik asked Shmuel Levitin, an older chassid and dedicated member of the Lubavitch Yeshivah in 770, to ask the Rebbe if he could stay. The Rebbe responded that they had made a deal. The Rebbe gave Rabbi Raichik a set of lulav and esrog, and money to purchase l'chaim, and the shliach made his way back to Los Angeles for Sukkos.

That Simchas Torah, Rabbi Raichik joined a local shul for Hakafos. However, he missed the joy and atmosphere in New York, and asked Herschel Fish, a community member, if he would stay afterward and farbreng with him.

"I will stay with you if you give me a berachah for a son," Mr. Fish said.

At first Rabbi Raichik did not like the idea. "Who am I to give you a berachah?" he asked.

However, when he realized that Mr. Fish was going to leave if he didn't, he reluctantly gave him a berachah.

That winter Mr. Fish came to Rabbi Raichik and told him in jest, "You should know that my wife is pregnant. If it is a boy, I will take him home. If it is a girl, you



With Rabbi Gruman at a Los Angeles community event, circa 1969.

will take her home."

Rebbetzin Raichik would retell how her husband came home and told her, "Listen, we have a boy, Abi, so we will have a girl too."

That summer the Fishes were blessed with a boy. Rabbi Raichik was in S. Diego on the day of the bris, but they waited until he came back late that afternoon so he could be the sandek.

Before Tishrei 5713 (1952), when he asked the Rebbe for approval to come, the Rebbe responded (27 Av) affirmatively: "With the approval of your wife, like last year." He also requested that he find someone in Los Angeles who could deliver inspirational words during Yom Tov.

"As explained in Chassidus, and it is also self-understood, a good activist and teacher influences others to become activists and teachers themselves," he wrote.

The Rebbe added that he should do something to show his wife appreciation, "for you will be here and she will remain there." From that year onward Rabbi Raichik spent every Tishrei in Brooklyn with the Rebbe.

Traveling to the Rebbe

Rabbi Raichik made frequent trips to New York throughout the years. The Rebbe many times gave him three conditions for his approval: that his wife had to agree, all his activities in Los Angeles needed to be complete, and he had to request a beis din's approval to leave his family and communal duties.

One time Rabbi Pinchus Gruman was called to the beis din, together with Rabbi Halberstam and Rabbi Deitch, to hear the request. Rabbi Gruman start-



Receiving kos shel berachah from the Rebbe during Tishrei, motzei Rosh Hashanah, 5747 (1986). *Courtesy of Levi Freidin/JEM*

ed to ask Rabbi Raichik many questions, giving him a hard time. Finally Rabbi Raichik turned to him and said, "Reb Pinchus, it is enough already!"

(Over the years, when men in the community would ask Rabbi Raichik if they should visit the Rebbe in New York, he would tell them that they could not go without complete consent from their wives.)

Often before his trips, people would bring him letters to give to the Rebbe. "The house was busy with people coming and going," his son-in-law Chaim Hanoka recalled.

Just before leaving, Rabbi Raichik would ask his wife, *"Ich meg gein?"* ("Can I go?") Not wanting him to miss his flight, she would hurriedly say, *"Gei, gei!"* ("Go, go!") This was always a point of humor for her, because she had already packed and organized his luggage for departure.

In New York, Rabbi Raichik would often join the Rebbe for the Yom Tov meals in the Rebbe Rayatz's apartment. This continued until the passing of Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, when the Rebbe began eating at home in private with Reb-

betzin Chaya Mushka.

When he was at the Rebbe's table on Shavuos 5714 (1954), someone present mentioned that the Rebbe Rayatz had told a story in 5698 or 5699 (1938 or '39) regarding what the Tzemach Tzedek said about the novelty Moshiach would bring to the world.

The Rebbe said that since Rabbi Raichik had actually been with the Rebbe Rayatz at that time in Otwock, he should repeat the Rebbe's words.

Rabbi Raichik told the story: The chassidim once asked the Tzemach Tzedek, "If everything is already outlined in Chassidus, what will Moshiach innovate?"

The Tzemach Tzedek responded that Moshiach would innovate the "Aha!" moment, where everything that was studied in Chassidus would be revealed with deep clarity.

"And who will they say 'Aha!' to?" the Rebbe asked with a smile on his face. "To those that never learned Chassidus."

During a meal on Sukkos 5731 (1970), in a small sukkah on the second floor of 770, the Rebbe asked, "Does anyone know what ma'amarim the [Chabad] Rebbes said to purify the atmosphere?" (see *Hayom Yom*, 28 Tammuz). Abi, who was serving as the head waiter, recalled how the Rebbe looked at his father, indicating that he should answer the question. Rabbi Raichik started to name the ma'amarim said by each Rebbe. When he came to the Rebbe Maharash, he paused for a moment and then continued. "The Rebbe gave a broad smile," Abi said. (That was the last year that the Rebbe ate in 770 for Yom Tov. Rebbetzin Nechama Dina passed away on the 10th of Teves.)

After a meal with the Rebbe, Rabbi Raichik would review the details in 770, writing them down when possible, and he would relay the events to his hosts. Rabbi Leibel Schildkraut recalled that he brought them some of the seeds from the pomegranate the Rebbe had eaten on the first night of Rosh Hashanah. "He used to tell us what happened," he said, "either right after the meal or the next day."

For several years Rabbi Raichik would sit down with Rabbi Berel Chaikin after the Yom Tov and review what had been discussed during the Rebbe's meals. Many of the Torah conversations were published in a two-volume set, *Hamelech*

Bimesibo.

On several occasions the entire Raichik family went to New York for Tishrei. In 5735 (1974) the younger Raichik siblings went with their parents for a private audience. "We were all waiting outside the Rebbe's room, and it was very busy," recalled their daughter Chani Hanoka.

The Rebbe spoke to each of them personally. "He called each of us over," she said. "I didn't understand the Rebbe, so my father translated."

The Rebbe asked Chani if she said Birchos Hashachar before she ate. She said yes – Rabbi Raichik had always been meticulous in reminding the children to say them in the morning, as well as to set *negel vasser* by their beds at night.

The Rebbe gave each of the children a dollar as early Chanukah gelt, and to the girls he gave another two or three dollars to pass on to a friend who would light Shabbos candles.

The Treasure

Rabbi Raichik encouraged everyone he knew in Los Angeles to write to the Rebbe with news, issues or questions. Before every trip to New York he would remind community members to write letters he could deliver to the Rebbe. He would also give the Rebbe individual, detailed reports about friends and supporters.

"The Rebbe gave Los Angeles Rabbi Raichik," said Mrs. Rabinowitz. "Rabbi Raichik gave Los Angeles the Rebbe."

For example, the Rebbe wrote to Nosson Noteh Dender in 5712 (1952), "I was delighted to receive your regards through Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik. He also gave me your note."

The Rebbe's letter to a professor in Los Angeles makes clear how detailed the reports were:

> *I was pleased to receive regards from you through our mutual and esteemed friend Rabbi S. D. Raichik, who has written to me about his visit with you and your participation in the worthy cause, in which you also took in your children as partners.*
>
> *In the light of what Rabbi Raichik has written to me about his acquaintance*

with you, I am confident that you will utilize your distinguished position, which brings you into personal contact with Jewish youth, to strengthen their Jewish identity.

Once, Rabbi Raichik was in New York, and his wife asked Yisroel (Izzy) Bastomski, who was traveling to Brooklyn, to deliver a package to him. After he agreed, Rabbi Raichik called him. "This package is my treasure *(otzar)*," he said. "You cannot put it in your luggage; you have to carry it on the plane. Don't worry. It is a paper bag and not that heavy."

On the plane, Mr. Bastomski's curiosity got the better of him, and he decided to open the bag. It was filled with letters containing people's names and countless requests for blessings from the Rebbe.

"Rabbi Raichik's otzar was not money," he later said. "It was names of people, to bring their names to the Rebbe."

At Rabbi Raichik's suggestion, Sarah Levin wrote to the Rebbe about her activities helping at the Los Angeles mikvah, where she purchased the supplies and checked on its cleanliness. In the postscript of her letter she wrote that her doctor had suggested another surgery as part of her treatment for infertility.

The Rebbe replied in a telegram, wishing her tremendous success for a planned fundraising luncheon. She later received a letter in which the Rebbe wrote (paraphrased), "In regard to your health, surely G-d will answer you in the merit of helping women with the laws of Family Purity. Looking forward to hearing good news."

Days later she met Rabbi Raichik in a bakery and showed him the letter. "He literally started to dance in the bakery," she recalled.

"You are so lucky the Rebbe has told you part of your purpose in life," he told her. "There are three keys that G-d distributes every year – health, livelihood, and children. The Rebbe was saying that you did not have the key for children, but because you are helping others keep Family Purity, G-d changed your lot, and now you will have children."

That month Mrs. Levin became pregnant, much to her doctor's surprise.



Delivering to the Rebbe, on Erev Rosh Hashanah, petitions ("panim***") from the Los Angeles community, Erev Rosh Hashanah, 29 Elul 5747 (1986).*** *Courtesy of Yossi Melamed/JEM*

Chabad's Growth

When Gita Nagel, a renowned philanthropist, arrived in Los Angeles in the early 1950s, Jewish observance was not strong in the city. "We had one of the four sukkahs in our neighborhood," she recalled. "There were not many religious families."

The Raichik home, though, was always open to those seeking to learn about Yiddishkeit. "Their Shabbos table had room for everyone," Mrs. Nagel remembered. "It didn't matter if you had a *sheitel* or a *kippah*, their home was open to all."

Describing Rabbi Raichik, she said, "He was the forerunner of what Chabad in Los Angeles is today. He was an institution by himself."

From early on the Raichik residence was home base for the students who would come to the Los Angeles area on Merkos Shlichus, a program that sends young men to communities and remote areas around the world to find Jews and strengthen their connection to Yiddishkeit.

Rabbis Berel Futerfas and Moshe Bogomilsky spent the summer of 5719 (1959) in Los Angeles as part of the program, where they saw firsthand the many meaningful relationships Rabbi Raichik had developed in the community.

Rabbi Raichik organized their visits to assimilated Jews in the city, and occasionally accompanied them. One of the homes they visited was Dr. Siegel, a famed doctor who lived in a huge mansion with his non-Jewish wife.

When they came in, Rabbi Raichik made his way to the doctor, who was sitting at the bar, and pulled at his sleeve. "Ahh, you want to put on tefillin," the doctor said, giving him a hug. "My rabbi, for you I would do anything." Rabbi Futerfas said that despite the fact that the two men were worlds apart, there was evidently some chemistry between them.



With longtime Los Angeles resident and friend Mr. Chaim Mordechai (Max) Wexler.

While they were talking, the woman of the house came down and greeted Rabbi Raichik, slightly touching him. "He jumped like he was electrocuted," recalled Rabbi Futerfas.

The woman realized her mistake immediately. "Oh, Rabbi, I am sorry. I know that I am not allowed to touch you," she said.

"He spoke a very good English, but he had a strong accent," Rabbi Futerfas said. "He was an intelligent person who knew what to say to each person." It was clear that all those whom Rabbi Raichik visited had tremendous respect for him, he said. People saw him as a sincere person who truly cared about them and their Yiddishkeit. When they met philanthropist Emma Schaver, she expressed this as well, telling the young rabbinical students, "Rabbi Raichik is *emes*, he speaks *emes*."

Mrs. Leiba Gottesman arrived in 1961 with her husband, Rabbi Menachem Gottesman, to head the Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy, and quickly realized



The Chabad House in Westwood, circa 1974. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

the important role Rabbi Raichik played in the community. "Rabbi Raichik was the pillar of Yiddishkeit in Los Angeles," she said. "He was very modest, and did things quietly while making a big difference in people's lives. He never sought honor."

Such a large community could not be sustained by a single individual, no matter how capable and dedicated. In 5725 (1965) Rabbi Shlomo and Mrs. Miriam Cunin arrived in the city.

"Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Lubavitcher movement, has announced the appointment of Rabbi Shlomo Cunin as West Coast director of its publications department," read the official press release from Lubavitch World Headquarters.

"Rabbi Cunin will also assist Rabbi Shmuel D. Raichik – who has been the Lubavitcher emissary on the West Coast for seventeen years – in other matters of Jewish concern."

The Cunins were successful, particularly with college students in the city. In May 1968 the *Bnai Brith Messenger* reported, "From the beginning, the aim of Merkos has been to promote Jewish religious education among the younger generation – regardless of background – in the spirit of 'Torah-true' Judaism."

The newspaper added that "the groundwork for this office has been carefully laid by Rabbi S. D. Raichik, personal emissary from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to the

West Coast."

In 5729 (1969) the first official Chabad House opened in Los Angeles, under the direction of Rabbi and Mrs. Cunin. The center included a shul, a kosher kitchen, a snack bar, and a well-stocked Jewish library.

The press release stated that "the regional representatives Rabbi S.D. Raichik and Rabbi S. Cunin said that the new center will be open 24 hours a day to offer its services to the thousands of Jewish college students on the campus."

From there Chabad in California grew into the vast network it is today.



Rabbi Raichik holding a Rambam as he exits, with Rabbi Baruch Shlomo Cunin, an event honoring the Rambam at the Los Angeles City Hall. *Courtesy of Chabad of the West Coast*

Rabbi Raichik felt a great responsibility to help and support the Rebbe's shluchim on the West Coast. He had a set time during the week to call shluchim, and he would sit with a list and rotate whom he called. "How are you? How is it going?" he would ask. "What activities have you recently done?" Shluchim would come speak with him, often for hours. When someone was going through a hard time, financially or otherwise, he offered any kind of support he could. For privacy reasons, many of these informal meetings happened on the street.

In 5744 (1984) the Rebbe launched a campaign for people to learn a daily portion of Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*, and Rabbi Raichik called the shluchim, pressing them to commit to study three chapters a day. Many demurred, saying they did not have time to study so much, but he would not take no for an answer. "A chassid has to do three chapters," he would tell them.

Once, when he called Rabbi Yosef Levin of Chabad in Palo Alto, he would not hang up the phone until the rabbi committed to do three chapters daily.

[PART VII]

On a Mission

Rabbi Raichik spent many hours davening and learning Torah each day, making what he studied an integral part of his daily life. He not only internalized and shared what he learned, but also devoted himself entirely to impacting people's lives and carrying out the Rebbe's work.

"A shliach is one who is a messenger from the Rebbe to spread Yiddishkeit," Rebbetzin Raichik said about being sent to Los Angeles. "We are like the fingers of the Rebbe, extending all over. That is why we were sent out, to bring Torah and mitzvos and Yiddishkeit to the general population."

To those who noticed, Rabbi Raichik's dedication to the Rebbe and Rebbe Rayatz was apparent every time he left his home: before stepping outside he would glance up at their pictures, which hung near the entrance.

Once, in Rabbi Raichik's later years, a neighbor called his son-in-law Avrohom Klyne, telling him to rush to the Raichik house immediately. Upon his arrival he found that Rabbi Raichik had fallen and was lying with his leg bent at an impossible angle. After calling for help he sat down next to him on the floor, spoke to him, and gently held his hand, which was shaking badly.

Rabbi Raichik was staring at a point above his shoulder, and seemed to be



Rabbi Raichik (seventh from left) with other shluchim at the 5745 (1984) Kinus Hashluchim. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

struggling to change his position. Eventually, he told Avrohom, "*Zeit mochel*, forgive me, but you're blocking my view of the Rebbe's picture on the wall."

Not My Honor

Representing the Rebbe was not always comfortable for Rabbi Raichik, who was naturally a humble, private person. In a private audience the Rebbe Rayatz once told him, "Since you are my emissary, I accompany you wherever you may travel. And since, if I had personally arrived [in a shul] in any given city, I would have been honored with a seat on the *mizrach vant* [a seat of honor on the eastern wall], you also need to do that wherever you may go."

He unfailingly obeyed this directive wherever he went. Once, in the early 1950s, a few students on Merkos Shlichus accompanied him to a shul in Los Angeles. Before they went in, recalled Moshe Groner, Rabbi Raichik told them, "I want you to know, I am going to do something that will seem out of place, but I must do it because I was told to." He promptly headed toward the front of the shul.

The students later traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where they met Rabbi Jacob Twersky, the rabbi of Congregation Beth Jehudah. He had seen Rabbi Raichik do the same thing when he visited, and expressed his surprise to the students. "Rabbi Raichik is a *bituldike* [self-effacing] Jew. Why is he pushing himself to *mizrach*?" The bochurim, who had deduced that this must be an instruction from the Rebbe, explained it to him.

Open Home

There was never a dull moment in the Raichik home. Although they were a large family of ten children, there was always room for others. No one was ever turned away; the Raichiks personally tended to each person who showed up at the door.

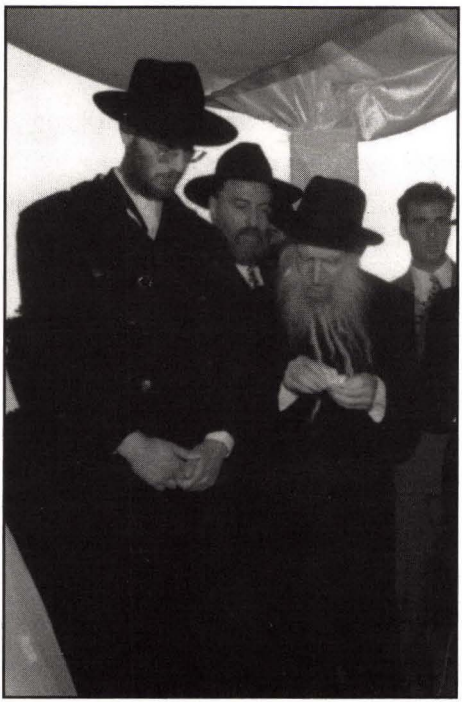
"You walked into that house and felt completely at home," Dr. Dauer recalled. "We used to knock on the door, but didn't have to, because the door was open 24/7. Everyone felt welcome."

Chantal Traub recalled the home as a down-to-earth, humble place. "It was like a time capsule," she said. "They personified the nature of how a Jewish man and woman should conduct their lives. There was no need for lectures or classes on Judaism; you just absorbed it from them."

The dining room could contain any number of people – some sitting on chairs, while others were fast asleep on the sofa. "Rabbi Raichik was either learning at the table beside his wife, or they were offering people something to eat or drink," Dr. Dauer said.

"There was always food in the fridge – whether gefilte fish or fresh marble cake – to feed those who would come," recalled their daughter Chani Hanoka.

There were many regulars. One was a Holocaust survivor who had two sickly daughters, and the Raichiks were extremely involved with the family's welfare. "Even when this woman passed away," Chani said, "my mother would always send her daughters a package for Chanukah. She would also pay for someone to make them Pesach food."



At the wedding of the daughter of Dr. Dauer (center).

There was the "journalist," a man who hoarded newspapers in his apartment. He often came over for dinner, but always without notice, and never before 10 PM. Even when Rebbetzin Raichik was sitting shiva for her mother, he came to the house and she personally fed him.

An elderly neighbor, Mrs. Goldstein, would light Shabbos candles at their home each week. "She barely ate from Shabbos to Shabbos," said Suri Klyne. "On Shabbos she ate at our home for a number of years."

The elderly woman began coming to the Raichik home when the older children were already studying abroad. When they returned they were surprised to see their father rush home from shul on Friday night, instead of davening at length as he always did. "When they came home from shul they realized that his concern for their hungry guest had changed his routine," Suri said. After the meal one of the Raichik children would escort her home.

Many of those who came were people who were not welcomed elsewhere. When one of the Raichik children confessed to being afraid of someone who frequented their home, Rabbi Raichik simply replied, "Maybe he is scared of you?"

Howard Elinson, a longtime neighbor and friend of the Raichiks, used to joke that one day city officials would come and protest that the family was pro-

viding social services without a license and taking business away from city social workers.

Although he was very restrictive about what he ate, Rabbi Raichik always made sure that others had plenty of food. At times on Shabbos day he would come home with his guests, have tea and cake while everyone ate the meal, and then return to shul to continue his davening. When he finished he would go home to have his meal.

Rebbetzin Raichik and the children would often accompany the guests home, even on Pesach, when the Seder continued into the wee hours of the morning.

To those who did not come to their home, but would not otherwise have a Shabbos or Yom Tov meal, Rebbetzin Raichik would send fish, challahs, and cake. Many times, after Shabbos and Yom Tov ended, people would flock to the Raichiks to eat and socialize. "It was the best show in town," said Zack Miller. "There were people present from all segments of society. Everyone was debating, discussing and eating. Throughout the entire time Rabbi Raichik seemed oblivious to what was going on, and he just walked around making sure everyone was okay."

"The Raichik home may have been in Los Angeles," Professor Tuvia Kwasman said, "a modern city; however, when you were in the house, it was as if it was still in the shtetl. That warmth, it never changed from how it was back then."

For the wedding of Rabbi Shalom Ber Levitin and Chana Weiss, in Av 5729 (August 1969), the father of the bride, Berel Weiss, offered to pay for six of the groom's friends in New York to attend the wedding in California. The students asked permission from the Rebbe, who agreed, as long as there was someone responsible for them. Rabbi Raichik planned their entire stay.

The young men visited local rabbonim to discuss Torah, and Rebbetzin Raichik prepared breakfast for them every day.

"I remember, at one meal, Mrs. Raichik kept serving us another portion, and then another one," Rabbi Gershon Schusterman recalled. "We were young students and we ate a lot, but at some point we could not eat much more. She was also a very talkative and feisty woman."

All the while Rabbi Raichik was in shul. When he came home, he asked the

students, "*Nu,* did you eat anything? Maybe have more potatoes? More eggs? And maybe you want to wash again for bread?!"

Rabbi Yossi Schneerson recalled the summer he was a camp counselor in S. Diego and decided to drive to Los Angeles. The hour was already late, and he would probably arrive close to midnight.

"How are you going to find food so late at night?" his friends asked incredulously.

He answered simply, "The Raichiks."

Rabbi Eliezer Gross of Yeshivah Gedolah in Los Angeles would regularly learn with Rabbi Raichik, and remembered how deep into the night people would knock on the door, including the homeless.

One individual who came frequently would bang furiously on the door. Rabbi Raichik would greet him warmly, "*Oh, Reb Yid, mistame kumt ihr tzu lernen.* You have probably come to study. Join us!" Of course, this person had not the slightest interest in learning.

"He was a homeless person, yet Rabbi Raichik greeted him gracefully and pleasantly," Rabbi Gross said. He recalled how he would sit the man down at the table and bring out a huge plate of food: "It looked like Rabbi Raichik was prepared for situations like this. These were people that nobody took care of. I don't know if anyone knew they existed."

Observing his hospitality was an enlightening experience for Rabbi Gross. "He was a lofty Jew," he said. "Dealing with such people didn't bring him a lot of glory, yet Rabbi Raichik did it happily."

"In all his years as an emissary," Congressman Howard Berman said on June 10, 1994, while honoring the Raichiks in Congress, "Rabbi Raichik has never recognized a distinction between his public and private lives. He has no office. He keeps no appointment book."

The congressman spoke of the open-door policy the couple established. "Visiting dignitaries, troubled youth, divided families, and spiritual seekers," he said, "all felt comfortable at the Raichik home. To fulfill their mission Rabbi and Mrs. Raichik and their family have sacrificed privacy, luxury, convenience, and comfort."

Sensitive Fundraiser

For years Rabbi Raichik continued traveling to raise funds for the central Chabad organizations, Machane Yisroel and Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, using his travels as an opportunity to reach out to Jews across North and South America. "This frail, tiny man with a long, straggly beard looked like the wind would blow him over, but he would go to the wealthiest of the wealthiest homes," said Susie Blauner, a community member who had a close relationship with Rabbi Raichik.

He truly cared about his donors and the others with whom he was in touch, and was up to date on their business dealings, so that he could be sensitive about asking for donations. If one was not doing well financially, he would simply offer support and encourage faith in G-d.

One day, with some yeshivah students in the car, Rabbi Raichik had the driver pull up to a newsstand. He rushed over and engaged in a quick nonverbal interaction with the owner. He picked up a copy of the *New York Times*, scanned the stock listings, folded up the newspaper, and waved goodbye to the owner.

"That blew my mind," recalled Rabbi Gershon Schusterman. "What did he know about stocks?"



At the Vacht Nacht of Eli Ryzman. Sitting on the right is the Munkatcher Rebbe.

When Rabbi Schusterman later inquired about the incident, Rabbi Raichik said, "I am a fundraiser. I have to stay updated on the stock market." During a visit to Los Angeles, Rabbi Leibel Schapiro said he witnessed people turning to Rabbi Raichik for advice on purchasing stocks.

"When you come to collect money, you have to know about his [the donor's] personal financial situation," Rabbi Raichik once explained to someone. "If he is doing well, you need to encourage him to give tzedakah. If he is not doing well, you have to raise his morale and trust in Hashem." He even kept a roster of people whom he could never ask for a donation due to their financial straits.

His son-in-law Chaim Hanoka had a similar experience visiting a bank with Rabbi Raichik, where he maintained certain accounts for Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch in New York. "He was not a man who you'd imagine would keep updated on stocks or the bank CD rates," he said, "yet I followed his conversations and he knew exactly what the CD rates were, and where to place the tzedakah money."

If he was forced to choose, mitzvahs always took precedence over money. "During a trip to Chicago we had a limited window of time before our flight back to California," Mr. Novack recalled. "We could either visit someone who always gave a substantial donation, or a widow who Rabbi Raichik felt would benefit from a visit. He chose to visit the widow."

Philanthropist Sol Teichman said that when he first came to Los Angeles he didn't have much money. Rabbi Raichik met him one day while shopping on Fairfax Avenue and told him, "You have to give charity."

Mr. Teichman, generous by nature and attuned to Rabbi Raichik's sincerity, took out five dollars (the equivalent of $90 today) and gave it to him. "He looked into my eyes and said, 'For you, two dollars is enough,'" Mr. Teichman said. "He returned the rest of the money."

Regarding tzedakah, Rabbi Raichik once told Sarah Levin that even if money was lacking, she should write a check and give it at the time it was requested, explaining: "If you write a check it is considered as if you gave tzedakah; when things improve, you can tell me when it is okay to cash it."

In the early years several people offered him money for his own needs, but he would simply send the money to Chabad headquarters in New York. Once, they found out and complained to him that the money had been intended for him and not an institution. They eventually realized that any support intended for the Raichik family should be directed to Rebbetzin Raichik.

When Shaul Rapaport heard that the Raichiks were having a difficult time financially, he sent $10,000 to Rabbi Raichik to use for his family's needs. "At that time someone turned to him that he was financially unable to marry his daughter," Shaul told his nephew Avery, "and Rabbi Raichik gave him all of the money."

From around 5755 (1995) Rabbi Raichik, who was then frail, was accompanied on several trips by Rebbetzin Raichik, including those to Brazil, where he stayed with the Zajac family.

"It was a beautiful couple to watch, very special," Mrs. Zajac said. "Every time I recall those days my heart melts. They were very respectful to one another, very polite."

Despite his poor health Rabbi Raichik was still raising large sums of money. He once raised $270,000 in one night. "Rabbi Raichik didn't take any commission from the money he raised," Rabbi Zajac said.

By that time, the Zajacs felt like family with the Raichiks. Their children treated him as their grandfather. In a rare moment Rabbi Raichik opened up about his personal financial issues. "I am making a *chassunah* for my child and I don't have

a penny to my name," he said.

Rabbi Zajac said: "Why didn't you tell me? I would have had everyone give the money to you instead of to the Rebbe. Everybody would have been fine giving the money for your needs."

Despite being very weak, Rabbi Raichik jumped up in a panic and said, "*Chas veshalom!* [G-d forbid!] That money is *kodesh kodashim* [holy of holies]."

Other fundraisers were not exempt from his kindness and generosity; he would happily introduce them to his friends and donors. When Rabbi Mendel Futerfas began fundraising for one of the yeshivahs in Kfar Chabad, Rabbi Raichik would travel with him. All of the money they raised went to help the struggling yeshivah.

Jack Mayesh received several visits from the two distinguished chassidim. "It was generally an unannounced visit at my workplace," he said. "I would immediately take them into my private office."

Rabbi Raichik would put on tefillin with him and afterwards explain Rabbi Futerfas' initiative. Mr. Mayesh was always happy to help.

"I typically spoke to Rabbi Raichik once a week," said Rabbi Schusterman, who headed the Chabad-Lubavitch Hebrew Academy of Orange County, a few miles south of Long Beach. He would regularly stop by to talk to Rabbi Raichik. Keeping the day school afloat was challenging, and Rabbi Schusterman often voiced his frustrations. "Rabbi Raichik was wise," he said, "and knew more about fundraising than anyone."

He once told him, "Gershon, there are Jews in Orange County who are begging, 'Come to me, I want to give you funds for the yeshivah.' There are people whom you know and have money; all you have to do is ask them."

In the late 5730s (1970s) Rabbi Schusterman made an appointment with a oncologist who had a large foundation geared toward education. Anxious to make the most of the opportunity, he called Rabbi Raichik and asked him to join the meeting.

Though he would have to leave especially early to get to Huntington Beach, located some forty miles from his home, he agreed. Unfortunately, despite their efforts, the oncologist declined to donate to the school.

"Rabbi Raichik showed no inkling of regret for schlepping all the way to Long Beach," said Rabbi Schusterman. "He was a helpful man and he did his duty. In fact, I don't think I ever saw him angry."

When Rabbi Avrohom Levitansky needed money for Chabad of S. Monica, he phoned Rabbi Raichik to discuss the situation and spent the rest of the day making fruitless fundraising calls. Exhausted, he fell asleep. At one in the morning the phone rang. Rabbi Levitansky answered and Rabbi Raichik told him to come over. "I have two thousand dollars for you," he said.

Shimon once noticed his father davening far later than he normally did. When he asked what happened, Rabbi Raichik replied that the entire morning had been devoted to obtaining urgent funds for a Chabad House and that he had not been able to daven until the money was in the bank.

Rabbi Raichik not only gave advice and moral support to the shluchim, he also took out loans on their behalf. Once, someone called Rebbetzin Raichik and told her that if Rabbi Raichik still needed the money he had borrowed, he should not rush to pay it back. The person never knew that the money had gone to help a struggling shliach.

When a businessman who frequently gave him money began to lose his livelihood, Rabbi Raichik, who was then already quite sick and frail, went on his own from house to house asking for money for the man's family. People realized how important the cause was to him, and a large sum was raised within a few days.

Jerry Liebowitz recalled how his father, Aharon, once met Rabbi Raichik walking on Fairfax Avenue. As they continued walking together they passed a homeless man lying on the sidewalk. Mr. Liebowitz walked around the man, but Rabbi Raichik stopped. He bent down and spoke gently with him. He then went into a store and purchased a box of matzah for the man before continuing on his way.

When Time Doesn't Matter

Those who drove Rabbi Raichik around Los Angeles admired his skillful navigation of city streets. While he never drove a car, he directed the drivers by motioning with his hands. Some commented that they were not even sure if he knew the street names, but he most definitely knew the way.

Chaim Hanoka remembered how his father-in-law once asked him for a ride on Erev Sukkos. The Hanokas had recently moved to Pasadena, California, to open a Chabad House, and the one thing he lacked was spare time. But he couldn't refuse Rabbi Raichik. Seeing that his son-in-law was stressed over his disrupted schedule, Rabbi Raichik blessed him, "The *Aibeshter* will give you success in time."

Chaim said, "There was no feasible way to get everything done, but somehow that day I did everything I needed to do."

Rabbi Raichik would often travel to Brazil in the summer, first flying to New York for meetings and catching a flight to South America from there. When Chaim was still living in Crown Heights he would drive him to the airport.

Once, the hour of Rabbi Raichik's flight approached, but he was nowhere to be seen. Shortly before the flight, when there was little hope of catching it,



At the engagement party for Chani Raichik and Chaim Hanoka

he came rushing to the Hanoka residence. "Chaim!" he exclaimed, "We need to go to the airport. It is late!" He had been held up in meetings in 770.

"On the way to the airport I didn't hit a single red light," Chaim recalled. "We got to the airport 15 minutes before his flight."

Not only did Rabbi Raichik catch his flight, but the airline offered him a seat in first class, since they had already given away his seat.

On another occasion he was delayed for a flight because he had to finish davening and make several pressing phone calls. By the time Rabbi Naftali Estulin arrived with him at the airport, the plane was already taxiing to the runway. Rabbi Raichik adamantly refused to be turned away, however; banging on the ticket counter, he said, "I have to go now!" The airline personnel recognized his sincerity and had the plane turn back for him.

Yisroel Feiner, who frequently traveled with Rabbi Raichik, remembered how the two were rushing to the airport for a flight when they were pulled over by the police. Mr. Feiner beseeched, "Officer, please, I have an elderly person in the car, and if he misses the flight it will be very distressing."

After the officer wrote up a ticket he escorted their car to the airport. "It turned out that the flight was delayed for a little while, and we made it on," Mr. Feiner said.

Rabbi Raichik traveled so frequently that he could not avoid missing some of his flights, however. Mr. Elinson recalled driving him to the airport. When they arrived he had just missed the flight, and the two drove around LAX for a while

until they found another flight.

"He worked all day without stop, always trying to help Jews," said Gutman Locks, who used to chauffeur Rabbi Raichik in his old Volkswagen. "He never seemed to tire. He was always pleasant and kind."

Mr. Locks once complained to him that he did not stop distributing Shabbos candles early enough on Friday afternoon for Mr. Locks to complete his own Shabbos preparations. The following Friday he had Mr. Locks drop him off at his home one hour before candle-lighting time. "See?" he said. "I listened to you and stopped well before Shabbos."

On the Flight

Jay Sussman, who once found himself on a flight with Rabbi Raichik, recalled how he always ordered a kosher airline meal, though he didn't actually eat it. "I want to give another Jew livelihood," he explained. He would take the foil-wrapped meal, walk around the airplane, and persuade a non-observant Jew to give up his non-kosher meal for a kosher one instead.

"Rabbi Raichik had more *seforim* in his carry-on luggage than anything else," said Mr. Feiner. "He also carried a small bread roll, medications, and some clothes."

Once, Dr. Dauer was on a red-eye flight to New York; unbeknownst to him, Rabbi Raichik was on the same flight. When they found each other on board, the rabbi pulled out a small flask and honey cake, and together they made a *l'chaim*. The doctor fell asleep shortly afterwards. When he awoke due to turbulence at 3 am, he looked over at Rabbi Raichik and saw that he had sat undisturbed all night, learning from a sefer.

After they landed at Kennedy Airport, Rabbi Raichik took Dr. Dauer by the arm and they walked toward the water fountain. He opened his carry-on bag and removed a small cup, saying that they had to wash *negel vasser*. "You can't wait," he said. "You have to do a mitzvah right away."

Traveling Rabbi

During his visits to cities around the world Rabbi Raichik left a strong impression on the people he encountered, particularly on his hosts.

During the month of Cheshvan, when he was often traveling, he would visit Cleveland for a week or two. Rabbi Lipa Schapiro, who was a shochet in the city and later a member of the Vaad Rabonei Lubavitch, would arrange a *melaveh malkah* in his honor, and Rabbi Raichik would farbreng with the crowd.

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, who was a young child at the time, vividly recalled seeing people walk over to Rabbi Raichik in shul to ask his advice on all different matters. He recounted how once, someone quoted an expert on a particular issue being discussed, and he responded, *"Ich halt az der Aibeshter vet zicher helfen"* ("I hold that surely G-d will help!"). That was his expert opinion.

Rabbi Schapiro, today the rosh yeshivah of the Chabad yeshivah in Miami, Florida, said Rabbi Raichik was a pleasant guest. He used to bring presents for the Schapiros. "He was very *mentchlich,* even in a *baalebateshe* [respectable and well-mannered] way," he said, always asking Mrs. Schapiro how she and her kids were doing in Cleveland.

Moshe Sussman recounted how his parents, Noach and Goldie, hosted Rabbi



Rabbi Raichik made several trips to Israel at the Rebbe's behest.

Raichik in S. Louis. He would call them when he arrived in the airport. "There is no need to come pick me up," he would say. "I just want to make sure you are home." Of course, the family arranged for someone to fetch him.

"He would come at night, and when my mother would look into the room the next day, she would see that the bed was never slept in," Dr. Sussman said.

In numerous cities this was repeated; it appeared that he never slept. Many compared him to Rabbi Yitzchak Gurevitch, known as Reb Itche der Masmid, who left a deep impression on the many communities he visited.

Whenever Mrs. Sussman asked Rabbi Raichik if he had everything he needed, he would simply smile and say, "Mrs. Sussman, I have everything. All I need is a check."

Once, while visiting Silver Spring, Maryland, he stayed at the home of Yonatan and Dvora Adler for Shabbos. Before the meal he asked Mr. Adler if they baked their own challahs. Hearing that they did, Rabbi Raichik said, "Good! I schlepped challahs from Los Angeles, and they are most probably a little stale."

The Adlers' challah was made with whole wheat flour, which was then coming into style in America as a healthy alternative to white flour. When he saw that, Rabbi Raichik insisted on making the berachah on his own white challahs, even if they were stale, since to him white bread was traditional Shabbos fare. Later in the evening he asked to taste the whole-wheat challah.

Years later the Adlers received an invitation to his daughter's wedding. "We were amazed! You put [someone] up for Shabbos, and he invites you to his daughter's wedding," Mr. Adler said. "We were very surprised and touched." The couple traveled to Los Angeles to attend the wedding.

In later years Rabbi Raichik stayed at the Alevsky home in Cleveland. Once, Devora Alevsky turned on a record of the Rebbe singing a niggun. At the sound of the Rebbe's voice, he leapt up. Another time, she remembered, Rabbi Raichik left the door to their house open. When she closed it, he opened it again. She then left it opened, although she did not understand why he wanted it that way. Later she realized that if the door had been closed, there might have been a problem with *yichud*.

Rabbi Velvel and Mrs. Ray Schildkraut hosted Rabbi Raichik many times in



Rabbi Raichik (second from left) with other shluchim at the White House.
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

New Haven. When they moved to Crown Heights, he and his children would for many years stay at their home. "The first time he came, he wanted to pay me, and we were insulted," Mrs. Schildkraut recalled. "He didn't ask for anything, and was always very happy. He ate whatever I served, though he never asked me for food once."

Her son, Rabbi Yehudah Leib Schildkraut, said that Rabbi Raichik would wake him up to say Krias Shema on time in the morning. "Leibel, it's *zman krias shema*. You can go back to sleep, but first say the Shema," he remembered him saying.

When the Schildkrauts were marrying off their daughter Fraida to Berel Kahan, Rabbi Raichik asked what they needed. "We need five hundred dollars," a large sum at the time, Mrs. Schildkraut told him. He arranged for someone to give the money as a gift.

While Rabbi Raichik was unable to attend the wedding, he instead joined the young couple for dinner on his next trip to New York. During the meal he que-



Teaching a class in S. Louis, Missouri. *Courtesy of Dr. Moshe Sussman*

ried them about their means and livelihood. "He felt strongly that we shouldn't go overboard, and [should] stay within our budget," Mrs. Kahan recalled.

In 5737 (1977) Rabbi and Mrs. Zajac arrived in S. Paulo, Brazil, from the United States. Immediately Rabbi Zajac felt something was missing. "We have everything here in Brazil," he wrote to the Rebbe. "We have yeshivahs, shuls, even local community politics, but we don't have someone with a *tziyur* [countenance] of a chassid like Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik."

He asked the Rebbe if he could send someone like Rabbi Raichik.

One day Rabbi Zajac received a call from Rabbi Raichik, who asked if he could come to Brazil and stay with them. "The Rebbe told me to go and stay by you," he said. "When should I come?"

For the next 18 years Rabbi Raichik spent several weeks in the month of Elul in Brazil with the Zajacs.

The Zajacs treasure their memories of those years. The *yiras shamayim* that Rabbi Raichik had rubbed off on those who met him, they said. They can still

repeat, word for word, portions of the chassidic discourses he delivered for the community.

Rabbi Raichik would visit the local schools and there would be a *melaveh malkah* where community members would gather. "He would start to say 'Elul,' and people froze from the way he said it," Mrs. Zajac said. "The seriousness of the month became a reality for those gathered."

Whenever Rabbi Raichik stayed with them, their home was busy the whole day, with people lining up to see him, she said, "in their Shabbos clothes, *shtreimlach*, *vaise zoken* (white socks) and all."

Mrs. Zajac said that Rabbi Raichik shrugged off all the honor they tried to give him: "He couldn't take it." Someone from the community once asked him whether it is better to go to a place where one receives a lot of honor, or to a place where one can earn money. *"Vos hot men fun kavod?"* ("What do you get from honor?") Rabbi Raichik answered, making his preference clear.

When people asked him for a berachah, he would say: "I will remember you by the Rebbe. I will give it over to the Rebbe."

Holy Partners

Rabbi Raichik and Reb Mendel Futerfas used to travel around the country collecting money for one of the yeshivahs in Kfar Chabad, Israel. Although they came from different backgrounds, Rabbi Raichik from Poland and Reb Mendel from Russia, over the years they became inseparable friends.

Rabbi Moshe Leider of Chabad Center of University City in S. Diego remembered Rabbi Raichik's visits with Rabbi Mendel Futerfas. By the time the two elderly men finished learning and praying, the hour was late. When they finally began to fundraise, Rabbi Leider said, "People would stop their cars to look at them, the two chassidim. It was an amazing sight."

Rabbi Leider was constantly astonished by the impact the two men had on community members. They would talk to people about Judaism, encouraging them and their families to connect with their heritage and observe mitzvos. "People were awe-inspired by their presence," he said.

When Sholom and Debbie Fine were first becoming involved in Chabad of La Jolla, they met the two rabbis. Sholom once gave them a lift in his Jaguar to Del Mar, where they planned to meet with a potential donor.

At Rabbi Raichik's insistence, Reb Mendel sat in the front seat. Not knowing



In conversation with Rabbi Futerfas at 770.

much about him, Mr. Fine asked him about his occupation. Reb Mendel responded simply that he was a teacher. Rabbi Raichik attempted to correct him, and said that Reb Mendel had been the head of the Russian learning program, referring to his involvement in running the Chabad underground in the Soviet Union. Mr. Fine did not know what he was referring to, and Reb Mendel just smiled.

The destination in Del Mar turned out to be an enormous mansion. The two elderly men climbed the steps to the entrance. Sholom was concerned they would be turned away immediately, but instead they were ushered in. The two returned 20 minutes later smiling.

When Reb Mendel's grandson Rabbi Shloimie Futerfas was studying in Los Angeles in 1987 he took the two rabbis around, a tradition that continued until 1989. "They both had a tremendous respect for one another," he said. "Doing the Rebbe's *shlichus* was the most important thing to them, nothing else."

He said that by then they had been visiting the same donors for years, and people felt it was a great *zechus* to be visited by the two elderly chassidim. "They didn't need to fundraise," he said. "They came with checks ready. People appreci-

ated who they were giving money to."

At times, he said, Rabbi Raichik was not happy with the amount, and he would say, "Nu, give more." A friendly argument would ensue. "Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn't."

One individual who lived in a secluded area near the Mexican border would give them large sums of money. His wife was eccentric, and after he passed away they did not expect to receive anything from her. However, Rabbi Raichik decided that he wanted to try anyway.

As always, Rabbi Raichik was doing the navigating. As they approached the border, however, Shloimie started getting nervous. He told Rabbi Raichik that they had already passed the home. "*Fahr, fahr*, drive, drive, I will show you the way," Rabbi Raichik said.

Finally, at the last exit, Rabbi Raichik took them up a small road, off the beaten path, and they arrived at a home. They knocked on the door, and the maid said that no one was home. "I know she is home," Rabbi Raichik said. "Just open the door."

From behind the door, they could hear a woman screaming, "Don't let them in!"

Rabbi Raichik kept on banging, while Reb Mendel was telling him that perhaps they should just go. Rabbi Raichik was not giving up.

"I need to use the bathroom," he told the maid through the closed door. The woman again shouted not to let them in, but the maid opened the door slightly to tell them what the woman was saying. Rabbi Raichik quickly stuck his foot in the door so that she couldn't close it. "Please, please, I must use the bathroom," he said.

She let him in, and he went to the bathroom, washed his hands, said Asher Yatzar, and left.

As they drove away, Reb Mendel asked him, "Why did you have to bother with them?"

Rabbi Raichik responded, "Nu, at least to make a berachah in the home."

Once, they visited a wealthy man, and his secretary said he was very busy,



With Rabbi Futerfas in Long Beach, California, circa 1989. Standing on the left is Rabbi Gershon Shusterman. *Courtesy of Rabbi Shlomo Futerfas*

and asked if the rabbis could wait 20 minutes. During that time they both fell asleep from exhaustion.

Finally the man came out with a check and found the two old Jews sleeping. He wrote a check for $5,000. When they woke up, the secretary gave them the check.

Reb Mendel was very excited to receive such a large sum. He turned to Rabbi Raichik and said, "Where could we go to sleep again?!"

Friday Calls

Rabbi Raichik had a very long list of people he would call every Friday without fail. The phone had a long wire, so he would bring it into his bedroom and make the calls. The Raichik family knew that on Friday afternoons the phone would be in use.

These calls were to wealthy donors, sick people, widows, orphans, and anyone else he knew would appreciate hearing from him. Many of the recipients recounted how touched they were that he took the time to let them know he was thinking of them.

When a new couple moved into town and had a difficult time acclimating, he called them weekly for over a year; a young woman who married a widower with a large family received a call each week asking if she was happy and if she needed anything; and a community member who was unemployed for a time received a call every Friday until he found a job.

Rabbi Josh Gordon, who headed Chabad of the Valley for many years, would bring people from his community to Rabbi Raichik. "They would discuss issues with him and get his counsel," he recalled. "Rabbi Raichik was an excellent listener. He would not say very much. His words were very few and chosen. He would then give them a blessing. No one walked away disappointed."



With Jerry Blauner. *Courtesy of Sarah Blauner*

Jerry Blauner, a supporter of Chabad in the Valley, was completely nonobservant when he first met Rabbi Raichik in the late '70s. "Rabbi Raichik called him every Friday and never missed a week," Rabbi Gordon said. "I guess this is what he was great at, simply giving support in his own quiet way." Over the years Mr. Blauner and his wife became more observant. When Rabbi Raichik passed away they felt a deep sense of loss. "It is the one thing that I miss terribly," Mrs. Blauner said of the Friday calls.

Zoltan Schwartz, a Satmar chassid who opened a nursing home in California, used to receive calls from Rabbi Raichik asking how many patients he had and how many rooms were empty. "I knew many good Jews from Europe," Mr. Schwartz would say, "but none were like Rabbi Raichik."

Even when he was out of town he never forgot to make his calls. His little phone book was with him always, and the calls continued until the final years of his life.

Discrete Advice

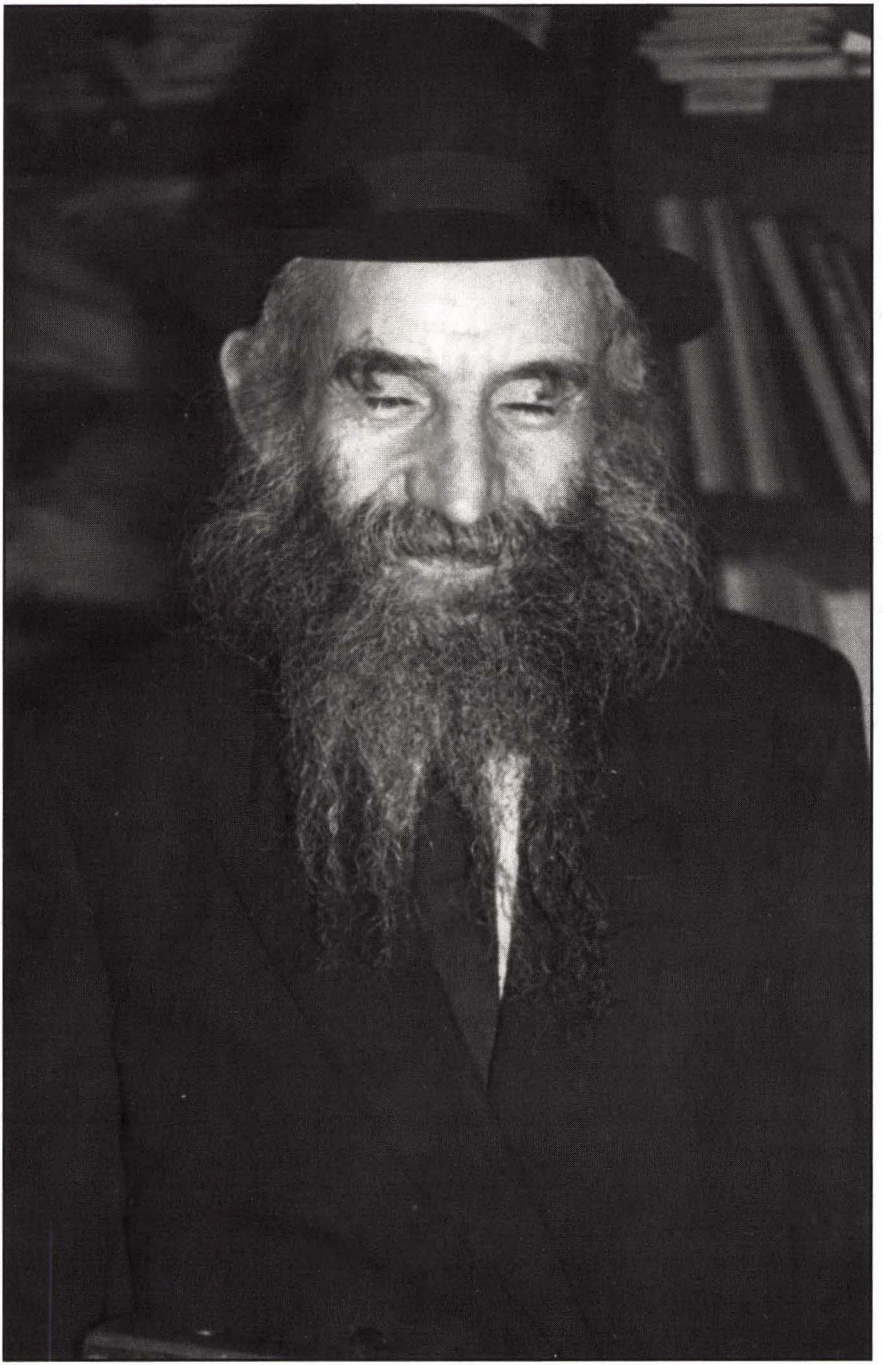
The time he spent on his calls was small compared to the hours he spent counseling people. He never spoke about those who confided in him, out of fear of divulging private information, and went to great lengths to preserve their anonymity.

The Raichiks' street was known as Rabbi Raichik's "personal conference room." He could often be seen on the sidewalk, walking to and fro, deep in conversation with someone who needed his advice, having sought refuge from the bustling house outside.

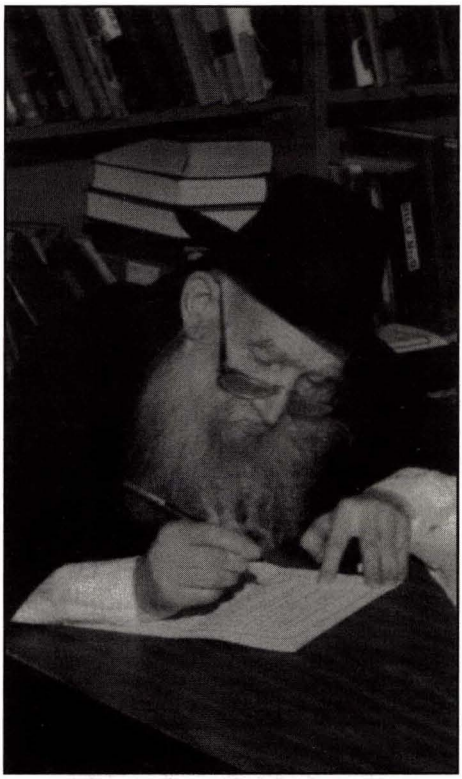
Motti Wilhelm, who lived with his grandparents when he was learning in the Los Angeles yeshivah, recalled being sent to his room when couples would come to confer with Rabbi Raichik.

Once, Rabbi Raichik wanted to speak to a student at the yeshivah, but did not want to embarrass him by singling him out. Instead he called several students to the yeshivah office, one by one, and discussed general yeshivah matters, before finally calling the student with whom he really had something to discuss.

His advice was treasured by those who received it. Dr. Dauer recalled how when his children were young Rabbi Raichik emphasized the importance of pa-



In the Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch offices at 770, circa 1970. Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives



Writing the details of the kesubah at the Dauer-Lipskier wedding.

tience. "You have to love and respect the child, no matter what he or she does," he told him. "Everything will turn out well at the end. You are going to see only goodness from these children."

This advice, said the doctor, "was very much on target." He also urged him to spend as much time as possible with his children and family, and to take them to shul from the earliest possible age.

Rabbi Raichik intuitively knew when he could encourage people to grow in their Jewish observance. After Dr. Dauer's father passed away, Rabbi Raichik – who was in New York at the time – called to offer condolences. He also inquired whether Dr. Dauer intended to say kaddish. Dr. Dauer said that local rabbis had advised him to make every effort to go to shul once a day, given the demands on his time as chief of staff in the coronary and intensive care unit of a hospital.

"What do you mean 'once a day'?" the rabbi said. "You have to make it your business to rearrange your schedule and say kaddish three times a day in shul!"

Dr. Dauer did indeed manage to lead davening three times daily for the entire eleven months. "Because of Rabbi Raichik, I never missed a single kaddish for my father or my mother," he said.

Rabbi Raichik would make an effort not to press people to do more than they could. When Dennis and Susan Blauner were still new to Jewish observance, he recommended to Mr. Blauner that he stop smoking on Shabbos.

"What's the difference if I stop smoking?" Mr. Blauner asked. "I'm still working on Shabbos."



With Dennis Blauner (right) and Joseph Lutman. *Courtesy of Sarah Blauner*

Rabbi Raichik explained that he needed to take one step at a time.

One step led to another, and the Blauners eventually wanted to move closer to the shul in order to walk there on Shabbos. They found the area prohibitively expensive, however. They told Rabbi Raichik they couldn't afford the move. He gave them a blessing, and the next week a house came on the market that they could afford.

Then another obstacle arose: they had trouble selling their old house, and could not afford both. They told him about their dilemma, and he blessed them again. By the following week the Blauners had sold their house for more than they had imagined possible. From that weekend on, they began to keep Shabbos.

Shimon said that he will never forget that Erev Shabbos when Mr. Blauner told his father the news. "It was as if my father found a treasure."

Rabbi Raichik told him, "Baruch Hashem, they will be able to walk to shul without driving."

When Baila Romm was ready to get married, she made an appointment to

see Rabbi Raichik. He promised to daven for her. "I felt he was pure truth," she said. "He really meant what he said, and he davened for me every day until I got married."

The Raichiks attended the wedding. At a Sheva Berachos in the Levin home the guests were asked to introduce themselves and their relationship to the couple. Rabbi Raichik rose and announced, "The bride is my sister and the groom is my brother. That's how I know them."

Once, Mrs. Levin's mother-in-law gave her money to purchase a set of dishes for Shabbos. Together with a friend, she went to the store, where Mrs. Levin chose a pricy set. Her friend suggested something more moderately priced, which would allow her to purchase glasses too. They left without buying anything. Later Mrs. Levin related what happened to Rabbi Raichik.

"If you are somebody who entertains the president or a congressman," he told her, "then you have to have expensive bone china. However, if you are serving people like me, Melmac is just fine. There is a middle road." He said one needs to know who they are, what their role is in life, and then behave accordingly.

Though he himself lived an almost ascetic life, Rabbi Raichik did not advocate that approach for others. He understood that people need physical things that give them pleasure. He once explained that doing things to break your own will, such as purchasing an item you don't like, is not the way of Chabad. The item you don't like will always bother you, he said, and you'll end up thinking about it more than if you just bought something you liked and moved on with your life. If all you think about is the thing you did not get, then what have you accomplished?

He once told someone that every person should carry two pieces of paper in his or her pocket: On one should be written "Every star and blade of grass was created for you. Because G-d finds you so special, He created a beautiful world for you." The second should read, "Being honest with oneself is necessary; a person who makes mistakes can always grow and improve."

"You are exactly where G-d wants you to be," he would say.

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro recalled that there was a period when a number of people passed away in his community in Miami. When Rabbi Raichik was visit-

ing, he asked him if there was reason for alarm.

"Don't make it an issue," he said. "Why connect all the deceased into one narrative? Why turn it into a communal crisis? Every case is a separate situation."

Community member Ariella Goldberg was experiencing a health scare. Her doctors were not hopeful about the prognosis, but Rabbi Raichik felt confident that everything would be fine. "It was Rabbi Raichik who kept me going during that time," she said. "He really took an interest in how I was coping. He would call every other day, despite being so busy, just to see how I was doing." She recovered completely.

At one point Rabbi Yosef and Mrs. Hinda Langer, shluchim in S. Francisco, were having difficulty shouldering the burden of their work alone. On one of Rabbi Raichik's visits to the city Mrs. Langer asked if she could speak to him about her situation. For 45 minutes she poured out her heart, releasing months of pent-up thoughts.

After a few moments he said extremely slowly: "The Rebbe Rayatz said that a person should be very forgiving about not understanding matters."

"I expected him to continue speaking," Mrs. Langer said. "But that was it! He had said what he wanted to say!"

Mrs. Langer was shocked, and she sat in silence for several minutes. It took some time, but she slowly comprehended the message. "I let out my complaints, and they had to evaporate into the simplicity of the truth," she said.

She felt that he helped her address the heart of the matter. "I have kept his words in my mind and return to them frequently. I don't understand everything, and I keep remembering that it's not my job to understand everything," she said.

Once, Rabbi Raichik approached someone in S. Francisco to encourage him to take on an additional mitzvah. Rabbi Chaim Drizin recalled that the man tried to brush him off, saying, "I'm just getting started!"

"We're in the jet age!" Rabbi Raichik responded.

[PART VIII]

Mitzvah Advocate

Rabbi Raichik threw himself wholeheartedly into every mitzvah campaign the Rebbe initiated. During the tefillin campaign of 5727 (1967), prior to the Six-Day War, he became a virtual landmark on Fairfax Avenue, tefillin in hand, walking up and down the street. For the rest of his life his tefillin remained at his side throughout the day, ready to be placed on another Jew.

In 5747 (1986) he joined a group of shluchim at the White House to receive a proclamation honoring the Rebbe. Rabbi Raichik asked every single man present if he was Jewish. After a few negative replies, someone finally said yes.

"Let's put on tefillin!" Rabbi Raichik declared.

Embarrassed, the man replied, "Here, Rabbi?"

To locate a private corner, Rabbi Raichik began opening doors freely, until he finally found a private corner, where the man put on tefillin.

His single-minded focus on tefillin led him to develop relationships in unlikely places. Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky remembered how once, when they were on a fundraising expedition together, Rabbi Raichik suddenly announced that they had "something to do." They walked into a large office building, past receptionists and secretaries, until they reached the inner office of the



CEO. At the sight of Rabbi Raichik the CEO put down his phone and rolled up his sleeve. Rabbi Raichik wrapped the tefillin on him, helped him recite the Shema, and the two rabbis left.

"I thought we were going to collect money," Rabbi Kazarnovsky said.

"We finished the shlichus we had to do here," Rabbi Raichik replied.

Meir Plotkin, a precious stone dealer from Montreal, Canada, recalled hearing the story later from Rabbi Kazarnovsky. "It was evident what a great impression it made on him," he said.

Chani Hanoka and her husband came to spend Pesach in Los Angeles the first year after they got married. On Erev Pesach, Rabbi Raichik approached his son-in-law, Chaim Hanoka, and asked if he would like to help him deliver matzah to people.

Chaim agreed immediately, but hesitated about driving, because he was unfamiliar with the city. He soon realized that his worries were unfounded. Rabbi Raichik knew the streets of southern California like the back of his hand. "I had no idea where I was, and at the end of the day we ended up in farmland," recalled

Chaim, "where he brought them [the farmers] matzahs and put on tefillin with them."

They arrived back in Los Angeles late, but instead of going home to prepare for Yom Tov, Rabbi Raichik went to City National Bank, where he put on tefillin with everyone and gave out matzah.

Chaim described how at the bank they met a new Jewish employee and asked him if he wanted to put on tefillin. The man was not interested and shrugged them off. Thinking perhaps he did not understand what they were referring to, Chaim tried to explain the mitzvah.

"I understand the question," the man interrupted. "I am not interested."

Rabbi Raichik gave the man a piercing look and said, "We put on tefillin!" Without another word, he got out of his seat and put on tefillin.

When the choice was between fundraising and tefillin, Rabbi Raichik never hesitated. Rabbi Meir Schmukler once went with him to collect money from a wealthy man. They did not make an appointment, and the man was upset about the interruption in his schedule. "Either you take a check," he told Rabbi Raichik, "or I put on tefillin." Rabbi Raichik immediately replied that he should put on tefillin.

Rabbi Raichik would frequently visit Manny (Mendel Ber) Adler, a carpet dealer in National City, California, who was known for his generosity. Once, Rabbi Raichik and Rabbi Futerfas approached him for a donation. Rabbi Raichik, naturally, asked him to put on tefillin first, and Mr. Adler agreed.

They had a lengthy conversation, after which the rabbis walked back to their car. They were halfway down the block when Mr. Adler realized that they had forgotten to take the check he had written.

When Mr. Adler caught up to them, he told Rabbi Moshe Leider, who accompanied the two rabbis: "Many collectors forget to put on tefillin with me, but they always remember to take the check. Rabbi Raichik always remembers to put on tefillin with me, but many times forgets the check."

Mr. Adler repeated this story many times. Similar stories were told by others, including Rabbi Shalom Ber Gordon, who had the same experience with Rabbi Raichik in an office in Newark, New Jersey.



With President Ronald Reagan during his 1986 White House visit.

There are countless stories of how Rabbi Raichik helped people, often in life-changing ways, by encouraging and enabling them to put on tefillin. Zvi Lewis, an engineer, experienced a nearly fatal heart attack while attending a conference in California, and was hospitalized in Cedars-Sinai. He was unable to put on tefillin without help due to his condition, and Rabbi Raichik visited him daily to assist. Afterwards he spoon-fed Mr. Lewis chicken soup that was prepared at home and packed in a Folger's coffee can. That kindness was never forgotten.

Rabbi Raichik was always present at the Los Angeles Jewish charity walks and festivals, tefillin in hand. Once, he approached someone who curtly dismissed him. Rabbi Raichik finally offered the man $25 to put on tefillin. "I will give you $25 to leave me alone," the man snapped. Rabbi Raichik persisted nonetheless, and finally the man relented.

Chaim Drizin, a businessman in Crown Heights, recalled how as a yeshivah student in L.A. he was putting tefillin on local Jews, when he encountered a tall Texan. Mr. Drizin asked the man if he was Jewish. He replied that he most certainly was, and agreed immediately to put on tefillin.

"Is this your first time?" Mr. Drizin asked.

"No, actually it's my second," answered the Texan. "The first time was this morning. I was walking down Fairfax minding my own business, when an old, saintly Jew with a long white beard approached me. He asked me if I would put on tefillin, and I told him to go away."

Rabbi Raichik followed him for three blocks. "I finally gave up," the Texan said. "I turned around to the rabbi and said 'Fine! If it is so important to you, I will do it.' With unusual strength the old rabbi grabbed my arm and helped me put on tefillin right then and there – outside, on the street. It was an amazing experience."

One month after Rabbi Raichik's passing, the Chabad House in Westwood received a call from Bram Goldsmith, the chairman and chief executive of City National Bank, the largest bank lender in Los Angeles. The receptionist could not get anyone in the office to take the call, as they assumed it was regarding a debt.

Finally Ruchie Stillman picked up the line. "Do you happen to have a picture of Rabbi Raichik?" the manager asked. Surprised, Mrs. Stillman asked why



Putting on tefillin with a White House aide, 20 KIslev, 5747 (December 22, 1986). *Courtesy of Yossi Melamed/JEM*

he wanted one. The manager replied, "Every time Rabbi Raichik came to this branch, he headed straight to my office and asked me to put on tefillin. It didn't make a difference what I was doing. Even if I was in a private meeting, I always stood up, rolled up my sleeve, and put on the kippah and tefillin." He concluded, "I want Rabbi Raichik's picture on my desk to inspire me to rise to the highest level in my Judaism."

"Every Jew wants to lay tefillin," Rabbi Raichik once said. "If you approach a person with the attitude that you have a treasure and want to share it with him, no one will refuse."

Mikvah

Family Purity, Taharas Hamishpacha, was another mitzvah close to Rabbi Raichik's heart. He was the force behind the construction of many mikvahs in California and elsewhere, and even created his own mikvah-building fund.

In the Raichiks' early days in Los Angeles there was a mikvah in Boyle Heights. "The rabbi who built it devoted his life to it," Rebbetzin Raichik recalled, "but he couldn't pay the mortgage. One week the rabbi appealed to all the shuls to help cover the mortgage. So my husband gave $25 in one shul and $25 in another. The only trouble was that he was then earning $50 a week."

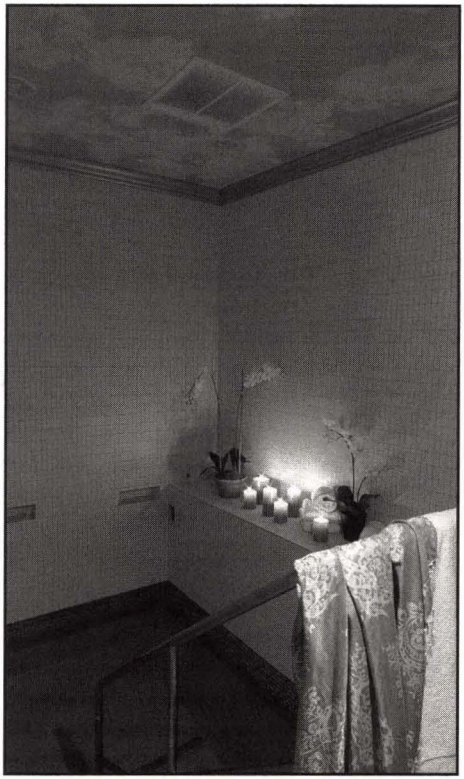
In fall 5733 (1972) Rabbi Gershon Schusterman received a call from Rabbi Binyomin Klein of the Rebbe's secretariat, with a "response" from the Rebbe.

"I didn't ask anything of the Rebbe," Rabbi Schusterman answered in bewilderment. "Are you sure the message is for me?"

Rabbi Klein assured him that it was, and delivered the message: "The idea to build a mikvah in Long Beach is extremely important, and in order to speed up the process I am sending a check of $1,000."

No one knew who had sent a letter to the Rebbe in the first place. Neither

Rabbi Raichik nor any of the local Chabad rabbis or rebbetzins had proposed a mikvah. It was later discovered that Rabbi Mendel Futerfas had heard about the absence of a mikvah in Long Beach on one of his yearly visits to the community. During his stay he held a farbrengen and encouraged that one be built. One woman in attendance later wrote to her mother describing what happened at the farbrengen. Her mother showed the letter to the Rebbe, who then contacted Rabbi Schusterman.



The mikvah in Long Beach. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

"The idea of building a mikvah in Long Beach did not make sense," Rabbi Schusterman explained, "because there were only four women in the vicinity actively using one, and Los Angeles was only about 30 minutes away. I thought to myself that Rabbi Futerfas doesn't realize how preposterous the idea is."

Nevertheless, with the Rebbe's instruction in hand, Rabbi Schusterman came to Rabbi Raichik and explained the difficulty with collecting donations from people who have no use for a mikvah.

"Ich vel dir helfen, ich vel dir helfen," Rabbi Raichik answered. "I will help. We will go to people here in Los Angeles."

They drew up a list of local businessmen, and for several months paid frequent visits to Rabbi Raichik's longtime supporters. "He would make small talk," Rabbi Schusterman recalled. "He knew them and inquired about their families. But then he would get down to business. He didn't beat around the bush."

Rabbi Raichik made the pitch: "There are many families in Long Beach. They



Mikvah Esther in Los Angeles. *Courtesy of Mikvah Esther*

are in a far-off location, and the Rebbe instructed them to build a mikvah. We need to help them."

Eventually enough funding was secured. Rabbi Raichik found an architect and contractor, and a beautiful mikvah was built. He also arranged for Berel Weiss to cover the monthly mortgage.

For many years the Long Beach community held an annual barbecue as a mikvah fundraiser. Rabbi Raichik would attend and, in his modest way, talk to people about the laws of Taharas Hamishpacha.

He also actively encouraged women in Los Angeles to use the mikvah, and when he heard that many were reluctant because of its rundown appearance, he became one of the driving forces behind the building of Mikvah Esther in the Pico-Robertson area, making countless calls to the mikvah committee to offer encouragement and advice.

"He would call me almost weekly," recalled Sandi Reiss, the founding president of Mikvah Esther. "Because I knew he'd be calling, and I had such respect for him, I really made sure things were happening and would have what to report."

Sarah Levin recalled that in the Pico-Robertson area there was a mere handful of women who would use the mikvah. As in Long Beach, fundraising was especially difficult, with most of the community indifferent to the project.

But Rabbi Raichik understood that in order to increase the numbers of women using the mikvah they would first need to build a beautiful one. "Even if a woman would be encouraged to use the mikvah," Mrs. Levin recalled, "there was nowhere at the time that would be appealing to do so in the entire Los Angeles."

Finally Mikvah Esther was complete. All that was required was rainwater, in order to fulfill the halachic requirement of using water from a natural source. When he heard of an approaching thunderstorm, Rabbi Raichik got on the phone to make sure that the arrangements for the collection of rainwater were in place.

"I feel that it was due to Rabbi Raichik that the mikvah came about; he realized the necessity to build a mikvah at that time. Without him, and Lubavitch [Rabbi Shlomo Cunin], who were very much involved in raising the money, the mikvah would not have happened," Mrs. Reiss said.

Rabbi Raichik did not content himself with helping to construct the mikvah. He called frequently to ensure that the clientele was growing. "How many women attended the mikvah?" he asked Miriam Fishman, a mikvah committee member. "How many women did you call this week? How many newcomers are using it?"

"When speaking with Rabbi Raichik we always felt that what we did previously was never enough. No matter how many tours were coming from sisterhoods and Hadassah groups, we always had to do more," Mrs. Fishman said. He also made certain that mikvah brochures were constantly available and distributed.

"Rabbi Raichik was the driving force to educate women about Taharas Hamishpacha in Los Angeles," Leiba Gottesman, a mikvah founder, recalled. "He had us arrange classes to talk and educate women about the mikvah."

On a trip to Florida in 5734 (1974) Rabbi Dovid Eliezrie received a call from Rabbi Raichik. He asked Rabbi Eliezrie to travel around the state to check the condition of the existing mikvahs and ascertain which cities still needed one.

"There was a mikvah in Jacksonville that needed repair," Rabbi Eliezrie said.



Rabbi Raichik with the shluchim of the West Coast. He encouraged them to build mikvahs in their local communities. *Courtesy of Chabad of the West Coast*

"We arranged for it to be fixed, and so on. In Tampa there was a need for a Chabad House. Rabbi Raichik told Rabbi Eliezrie that he first wanted a mikvah there – and then eventually a Chabad House."

Later, when Rabbi Eliezrie built his own Chabad House in Yorba Linda, California, Rabbi Raichik came to the opening and inquired, "Where is the mikvah?" Eventually, after Rabbi Raichik's passing, a beautiful mikvah was established there.

At Rabbi Raichik's urging, several women became spokeswomen for the mitzvah of mikvah. One of these women was Mikhla Dauer, who lived then in Long Beach. At least once a week, no matter where he was, Rabbi Raichik would phone the Dauer residence to inquire about their children and ask Mrs. Dauer about her work promoting Taharas Hamishpacha in her local community.

Initially he presented her with a list of women to speak to, many of whom she knew just superficially, or not at all. Even when a woman denied interest, he pressed Mrs. Dauer, "Don't give up. You have to encourage them. It is crucial for them to go; it will help them so much in their lives."

Mrs. Dauer became so devoted to the mitzvah that she even had the word "MIKVAH" on her license plate. "He was such a holy man," she said, "yet a very kind, caring, practical person. He had a goal, and he was persistent and consistent, because he realized the importance of the mitzvah."

From the time Mrs. Levin received her letter from the Rebbe about assisting women with using the mikvah, Rabbi Raichik called her, initially every two weeks and then weekly, to ask what she was doing to promote Family Purity in Los Angeles.

"If I had nothing to report," she said, "he would quietly ask, 'There was nobody you could find to call?'" Those calls propelled her to do more.

If she felt nervous about meeting someone, she would ask Rabbi Raichik to keep her in his prayers. "He would say that he would write in to the Rebbe for a blessing, and he would pray for me," she recalled. "Then he would call me to find out if all had gone well. He was involved and interested in that way."

Rabbi Raichik once visited a certain man in a small city to ask for a donation to build a mikvah there. The man became very moved and asked Rabbi Raichik, "Did you come to me yesterday in a dream?" Rabbi Raichik responded that in fact he had. The person donated money for the mikvah.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Fogel heard the story and asked Rabbi Raichik, "How could you come and tell someone you were the one in the dream? Maybe it was someone else?"

Rabbi Raichik answered, "Who cares about a mikvah in a small city if not the Rebbe? The Rebbe appeared to him in the dream. When he asked me if it was me, I said yes, since I am the shliach of the Rebbe."

Visiting Homes, Changing Lives

Rabbi Raichik often visited people's homes. During the visits he would pay particular attention to the mezuzahs, the kitchen and the master bedroom to make sure that everything was in compliance with Jewish law. The brief visits often had profound effects on the families who received them.

When a couple in Long Beach moved into their new home, Rabbi Raichik and several Chabad rabbis arrived to affix a mezuzah. They found moving trucks parked outside.

Rabbi Raichik asked the new homeowner to have the crew unload a table and chairs first, so that they could have a farbrengen in honor of the new house. "Rabbi Raichik," the man countered, "they haven't even opened up the truck."

"Just ask them," he replied.

The movers brought out a dinette set while Rabbi Raichik waited, a bag of honey cake and liquor in hand. While the movers busied themselves with the rest of the furniture, the group of men sat around the table offering *l'chaim* and blessings for the new home. They finished by affixing the mezuzah.



Delivering a talk at a Long Beach mikvah fundraiser.

Rabbi Raichik was not a nosy person. In one area, however, he went against his natural inclinations. When he visited a home he would often ask to see the master bedroom, in order to be sure that there were two separate beds.

Thus, after they finished with the mezuzah, Rabbi Raichik asked for a tour of the house. In the master bedroom the movers were setting up a large, king-sized bed. Determined, he insisted that they needed two beds, and that under no circumstances was one enough.

"I'll order one tomorrow," the man answered.

"Do you have a telephone in the house?" Rabbi Raichik asked. When the man said yes, Rabbi Raichik asked for a telephone book. He searched through the pages until he found ads for local stores that sold beds. "Call one of these stores now and see if they'll deliver a bed for tomorrow," he pressed.

This scene repeated itself with other couples. While visiting another home he strode into the master bedroom, ignoring the handsome living and dining rooms. Assured by seeing two beds, he turned to the owner of the house and said, "All is well! Let's say *l'chaim*!"

Once, he called a couple and asked to visit their home. They cleaned the house thoroughly in preparation for his arrival.

When he arrived, they found he was mainly interested in seeing the kitchen, to make sure it was kosher, and the bedrooms. On the second floor, however, they showed him every room except the master bedroom.

"You didn't show me that room," he commented.

"It's our private bedroom," the husband answered. "Let's keep going."

"I just want to see it from the door," Rabbi Raichik said. The wife opened it slightly, and he caught sight of one bed.

"Where is your bed?" he asked the wife.

"There," she said, pointing.

"So where is your husband's bed?"

"That's also his bed," she replied.

He insisted they get two beds. Seeing the husband's discomfort, he added, "Measure your room and see what size beds you could have, but there needs to be two of them."

The couple later revealed that they had been experiencing difficulty in their marriage until they fulfilled Rabbi Raichik's request.

Once, during a fundraiser for the Long Beach mikvah, Rabbi Raichik spoke to several women about the importance of this mitzvah. In the middle of the event he turned to Rabbi Shlomo Schwartz of Chabad of UCLA and asked to see the bedrooms of the house. Rabbi Schwartz, though surprised, gave him a guided tour after getting the hostess' approval.

When they came to the master bedroom and he saw only one bed, Rabbi Raichik turned to Rabbi Schwartz and said, "You must speak to the hostess about Taharas Hamishpacha."

Rabbi Schwartz wasn't amused. "This woman was kind enough to open her house for a fundraiser, and now you want to discuss something so personal? It would take me a year or two to know someone well enough to discuss these matters," he said.

At the end of the event, not only was a substantial amount raised for the mikvah, but Rabbi Raichik also spoke to the hostess directly about Taharas Hamishpacha, and she committed herself to observe it. He arranged for a Chabad rebbetzin to teach her the laws.

"This was something only Rabbi Raichik could accomplish with his truth and sincerity," Rabbi Schwartz said.

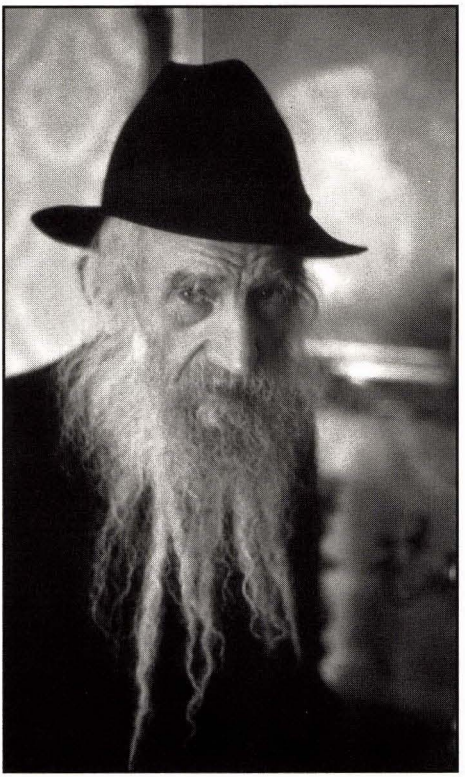
Candle Lighting

Just before Rosh Hashanah 5735 (1974) the Rebbe started a campaign encouraging women and girls to light Shabbos candles. Even in many observant communities only married women lit candles, and the Rebbe urged that Jewish girls, from an early age, should light a candle too.

The Rebbe requested that Rabbi Raichik stop in cities across the country to promote the mitzvah. Rabbi Raichik would often call his son Abi in New York asking him to send candle-lighting kits via Greyhound bus to the next city he was visiting.

Wherever he went he distributed the kits and met with rabbis to enlist their support for the campaign. Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan, the leading Chabad representative in Maryland, arranged for Rabbi Raichik to visit several schools when he stopped there. Rabbi Raichik arrived early in the morning and insisted on going to the schools without resting, where he spoke to the children and distributed kits.

In Columbus, Ohio, he worked closely with Rabbi Dovid Stavsky of the Beth Jacob Synagogue, who also felt strongly about promoting Shabbos candle-lighting and had written a brochure on the topic.



Courtesy of Michael Volk

In a letter to Rabbi Stavsky the Rebbe praised him for his initiative, and explained why he wanted young girls to participate in the mitzvah: "This is only returning to the old custom.... In previous times young girls would light candles. It was only because of lack of funds to purchase candles during times of upheaval, war, etc., that this custom was stopped."

On one trip Rabbi Raichik stopped in a shul to speak to the rabbi, but he was not in the office. After driving away, Rabbi Raichik discovered that he had forgotten to return a pen he briefly borrowed. He had the driver turn back. By the time they arrived back at the synagogue the rabbi had returned, and he and Rabbi Raichik had a productive discussion about the Neshek campaign.

Rabbi Raichik was very pleased that returning the pen had enabled him to meet the rabbi and encourage him to promote candle-lighting in his community.

Lulav and Esrog

Rabbi Raichik was given a set of lulav and esrog by the Rebbe Rayatz, and later the Rebbe, every Sukkos. Though he cherished this gift, he nonetheless encouraged others to use it.

Every day of Sukkos the Rebbe would allow people to say the berachah on his own lulav and esrog set, and a long line would immediately form after Shacharis. Rabbi Raichik would bentch on the Rebbe's personal set, but do the shaking in all directions, the *naanuim*, on the set the Rebbe had given him. He would sit in the central sukkah at 770 and permit anyone who asked to use his esrog set.

During Sukkos he would often farbreng until the early hours of the morning with Reb Avraham "Mayor" Drizin, an elderly chassid who raised funds for the Chabad yeshivahs. Shimon remembers his father waiting for Reb Avraham in 770, when the latter was running late, so that he would be able to do the *naanuim* on the lulav and esrog that the Rebbe gave Rabbi Raichik.

For many years Rabbi Raichik, along with Rabbi Mendel Futerfas and others, would travel to New Haven, Connecticut, to farbreng with the community in the sukkah of Dovid Deitsch, a wealthy businessman who supported many Chabad institutions. In the early 1980s Yisroel Shemtov would drive the group.



Reciting Hallel on Chol Hamoed, 5729 (1968).
Courtesy of Philip Garvin/Howard and Mark Elinson

Once, they stopped on the shoulder of the highway to daven Minchah. Rabbi Raichik placed his lulav and esrog on top of the car. After davening they continued their ride. Several minutes later Rabbi Raichik realized that he had forgotten his lulav and esrog on the car roof. "Oy vey, my lulav," Mr. Shemtov recalled him saying. They turned around immediately.

Eventually they saw a tallis spread out in the bushes. The lulav was there too, but the esrog was not. They looked toward the highway. The bright yellow fruit was clearly visible in the center of one of the white lines on the road.

They were able to retrieve it during a break in traffic. "There was not a scratch on the esrog," Mr. Shemtov said. Rabbi Raichik thanked him for going back for the set, and never mentioned the occurrence again. Mr. Shemtov, on the other hand, has been telling the story ever since.

Even when Rabbi Raichik was frail and it was difficult for him to walk long distances, he could not celebrate the holiday without helping another Jew do the mitzvah of lulav and esrog. He took one of his children to the 71st Precinct police station, a few short blocks from where they were staying, and they found a Jewish officer to make the berachah.

Purim

Rabbi Raichik always spent Purim in Crown Heights, though the rest of the family usually remained in Los Angeles.

Purim of 5741 (1981) fell out on Friday. While Rabbi Raichik was out helping people perform the mitzvahs of the day, his sons Abi and Shimon found themselves in 770, where the Rebbe unexpectedly delivered a *ma'amar* after Minchah in the upstairs shul.

When Rabbi Raichik returned later, Abi told him what had happened, expecting him to be disappointed that he had missed the ma'amar. But to everyone's surprise he was not annoyed in the least. He explained that he had been busy doing the Rebbe's work, which was just as important.

Every year the Rebbe would send *mishloach manos* to a Kohen, Levi and Yisroel. Rabbi Shmuel Levitin used to receive the Levi package. After Rabbi Levitin's passing in 5734 (1974) Rabbi Raichik received the yearly Levi package from the Rebbe, which included a fruit, a hamantash, and a bottle of vodka.

Rabbi Raichik treasured the foods he received from the Rebbe, yet he made a point of sharing them with as many people as possible, giving each a small piece of the hamantash and some of the vodka. "The fruit he would save to divide with the family," Chani said, "and it would be our dessert at the *seudas Shabbos* when he came home."

Shmurah Matzah

In the early 5710s (1950s) hand *shmurah* matzah was not available in Los Angeles.

A pound of shmurah matzah in those years cost around three dollars. At a time when most people's wages were about one dollar an hour, that was an astronomical sum.

Rabbi Raichik would bring hundreds of pounds of shmurah matzah to Los Angeles for the local community each year. It was a huge hassle. The shipping was done by freight train, and Rabbi Raichik had to arrange for the matzah to be brought to the station in New York and then picked up when it arrived in Los Angeles and brought to his house. The family cleared out the living room to store the matzah.

For months before Passover he would try to convince people to purchase a pound, or at least several matzahs to use during the Seder. "My father would give out many of the matzahs for free," Elozor recalled. "Others he would give at a discounted price. Every year he would calculate, and there was always a loss."

Even after shmurah matzah became available in local stores, Rabbi Raichik continued to have large quantities shipped from New York. Many people pre-



At a Melave Malkah in Congregation Levi Yitzchok.

ferred to get it from him, and he always bought extra to give to those who would otherwise not have.

Some people would come at the last minute, when there was not much matzah left, but he never turned anyone away emptyhanded. At times, Shimon said, the family would have to ration the matzah during the last few days of the holiday because Rabbi Raichik had given so much away.

Erev Pesach, before going to shul for Minchah, Rabbi Raichik would send his children to deliver shmurah matzah to the many Jewish families who were living on the block.

Summer Learning

In the summer of 5733 (1973) the Rebbe asked his followers to increase the amount of Torah they studied, and to make children's gatherings where Torah would be studied, for the sake of Israel's security. Rabbi Raichik got to work immediately.

There were no organized learning programs for children in Los Angeles then during the summer months, so he flew in several yeshivah students from New York to run the programming. In the morning they studied with teenagers and children who were not going to camp, and in the afternoons they visited local stores to encourage the businessmen to increase their observance of mitzvahs.

At night the students studied with businessmen and camp counselors. Rabbi Raichik also took part in the initiative by giving shiurim at Mid-City Chabad House. When he reported to the Rebbe about the classes, the Rebbe responded that he "should always notify [me] of such good tidings."

The students ate in the Raichik home. Rabbi Raichik would make sure they had fresh rolls every day. They slept either in the retirement hotel owned by Moshe Mendel Feiner, or in the Goldsteins' Shalom Hotel.

Even after the Rebbe's official campaign ended, Rabbi Raichik continued



Teaching a Torah class for the summer learning program, 5734 (1974).

the programming each summer until the founding of Yeshivah Ohr Elchonon Chabad in 5738 (1978).

Pesach for Prisoners

When the Rebbe encouraged new programs to assist Jews in prison in the 5730s (1970s), Rabbi Raichik pioneered many new services. Chief among them was the provision of kosher food for Pesach.

Initially the Pesach food program was not well received. Rabbi Raichik had to confront resistance from penal institution regulations, and the existing chaplaincy structure, to provide kosher-for-Passover meals to Jewish inmates and mental health patients in California.

When the program was first proposed, the Los Angeles Sheriff's office turned to the chaplain, who said that it was unnecessary. "The sheriff's office would be reasonably receptive to the needs of their Jewish inmates," wrote Los Angeles County Assistant Sheriff James Downey in a May 5731 (1971) letter, "if the Jewish chaplain from the Los Angeles Board of Rabbis would request it. The chaplain felt that inmates who do not keep kosher the entire year didn't need *kosher l'Pesach* food. He emphasized the 'problem' of there being a difference in the treatment of Jews among the entire prison population."

The assistant sheriff argued that permission for the Pesach meals "cannot be given, as it would constitute a deviation from policy and an exception for one particular religious group, and set a precedent for other religious groups. Genu-



Helping Congressman Henry Waxman affix a mezuzah on his Washington, D.C., office door.

ine religious needs of observant Jews, on an individual basis, however, have been and will be met."

Rabbi Raichik did not give up. Every year he clamored to serve even one Pesach meal to a prisoner who needed it.

Political Assistance

During his time in California Rabbi Raichik developed a relationship with Representative Henry Waxman, whose district included much of western Los Angeles. "Rabbi Raichik was always attentive that I had every opportunity to observe the mitzvot," Mr. Waxman recalled. "Every Pesach I received shmurah matzah. On Purim I got mishloach manos. And for Sukkos, Rabbi Raichik made sure a sukkah was put up at my home."

When Rabbi Raichik came to Washington, D.C., with a group of shluchim, he affixed a mezuzah on the congressman's office. "That was the first time there was a mezuzah on a congressional door," Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan said.

Mr. Waxman and Rabbi Raichik got to know each other through Howard Elinson, the administrative assistant in the office of then-Assemblyman Waxman.

"Rabbi Raichik was the West Coast director for the Rebbe," said Mr. Waxman, "and he made every attempt to help the entire Jewish community. And if there was a concern that I could deal with, Rabbi Raichik would call me."

The former congressman said that Rabbi Raichik understood the real world, and followed issues in people's lives, "not in any judgmental way, but out of concern, to try to help people."

When the issue of Pesach food in prison arose, Rabbi Raichik turned to Mr. Waxman through Mr. Elinson. In a letter to Roland W. Wood, superintendent of the California Rehabilitation Center in Corona, Mr. Waxman wrote that Rabbi Raichik's program aimed to provide prepackaged meals prepared by a certified-kosher airline caterer.

In another letter Mr. Waxman explained to Mr. Wood that the meals were intended for all eight days, not just the first Seder night: "The holiday is a full eight-day period. Each day is as much a part of Pesach as any of the others.... With all due respect for the problems involved in meeting the religious needs of inmates of many diverse denominational backgrounds, I do feel that the Pesach meal project is a reasonable request."

The chaplaincy director of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, apparently the one behind much of the resistance to the proposal, responded with a scathing letter to prison officials, implying that Mr. Waxman was being pressured by Orthodox rabbis and warning that the program would actually impede their ability to serve Jewish prisoners:

> *I would like to caution you... [not] to approach institutions in this particular matter in the future, since, as is quite clear, from Mrs. L.'s [the field representative for the Jewish Committee for Personal Service] and my correspondence with you, that we have to be very careful as to where to draw the line between reasonable and unreasonable requests, as the loss of good will and the then resulting loss of benefits which we are able to gain for our inmates throughout the year (and not just during Pesach holidays) cannot be made up.... [T]he real religious needs of our Jewish prison population are*

met very conscientiously throughout the year, which, of course, includes Pesach...

Rabbi Raichik, Mr. Waxman, and the other community rabbis disagreed, believing that this so-called chaplain simply cared little for Pesach observance, and they had to go through other channels.

Never Give Up

In addition to the opposition from the chaplain, there was also the formidable problem of prison rules and regulations regarding outside food. With faith, political savvy, and sheer persistence, Rabbi Raichik managed to overcome this obstacle as well.

He would occasionally go to the state capitol in Sacramento, where he visited officials, politicians, and their assistants. "He would meet Jewish legislators and offer to put mezuzahs on their doors," recalled Jack Mayesh, who in the 1970s was chief of staff for then–California Assemblyman Howard Berman. "I would always greet him and invite him into my office."

At one point Rabbi Raichik turned to Mr. Mayesh for help with the Pesach meals program.

"I approached the proper authorities and I had very nice conversations with them," said Mr. Mayesh. "The warden told me that they would love to accommodate, but they do not let food come in from outside the prison. I was disappointed. I called Rabbi Raichik back and told him that I had tried, but they were very adamant that it would not be possible for security reasons."

Rabbi Raichik responded, "This is very important. You will try again and maybe the warden will find a way to help us."

Mr. Mayesh made it clear that the warden was unwavering.

"I know, but with G-d's help," Rabbi Raichik said, "maybe you will be able to do something."

He promised to call again.

This time he was more forceful. He explained how critically important the matter was. "This is a good thing. It is important for the Jewish inmates to be able to celebrate the holiday. I would make the effort to check that the food is fit and

secure for the prison," he told the warden.

The warden was adamant that he could not break the rules, but did promise to speak to his supervisor. Several days later he called and again reiterated that they would not be able to accommodate the program.

These conversations between Rabbi Raichik and Mr. Mayesh, and Mr. Mayesh and the warden, repeated themselves several times.

"I had a very hard time refusing Rabbi Raichik," Mr. Mayesh said. "It was not like he did not understand. He felt I should not be afraid since I am a messenger from G-d. Rabbi Raichik was not an overtly forceful person. He did it with humility and kindness."

After his third call with the warden, Mr. Mayesh was ready to give up. But during yet another conversation with Rabbi Raichik he found himself agreeing to try again.

"When I hung up, I had no idea what I was doing," he said. "I had spoken to them three times, and the warden couldn't have been more definitive. He was a very nice man, but he wasn't budging. What could I do?"

Time was running out. Mr. Mayesh told the warden that he understood his position, but he was still hoping that he could find a way to make the program work.

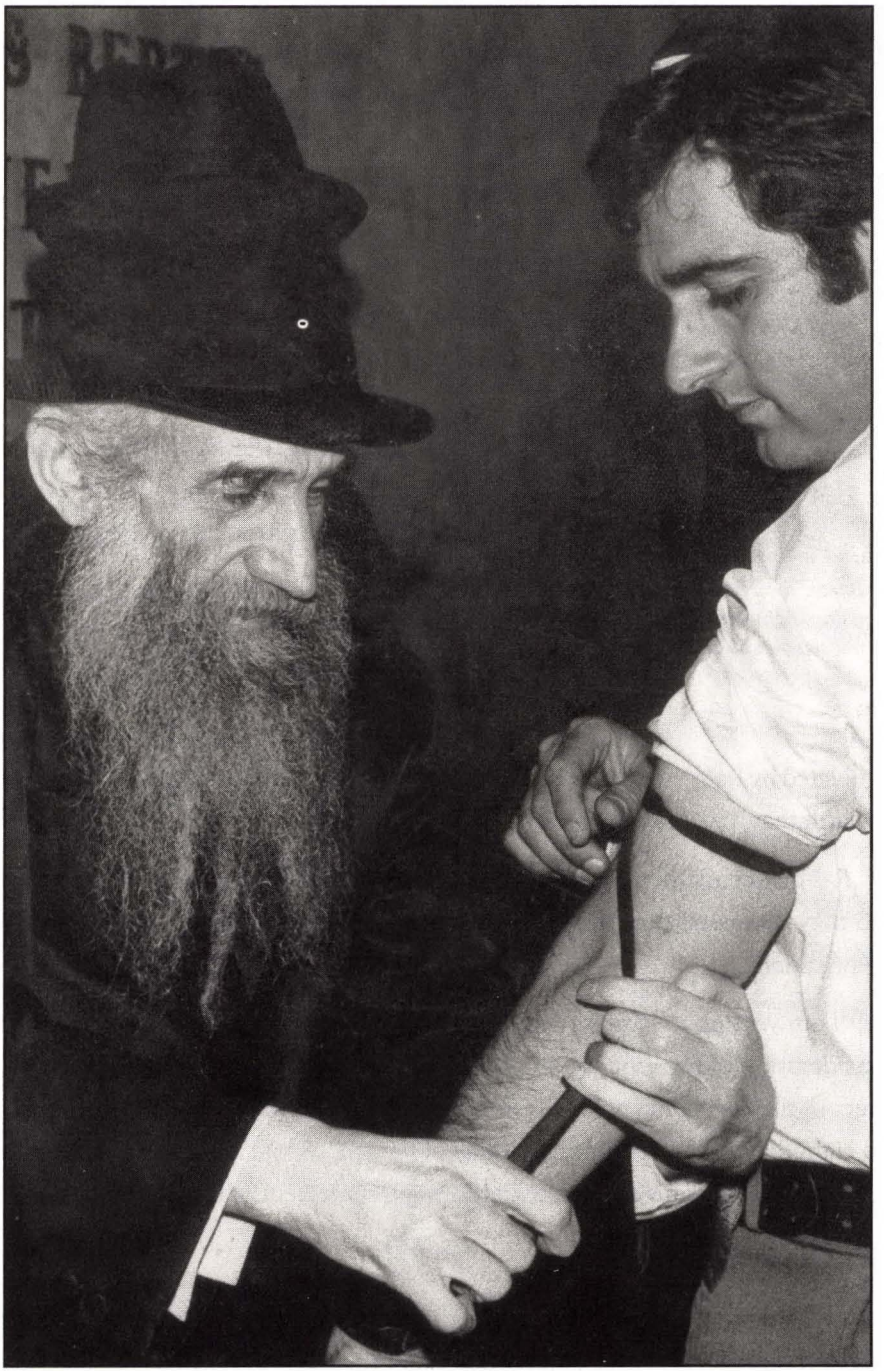
"I have gone to my superiors," the warden said, "and they are just not going to be able to take a chance."

Mr. Mayesh responded, "There must be something that we could do. I think it is something you should reconsider."

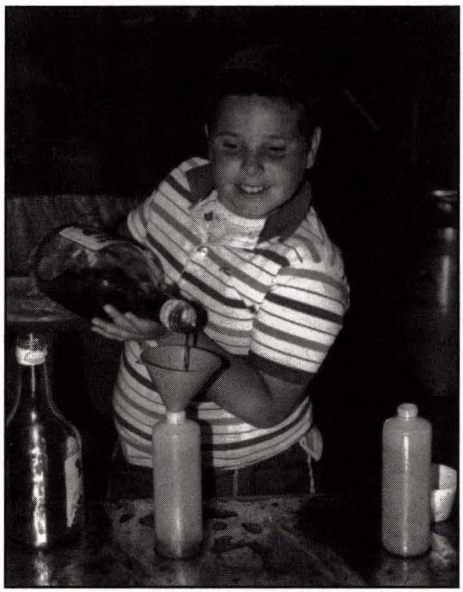
The conversation ended unsuccessfully; the warden was clearly frustrated with Mr. Mayesh's persistence.

Mr. Mayesh reported back to Rabbi Raichik, who again insisted that this was not the end of the road. Mr. Mayesh was frustrated too, and he did not want to become an enemy of the warden. However, Rabbi Raichik convinced him to call the warden again, for the fifth time.

As soon as he called, the warden said, "All right, we will do it!"



Putting on tefillin with Mr. Jack Mayesh.



Grandson Yossi Raichik pours grape juice from the original glass bottles into specially purchased plastic bottles, 1989.

Mr. Mayesh was shocked.

"We will have to take very careful precautions, but we will allow it to happen," the warden said.

Mr. Mayesh could not believe what he was hearing. "I was like a child in a candy store," he recalled. "It was just the conviction of Rabbi Raichik, who repeated numerous times, 'Hashem is with you and you are doing His work.' There was no other explanation for it. It was like the opposition just melted away."

When he reported the news, Rabbi Raichik calmly said, "Oh, I am so happy. I knew this would happen."

Mr. Mayesh concluded, "I was more motivated by Rabbi Raichik's faith than the mitzvah itself. He had such unbounding faith that it would happen."

Rabbi Raichik then met George Warner from the Department of Corrections, and they discussed the logistics of delivering kosher-for-Passover meals to Jewish prisoners.

"I am writing to express my sincerest appreciation for you and your staff's consideration of my request, and the request of Rabbi Raichik, that Jewish prisoners in the California prison system be allowed to receive kosher food during the eight days of the upcoming holiday of Pesach," wrote Assemblyman Berman to Jerry Enomoto, director of the California Department of Corrections.

Organizing the Food

In 1976 the Department of Corrections made permanent arrangements for Pesach food to be provided to Jewish inmates throughout the penal system. Having overcome administrative and political hurdles to get the program adopted, Rabbi Raichik now dealt with the logistics.

He arranged for kosher caterers to provide the meals. One year, when he could not find a caterer, his son Elozor came to Los Angeles from New York to assist. They purchased pots, food, and containers, and did all the cooking themselves in the old Westwood Chabad House. Rebbetzin Raichik and the rest of the family helped with the cooking, packing, labeling, and shipping.

Since there was so much food needed, they cooked twice, once before Pesach, and then again in the middle of Chol Hamoed for the rest of the holiday.

The prison policy was that no glass bottles were allowed; thus every year the family purchased special plastic bottles, into which they poured grape juice from the original glass bottles, and then sealed them properly. Delivering the food was sometimes difficult; some years they hired a driver and rented a truck because regular truckers did not want to deliver such a small number of packages.

While the rest of the Jewish world was preparing for Pesach in their own homes, the Raichiks were always preparing Pesach for others. "I would stop by the Raichik home on Erev Pesach," said Rabbi Yosef Engel, a shliach in Long Beach, California. "Rabbi Raichik would be reviewing lists and organizing where all of his children would be going. The entire house revolved around this hospital patient or that prisoner.

"I was amazed that the whole household was worried about hospital patients and prisoners. The next year I announced to our community that while we are all busy with our preparations, there was a family in Los Angeles who was worrying about others."

Rabbi Raichik would travel to New York for the farbrengen marking the Rebbe's birthday on 11 Nissan, shortly before Pesach, leaving his son Shimon in charge of organizing the Pesach food for the prisoners.

One year a chaplain failed to arrange to have food sent to one of the prisons. Rabbi Raichik phoned his son frantically. "What's going to be?" he said. Shimon finally reached State Senator Herschel Rosenthal, and within an hour everything was resolved.

The Pesach meals, though costly, were provided to the institutions without charge; the funds were raised by Rabbi Raichik's appeals in the local shuls. When people questioned why they were being called upon to help convicted criminals,

he replied that these criminals were still Jews and that the laws of Pesach applied to them equally.

Over the years the program earned recognition and praise. "On behalf of the staff and patients of our hospital," wrote Rabbi Eugene Gruenberer, chaplain at the Department of Mental Hygiene at Camarillo State Hospital, "I wish to thank you and your organization for supplying us with the *kosher l'Pesach* frozen dinners for our observant patients."

"More [important] than the goods, as generous and as beautiful as they were," wrote Rabbi Mel Silverman, Jewish chaplain of Chino Prison, "is the importance of making these inmates and their families feel [that] they are still part of the larger Jewish community. This is especially true during the *moadim simchot*, when the absence of families and friends is especially acute. Thank you and Chabad for once again helping them feel Jewish at such a meaningful time of the year."

Visiting the Prisons

In later years Rabbi Raichik worked hand-in-hand with Rabbi Martin Ryback, then the head chaplain for the county and state jails. When he was in California for Chanukah, Rabbi Raichik would go one night with other Lubavitchers to visit a prison. Rebbetzin Raichik would prepare trays of latkes and doughnuts, and after lighting the menorah Rabbi Raichik and Rabbi Ryback would talk to the inmates.

For many years Rabbi Raichik continued to visit California prisons and organize others to visit as well. Once, a group of Israelis were imprisoned in a California jail. One in particular was charged with a heinous crime. He was tried and given a life sentence.

When Rabbi Raichik went with a group of yeshivah students to visit the prison where the Israelis were being held, the students avoided this individual in total disgust. "Were you in the room when the crime happened?" Rabbi Raichik asked them. He reminded them that they were there to promote Judaism, not pass judgment on the prisoners.

Years later it was discovered that this individual had been framed by the rest of the gang, and that he was innocent of the crime.

On Behalf of the Holy Land

Rabbi Raichik continued to help institutions in Israel throughout his life. In 5721 (1961) the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Efrayim Wolff, director of the Chabad yeshivah system in Israel, informing him that Rabbi Raichik had offered to connect him with a California foundation willing to give sizable loans to Israeli organizations.

In 5716 (1956), seven years after the establishment of Kfar Chabad, the village experienced a crushing loss. A group of terrorists entered the vocational school and murdered five students and their teacher. Instead of closing the small village and moving elsewhere, the Rebbe encouraged them to rebuild and grow.

One of the mentors in the village, Rabbi Avraham "Mayor" Drizin, came to California with Rabbi Kazarnovsky to raise funds for the new printing school, Yad Hachamishah.



With Rabbi Avraham "Mayor" Drizin (left).

(That was the first time Rabbi Kazarnovsky was in Los Angeles. He returned many times over the years, and made a deep impression on the



The dedication of new buildings for the Kfar Chabad vocational school, 1965.

Raichiks. When he visited for Shabbos he would *farbreng* with the Raichik children, telling them stories and chassidic sayings, and teaching them Chabad melodies. "When Rabbi Kazarnovsky was at our home," Shimon recalled, "it was a special Shabbos.")

Rabbi Kazarnovsky left after several weeks, but Rabbi Drizin stayed on for over two months. He developed many relationships in the community. One of them was with Alan Lazaroff, a Los Angeles philanthropist with Chabad roots, who together with his children became deeply committed to Chabad projects.

The Lazaroffs eventually sponsored several new buildings in Kfar Chabad. Rabbi Kazarnovsky represented them at the dedication ceremonies. Rabbi Raichik was also close to the family, and in 5725 (1965) they requested that he join Rabbi Kazarnovsky at the dedication of the Anna Lazaroff Synagogue at the vocational schools. During that visit Rabbi Raichik also met with the president of Israel, Zalman Shazar.

Later, at Rabbi Raichik's encouragement, the Lazaroffs donated the building for the Toras Emes Yeshivah in Yerushalayim.



Rabbi Raichik and Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky (left) present Zalman Shazar with a sefer authored by the president's namesake, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi , 1965.

Sima Rappaport, with her daughters Rebbetzin Raichik and Esther Stock at her side, passed away on Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5730 (1969) in New York. Rabbi Raichik flew to New York for the funeral, and then accompanied the body to Israel for the burial. Rebbetzin Raichik returned to Los Angeles to sit shiva.

In New York he had a private audience with the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked that he visit the Nachlas Har Chabad neighborhood in Kiryat Malachi, home to a newly established Georgian community, as well as a Chabad kollel that had been founded the preceding year. The Rebbe also gave him the galley proofs of *Ohr HaTorah,* a work of the third Chabad Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, instructing him to teach it to residents in Kiryat Malachi.

During his two weeks in Israel, Rabbi Raichik visited Nachlas Har Chabad several times and fulfilled the Rebbe's request. He also held a lengthy farbrengen, where he taught a ma'amar from *Ohr HaTorah*. Days later he attended a local council meeting where he brought greetings from the city of Los Angeles to Kiryat Malachi.

In her will, Mrs. Rappaport had requested that, since she had no sons, Rabbi



With the mayor and city council of Kiryat Malachi, Kislev 5730 (November 1969).

Raichik should say kaddish for her. On his way back from Israel he stopped in New York and davened in 770, where he said kaddish. The Rebbe noticed him and, after Maariv, asked him to come into his office for a private audience. The Rebbe then told him to see to it that Kiryat Malachi be made a "twin city" to Los Angeles.

When he returned home Rabbi Raichik spoke before the Los Angeles City Council, which officially proclaimed Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik as the Los Angeles representative to Kiryat Malachi, and Kiryat Malachi was officially named a sister city of Los Angeles.

Tzemach Tzedek Shul

After the Six-Day War, Rabbi Raichik became involved in the donation of a Sefer Torah to the Tzemach Tzedek Shul in the Old City of Yerushalayim.

The initiative was inspired by a talk the Rebbe delivered on the 12th of Tammuz 5727 (1967), shortly after the war ended. The Rebbe spoke strongly about Yerushalayim, emphasizing that the Tzemach Tzedek Shul was the only one that had survived the Jordanian occupation of the eastern half of the city in 5709 (1949), following the Israeli War of Independence. During the nearly twenty years that followed, the damaged shul had been used as a warehouse or factory.



The ceremony where Los Angeles was proclaimed a sister city of Kiryat Malachi, Teves 5730 (December 1969).

Now, with the entire city in Jewish hands, the Rebbe spoke about the shul's reestablishment. Rabbi Raichik played the recording of the Rebbe's talk for Berel Weiss, who wanted to do something to help.

Mr. Weiss decided to donate a Sefer Torah to the Tzemach Tzedek shul, and commissioned a sofer to write one. It took quite some time to complete the Torah, and the Rebbe urged Mr. Weiss to hasten its completion. The Torah was brought into the shul before Shavuos 5731 (1971), and Rabbi Raichik went to Israel for the celebration.

While there, at the Rebbe's request, he met with President Shazar again to discuss the "Law of Return" and the controversy surrounding the definition of a Jew. He also encouraged other influential people to become more involved in the campaign to amend the law to recognize only halachic conversions.

One of the individuals he visited on the Rebbe's behalf was the Gerrer Rebbe, the Bais Yisroel. During a lengthy conversation Rabbi Raichik mentioned his father-in-law, Abele Rappaport. The Bais Yisroel exclaimed, "I didn't know that Abele Rappaport had such a son-in-law!"

[PART IX]

Spiritual & Grounded

Despite his years in California, Rabbi Raichik still lived to a certain extent back in the *alter heim*, the old country.

"People would look at him and assume he was an old, frail man who would spend his day in prayer," said Sultana Mayesh, who with her husband became close to the Raichik family. "Yet once you got to know him, you saw that he was firmly grounded and very strong. He was very calm, and I never heard him raise his voice."

Rabbi Eliezer Gross recalled that Rabbi Raichik lived simply. Everything he did, Rabbi Gross said, was to serve Hashem. "In his quiet, unassuming way, he was able to accomplish what a lot of people do with noise and fanfare," Rabbi Bursztyn said.

Once, Rabbi Raichik was honored by Cheder Menachem. A friend from his yeshivah days, Rabbi Yosef Wineberg, was the guest speaker.

Rabbi Wineberg told the crowd: "Usually, when you come to a dinner, many people praise the honoree. For about five minutes the crowd is listening and nodding their heads in approval. Then everyone loses interest, and the only ones still listening are the other speakers. After another five minutes, the only one listen-



Carrying the Sefer Torah written for the Jews of California, Adar 5743 (1982).

ing is the honoree himself."

The crowd chuckled.

"Here it is just the opposite," Rabbi Wineberg said. "Everyone is listening to each word of praise about the honoree, but the only one who is not listening is the honoree himself. He is the only one who does not believe a word that is being said."

"He expressed it perfectly," Rabbi Gross agreed. "Rabbi Raichik was sitting there and his mind seemed to be elsewhere. He wasn't listening to a word."

They had convinced Rabbi Raichik to be honored for fundraising purposes, and he had obliged out of a sense of duty, without any interest in the honor. "Everything he did was for the Rebbe," said Mrs. Mayesh. "Rabbi Raichik had absolutely no ego."

Rabbi Gershon Schusterman recalled, "There was a lot more going on with Rabbi Raichik than what you saw. There was no need to show it. He didn't want nor need public roles. He just wanted things to happen."



Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

In fact Rabbi Raichik was very knowledgeable about his American surroundings, as those who got to know him soon discovered.

"He looked and acted as if he just stepped off the boat," Rabbi Schusterman said. "Although he was hovering somewhere around the seventh heaven, his feet were firmly planted on terra firma. And his advice to me was always solid."

Fishel Grossman recalled catching an enormous tuna while on a fishing trip with a friend. They decided to gift it to the Raichiks. It was after midnight when they arrived, but the Raichik home was brightly lit.

At the long dining room table, Rabbi Raichik sat learning, while everyone surrounded the two fishermen and gleefully asked, "Is it kosher?!"

Rabbi Raichik looked up for a brief moment and answered nonchalantly, "It's an albacore."

Dr. Alan Dauer described Rabbi Raichik as someone who knew how to relate to every person he met: a taxi driver, a rabbi, or a Jew attending synagogue for the first time. Although spiritual by nature, he was "able to impart tremendous

wisdom and concern. He was genuinely interested in listening to what I had to say, and his responses were well thought out."

He wanted to know about each of the Dauer children, "You would think that a man like him would be totally sheltered. However, I know that he knew exactly what was going on in the world."

Once, after a long conversation with Koppel Goldberg about a particular issue, Rabbi Raichik concluded, *"Der Aibeshter vet zicher helfen"* (G-d will surely help). This was his slogan.

Mr. Goldberg responded, "I am not sure I am worth it."

"You are surely worth it!" Rabbi Raichik retorted.

"They were very simple words," recalled Mr. Goldberg, "but coming from Rabbi Raichik, they reaffirmed my faith in myself. He just had that way of making you understand that all problems should be delegated to the basement; in moments of despair you just have the wrong view."

"If you asked him to daven for you, he never forgot," said Sarah Levin. "He was an extraordinarily kind, wise, and connected human being."

Blessings

People from other communities would ask Rabbi Raichik for a blessing, and he would readily give it to them. But when someone from the Lubavitch community asked him for one, he would shy away. It was as if he was saying, "You should know better; we have a Rebbe that we turn to for berachos."

Harvey Lerner recalled that when people would ask Rabbi Raichik for blessings, he would say, "*Shoin!* [Enough!] I'm a simple Yid! You'll get what you need!"

When a Lubavitcher began bringing people to the Moshiach Seudah for berachos, Rabbi Raichik told him, "Don't bring people. I am not a Rebbe."

Davening for Hours

Davening took up a large portion of Rabbi Raichik's day. Davening at length, a well-known practice among Chabad chassidim, entails contemplating each word and reciting it slowly, with intention. Even while traveling, Rabbi Raichik never relinquished his schedule of prayer and study.

Rabbi Yitzchok Groner, who eventually developed Chabad in Australia, headed the Lubavitch yeshivah in Buffalo, New York, in the early 5710s (1950s). Once, when Rabbi Raichik was visiting Buffalo, Rabbi Groner arranged for a driver to chauffeur him around. The driver complained the next day, "Rabbi Raichik told me to be ready for him after davening, so I came to the shul at nine, after davening, ready to take him. However, until Rabbi Raichik is done with davening, half the day is gone!"

On Shabbos Rabbi Raichik davened even longer, as many people with whom he spent the holy day over the years witnessed. One Shabbos afternoon Rabbi Raichik returned to the Groners' very late after davening, while Mrs. Devorah Groner was giving a class for women. The women were amazed to see someone eating a Shabbos meal that late, and Mrs. Groner told them that he was eating the *shalosh seudos*, the third meal. Meanwhile Rabbi Raichik told the person serving him, "I can't eat too much. Please don't give me too much cholent," revealing that it was in fact his first meal that day.

On another visit Rabbi Raichik davened so long that he did not go home to the Groners, and remained in shul the entire Shabbos. In lieu of a meal he asked the *gabbai* for some wine and matzah. Later that night, when he came back, Rabbi Groner scolded him, "*Hayitochen* [how could you]? What did you eat the entire Shabbos?" Rabbi Raichik, characteristically, did not respond.

Reb Moshe David Einhorn, the longtime gabbai at Rabbi Halberstam's shul, where Rabbi Raichik davened for many years, remembered that when he arrived to prepare for *shalosh seudos* on Shabbos, Rabbi Raichik would still be davening Shacharis. "When Rabbi Raichik noticed that I had come, he would hurry up and finish davening," he said.

When Rabbi Moshe Lazar was in Oklahoma on Merkos Shlichus, he stayed at the home of the local shochet. The group of young men he was with returned home after davening at a normal time, and the shochet asked, "Are you Lubavitchers? When Rabbi Raichik stays at our home, on Shabbos day he does not show up until late in the afternoon."

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Fogel recalled how in the 5750s (1990s) he often returned to shul on Shabbos after his meal and found Rabbi Raichik just finishing davening. When he finished they would discuss that week's discourse from *Lik-*

kutei Torah by the Alter Rebbe, informally known as the "chassidishe parshah."

Sometimes the conversation was short; sometimes it was longer. "He would request that I should learn it inside," Rabbi Fogel, who today heads Maayonei Yisroel, a satellite of kollels in Israel focused on the learning of Chassidus, said, noting that he came to recognize that Rabbi Raichik was living with the teachings on a very deep level. Afterwards Rabbi Raichik would go home and make Kiddush.

Rabbi Raichik never went to sleep without completing all of his set daily studies. Prior to reciting the bedtime Shema he spent time contemplating that day's activities to see if anything needed to be corrected or improved.

Rabbi Herschel Gansburgh, who in the 5700s (1940s) was a student at the yeshiva at 770 together with Rabbi Raichik, recalled seeing him begin the first paragraph of that prayer, *"Ribbono shel olam"* ("Master of the universe"), in which one forgives all who have sinned against them and asks G-d to prevent transgression and to forgive any sins that have already been committed. When Rabbi Gansburgh returned hours later, Rabbi Raichik was still in the middle of the same paragraph.

Reb Moshe Mendel Feiner and his family arrived in California in the 5710s (1950s), a time when the younger generation was losing interest in Yiddishkeit. His son Yisroel Feiner recalled, "My Jewish friends would go out to eat *treif*. I could not bring myself to eat in such places, and would ride my bike elsewhere."

The first time this happened, Yisroel went to the shul, where he noticed Rabbi Raichik in the corner, still davening at four o'clock. "I would often come up behind him and listen to his davening," he said. "This made a very strong impression on me as a child."

Rabbi Chaim Baruch Rubin, of Congregation Etz Chaim, also cherished a vivid memory of watching Rabbi Raichik daven on a normal weekday at one of the Fairfax shuls. "[He] was wrapped in tallis and tefillin, and davening with such fervor that you might think it was Neilah on Yom Kippur," he said.

Once, while visiting the Blauner family, Rabbi Raichik told his hosts that he needed to daven Minchah, and promptly went off to a corner. "For twenty minutes we watched as he went to another plane, another world. I was afraid to breathe. I didn't want to let out any noise and disturb him. Then he came back



Governor Jerry Brown (center) attends the wedding of the Raichik's daughter Suri to Avrohom Klyne (right), 22 Adar, 5742 (March 17, 1982).

and continued the conversation where we had left off," Mrs. Blauner said.

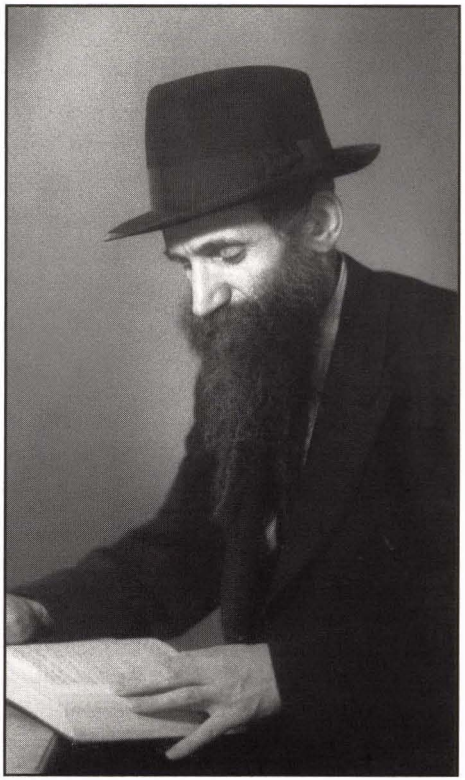
For several years, whenever he was in Crown Heights, Rabbi Raichik stayed at the apartment of the Weiss family on Eastern Parkway. There Rabbi Moshe Weiss witnessed him reciting the morning blessings, normally a short affair, for over 20 minutes.

Avrohom Klyne, Rabbi Raichik's son-in-law, lived for a time in Crown Heights and would host his father-in-law when he was in town. He told how they once came home together after the Rebbe's farbrengen in the early hours of the morning. Avrohom went to sleep, but later was awakened by a loud cry coming from the room where Rabbi Raichik was sleeping.

"Fearfully, I ran to the room in my semi-awake state and found him at the table, oblivious to my entrance," he recalled. Rabbi Raichik was repeating: *"Ani nivreisi leshamesh es koni. ... Ani loi nivreisi ela leshamesh es koni"* ("I was created to serve my Creator; I have not been created except to serve my Creator").

Awestruck and inspired, Avrohom crept back to bed and decided to get up

earlier than usual to learn Chassidus. "When I checked on my father-in-law before I left, he had already gone to shul," he said.



Once, a hip fracture landed Rabbi Raichik in the hospital, with surgery scheduled for the next morning. The anesthesiologist walked in bright and early, announcing, "We are ready for you."

"I can't go," Rabbi Raichik said.

"What do you mean, you can't go?" the anesthesiologist demanded.

"I am not going anywhere until I daven," he responded.

Surgery was postponed for several hours. When they came for him the second time, he refused to go until he had davened Minchah. Only then did he consent to be taken into the operating room.

"When he came out of the recovery room," recalled Dr. Dauer, "he opened his eyes and said to me, 'I'd better daven Maariv now, because I might fall asleep and miss it later.'"

Love for Learning

Rabbi Raichik studied Torah with the anticipation and pleasure that most people associate with materialistic pursuits.

"Rabbi Raichik would be so excited to learn a *sicha* (talk of the Rebbe's); he was like a young child enjoying a new comic book," Yisroel Feiner recalled.

Many remember him for his vast knowledge of Gemara. No matter the question, he had an answer. Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, the rosh yeshivah of Yeshiva Gedolah of Greater Miami, recalled a discussion in which he quoted a Ge-



At a gathering about the issue of "Mihu Yehudi," the question of who is a Jew and the Law of Return in Israel, at the Young Israel of Los Angeles, Spring 1979. On the left is Rabbi Shnuer Kotler, rosh yeshiva of Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, New Jersey.

mara from memory, and Rabbi Raichik said that he had quoted it incorrectly. When Rabbi Schapiro later looked it up again, he found that he had indeed been mistaken.

Dr. Sussman recalled, "My father always enjoyed learning with Rabbi Raichik. He always said, 'Whichever Gemara you would ask Rabbi Raichik about, he always knew.'"

Rabbi Eliezer Gross would learn *Tanya* weekly with Rabbi Raichik. Due to their demanding schedules, they would meet every Thursday night at 11 pm. "For Rabbi Raichik the late hour made no difference," said Rabbi Gross. The two would have intense discussions about the interpretation of the *Tanya*, as well as Gemara, halachah, and other topics.

Rabbi Gross said, "Rabbi Raichik was familiar with endless topics discussed in the Gemara. He was a great *talmid chacham*."

While studying *Tanya* with Rabbi Raichik, Rabbi Gross said, he came to the conclusion that "[Rabbi Raichik] actually lived it."

Conflict Resolution

"Rabbi Raichik was a peacemaker," said Dr. Dauer. "He would assist those with marital issues and issues with children. Anecdotally, people used to tell me that Rabbi Raichik was always 'coming to the rescue.'"

"He cared immensely," said Rabbi Schusterman. "He went through so much by then, more than most people go through their entire lifetime, so there was wisdom to impart, and that is what he did."

Rabbi Raichik used his conflict-resolution skills in his own life as well. On one occasion in particular he worked for years to remove a grudge that someone had against him. A close friend who had studied with him in Otwock moved to Los Angeles in the 5710s (1950s). This friend asked Rabbi Raichik to help him become a partner in a certain business, and he agreed to try. Despite his efforts, he was unsuccessful, and his friend, feeling rejected, bitterly placed the blame on Rabbi Raichik. Slowly his resentment grew to the point where he ceased to speak to Rabbi Raichik or have anything to do with him.

Once, while in New York, Rabbi Raichik was called into the Rebbe's secretariat. The Rebbe's secretary explained that the Rebbe had inquired about this former friend's welfare. When Rabbi Raichik said that they had lost touch over the years, the Rebbe asked through the secretary, *"Vos iz mit ahavas Yisroel?"* ("What

about the mitzvah to love your fellow Jew?")

After this Rabbi Raichik made every effort to mend the situation. He attended this individual's simchas, whether or not he was invited. When the man was recuperating at home from an operation, Rabbi Raichik, though he was not well himself, made the effort to visit him. On another occasion when the man was unwell, he brought a book with pictures of the yeshivah in Otwock, and they reminisced about their years there. Before his son Yossi's *aufruf*, Rabbi Raichik asked Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky to personally invite this individual to the kiddush.

At the kiddush Rabbi Bogomilsky got up and said that everyone was united at Rabbi Raichik's table. This individual later told Rabbi Bogomilsky that he agreed with him completely. Years later, at a farbrengen in shul, this man called Rabbi Raichik one of his best friends. Only then did Rabbi Raichik feel that his efforts were successful and complete.

In the early days of Yeshivah Ohr Elchonon Chabad there was a feud simmering between the students and the administration. Rabbi Raichik heard about the issue and began to work behind the scenes towards a resolution. He met one of the more vocal students and told him that he wanted to meet privately with the group who were upset. "Come with a car to my house, and we will meet outside," he said.

Rabbi Levi Fogelman, then a student in the yeshivah, recalled Rabbi Raichik sitting in the van and listening to the students' complaints without saying a word.

"We later heard that Rabbi Raichik met everyone in the administration," Rabbi Fogelman said, "and within a few days the entire issue was taken care of."

Once, a woman in the community got into an argument with a friend. Her friend raged against her in repeated phone calls, leaving her traumatized. Some time later the friend got married, and the woman's invitation to the wedding was rescinded. Rabbi Raichik, who happened to be at the wedding, noticed her absence. He called her and she related the entire story. Rabbi Raichik then contacted her husband and told him that she needed to forgive her friend. She repeatedly refused, however. In a subsequent conversation Rabbi Raichik told her, "You know, you have to forgive her before Rosh Hashanah." In tears, she repeated that she couldn't possibly do it. "You should really forgive her before Rosh Hashanah, but certainly no later than Yom Kippur," Rabbi Raichik said.



Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky reads the tenaim at the wedding of his daughter Devora, surrounded by members of the Los Angeles Jewish community.

He explained, "G-d gives us life and the Torah. G-d gives us health and blessings and the strength to function, but then we do what we want and later ask Him to forgive us. How can we stand before Hashem and ask, 'Please forgive us for all the things we have done,' when we are not willing to forgive someone who hurt our feelings? You must forgive her."

You have to let the other woman know that you forgive her, he said. "A written note is enough." She told him that she just couldn't make herself do it. It's true, he responded, you can't make yourself feel forgiveness. But you could make an intellectual decision to forgive her, "and then daven that Hashem bring it from the head to the heart, and that you should also feel the forgiveness."

It took her six months to recover from the ordeal. Throughout this time Rabbi Raichik constantly phoned her, inquired about her welfare, and continued to guide her toward forgiveness.

He explained that the pain she was feeling was the result of a heavenly decree, and not, as it seemed to her, her friend's fault. "Forgiving her does not absolve her," Rabbi Raichik said. "It's true that G-d gives pain to people, and challenges, but she didn't have to choose to deliver that pain. G-d is very creative; He could have come up with another way. The fact that she chose to be that person is something she will have to answer for in the next world. However, you need to accept that what happened came from G-d."

Eventually she relented. "I learned what it meant to forgive," she said, "and that it is possible to forgive. It was not about the other woman, it was about my relationship with G-d and loving a fellow Jew."

Los Angeles businessman Nathan Grossman related how once, when he was negotiating a business matter, the other party suggested that he ask Rabbi Raichik for a character reference. Mr. Grossman asked, and Rabbi Raichik promised to do some research and get back to him. Uncharacteristically, he never did.

"He did not call me back, because this individual was not someone Rabbi Raichik wanted to vouch for," Mr. Grossman recalled. "He did not want to say anything negative about him, yet he did not want to lie. I got the message and was very grateful for that."

Rabbi Raichik's granddaughter Simi Raichik recalled that once, at the Shabbos table, someone spoke negatively about another person. "I remember my grandfather was not happy, and raised his voice," she said. "He repeated several times, 'We don't talk about Yidden that way.... That is not the way we talk about another Yid.'"

Rabbi Rubin remembered how Rabbi Raichik took the utmost care to not embarrass another person. "Even when a person's behavior was questionable or wrong, he was careful not to even offend that individual. Rabbi Raichik was adamant that [as rabbis in the community] we should never cause another embarrassment," he said.

As Chabad grew across the United States, Rabbi Raichik was asked to intervene and work out differences between various Chabad representatives, which, Shimon said, took a lot of his energy and strength. "Many times, in the middle of the night one person called; then the other side would call; then the first side would call again, back and forth for three hours." Even at that late hour, he said, his father listened patiently as each party shared their point of view.

When Rebbetzin Raichik was asked about their lifestyle of bringing kindness and peace to others, she explained, "That is the way I am, and that was the way of my husband. I don't fight and I don't tell people off. If someone is in my house and I don't want them here, I still can't tell them to go away.

"How do you have peace? You need a little gentleness. That is all."

The Rebbetzin

Rebbetzin Raichik sacrificed tremendously for her husband's sake. She ran their home, often for long periods, without his help. She took on most of the burden of educating and raising the children, and she also helped her husband with his activities, preparing food for gatherings at the house and for impromptu visitors.

After his father's passing Shimon discovered an undated draft letter his father had written to the Rebbe, informing him that Rabbi Hodakov had asked him, in the name of the Rebbe, to return home immediately. "My wife was having terrible pain," he wrote, "and she went to a doctor, and she is doing better. [In addition,] the children have colds."

"Communication was difficult," Shimon said. "With a phone call costing a lot, he did not call home so often. My mother called the Rebbe's office in New York, which she knew was in more frequent touch with him. In today's day and age it is very hard to imagine such a scenario." In the 5730s (1970s), when calling became slightly cheaper, Rabbi Raichik would call more often.

As adults, the Raichik children have a deep appreciation for their mother's character and dedication. "She grew up well-to-do," said Chani. "I am sure it wasn't easy for her to move to California alone and without much to live on."



"She never once complained, even as she remained in the house to educate us," Yossi would say. "My mother never thought that what she was doing was self-sacrifice."

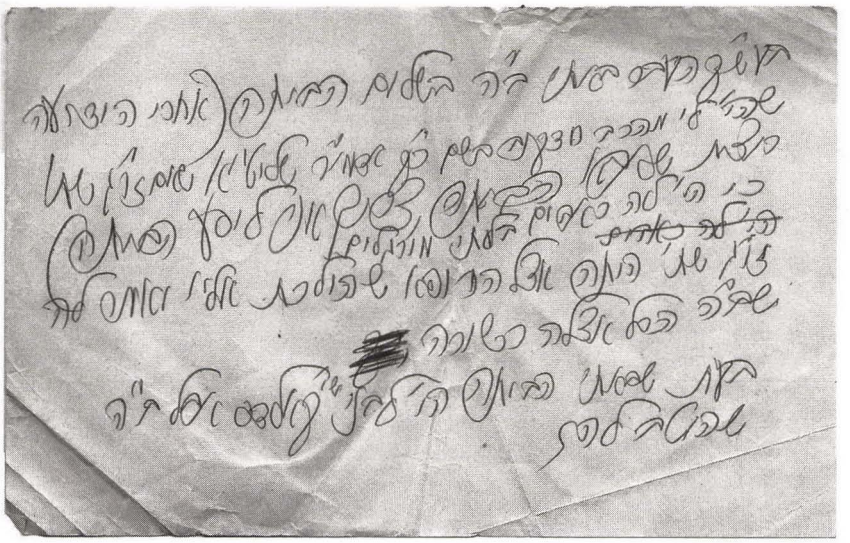
"My mother was a very independent woman, and she didn't have a problem doing things by herself," said Suri Klyne.

"She didn't harp on how tough life was," Devora said. "She said that perhaps we didn't always have leisure time, but it's a meaningful life."

When someone addressed Rebbetzin Raichik as "Rebbetzin," she replied, "Don't call me Rebbetzin; I feel older than I am, and I am already old."

She then told a story about her sister Esther. "You know that I had a sister. She was younger than me, maybe nine years old, during the war. My brother was much older, and he was a rabbi in the city. The kids were running barefoot. He says, 'Esther, it's not nice [that] the sister of the rabbi runs barefoot around in the streets.' My sister answered, 'It's not my doing that my brother is the rabbi. Would it be my fault if my sibling would be a *ganav* [thief]?'"

When Rebbetzin Raichik's family was sitting shiva for her, Rabbi Leibel



After the Rebbe sent word that he was needed at home, Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe about his wife and son's health.

Groner, one of the Rebbe's secretaries, visited and recounted how he once told the Rebbe about a request of hers, saying "Mrs. Raichik is asking..." The Rebbe corrected him, "It is Rebbetzin Raichik." In his letters to Rabbi Raichik, the Rebbe Rayatz referred to her as "Rebbetzin."

Rebbetzin Raichik always concerned herself with others. She went so far as to send lunch every day for the school secretary with one of her children.

Simi Rivkin remembered how her grandmother once met a woman named Esther on a flight back from Israel. "She had befriended an elderly woman on the airplane and had given her phone number in case she needed assistance while in Los Angeles," she said. A day or two later Esther had a conflict at the home where she was staying, and asked Rebbetzin Raichik if she could stay with her. "She was warmly welcomed into my grandparents' home," Simi said, "where she stayed for two weeks." Esther was introduced to many mitzvahs during her time with them.

Harvey Lerner remembered how many people arrived at the Raichiks' home with issues that greatly agitated them, yet "Rebbetzin Raichik had the ability to put you at ease, many times with humor." Often people would speak with her while they were waiting to speak to Rabbi Raichik, and by the end of the conversation their problems had been resolved. Her advice was very practical and



Rebbetzin Raichik surrounded by her grandchildren at the dinner of Chabad of Pasadena, 24th of Sivan 5767 (June 10, 2007)

solution-oriented.

"She was the most grounded, nurturing person in a very practical way. What was so comforting about her was that she was so very down-to-earth," recalled Mrs. Traub.

Once, Mr. Fine mentioned that his grandmother, who was in a nursing home, occasionally wanted to eat in the middle of the night, but the attendants were refusing, and it was causing issues. Without missing a beat, Rebbetzin Raichik suggested they purchase a small refrigerator for the elderly woman's room. Mr. Fine remarked, "The solution was so simple, yet no one ever thought of it."

When Mrs. Fine's father was unwell, Rebbetzin Raichik followed his progress closely. "She gave me strict instructions," she said, "as to what medicines would be good for my father. She would check in with me to find out how things were progressing and if the new medicines were working."

When her daughter Chani established a Chabad House in Pasadena, she would tell her that she didn't want her to overwork herself by cooking or host-

ing too much, even though she herself did far more than her daughter.



Rebbetzin Raichik at her grandson Eli Raichik's bar mitzvah, Kfar Chabad, Israel, 5760 (2000).

Rebbetzin Raichik never had an empty nest. After her children moved out, the grandchildren began moving in. "My grandmother would make me lunches, as she did for her own children," said Motti Wilhelm.

Yosef Raichik said that his grandmother had a genuine interest in the activities they did to spread Yiddishkeit. On Friday afternoons, after the grandchildren would return from their *mivtzoim* "routes," where they would encourage Jews to put on tefillin and light Shabbos candles, she would put out a whole spread with cholent and kugel.

Once, she asked her granddaughter Simi to come with her to purchase a curtain. As they were making a decision, she asked Simi for her opinion several times. A woman nearby overheard the conversation and asked if Simi was her grandchild. She nodded happily, and the woman exclaimed, "You really respect her opinion!"

With a glow in her eyes, Rebbetzin Raichik responded, "This is who I live for."

Parenting by Example

While Rebbetzin Raichik was clearly the dominant force in the Raichik home, both parents led by example. All the children were well aware of their dedication to the Rebbe's work.

Yankee remembered that if his father saw a behavior among the kids that he didn't approve of, he immediately said so. Whenever the siblings would get into feuds, he would tell them in Yiddish, "You are better than that. What you are arguing about is childish. Look at the greater picture and work it out."

He encouraged the children to learn Mishnayos by heart, and would ask them to repeat what they learned on the way to and from shul.

Though he did not do homework with them on a regular basis, they always knew he was available if they had a question. "I remember once asking him a question about a word in Chumash," recalled Chani. "Before I knew it, there were three Gemaras on the table."

Elozor recalled that his father would say, *"Men darf zitzen un lernen. Men darf davenen"* ("You need to sit and study Torah. You need to daven with concentration").

Though Rabbi Raichik often came home late on Fridays, he always made sure



The Raichik family, Pesach 5735 (1975).

there was enough time for him to set up the Shabbos candles for his wife to light.

"At our Friday night table we had dynamic discussions, and he would take an interest in our week," said Devora Wilhelm, today the Chabad representative in Portland, Oregon. "We would talk at the table, and it sometimes appeared as if my father was not listening, but then he would interject and comment on the conversation."

Rabbi Raichik would repeat one of the Rebbe's talks at the table, and if the conversation began revolving around politics or other trivialities, "he would shush everyone up," recalled Chani.

In later years it became difficult for him to travel long distances. Nonetheless, one of his sons recalled that on a plane trip to New York for Tishrei, his father still sought out a Jew with whom to put on tefillin. This left a deep impression.

When private matters needed to be discussed, the Raichiks would speak to each other in Polish. "He speaks Polish like a yeshivah student," Rebbetzin Raichik said of her husband.



At the wedding of Yossi and Dina Raichik. Rebbetzin Raichik (second from left) with her sister Shaidel Backenroth, and on the right Rabbi Raichik with Dovid Backenroth.

Noach Sussman was fond of relating how his family once went to visit the Raichiks on Shabbos and found Rabbi Raichik in the act of making kiddush. The children ran to the door, screaming excitedly, "There are guests, there are guests!"

Rather than reprimanding them, Rabbi Raichik sat down silently and waited for them to return to the table. Then he continued kiddush.

"It was a lesson for us to be patient with our kids," Mr. Sussman said.

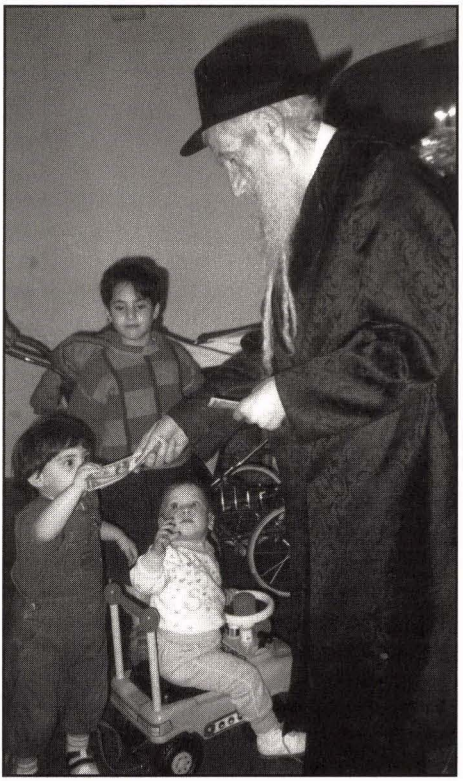
"When I am hesitant to approach someone," said Sholom, director of Chabad of Upper Montgomery County, "I recall the way my father would do it. If you have a responsibility to do something, just forge ahead and do it."

Shimon's children said that in the home of their grandparents Yiddishkeit was never a burden. "It's not something that we just do," said Yosef, who today runs the Chabad Jewish Center of West Boynton. "Whatever it was, you felt that this is real and exciting."

When Devora Wilhelm and her husband moved on shlichus to Portland, Oregon, they found the first few years very difficult. Rabbi Raichik offered lots of encouragement and support. *"Hazor'im bedim'ah, berinah yiktzoru"* ("When

one sows with tears, he will reap with joy") (Tehillim 126:5), he told them repeatedly, and *"MeiHashem mitz'adei gever konanu"* ("Hashem guides the footsteps of man") (Ibid. 37:23).

Shortly after they arrived in the city, Rabbi Raichik came and sat at the Wilhelms' dining room table and announced to a group of people who had gathered in their home that he saw a great future for Chabad in Portland, and predicted that they would one day build a sizeable Jewish infrastructure similar to a specific community that had recently begun to flourish in California. "Today, so many years later, I could say that he was one hundred percent on the mark," Devora said.



Giving Chanukah gelt to his grandchildren.

Similarly, when Chani Hanoka moved to Pasadena, California, with her husband, Chaim, Rabbi Raichik would call almost every day and ask his son-in-law how many people he had put on tefillin with that day, and whether he would have a minyan for Shabbos.

"He gave me a sense of accountability," Chaim said.

When Sholom was building a Chabad House in Gaithersburg, Maryland, Rabbi Raichik wanted to know where the mikvah would be. Sholom told him that there was a mikvah 15 minutes away. "You still could build one," his father told him. "My father's request was always on my mind and heart," Sholom said. "Soon the mikvah will be completed in Gaithersburg, fulfilling my father's request."

Whenever Rabbi Raichik was in Gaithersburg for family events, he made sure that everyone in the room put on tefillin.

Honesty

Rabbi Elchonon Tauber of Congregation Bais Yehuda had a weekly appointment to study a ma'amar from *Likkutei Torah* with Rabbi Raichik. "We learned it in great depth," recalled Rabbi Tauber. "It was a very difficult ma'amar, and I gave him a hard time. I wanted to understand everything, and he had to explain to me. If he didn't understand, he didn't make anything up; he said he had to look into it."

During their meetings Rabbi Raichik was totally focused on the learning. "When we were learning, he didn't want to talk about anything else," said Rabbi Tauber.

One week, on the day of their shiur, there was a meeting of shluchim at the Raichiks' home. When Rabbi Raichik realized that he had forgotten about his shiur with Rabbi Tauber, he sent everyone home. "I told him that they came from far away, and it was okay to miss the shiur," Rabbi Tauber said. Nonetheless Rabbi Raichik insisted that they keep their regular schedule.

People were often surprised at how far Rabbi Raichik would go to keep his word. Once, a group of students came to a wedding in Los Angeles, and he took them to a local artist who sold paintings of the Rebbe for a nominal sum. "I happened to be last," recalled Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, "and there were no paintings



Addressing a meeting of shluchim to California, circa 1972.

left." Rabbi Raichik promised to get him one.

Rabbi Schapiro assumed that he would forget about it, but several weeks later Rabbi Raichik tracked him down in New York and gave him a painting.

Dr. Sussman recounted how he invited Rabbi Raichik to his son's bar mitzvah in S. Louis, and he had promised to attend. He did not show up at the party, however. "The next day we received a call from Rabbi Raichik," said Dr. Sussman, "and he was at the airport."

Apparently the car that was taking him to the airport had broken down and, not wanting to abandon the driver on the side of the highway, he had missed his flight. He took the next available flight to S. Louis, even though he knew he had missed the event.

"I told you I was coming," Rabbi Raichik announced to the bar mitzvah boy. He wished young Moshe a "mazel tov" and shortly thereafter headed back home.

The wealthy Jewish families in Los Angeles universally respected and trusted Rabbi Raichik, and often he turned to them in moments of emergency when the community or certain individuals needed help. "They told me that Rabbi Raichik was the most trusted man when it came to money," recalled Rabbi Bursztyn, director of Bais Yaakov. "There was no amount of money that they hesitated to give him, because they always knew he would pay them back."

[PART X]

Until His Last Breath

After the Rebbe's passing in 5754 (1994), Rabbi Raichik would travel several times a year to visit the Rebbe's Ohel (resting place) in the Old Montefiore Cemetery, in Queens, New York. The last time that Koppel Goldberg saw Rabbi Raichik was at the Rebbe's Ohel. He asked Rabbi Raichik if he could help him carry his valise, but he dismissed the offer and began to ask Mr. Goldberg questions about his family and his business.

"He was extremely thin, dragging a little valise with great difficulty, yet he was thinking only of me," Mr. Goldberg said.

Dr. Dauer recalled a similar episode. After Rabbi Raichik fractured his hip, he required surgery. Dr. Dauer was in the room when his patient woke up, and asked how he was feeling. Rabbi Raichik turned to him and said, "More important, how are you?"

Toward the end of his life Rabbi Raichik had to go to physical therapy. Naturally, every time he went he helped the therapist put on tefillin. So painful was the therapy that he considered ending it, but he never did – because, as he said, if he stopped going the therapist would no longer lay tefillin.

Until his very last days, when he heard that someone needed help he tried to



At the last Kinus Hashluchim he attended, 1997.
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

intervene. "The fact that his body was not working so well," said Rabbi Schusterman, "did not stop him from caring and acting on the need to assist another."

Among Rabbi Raichik's later activities were raising money for a family with little income and collecting funds to build a mikvah for the Wilhelms' Chabad House in Portland.

Building a mikvah is expensive, and the Wilhelms understood that if they wanted the locals to use it, it would need to be centrally located and aesthetically beautiful, both of which would add to the cost. Unfortunately, the locals were not able to fund the project entirely, though the Wilhelms believed they would use the mikvah once it was completed.

Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky came from Chabad headquarters to Portland to help iron out the details. He pledged his support and said that he would speak to Rabbi Raichik about assisting with the fundraising.

Rabbi Raichik went around with his son-in-law Moshe visiting donors in California and New York. "It really was amazing to see the *kavod* people had for

my father," said Devora, noting that Rabbi Raichik did most of the talking in the meetings. "In a number of places they asked my father how much they should give, and that is what they gave." The Wilhelms also received several large unsolicited donations from people who had heard Rabbi Raichik was collecting for them.

The mikvah was completed in 1997.

One Friday night following davening, at a time when he was already suffering from Parkinson's, Rabbi Raichik spent a long time in private conversation with a person in shul. Following the conversation he left arm-in-arm with his son-in-law Avrohom Klyne.

Rabbi Raichik was in considerable pain and had a difficult time walking. Suddenly, after walking several blocks, he stopped and announced that he needed to go back to shul. Thinking that his father-in-law wanted to use the bathroom, Avrohom tried to convince him that the shul would now be locked and that they could stop at a friend's house to use the facilities, but Rabbi Raichik was adamant.

Painstakingly they retraced their steps. They knocked, and the man with whom Rabbi Raichik had been speaking opened the door. Rabbi Raichik sternly told him to go home and make kiddush for his wife immediately, as she was surely waiting for him. Then he silently shuffled around and headed for home again.

Funeral Arrangement

Aharon Grunfeld had a very close relationship with Rabbi Raichik from the time he was a child. "[He] was not merely a rabbi, but a lifelong, caring and close family friend," he said. "When something was happening with our family, he took it to heart as if it were his own family."

When Mr. Grunfeld's father passed away on Rosh Chodesh Elul 5740 (1980), Rabbi Raichik came to the hospital and told him that his father had wanted to be buried in Eretz Yisroel. "I was in shock over the loss of my father, and in that painful daze of losing a parent I could not decide where to start," Mr. Grunfeld said. "There were no cell phones or internet. Communication was via landline only."

Rabbi Raichik reassured him that he would take care of everything. He arranged the entire funeral in a few hours, including a plot in the section maintained by Chabad on Har Hazeisim in Yerushalayim. "He made sure every detail

was handled without added complication or worry," Mr. Grunfeld said.

When Mr. Grunfeld got married in Kislev 5758 (1997) he knew that Rabbi Raichik was very frail, and did not expect him to come. He was very surprised when he entered the reception area, taking painful, halting steps with a walker.

Mr. Grunfeld said that as Rabbi Raichik slowly ascended the few stairs leading to the chupah to recite the sixth berachah, his face was beaming "with a sparkling, energetic smile that all of the assembled guests, both Jews and non-Jews, found remarkable."

Later on in the evening he insisted on dancing with the groom. "It was clear to everyone that my simcha was his simcha," Mr. Grunfeld said. Until today, he said, people ask him about "the saintly old rabbi who personified the presence of G-dliness."

The Fairfax Route

When it became difficult for Rabbi Raichik to maintain his regular Fairfax route putting tefillin on people, he asked his grandson Yosef Raichik to assist him, on condition that it would not take away from his studies.

Yosef began to accompany him daily on his route. "He would hold my arm, and we would walk slowly on Fairfax together," he said. His grandfather's determination to assist others with the mitzvah left a tremendous impression on him.

Blessing for a Child

Rabbi Yossi and Daniella Gordon were challenged with infertility in the early years of their marriage. Rabbi Josh Gordon, Yossi's father, met Rabbi Raichik at a wedding and asked him for a blessing for his son. Rabbi Raichik gave Rabbi Gordon a blessing and said, "Your son Yossi should have children, offspring that will live and endure, this year."

Half a year later, after Rabbi Raichik passed away, Rabbi Gordon was thinking about his son's predicament. Seeking inspiration, he opened a volume of the Rebbe's correspondence.

"I was in total shock to see the first letter to catch my eye," Rabbi Gordon recalled.

The letter began: "I received your letter through Rabbi Raichik, requesting

a blessing for children. I hereby give you my blessing for offspring that will live and endure..."

Shortly afterward Mrs. Gordon conceived and gave birth to a healthy child.

Chanukah Candles

On Chanukah, several nights before he came down with his final illness, Rabbi Raichik asked his son-in-law Moshe Wilhelm to accompany him to the home of an elderly widow and help her light Chanukah candles. "She was so happy to see another human being," Moshe recalled. Rabbi Raichik sat there listening to her talk about her difficulties and encouraging her. Only then did he return home to light his own menorah.

"A year later, on Chanukah," Shimon recalled, "my mother asked me to go to that neighbor's home. I lit Chanukah candles with her, and she told me how much it meant to her that Rabbi Raichik had come the year before. 'He was frail, just two days before he went to the hospital,' she told me. 'Your father sat here and made sure I lit Chanukah candles.'"

On the sixth night of Chanukah, as he was preparing to go to an event at Chabad of Pasadena, Rabbi Raichik became ill and was admitted to the hospital for the last time. "As scores of people of different backgrounds began to come visit my father, we realized how great an impact he had on so many lives," Devora said.

One day Chaim Hanoka was sitting beside Rabbi Raichik in the hospital, when someone silently came in, said Tehillim, and then rose to leave. Chaim said to him, "Shalom Aleichem! Who are you?"

The man responded with a story: "My parents could not have children, and my father begged Rabbi Raichik for a blessing. He refused for a very long time, but my parents wouldn't give up. Eventually Rabbi Raichik gave them a blessing for a boy and girl."

Later the couple had a son and daughter. "I am the son," the man said.

While the family was spending nights at the hospital, a young man they did not know began bringing them dinner every night. After a while they asked him why he was doing it. The man told them that a number of years before, his family had been going through a very hard time. "I barely knew who your father even



With their children at their grandson's bar mitzvah in Portland, Oregon.

was," he said. Yet Rabbi Raichik called this man's wife before every Shabbos, no matter where he was, to ask how the family was doing.

During the last day of his life, when Rabbi Raichik was in the ICU at Cedars-Sinai Hospital, the family and close friends gathered at his bedside, singing Chabad niggunim. Suddenly his heart rate, which had been stable until that point, became very irregular. He was physically reacting to the singing.

Dr. Dauer, looking at the monitor, said, "Medically this does not make sense, yet with Rabbi Raichik things are different."

On the 8th of Shevat 5758 (February 4, 1998) Rabbi Raichik passed away.

"Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik, who served the Los Angeles Jewish community for five decades, died," reported the *Los Angeles Times* on Feb. 6, 1998. "After his escape from Nazi-occupied Poland during World War II, he was sent to Los Angeles as the personal emissary of the chief rabbi of the Lubavitch movement. In addition to his work in the Los Angeles area, particularly with the Chabad Lubavitch organization, Raichik traveled extensively to work with Jewish communities throughout the world. He and his wife, Leah, had ten children, all of whom are leaders in Jewish communities around the globe."

Rabbi Raichik was buried in the Old Montefiore Cemetery near the Ohel of the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe.

[PART XI]

Telling Vignettes

"Can I Help?"

Once, Mrs. Sterna Citron was walking down Fairfax Avenue with two heavy bags and a child pulling at her skirt. She was hoping someone would help her, but no one seemed to notice.

Moments later Rabbi Raichik approached her and asked, *"Ken ich efsher helfen?"* ("Can I possibly help you?")

Already Connected

When Rabbi Menachem Mendel Fogel was the principal of the Los Angeles Cheder, the cheder was next to Congregation Levi Yitzchok, where Rabbi Raichik spent many hours each day davening. The two became extremely close, and Rabbi Raichik had a profound influence on him. The one thing Rabbi Fogel could not understand, however, was how someone who was a total *oved Hashem* could spend so much time helping people with simple mitzvahs like putting on tefillin.

He asked Rabbi Raichik about it, and he repeated the famous saying of the Baal Shem Tov that a *neshamah* comes down into the world for 70 or 80 years just to do a favor for another Jew, adding an explanation he had heard from the Rebbe Rayatz: "Right when the person is born and he is in the world, he is already



At the Kinus Hashluchim, 1991. *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

connected to another Jew."

Rabbi Fogel experienced this firsthand when Rabbi Raichik asked him to take on a task that seemed beneath his dignity. "He stood very firm that the concept of doing for another [means] doing for every kind of Jew," Rabbi Fogel recalled. "I did what he requested and afterwards understood what I gained from it."

"Do You Really Want It?"

There was a foreclosure on a large home, and Yisroel Feiner wanted to purchase it. "I put in an offer with the bank for a house well below market value," he recalled.

His father did not like the idea, and wanted him to invest the money in a business instead. The elder Mr. Feiner went to Rabbi Raichik and told him that he did not want his son to purchase the home.

In conversation one day, Rabbi Raichik asked Yisroel why he wanted the house. "I need the extra rooms in order to have solitude in which to serve G-d," Yisroel said.

"That won't happen," Rabbi Raichik answered.

"I need more space for my kids," Yisroel said.

Rabbi Raichik looked into his eyes. "Do you really want the house?" he asked. "If you really want it, you will get it."

Apparently he really did want it. "It was a miracle that the bank agreed to sell it for such a low price," Yisroel said.

"Do What's Good for You"

Leah Jacobson, a member of the L.A. Chabad community, got to know the Raichiks in the 1980s. She remembered how once, the Chabad women in the next city were producing a play, and she very much wanted to be a part of the project. She was pregnant at the time, however, and could not drive to rehearsals every day. Rabbi Raichik calmed her, saying, "You do what is good for you. Would you be able to help them out without being there every day?" She took a role in the backstage preparations that did not require her to be at every rehearsal, and felt happy to be part of the production.

Too Holy

Rabbi Pinchos Gruman, a renowned rabbi in Los Angeles, met a doctor just after Rabbi Raichik had undergone a procedure in his office. The doctor, who was not Jewish, related that when he saw Rabbi Raichik he said, "I cannot do an operation on the man. He looks too holy." His partner, a Jewish doctor, did it instead.



No Mail Today

For many years Rabbi Raichik asked his mail carrier, who was Jewish, not to bring the mail on Shabbos. The man obliged and brought all the mail on Monday instead.

Honor, Not Mine

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro was among a group of students who traveled to Los Angeles from Crown Heights for the Levitin-Weiss wedding.

Rabbi Raichik asked them to stay over for Shabbos and speak in the Los Angeles shuls, but they were eager to return to New York so they could attend the Rebbe's farbrengen on Shabbos.

Rabbi Raichik spoke to Rabbi Hodakov at the Rebbe's office in New York, and soon afterward Rabbi Shapiro received a phone call from Rabbi Hodakov. He told the Rebbe's secretary that the group of students were planning to be at the Rebbe's farbrengen that Shabbos. Rabbi Hodakov said that no farbrengen was scheduled and they should stay as Rabbi Raichik had requested.

After Rabbi Schapiro hung up, Rabbi Raichik said, "You should know that the Rebbe overheard your conversation."

Rabbi Raichik arranged for the group to be divided among the various con-



*Receiving "***lekach***" on the eve of Yom Kippur 5748 (1987). Courtesy of Yossi Melamed/JEM*

gregations, and Rabbi Schapiro spoke at Congregation Atzei Chaim, known as Rabbi Halberstam's Shul, and at the Young Israel.

"Rabbi Halberstam sat me next to him and was honoring me in numerous ways," recalled Rabbi Schapiro, who was a young man at the time. "It occurred to me that I was being honored because of Rabbi Halberstam's great respect for Rabbi Raichik, who had arranged for me to speak."

Important Call

Many of the Rebbe's directives to Rabbi Raichik were communicated via phone call from Rabbi Hodakov. Many times when they were on the phone Rabbi Raichik would hear a click of someone picking up the line, which meant that the Rebbe was listening from his office.

"Therefore, when he would speak to Rabbi Hodakov, he would put on his kapote and gartel," said his son Abi.

Extra Baggage

A Jewish woman in Los Angeles had passed away at a relatively young age, and the entire community was in mourning. Some speculated that she might

have worn herself out caring for her many children.

"No one dies early," Rabbi Raichik told several people. "Everyone dies at their time. The only difference is that she went [to heaven] carrying extra baggage, good deeds that she will be rewarded for."

Bad Influences

Every time Yisroel Feiner had a problem with his children, Rabbi Raichik would give him advice and support. He also kept an eye on Yisroel himself, encouraging him to study Torah and avoid negative influences. "He was an extremely loving person and cared dearly about our family," Yisroel said.

Yisroel's job required him to go into people's homes, and Rabbi Raichik advised him not to spend much time in neighborhoods where he might be exposed to things he shouldn't see. "I was working one day in a building as a plumber," Yisroel said. "In one apartment there was someone dressed inappropriately. I should have run out of the apartment; however, I remained and completed the job."

A few days later he met Rabbi Raichik, who gave him a concerned look and said, "You need to conduct yourself in a more proper manner."

When Yisroel expressed a desire to go to Mexico on vacation, Rabbi Raichik was perplexed. "How could it be you want to go to a place like that?" he asked. "There wouldn't be a minyan there, no shiurim."

Guests Are Waiting

Whenever he was in New York, Rabbi Raichik's custom was to stay after a farbrengen ended to hear the *chazarah*, when select individuals would repeat the Rebbe's talk word for word. In 5747 (1986), on the first night of Sukkos, the Rebbe spoke twice, once for the crowd in 770 and then again for guests in the sukkah.

"My father sat through the chazarah of the first and second sichos," recalled Sholom. It was ten o'clock by the time they finished.

Rabbi Raichik and his son were staying at the home of Berel Weiss on Eastern Parkway, so they didn't have far to go. Nevertheless Rabbi Raichik was concerned that perhaps they were running late. "We have to rush," he said, "guests are waiting."



At the chazarah (review) of the Rebbe's talk with Rabbi Yoel Kahan.
Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

Concerned

It was Friday night in New York, and one of the guests who had eaten with the Raichiks was nervous about walking back home by herself.

"Everyone was teasing her," recalled Doonie Mishulovin, "and joking about it, except Rabbi Raichik, who was concerned that she would feel and be okay."

Calculating the Tzedakah

During a trip to New York, Yisroel Feiner decided he wanted to join the Machne Israel Development Fund and give the Rebbe $100,000.

"From where will you get the money to pay?" Rabbi Raichik asked him.

Yisroel said that he would find a way.

"No, no, no," Rabbi Raichik said.

"He wouldn't let me pledge the money without being able to pay," Yisroel recalled.

Together they went to a second rabbi to discuss the issue. The rabbi suggested that the pledge could be paid in monthly installments over five years, to which Rabbi Raichik agreed.

When Yisroel returned to Los Angeles, he was approached by a restaurant that wanted to rent some of the land around his home for parking. The rent turned out to be exactly the amount of his monthly payments.

Not Too Much

Fraida Kahan recalled that the first time Rabbi Raichik stayed with her parents, Rabbi Velvel and Mrs. Ray Schildkraut, for Shabbos in New Haven, Connecticut, her mother put a lot of cholent on his plate and he ate it all. The next week Mrs. Schildkraut was preparing to serve him an even larger portion, when he stopped her. "It's okay," he said, "don't put so much."

He explained that he had finished the portion the week before only because on Shabbos one should not leave food on the plate.

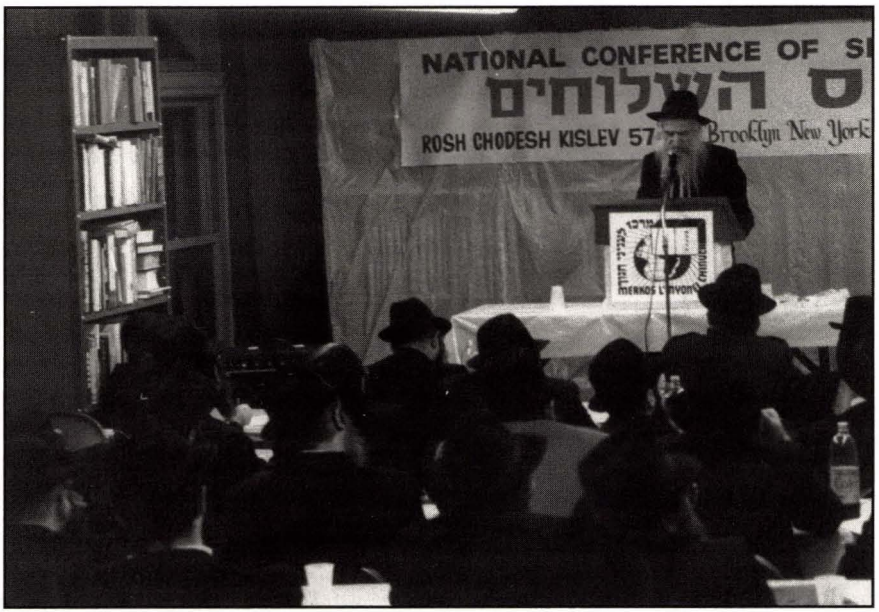
Joining the Youth

The students of the yeshivah in Kfar Chabad would go to the central bus station in Tel Aviv every Friday to help men put on tefillin. When Rabbi Raichik was in Israel for a month, he made a point of accompanying them every week.

At age 60, with a long white beard, he stood among the 16-year-olds, eager to help fellow Jews. For a long time afterward the students spoke about it with awe.

Never Refuse

The Los Angeles Cheder had asked Rabbi Fogel to take on a particular responsibility for which he felt unqualified. "I did not have any experience dealing with it, and I wasn't fluent in English," he said. He went to Rabbi Raichik for advice. Rabbi Raichik showed him a letter from the Rebbe where he writes that a person is given a particular task by Divine providence, and that together with the request comes the ability to fulfill it. "One should not ask any questions, but immediately begin the new task," the Rebbe wrote. Rabbi Fogel followed this advice and found that he was successful.



Rabbi Raichik addresses the first Kinus Hashluchim, 1983.

Time Will Heal

Mr. Novack once confided to Rabbi Raichik about a particularly difficult situation in his personal life. Noticing his pained reaction, Mr. Novack said, "Don't worry, time will help."

"G-d will help," Rabbi Raichik told him. Mr. Novack again repeated that time would help, and once again Rabbi Raichik answered, "G-d will help."

Bad Dreams

An elderly Holocaust survivor who frequented the Raichik home would often have nightmares and would ask Rabbi Raichik to recite Hatovas Chalom, a prayer for rectifying a bad dream. His children recall often hearing him patiently reciting the words with her over the phone.

Long Night

Rabbi Shimon Goldman, who studied with Rabbi Raichik in Shanghai and years later owned a butcher shop in Brooklyn, remembered one night they spent together in Buffalo, New York.

"I happened to be there for several days, and we resided in the same room,"

he said, "I clearly remember one night at 3 am, after we had a farbrengen together, I went to bed. As I was falling asleep I heard Rabbi Raichik walking and beginning his lengthy recitation of the Shema."

Long, Short Blessing

During one of Rabbi Raichik's frequent trips to Chicago, Mr. Novack agreed to drive him around for the day. He arrived at the home where Rabbi Raichik was staying, and the host offered them both breakfast. Rabbi Raichik ate one scoop of cottage cheese.

"When I finished eating, Rabbi Raichik said that he wanted to say the *berachah acharonah*, the after-blessing. I said fine, and I'd wait in the car in front of the house," he recalled. "What I did not realize was that Rabbi Raichik would spend 15 minutes saying the short blessing."

In Yiddish

Hinda Langer, a shluchah in S. Francisco, was working through the night on a magazine for the Chabad House when Rabbi Raichik, who was staying in their home with Reb Mendel Futerfas, woke up early and began to say the morning berachos.

"The saying of the morning berachos took him a very long time," she said, "because in between it seemed to me that he was talking in Yiddish to the Aibeshter. Just for berachos, he was davening *b'arichus* [at length].

"[It was] a stunning and awesome moment for me," she said. "I felt I was in the presence of a true *oved* and chassid, whose link to the Aibeshter was his flesh and bones. I will always remember this as a moment that is truly beyond my realm of understanding."

For Education

In 5757 (1996) the Fogels had their first child. Rabbi Raichik was not in good health then, but he made the effort to attend the bris anyway. When Rabbi Fogel's father-in-law asked him why he had come, he replied, "The Chabad Rebbes had *mesirus nefesh* for Jewish education. I feel a responsibility to support all those who are involved in education. That is why I made the effort to come."

Early Morning Call

At 1:30 am the phone rang in the Sussman residence. The person on the line asked for Rabbi Raichik, who was staying there on one of his trips to S. Louis.

Rabbi Raichik picked up the phone, greeted the caller, and listened in silence for several minutes. Then, to his hosts' utter shock, he began yelling, "Tell the woman to mix out of their marriage! Let the couple live happily!"

It appeared that a young couple had just gotten married, and someone was causing friction that could impact their *shalom bayis*. The Sussmans left the room, and Rabbi Raichik finished the conversation in a normal tone of voice.

We Need You

In 1979 Rabbi Zalman Schmukler came to Los Angeles for a week to substitute for the local shochet. While he was there, Rabbi Raichik urged him to write to the Rebbe and ask whether he should move to Los Angeles permanently and be a shochet there.

"Why should I do it?" Rabbi Meir Schmukler recalled his father asking. "I am a shochet in Montreal, where my family lives, and we are happy there. There is no reason to ask."

Rabbi Raichik persisted, however, and eventually he gave in and wrote to the Rebbe, who replied that in fact it was a good idea.

Visit to Israel

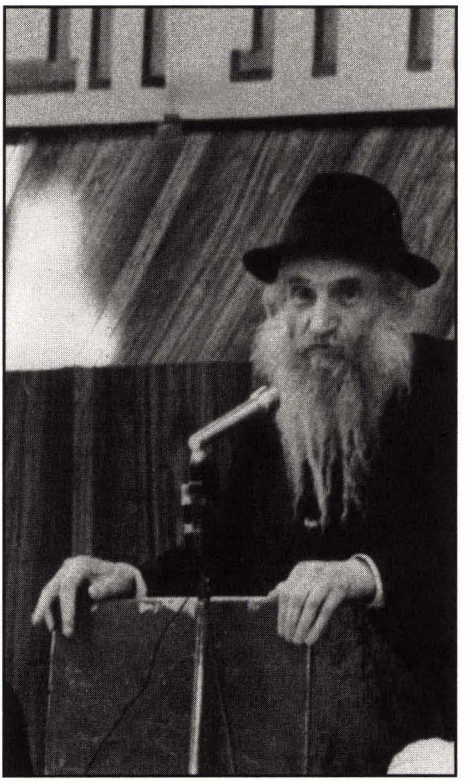
In February 1969 Rebbetzin Raichik flew to Israel to visit her sister Shaindel, whom she had not seen in over twenty years. For the family, her trip was a very significant event, and all the Raichik children who were home at the time went to the airport to see her off.

During her stay she went to Kfar Chabad to see the vocational school that Rabbi Raichik helped raise the funds to build. She was accorded much respect and given a private tour of the facility. When she was leaving, she asked the man who gave her the tour his name so she could tell her husband. He replied, "Shaya." She asked, "Shaya who?" He answered, "Just say 'Shaya' and your husband will know who I am."

Rebbetzin Raichik stopped in New York for several days on her way home, during which time she had a private audience with the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked her if she had visited Kfar Chabad, and she responded that she had, and had visited the vocational school.

"Who showed you around the vocational school?" the Rebbe asked.

Rebbetzin Raichik could not recall his name. "Maybe his name is Reb Shaya?" she said. The Rebbe also asked if she took pictures in Kfar Chabad. When she said that she had not, the Rebbe seemed disappointed.



Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

Not Good for the Heart

One Friday night in the shul near the Raichik home a quarrel broke out between two of the congregants, with one loudly accusing another of wrongdoing. Rabbi Raichik approached the accused, who had health issues, and asked him to leave, since quarrels were not good for his heart.

The rabbi managed to calm everyone down so they could finish davening. Immediately afterward, however, everyone gathered around the accuser to hear his side of the story. Rabbi Raichik, still in the middle of davening, stuck his fingers in his ears to avoid hearing the *lashon hara* (gossip).

No Nepotism

At one time a fund from Lubavitch world headquarters was distributing money to various shluchim as assistance towards new buildings. The regional director of Chabad said to one of Rabbi Raichik's sons that should he want the grant for his Chabad House, he should ask his father to put in a good word for



With his children Abi (left) and Shimon in Israel, 5731 (1971).

him at headquarters.

Rabbi Raichik told his son, "*Ich gei zei rufen* [I'll call them], but I will not ask them to do anything for you that they would not do for any other shliach."

"I Need to Go"

Many people turned to Rabbi Raichik for advice, confiding in him about the most sensitive areas of their lives. He never spoke about anyone, in fear of mistakenly divulging some private information.

Several students at the yeshivah once overheard a conversation Rabbi Raichik had with someone, during which he was asking how their mutual acquaintances were doing.

One of the students, Rabbi Levi Fogelman, recalled that at one point the other person asked, "What is doing with so and so?" mentioning someone they both knew. Rabbi Raichik terminated the conversation immediately. *"Zei gezunt,"* he said, "I need to go."



Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik with philanthropists Berel and Miriam Weiss.

Why Didn't You Go?

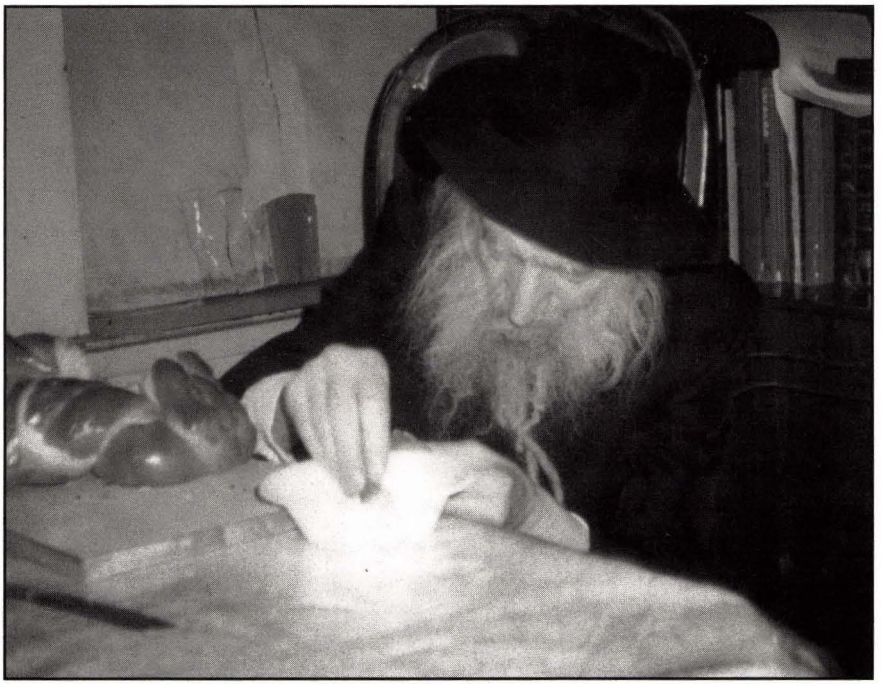
Once, Zack Miller was asked to donate his time to cater the wedding of a man named Dave, which he readily agreed to do. On that same night there was another wedding that Mr. Miller wanted to attend. He made sure to finish everything necessary for Dave's wedding before going, however.

On his way home he saw Rabbi Raichik walking and offered him a ride. Rabbi Raichik was worried about Dave's wedding. He wondered if people were attending and asked, "How come you didn't go?"

Mr. Miller said he learned from Rabbi Raichik that simply helping wasn't enough; he had to make sure that people who needed help felt cared about as well.

He Is Well

Whenever Koppel Goldberg told Rabbi Raichik that he had made a good deal, Rabbi Raichik would ask him how much money he had made. Then he would tell him to send a check to the Rebbe. "He never asked me for a penny," Mr.



A melaveh malkah at Elozor's home in New York.

Goldberg said. "It was always 'Give it to the Rebbe.'"

Every year he would accompany Rabbi Raichik to the Machane Yisroel Development Fund meeting. One year Rabbi Raichik had an infection in his leg and could not come.

When it was Mr. Goldberg's turn to have his *yechidus* with the Rebbe, the Rebbe looked at him and asked, "Who is the shliach you came with?"

"Rabbi Raichik is my shliach," he said. "But he is not well."

The Rebbe replied, "You are saying that Rabbi Raichik is not well; however, he is surely well. What will be with his foot? It will be good."

He Disappeared

Rabbi Raichik met with Berel Weiss and his daughter Chani several times to discuss her dating. He arranged for her to meet Rabbi Shalom Ber Levitin, and they got engaged. "Rabbi Raichik was a very strong influence on our entire life," Chani Levitin said. The wedding was going to be in Los Angeles, and Rabbi Levitin wanted the food at the wedding to meet the highest possible standards of

kashrus. He told Mrs. Weiss that it should be kosher enough for "Rabbi Raichik to eat there."

Mrs. Weiss and Rabbi Raichik went around to every hotel to speak to the chefs and see the kitchens. Once, Mrs. Weiss was in the middle of speaking to the caterer and the kitchen staff, when she noticed that many people were suddenly missing. It turned out that Rabbi Raichik had realized that many of the staff were Jewish, and he was helping them put on tefillin.

"You Think So?"

During the years that he interned at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Dr. Menashe Weiss used to spend Shabbos at the Raichik home. He remembered how one Friday night several of the grown Raichik children and their spouses were there, and it was very lively. "Everybody was talking, and Rabbi Raichik was in his own little world," the doctor said.

Yossi was joking about being married and how hard it is. "I guess after 20 or 30 years it gets a lot easier," he said.

Rabbi Raichik suddenly picked up his head and jokingly interjected, "You think so?"

Mentor and Rav

The Rebbe had announced a campaign that everyone should choose a spiritual mentor, and Dr. Weiss approached Rabbi Raichik and asked him to be his mentor.

Rabbi Raichik didn't like the idea. "No, no," he said.

"But the Rebbe said," Dr. Weiss protested.

Unable to argue further, Rabbi Raichik got up and went into his bedroom. He came out wearing his hat and *kapote*, and began asking Dr. Weiss questions such as, "What are you learning? What are you doing?"

"His eyes were looking right through me," the doctor recalled.

They Will Know

Moshe Fishman was once driving Rabbi Raichik through Beverly Hills and asked him, "Do you think these people are waiting for Moshiach? Do they care if



At the bris of the son of Moshe (left) and Miriam Fishman, 1981. *Courtesy of Miriam Fishman*

he is not here?"

Rabbi Raichik responded, "When Moshiach will come, everyone will have awareness that Moshiach is here. Now they may be immersed in physicality, but when Moshiach will come, they will recognize Moshiach."

Inheriting a Fortune

Rabbi Raichik used to tell a Baal Shem Tov story every Motzaei Shabbos, which the grandchildren looked forward to. One Motzaei Shabbos there was a false rumor going around that someone had passed away and left millions of dollars to Rabbi Raichik.

When he heard them talking about the fortune he had supposedly inherited, he asked Simi Mishulovin (née Wilhelm), "So, Simi, how much do you want? What would you do with the money?"

Simi said that she would give all the money to her parents' Chabad House in Portland, Oregon.

"You don't have to give all of it to them," her grandfather said. "You could keep some of it too."

Don't Get Involved

At someone's urging, Motti Wilhelm once asked his grandfather about a controversy in the community that was causing discord.

Rabbi Raichik became very stern and said, "Why are you getting involved in these issues? Your *koch* (devotion) needs to be in your learning and davening."

Fish on Shabbos

After the Wilhelm children graduated the Chabad day school in Oregon, they would go live with their grandparents so that they could attend high school and mesivta in Los Angeles. The Raichiks happily assumed a parental role, making school lunches and attending parent-child events with their grandchildren.

Rabbi Raichik used to take the children on his tefillin route, making a brief detour to purchase cookies.

Motti Wilhelm remembered hearing his grandfather often say to himself, *"Oy, Moshiach darf kumen"* ("Oy, Moshiach needs to come").

Once, when Motti didn't want to eat fish on Shabbos, Rabbi Raichik told him, "In Poland the Rebbe Rayatz worked very hard that we should be able to have fish on Shabbos. He put extra effort into making it possible."

You're Doing Well

A friend of Sultana Mayesh was making a bris in S. Monica, and Mrs. Mayesh was asked to pick up Rabbi Raichik and drive him to the bris.

The idea of chauffeuring such an important person made her nervous. "I thought, 'Oh G-d, how am I going to do this?'" she recalled. "Even before I got to his house I was shaking."

During the drive Rabbi Raichik sat with his eyes glued to a sefer, learning. Mrs. Mayesh drove very slowly, paying attention to the lights.

At one point, when she was stopped at a red light, he turned, looked at her, and said, "You are doing very well."

She realized that he was trying to help her relax, and she calmed down.



Rabbis Raichik and Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky (third from left) during their traditional Motzei Yom Kippur farbrengen, 5738 (1977). Also seen is Rabbi Yaakov Gansburg from Milan and Noach Gansburg. *Courtesy of Levi Freidin/JEM*

You Need to Be Here

Rabbi Moishe Leider was feeling burned out. He had been living in S. Diego for a couple of years and he wanted to go back to New York for a time to sit and learn, to "get my batteries recharged," as he put it.

One day, as he was driving Rabbi Raichik around S. Diego, he asked him what he thought of the idea.

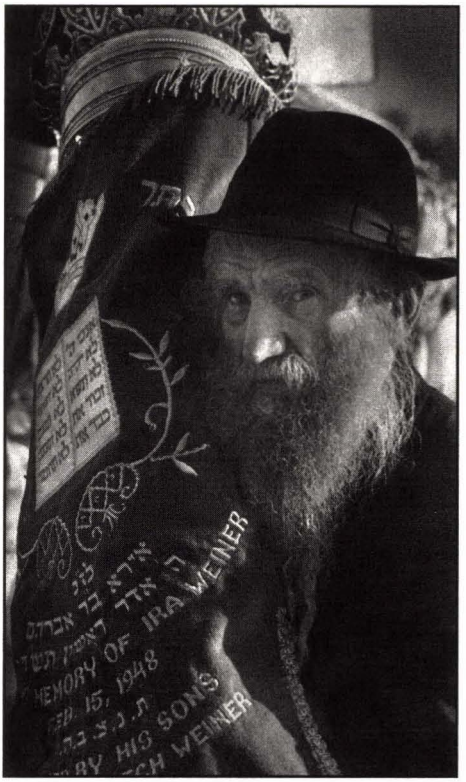
"You are on shlichus here," Rabbi Raichik answered. "This is where you are supposed to be."

Good Deal

Nathan and Dorothy Grossman shared a close relationship with the Raichik family for many years. Mrs. Grossman remembered once asking Rabbi Raichik about a recent event and finding, to her surprise, that he was quite familiar with it. "I realized that he was especially knowledgeable about and knew a great deal of current events," she said.

When Mr. Grossman purchased an office building on Wilshire Boulevard, Rabbi Raichik came to put up the mezuzahs.

"Before he affixed the mezuzahs," recalled their son Fishel, "he walked the lines of the property [and asked] the square footage of the property, to discuss with my father the value of the property and to see if my father got a good deal." He said Rabbi Raichik determined that his father had paid a good price.



A siyum Sefer Torah at a California Chabad House.

Finding Collateral

Shortly after Rabbi Naftoli Estulin arrived in California on shlichus, he needed a Sefer Torah for his shul. He found one being sold for $2,000, but could not afford it.

Rabbi Raichik directed him to go to the bank. "He told me, 'Go to this-and-this person and he will give a loan,'" Rabbi Estulin remembered.

The bank manager asked him what he could offer for collateral. "I did not know what that was," he said. He went back to Rabbi Raichik, who explained it to him.

Rabbi Estulin told Rabbi Raichik that he didn't have anything for collateral.

"What do you mean you have nothing?" Rabbi Raichik said. "Furniture you have? Seforim you have? Dishes you have?"

Rabbi Raichik calculated that he had $6,000 in collateral. Rabbi Estulin received the loan, and from then on he built a relationship with the bank.

This Is It?

At the Rebbe's request, Rabbi Raichik traveled to Baltimore to encourage women and girls to light Shabbos candles. He got off the plane very early in the morning and, without stopping to rest, insisted that Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan drive him immediately to the schools. When he had finished speaking to the children and distributing candle-lighting kits, he asked Rabbi Kaplan if they would be passing by the White House.

Rabbi Kaplan began to drive from Baltimore to Washington, D.C. On the way Rabbi Raichik fell asleep. Rabbi Kaplan stopped across from the White House and woke him up. "Reb Shmuel Dovid, here it is," he said.

Rabbi Raichik looked up. "This is it?" he asked. Then he went back to sleep.

"He didn't want to tell us that he [had been in Washington and] hadn't seen the White House on his trip," said his daughter Suri. That was the only motivation for the request.

A Long Walk Home

On his visits to New York it took Rabbi Raichik a long time to walk down Kingston Avenue, the main shopping street in Crown Heights. He greeted almost every person, asking how they were doing and how their families were. Abi said it seemed like his father had a computer in his mind keeping track of all of these minute details.

Once, before Pesach, he accompanied his father to deliver matzah to someone in a large office building.

As they exited the elevator on the ground floor, Rabbi Raichik turned to the janitor, who was surprised at the attention. "Hello, how are you?" he said. "Have a good day."

The Goal of a Simchah

To Rabbi Raichik, even joyous family occasions were opportunities to reach out to his fellow Jews. He insisted on bringing a guest speaker to every bar mitzvah and wedding the family hosted. Among them were Rabbi Kazarnovsky, Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah "JJ" Hecht, and Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht.



Receiving kos shel berachah from the Rebbe, motzei Simchas Torah 5736 (1975).
Courtesy of Levi Freidin/JEM

Moshe Wilhelm said that his father-in-law viewed his wedding as an opportunity to share the Rebbe's words of Torah with people. "He was busy going up and down the tables," he said, "saying *l'chaim*."

The Beinoni

During a Pesach seudah in 5708 (1948) the Rebbe Rayatz asked the crowd to sing the "Beinoni niggun" (Sefer Hasichos 5708, p. 201), one of the Rebbe's favorite melodies. When no one would or could start the niggun, the Rebbe said, "To be a *beinoni* [a very high level in the service of G-d, as explained in *Tanya*] is very difficult. At least you should be able to sing the 'Beinoni Niggun'!"

"My father took that *vort* so much to heart," said Shimon. Every Shabbos Rabbi Raichik would ask his family to sing the niggun. It was an intrinsic part of their meal, he said, the way kugel is for some people.

Many decades later, when Rabbi Raichik was already frail, he attended a gathering in 770; however, it was crowded and he could not see the Rebbe. Someone offered to hold him up, but Rabbi Raichik declined. When the crowd began



Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives

singing the "Beinoni," however, he asked to be held up so that he could see the Rebbe's face.

Tefilas Haderech

Rabbi Raichik once quoted to Rabbi Mayer Harlig what it says in *Hayom Yom*, that when a person is away from home, they should say Tefillas Haderech every day without G-d's name. "I say it every day," Rabbi Raichik concluded, "except when I am in 770, for this is our home."

"He Is My Shliach"

When Chanie Weiss, daughter of Berel Weiss, was marrying Rabbi Shalom Ber Levitin in 5729 (1969), Mr. Weiss invited the Rebbe to the wedding in Los Angeles. The Rebbe replied, "I will be there spiritually."

Mr. Weiss then asked the Rebbe to make Rabbi Shmuel Levitin, the chosson's grandfather, his shliach to be *mesader kiddushin* [officiate at the wedding], but the Rebbe responded that Rabbi Raichik was the Rebbe Rayatz's shliach, and "*Er iz mein shliach* [He is my shliach]. The chosson is a Levi, and Rabbi Raichik is a Levi."

Rabbi Levitin concluded, "That was how Rabbi Raichik was the shliach of the

Rebbe to be *mesader kiddushin* at our wedding."

They Shouldn't Know

After Shloimie Futerfas moved back to New York from Los Angeles, where he had been studying, Rabbi Raichik occasionally called him and asked him to do him a favor. These "favors" were to deliver large sums of money to people in need in the Crown Heights community. "He would collect money specifically to help people," Rabbi Futerfas said.

Rabbi Raichik always warned him not to say whom the money was from. Rabbi Futerfas remembered in particular one person who had been well off but lost a lot of money. "Rabbi Raichik gave me a package of many thousands of dollars and told me to give it to him," he said. "However, 'make sure he does not know where it came from.'"

Worried?

Shmuel Fogelman of Los Angeles once joined Rabbi Raichik in a car service on the way to the airport in New York. They were running late and the car kept on stalling. "At every red light it took a minute to restart," he said.

It was taking so long that Mr. Fogelman began to worry that they would miss their flight.

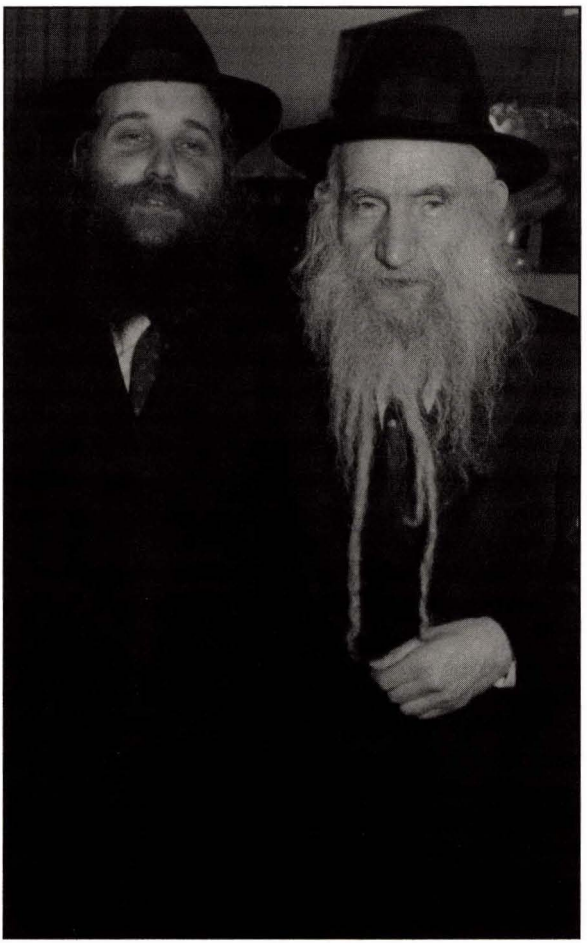
At one point Rabbi Raichik gave a painful sigh. Thinking that he was also worried about the time, Mr. Fogelman said he thought there was another flight not long after the one they had reservations on.

"No, no," Rabbi Raichik said. "I'm upset because he [the driver] needs to make a living, and his car is not working."

"It Is Nothing"

Things were looking bad for Levy Yitzchok Einhorn. Doctors had informed him that preliminary tests indicated he had cancer. Mr. Einhorn, the *baal korei* at Congregation Atzei Chaim in Los Angeles ("Halberstam's Shul"), where Rabbi Raichik davened for many years, felt despondent.

Around this time he attended a chassidic gathering presided over by Rabbi Raichik. The elderly chassid immediately noticed that something was wrong.



With his son Yossi, on his wedding day, 3rd of Adar, 5743 (February 16, 1983).

"Levy Itche," he asked, "what is going on?"

Mr. Einhorn described his situation, and Rabbi Raichik made a dismissive gesture with his hands. "Levy Yitzchok, *ich zog dir tzu, es iz gohrnit* (I am telling you that it is all nothing). Have faith in Hashem, and He will surely help."

He quickly forgot about the conversation, he says. He went back for more thorough tests and tried to prepare himself for the ordeal he was sure awaited him.

A few weeks later the doctor's office called and unceremoniously informed him that the tests were negative, and he was fine.

The Children's Berachos

Fred Schwartzman met the Raichiks in 1958. He had lost his faith during the Holocaust, but watching their family, he felt it beginning to return. He called his visit to their home a "great present."

"To hear the way your children said the berachah on the fruit brought back many memories from childhood years," he wrote to Rabbi Raichik later. He regretted the years he had lost. His contact with the Raichiks was "bringing G-d back to my heart."

Who Tied the Knot?

Two American young men, Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah Hecht and his younger brother Peretz, became very close to Rabbi Raichik when he arrived in America. Their friendship continued for years, rekindled during Rabbi Raichik's visits to New York.

Rabbi Raichik's singleminded dedication to the Rebbe's work did not leave him much time to consider his appearance, and the Hecht brothers used to joke about how they had made it their business to ensure Rabbi Raichik looked good when he was dating. It was an ongoing joke between the Hechts and the Raichik children to debate who had been the one to tie the knot in the suitor's tie (it certainly wasn't him).

Who Will Talk?

At the Shavuos 5718 (1958) *farbrengen* the Rebbe asked to organize the next day a Kinus Torah. Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, from the faculty of the yeshivah in 770, tried recruiting people to speak, but most would need time to prepare, which wasn't an option under the circumstances. Rabbi Mentlick did not know what to do.

Rabbi Raichik was davening in 770, as usual, for many hours. Rabbi Mentlick approached him and told him about his dilemma. Rabbi Raichik immediately volunteered to give a talk. "I will never forget how spontaneously Rabbi Raichik said a *pilpul* on a Gemara in Yevamos," recalled Rabbi Mordechai Shmuel Ashkenazi, later the Chief Rabbi of Kfar Chabad. "It showed that though he was occupied in all the activities he was doing, he still not only studied, but also delved into what he was learning."

[EPILOGUE]

A Chassid's Devotion

Reading this book, one quickly notices a theme that imbued every aspect of my parents' lives: the inner connection between a Rebbe and a chassid. My father's relationship with the Rebbe was the essence, the motivating force, the true heartbeat of his life. The moment he arrived at the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Otwock, he became connected to the Rebbe Rayatz with every fiber of his being. His reverence and love for the Rebbe can be seen in every letter and report he wrote. In a brief telegram from Shanghai to Montreal (see page 77), he and the other students urgently asked for news of the Rebbe, and requested the most recent talks and *ma'amarim* with which to strengthen their connection.

Although my father advocated for the mitzvah of tefillin before the Rebbe initiated his official campaign, Reb Mendel Futerfas, the legendary chassid who suffered so much to propagate Yiddishkeit in Soviet Russia, shortly after meeting my father, sized up what it took me many years to realize.

"Rabbi Raichik heard one statement from the Rebbe," Reb Mendel said during a farbrengen, "and from then on Rabbi Raichik was inspired and constantly engaged in putting on tefillin with Jews from every walk of life." The statement in question was made on 11 Shevat 5728 (1968). "Putting tefillin on a Yid hastens the coming of Moshiach," the Rebbe said.



On Av 17, 5751 (1991), seemingly on the way to his yearly visit to Brazil.
Courtesy of Chaim Baruch Halberstam/JEM

True, my father had put on tefillin with people for years before the Rebbe's Mivtza Tefillin campaign. But after the Rebbe spoke about it, the work took on a new urgency for him. Reb Mendel summed up what I came to realize only later: when my father heard something from the Rebbe, or the Rebbe Rayatz, he made every effort to implement it into his life.

Reading about my father, who was a *shadar*, an emissary of the Chabad Rebbes, for over 50 years, you will be struck by the *mesirus nefesh* my parents had in coming to Los Angeles, a spiritual desert at the time, not for their own interests but to fulfill a mission for the Rebbe. In these pages you met a couple whose entire life was dedicated to the Rebbe's work of bringing Yiddishkeit to every corner of the world.

It was not just my father, who traveled so often with limited access to kosher food and Jewish infrastructure; it was also my mother, who carried the burden of the family. Without her, my father would not have been able to accomplish what he did. My mother understood and accepted her role from the moment she met my father. Even when they were engaged, he was constantly traveling for the Rebbe Rayatz.



My mother's parents were Gerrer chassidim—she had never heard of Lubavitch until she came to America. Yet she wholeheartedly embraced her role as the first shluchah to the West Coast, an unfamiliar place where she knew no one. In her own words, "The Rebbe told us to go to Los Angeles. We went." (In addition to her many other duties, she carried the burden of the family while my father was travelling, see page 271).

This book provides insight into the definition of a chassid. It describes the relationship between a Rebbe and a chassid, and the responsibilities of a shliach. My father's devotion to Yiddishkeit and Chassidus was evident not only in the large projects he undertook, but also in the tiny details of his life, in the way he made a point of singing the "Beinoni" niggun after he heard the Rebbe Rayatz speak about it (see page 309), and in the care he took to say a berachah when he visited someone's home (see page 210), because of what the Baal Shem Tov said (*Hayom Yom*, 18 Elul):

> *The verse says, "You shall go to the place... to cause His Name to dwell there." You are to utterly dedicate yourself to making G-d known there. How does one "make G-d known"? With a berachah and a verse of Tehillim.*

I will never forget the trips we took as a family to be with the Rebbe for the Yomim Noraim. It was almost a three-day journey from L.A. to New York by train. My mother would prepare dozens of sandwiches, and we had a stopover in Chicago, where we had to catch a taxi to another station. When we finally arrived, there were the ad-hoc accommodations in Crown Heights: an apartment on top of the Kehot bookstore, a room above the kollel on Union Street, another above the matzah bakery.

Before we went home we had a yechidus with the Rebbe. My father would usually continue his travels for another month after Tishrei on the East Coast before he returned to L.A. One year Mr. Berel Weiss wanted my father to come back early to attend the bar mitzvah of his son Yona Mordechai (Marty). It was amazing to see my father ask the Rebbe if it was okay for him to change his normal itinerary to attend the bar mitzvah, promising that he would make up the missed visits later. The Rebbe gave him permission, at the same time providing a powerful lesson for us children that a shliach cannot make a move without guidance from the Rebbe.

Recently a story the Rebbe Rayatz told was brought to my attention (*Sefer Hasichos 5704*, page 4):

> *Once, the Baal Shem Tov overheard one person telling the other, "The Aibeshter will surely help." Deeply moved, the Baal Shem Tov went to the Holy Group [his closest students] and said, "With these words a simpleton helped save hundreds of thousands [of Jews] from bad decrees."*

Perhaps that was how my father first heard what became his famous slogan, *"Der Aibeshter vet zicher helfen,"* Hashem will surely help.



This project went through many stages and overcame many obstacles. I would like to thank HaKadosh Baruch Hu for giving me the ability to complete it. To use a variation of my father's motto, the *Aibeshter hot zicher geholfun*, Hashem surely helped us through the long process.

This book is intended to fulfill the Rebbe's directive to publish memoirs and biographies of chassidim. It is my hope that it will give the Rebbe much *nachas* on high.



***Blessing his daughter Suri Klyne before her* chupah.**

The project was made possible by the tireless efforts of Rabbi Dovid Zaklikowski over the past five years. The nucleus was formed by articles I wrote for the *Chabad Chodesh*, a publication of our shul, Congregation Levi Yitzchok, where my father davened during his last years. However, to make the book what it is today, Rabbi Zaklikowski conducted hundreds of interviews, did much research, and located many photos.

Many people helped, including Rabbi Nachman Levine, Rabbi Gershon Shusterman, Binyomin Kaplan, Mrs. Ofra Shipman, Mrs. Yocheved Novack, and Mrs. Chaya Hinda Malkah, who prepared the original articles in *Chabad Chodesh*. Most of them are noted in the acknowledgements. To those who may have been missed, please take this as a personal recognition of your assistance.

I thank my wife, Chana Leeba, and our dear children for always being there to encourage me.

It was my father's custom to tell a story at every Motzaei Shabbos *melaveh malkah*. At the last *melaveh malkah* he attended, he repeated a story he heard



Following the Rebbe's talk to those who marked, or will be marking, their bar and bas mitzvah, Shevat 16, 5752 (January 21, 1992). His grandson Yosef Yitzchok Raichik, shortly after his bar mitzvah, is on the left. *Courtesy of Levi Freidin/JEM*

from the Rebbe Rayatz in Otwock on the 19th of Kislev (*Sefer Hasichos 5696–Choref 5700*, p. 360). The Rebbe Rayatz told a story from the Tzemach Tzedek, who heard it from the Alter Rebbe, who heard it in Mezritch.

The Baal Shem Tov would travel from town to town. In each he would stand in the middle of the marketplace and speak words of Torah, tell stories, and share words of inspiration according to the locals' level of comprehension. Often the Baal Shem Tov spoke about the great love Hashem has for each Yid.

To illustrate, he once gave the example of Reb Yaakov, a local who would study Gemara and its commentaries by heart. (The Rebbe Rayatz noted that learning something by heart requires much concentration.) Once, Reb Yaakov was studying a large Tosafos, which filled up most of the page, when his child began to tell him a clever idea.

"Reb Yaakov was moved by the idea, and he stopped his learning to listen to the child," the Baal Shem Tov said. "Because of his love of his child, he interrupted his deep concentration."

This, the Baal Shem Tov said, is what Hashem does. The Gemara says (Avodah Zarah 3b) that "three hours a day, Hashem studies Torah." Yet when someone davens, Hashem stops what He is doing and becomes involved in the prayers and requests of the Yidden.

Before Hashem created Adam, He asked the engels, "Should I?" They responded, "What will man be? What do You need him for?" (Tehillim ch. 8) The Rebbe Rayatz explained that when a man wakes up in the morning and rushes to daven with a *minyan* before going to work, then runs to shul to daven Mincha, then learns some *Ein Yaakov*, davens Maariv, and goes home and repeats to his family some of what he learned, then Hashem gathers the *malachim* and takes pride in the creation of man.

Hashem tells them (Shabbos 88b), "You angels do not have the yoke of livelihood, which I commanded them to have. A person is stressed to sustain his family, has the burden of taxes and the yoke of *galus*, yet look at all the good deeds he amassed. Man is even greater than you."

Contemplating how Hashem takes pride in us, the Rebbe Rayatz said, will inspire us to do even more to serve Him.

It is interesting to note that the Rebbe Rayatz writes that this story was told on Chanukah. My father told this story Motzaei Shabbos Chanukah, a day before he fell ill.

My father frequently recalled the above talk of the Rebbe Rayatz (ibid., p. 359). "Moshiach is close. We are close to the top of the mountain," he would say. The Rebbe explained that those last few steps are the hardest to take. Every small thing is precious: a blade of grass, a stone, a twig that one could grab hold of. "We must hold precious every good thing; we must become a light unto others by spreading Torah, learning ourselves and teaching others."

This is what my father strove for, and the lesson his life holds for us: To prepare for "the light of that day," may it be speedily in our times.

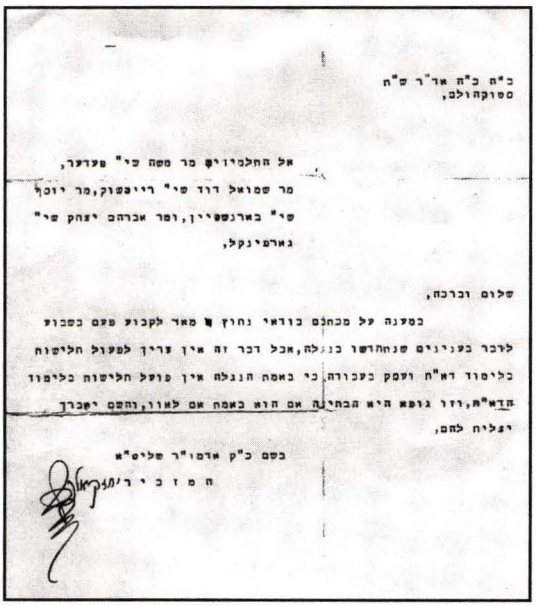
Rabbi Shimon Raichik
8 Shevat, 5778
My father's 20th yahrtzeit



[APPENDIX I]

Letters from the Rebbe Rayatz (free translation)

Baruch Hashem
25 Adar I 5700
Stockholm



To the students Messrs. Moshe Feder, Shmuel Dovid Raichik, Yosef Borenstein, and Avraham Yitzchak Garfinkel:

In response to your letter, it is important to deliver a talk once a week on a novel idea from your Talmudic studies. However, this should not come at the expense of learning Chassidus and davening properly. In truth, Talmudic studies should not detract from time spent studying Chassidus. When one does not come at the expense of the others, this

See p. 45.

is in itself a test whether the study is *emes* [true] or not. Hashem should bless you and give you success.

In the name of the Rebbe,

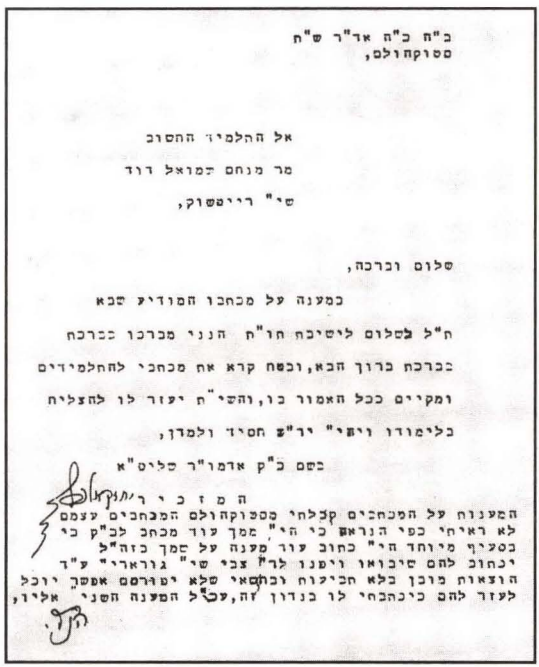
[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
25 Adar I 5700
Stockholm

In response to your letter informing me that, thank G-d, everything is okay at the yeshivah, I welcome you [to Vilna] with blessings. Surely you read my letter to the students and are fulfilling all that it says there. Hashem should assist you to be successful in your studies, and you should be G-d-fearing, a chassid and a Torah scholar.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]



ב"ה כ"ח אד"ר ש"ח
סטוקהולם,

אל התלמיד החסוב

מר מנחם שמואל דוד

שי' ריישקוק,

שלום וברכה,

במענה על מכתבו המודיע זכא

ח"ל בשלום לישיבה חו"ח הנני מברכו בברכה

בברכת בדוך הבא, ובשם קרא את מכתבי לתלמידים

ומקיים ככל האמור בו, והשי"ח יעזר לו להצליח

בלימודו ויהי' ירא"ש חסיד ולמדן,

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

ה מ ז כ ו ר

במענה על המכתבים שקבלתי מסטוקהולם המבחנים עצמם
לא ראיתי בפי הנראש כי הי' ממך עוד מכתב לכ"ק כי
בסעיף מיוחד הי' כתוב עוד מענה על ממך בזה"ל
יכתוב להם שיבואו וישנו לר' צבי שי' גוראריי' ע"ד
הוצאות מובן בלא חביקוח ובתנאי שלא ישדרשם אשתך יוכל
לעזר להם כיכתבתי לו בנדון זה, עכ"ל המענה השני' אליו,

See p. 48.

[Postscript added by Reb Chatche Feigin, the Rebbe's secretary (see page 48):]

I received the answer to your letters from the Rebbe [who is] in Stockholm. Your letter I did not see, but it's clear that you wrote an additional letter, for in another paragraph the Rebbe addresses this response specifically to you:

You should inform the students to contact Reb Tzvi [Hershel] Gurary concerning their expenses. They should not approach him with demands. This should be done discreetly and not publicized. I wrote to him about this, and there's a possibility that he will be able to help them.

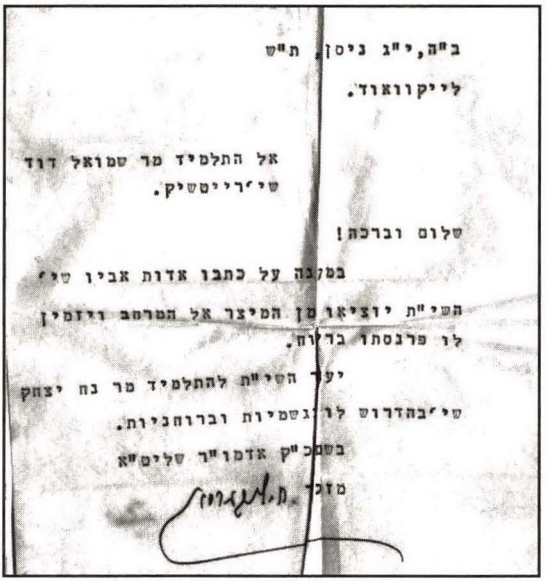
Baruch Hashem
13 Nissan 5700
Lakewood

Regarding what you wrote about your father, may Hashem take him out of his constraints to bounty and grant him plentiful livelihood.

Hashem should assist the student Mr. Noach Yitzchak in all his material and spiritual needs.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]



ב"ה, י"ג ניסן, תש"ט
ליקווד.

אל התלמיד מר שמואל דוד
שי' ריטשיק.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו אודות אביו שי'
השי"ת יוציאו מן המיצר אל המרחב וירזקו
לו פרנסתו בדרוך.
יעזר השי"ת להתלמיד מר נח יצחק
שי' בהדרוש לו בגשמיות וברוחניות.
בשכ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר

For an explanation of the name of the addressee, see page 47.

Baruch Hashem
20 Iyar 5700
New York

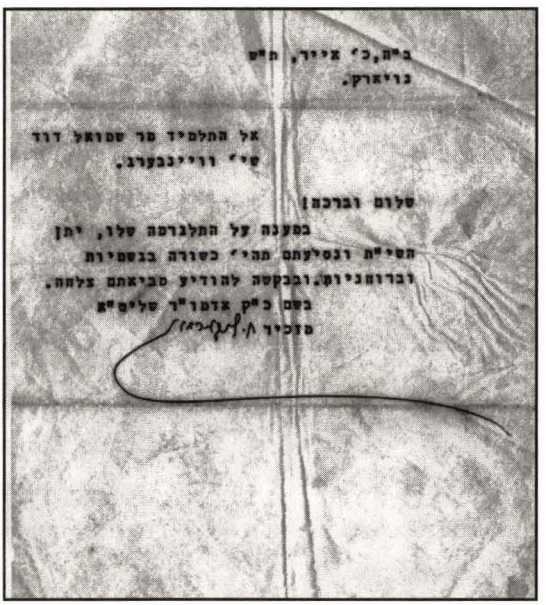
To the student Mr. Shmuel Dovid Wineberg:

Greetings and blessings!

In response to your telegram, G-d should grant that your trip should go well materially and spiritually. Please inform me of your safe arrival.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

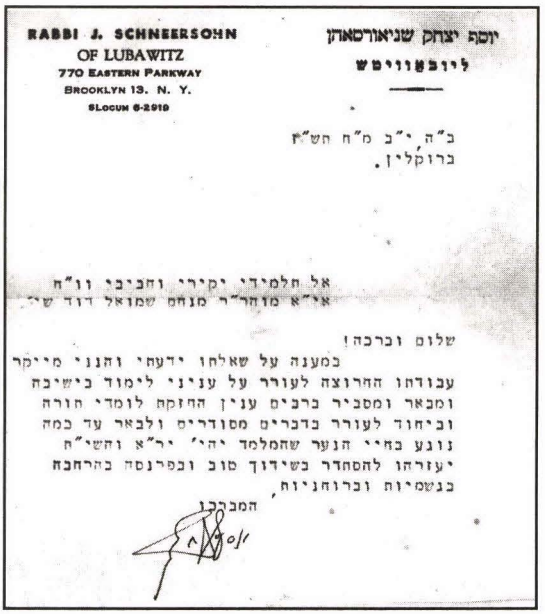


ב"ה, כ' אייר, תש"ט
ניויארק.

אל התלמיד מר שמואל דוד
שי' ווינבערג.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על התלגרמה שלו, יתן
השי"ת ונסיעתם תהי' כשורה בגשמיות
וברוחניות. ובבקשה להודיע סביאתם צלחה.
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר



RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2910

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ב מ"ח חש"ז
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על שאלתו ידעתי והנני מייקר
עבודתו ההרוצה לעורר על ענייני לימוד בישיבה
ומבאר ומסביר ברבים ענין החזקת לומדי תורה
וביחוד לעורר בדברים מסודרים ולבאר עד כמה
נוגע בחיי הנער שתמלמד יהי' יר"א וחשי"ח
יעזרהו להסתדר בשידוך טוב ובפרנסה בהרחבה
בגשמיות וברוחניות.

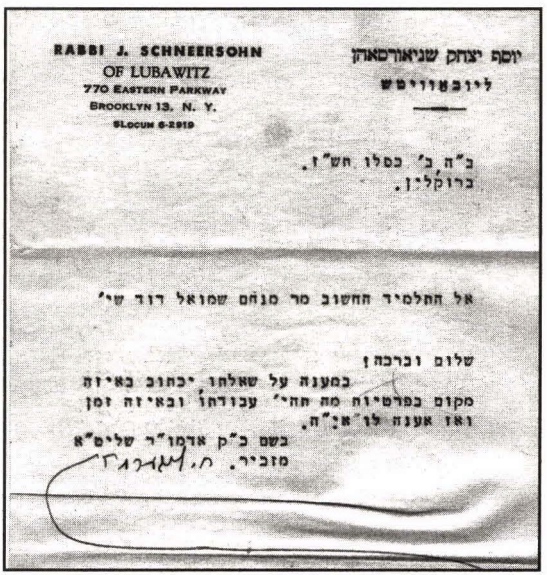
המברכו

Baruch Hashem
12 Cheshvan 5707
Brooklyn

In answer to your question, I know and value your dedicated work to inspire interest about learning in yeshivah, and that you publicly encourage the strengthening of Torah study. [You should] especially stress how important it is to the child's life that the teacher be a G-d-fearing Jew. G-d should assist you in finding a good shidduch, and livelihood in abundance, materially and spiritually.

With blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]



RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2910

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה ב' כסלו חש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמיד החשוב מר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על שאלתו יכתוב באיזה
מקום בפרטיות מה תהי' עבודתו ובאיזה זמן
ואז אענה לו"אנ"ך.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

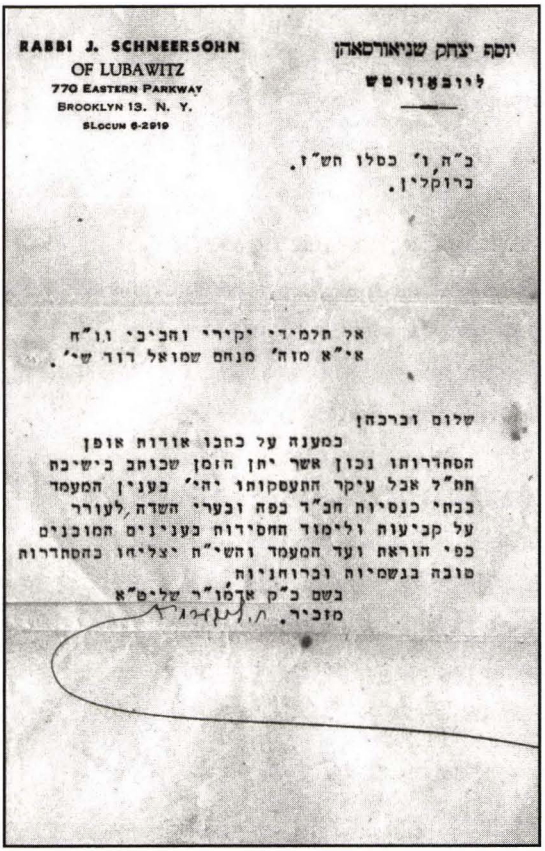
Baruch Hashem
2 Kislev 5707
Brooklyn

To answer your question, you should write which places, what the activities and the dates will be, and then I will, G-d willing, respond to you.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
6 Kislev 5707
Brooklyn


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2910

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

In answer to your question about how to settle down [in America], it is a good idea for you to spend time in Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim. However, the central focus of your activities should be [the collection of] *maamad* [funds (see p. 92)] in the Chabad shuls here [in New York] and in the outlying areas, and to encourage regular study of Chassidus that is easy to understand. All this should be done according to the directives of the *maamad* committee.

Hashem should give you success in acclimating well, materially and spiritually.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
8 Teves 5707
Brooklyn

In response to your letter, thank you, and blessings for your trip to visit with *anash* [Chabad chassidim] and inspire them to organize farbrengens [to encourage] the regular study of Chassidus. Hashem should grant that you happily settle down in an atmosphere of Torah and the service of G-d, with a good and abundant livelihood, materially and spiritually.

With blessings,

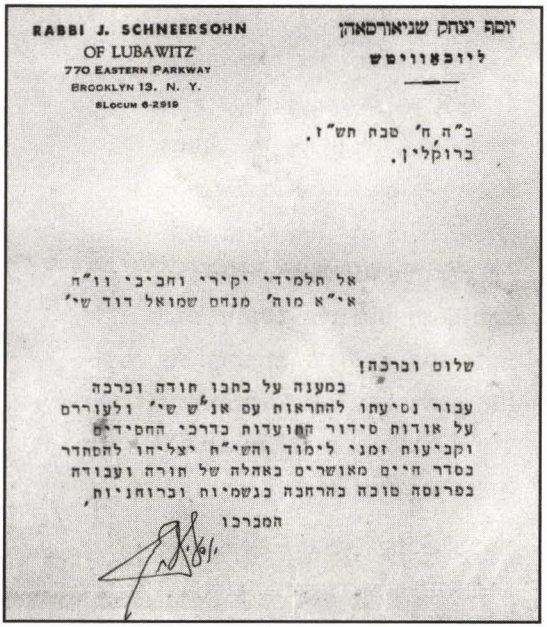
[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
24 Teves 5707
Brooklyn

Regarding what you wrote about your travels, surely you will describe the spiritual situation of the *anash* and youth [whom you met], and the improvements instituted [in the communities you visited]. May Hashem give you success materially and spiritually.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ח' טבת תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו חודה וברכה
עבור נסיעתו להתראות עם אנ"ש שי' ולעוררם
על אודות סידור הפועדות כדרכי החסידים
וקביעות זמני לימוד והשי"ח יצליחו להסתדר
בסדר חיים מאושרים באהלה של תורה ועבודה
בפרנסה טובה בהרחבה בגשמיות וברוחניות.

המברכו

Baruch Hashem
4 Adar 5707
Brooklyn


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ד טבת תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

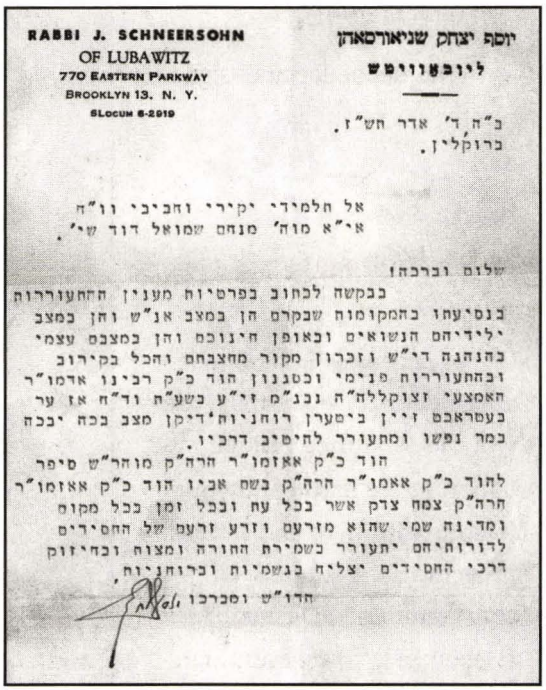
במענה על כתבו אודות נסיעתו
בודאי ירשום את מצבם הרוחני של אנ"ש והנוער
יחיו והתקנות אשר תיקנו והשי"ח יצליחו בנו"ר.
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

Please write in detail of the [spiritual] awakening in the places you visited. Tell me about the situation of *anash*: their conduct in regard to *yiras shamayim*, their loyalty to their heritage, and how they have educated their children. [All of your interaction with them] should be in a way of bringing [them] closer [to Judaism] and result in a deep awakening. As the Mitteler Rebbe would say, when a person will think of his lowly spiritual situation, he will weep from the bitterness in his heart and be inspired to rectify his ways.

The Rebbe Maharash would quote the Tzemach Tzedek as saying that at any time, in any place or country, a person who is a child or grandchild of chassidim will be inspired [in their ancestors' merit] to observe Torah and mitzvahs and to strengthen the ways of Chassidism. You should be successful, materially and spiritually.

Seeking your wellbeing and with blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]



RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה ד' אדר תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

בבקשה לכתוב בפרטיות מענין ההתעוררות בנסיעתו בהמקומות שבקרם הן במצב אנ"ש והן במצב ילידיהם הנשואים ובאופן חינוכם והן במצבם עצמי בהנהגת די"ש וזכרון מקור מחצבתם והכל בקירוב ובהתעוררות פנימי וכטענון הוד כ"ק רבינו אדמו"ר האמצעי זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע בשע"ת וד"ח אז עד בעמראכם זיין בימערן רוחניות'דיקן מצב בכח יבכה במר נפשו ומתעורר לחיסיב דרביו.

הוד כ"ק אאזמו"ר הרה"ק מוהר"ש סיפר להוד כ"ק אאמו"ר הרה"ק בשם אביו הוד כ"ק אאזמו"ר הרה"ק צמח צדק אשר בכל עת ובכל זמן בכל מקום ומדינה שמי שהוא מזרעם וזרע זרעם של החסידים לדורותיהם יתעורר בשמירת התורה ומצות ובחיזוק דרכי החסידים יצליח בגשמיות וברוחניות.

חדו"ש ומברכו

Baruch Hashem
20 Adar 5707
Brooklyn

Thank you, and blessings for your gift of the *sefer* Gur Aryeh. Hashem should assist you materially and spiritually.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]



RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה כ' אדר תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

תודה וברכה בעד תשורתו הספר
גור אריי, ותשי"ת יעזר לו בגו"ר.
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

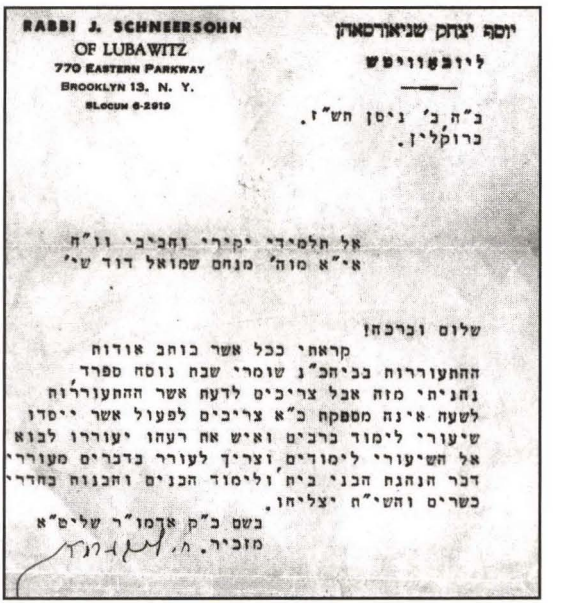
Baruch Hashem
2 Nissan 5707
Brooklyn

I read everything you wrote about the spiritual awakening in the Shomrei Shabbos Nusach Sfard shul. I appreciated it; however, you must know that a

temporary arousal is not sufficient. There must be a practical outcome in the form of regular public shiurim, with each person inspiring others to attend the classes. Please also encourage them in the areas of the conduct of the members of their household and their children's Jewish schooling. Hashem should make you successful.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

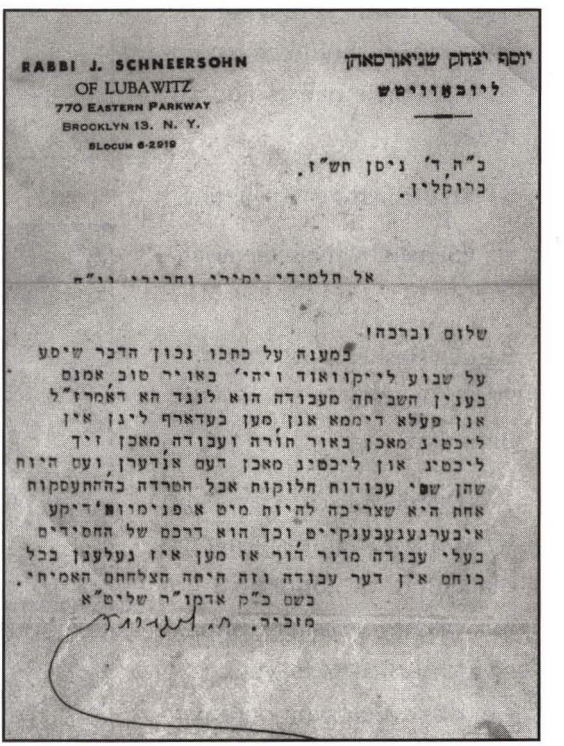
ב"ה, ניסן תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

קראתי ככל אשר כותב אודות ההתעוררות בביהכ"נ שומרי שבת נוסח ספרד, ונהניתי מזה אבל צריכים לדעת אשר ההתעוררות לשעה אינה מספקת כ"א צריכים לפעול אשר ייסדו שיעורי לימוד בדברים ואיש את רעהו יעוררו לבוא אל השיעורי לימודים, וצריך לעורר בדברים מעוררי דבר הנהגת הבני בית ולימוד הבנים והבנות בחדרי כשרים והשי"ת יצליחו.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ניסן תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח

שלום וברכה!

למענה על כתבו נכון הדבר שיסע על שבוע לרקוואד ויהי' באויר טוב, אמנם בענין השביתה מעבודה הוא לנגד מה דאמרז"ל אין פעלא רמא אין מען בעדארף לינן אין ליכטיג מאכן באור תורה ועבודה, מאכן זיך ליכטיג און ליכטיג מאכן דעם אנדערן, ועם היות שהן שפי' עבודות חלוקות אבל תכלית בהתעסקות אחת היא שצריכה להיות מיט א פנימות'דיקע איבערנעמענקייט, וכך הוא דרכם של החסידים בעלי עבודה מדור דור, אז מען איז נעלעבן בכל כוחם אין דער עבודה, וזה היתה הצלחתם האמיתי'.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

Baruch Hashem
4 Nissan 5707
Brooklyn

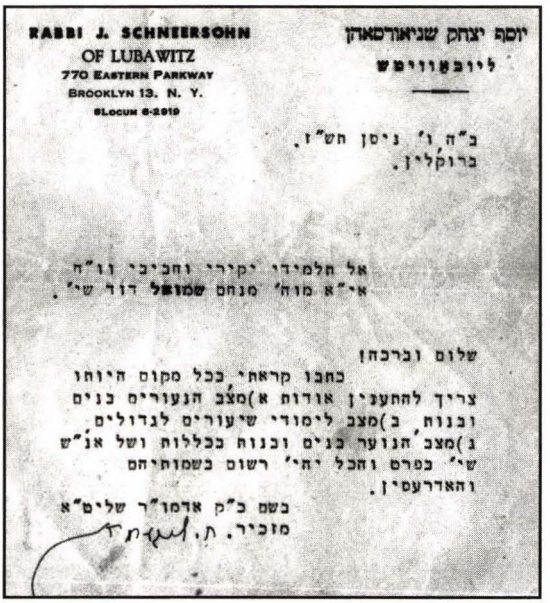
To answer your question, it is proper that you go to Lakewood for a week for good air. It says that abstaining from work is contrary to what our sages say, that "we are day workers." The meaning of the verse, however, is that we must bring light – the light of Torah and Divine service – into ourselves, and also illuminate others. These are two different tasks, but the effort is the same. It has to be done with the internal approach of giving yourself over

entirely. And this is the path of chassidim, those who are dedicated to the service of G-d. From generation to generation they devoted themselves to this work with all their strength, and in it found their true success.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
6 Nissan 5707
Brooklyn


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ו' ניסן תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

בחבו קראתי בכל מקום היותו
צריך להתענין אודות א)מצב הנעורים בנים
ובנות, ב)מצב לימודי שיעורים לגדולים,
ג)מצב הנוער בנים ובנות בכללות ושל אנ"ש
שי' בפרט ויהכל יחי' רשום בשמותיהם
והאדרעסין.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר. ת. לשנת

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
27 Nissan 5707
Brooklyn


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ז ניסן תש"ז.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי וו"ח
אי"א התמים הרב מוה' מנחם
שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

תודה יקרה על עבודתו בהתעוררות
קביעות עתים לתורה ברבים והשי"ח יצליח
בעבודתו הק' ויעזר לו בהפחדרות סובה בגשמיות
וברוחניות.

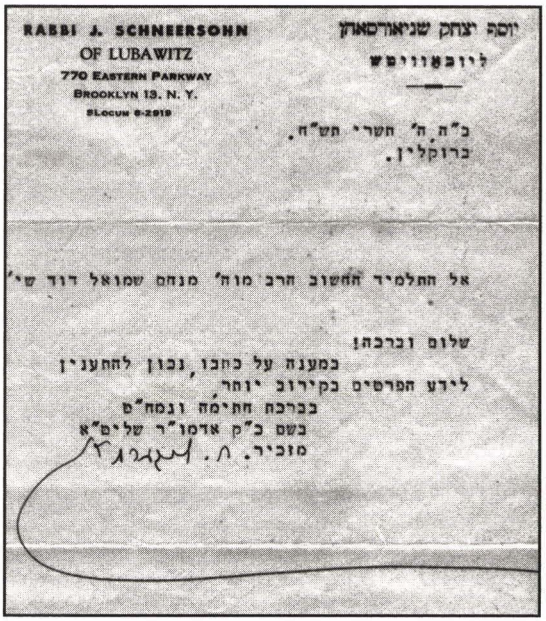
חדו"ש ומברכו

Thank you, and blessings for your work in inspiring the scheduling of communal Torah classes. Hashem should give you success in your holy work and help you acclimate

well materially and spiritually.

The one who seeks out your wellbeing and with blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, חשרי תש"ח.
ברוקלין.

אל החלמיד החשוב הרב מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, נכון להתעניין
לידע הפרטים בקירוב יותר.
בברכה חתימה ונמת"פ
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר. ל. שניאורסון

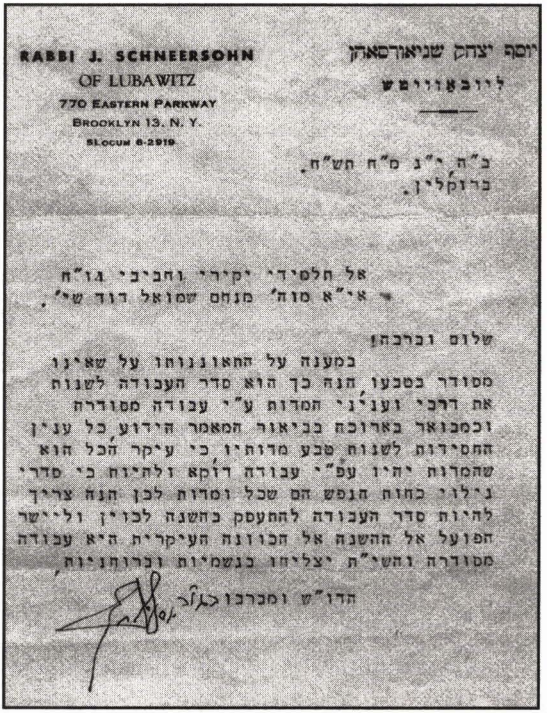
Baruch Hashem
5 Tishrei 5708
Brooklyn

In response to your letter, it is a good idea to look more closely at the details.

With blessings for a *gmar chasimah tovah,*

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ג מ"ח תש"ח.
ברוקלין.

אל חלמידי יקירי וחביבי גו"ח
מ' אי"א מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על התאוננותו על שאינו
מסודר בטבעו, הנה כך הוא סדר העבודה לשנות
את דרכי ועניני המדות ע"י עבודה מסודרת
וכמבואר באריכות בביאור המאמר הידוע כל עניני
התמידות לשנות טבע מדותיו, כי עיקר הכל הוא
שהמדות יהיו עפ"י עבודה דוקא ולהיות כי סדרי
גילוי כחות הנפש הם שכל ומדות לכן הנה צריך
להיות סדר העבודה להתעסק בחשבה לבונן וליישר
תפעל אל ההשגה אל הכוונה העיקרית היא עבודה
מסודרת והשי"ת יצליחו בגשמיות וברוחניות.

הדו"ש ומברכו בזה

Baruch Hashem
13 Cheshvan 5708
Brooklyn

Regarding your complaint that you are naturally a disorganized person: Organization is an essential component of the service [of G-d]. Changing your natural character traits requires an organized regimen of spiritual refinement. As the well-known saying goes, "The entire Chassidus is for the purpose of changing one's character traits." The central goal is that the refined traits should

aid you in the strenuous service of G-d.

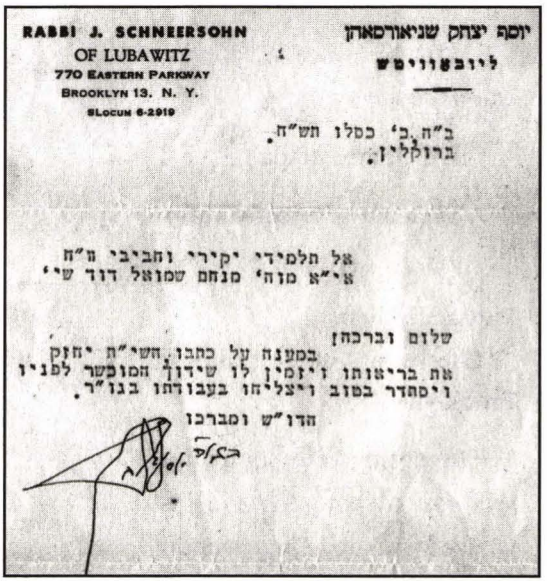
A person's true abilities are revealed through the mind and the character traits. Therefore, you must make an organized effort to work on the mind, which will then direct actual change. This is the reason that the service of G-d must be undertaken in an organized way.

Hashem should give you success, materially and spiritually.

The one who seeks your wellbeing and with material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
2 Kislev 5708
Brooklyn


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ' כסלו תש"ח.
ברוקלין.

אל תלמידי יקירי וחביבי ו"ח
אי"א מזה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, חשי"ת יחזק
את בריאותו ויזכין לו שידוך המוכשר לפניו
ויסתדר בטוב ויצליחו בעבודתו בגו"ר.

הדו"ש ומברכו

In response to what you wrote, Hashem should strengthen your health, provide you with a good shidduch, and all should work out well. He should give you success in your work, materially and spiritually.

The one who seeks your wellbeing, with material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

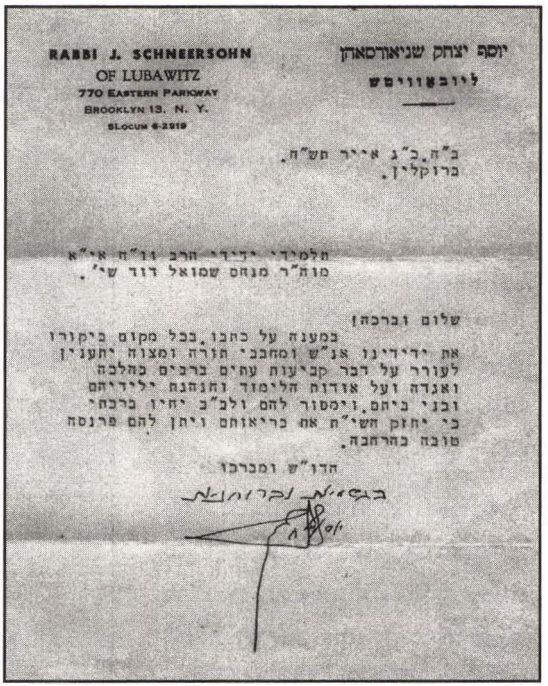
Baruch Hashem
23 Iyar 5708
Brooklyn

In response to your letter, wherever you find *anash* and those who cherish Torah and mitzvahs, you should encourage them to set aside time for commu-

nal study of Jewish law and *agadah*. Urge them as well regarding the education and conduct of their children. Convey to them my blessings that G-d will strengthen their health and give good livelihood in abundance.

The one who seeks your welfare and blesses you, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ג אייר תש"ח.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, בכל מקום ביקורו
את ידידינו אנ"ש ומחבבי תורה ומצות יתענין
לעורר על דבר קביעות עתים ברבים בהלכה
ואגדה ועל אודות הלימוד ותנהגת ילדיהם
ובני ביתם, וימסור להם ולב"ב יחיו ברכתי
כי יחזק השי"ת את בריאותם ויתן להם פרנסה
טובה כהרחבה.

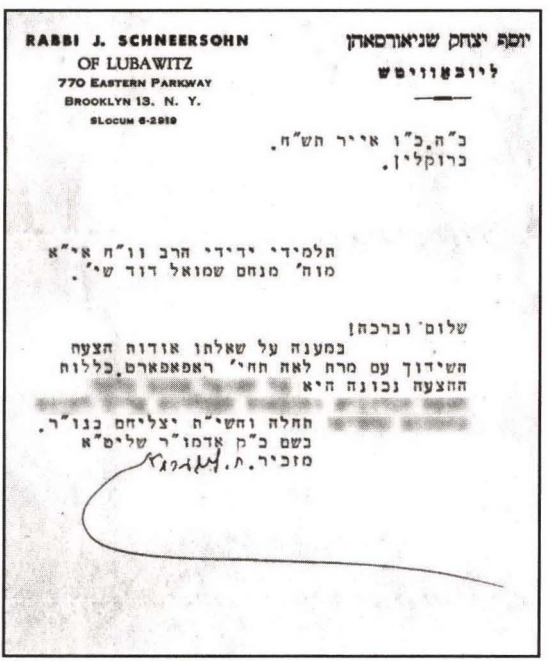
הדו"ש ומברכו

Baruch Hashem
26 Iyar 5708
Brooklyn

Regarding your inquiry about the suggestion for a shidduch with Miss Lea Rapaport, the general idea is good.... Hashem should give both of you success, materially and spiritually.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ו אייר תש"ח.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על שאלתו אודות חצעה
השידוך עם מרת לאה חחי' ראפאפארט, כללות
החצעה נכונה היא [redacted]
תחלה וחשי"ת יצליחם בנו"ר.
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

Baruch Hashem
8 Sivan 5708
Brooklyn

In response to your question, it is good [to become en-

gaged]. It should be with mazel tov in material and spiritual matters.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
16 Sivan 5708
Brooklyn

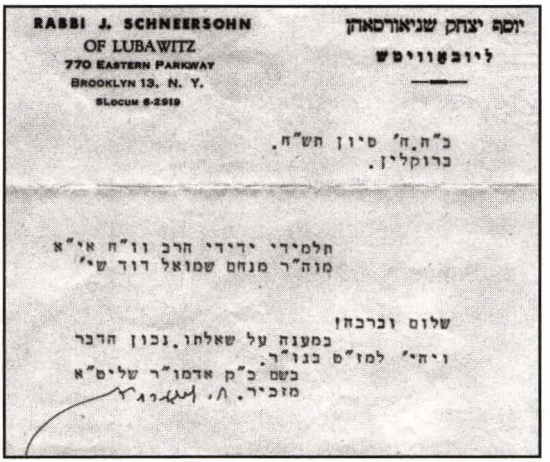
On the day you became engaged to your fiancée, the esteemed Miss Lea, I want to bless you with mazel tov. May G-d make it [the engagement] in good mazel. The wedding should be in a good and auspicious time, and may you settle in good order, materially and spiritually, with success in Torah and service of Hashem.

With material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
25 Tishrei 5709
Brooklyn

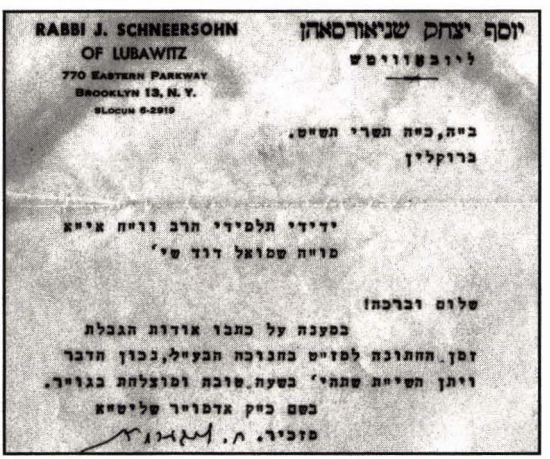
In response to what you wrote about setting the date of the wedding, to mazel tov, on Chanukah, it is a good idea, and Hashem should grant that


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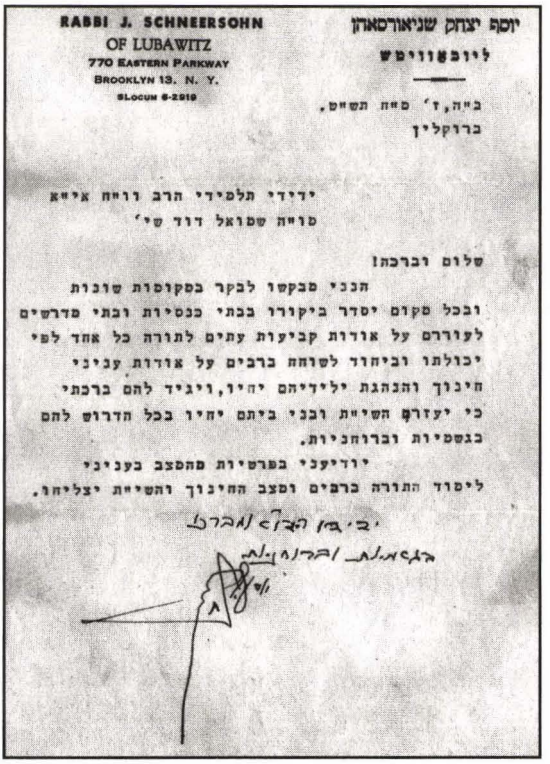
יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ז' מ"ח תשי"ם.
ברוקלין

ידידי תלמידי הרב וויח א"י
מוי"ח שמואל דוד ש"י

שלום וברכה!
הנני מבקשו לבקר בסקוסות שונות
ובכל מקום יסדר ביקורו בבתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשים
לעוררם על אודות קביעות עתים לתורה כל אחד לפי
יכולתו וביחוד לשוחח ברבים על אודות ענייני
חינוך והנהגת ילדיהם יחיו, ויגיד להם ברכתי
כי יעזרם השי"ת ובני ביתם יחיו בכל תדרוש להם
בגשמיות וברוחניות.
יודיעני בפרטיות מהמצב בענייני
ליסוד התורה ברבים ומצב החינוך והשי"ת יצליחו.

it should be materially and spirituality in a good and successful time.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
7 Cheshvan 5709
Brooklyn

I am requesting that you visit various locales, and in each place go to the shuls and study halls, and inspire the people there to set aside time to learn Torah, each according to their ability. You are asked especially to speak publicly about the education and conduct of the children. Convey to them my blessings that G-d will help them in all their necessities, materially and spiritually.

Please let me know in detail the state of community Torah study and education [in these places]. Hashem should give you success.

Your colleague who seeks your welfare, and with material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
15 Cheshvan 5709
Brooklyn

Regarding what you wrote about setting the date of the wedding, to mazel tov, Hashem should grant that it should be materially and spirituality in a good and successful time. You should be successful in your work to inspire [others

to educate] their children properly, and in organizing the institution of regular Torah study.

Your colleague who seeks your welfare and with material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

בית, שיו מיח תשיש.
ברוקלין

ידידי תלמידי הרב וויח אייא
טויח שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

בטענה על כתבו אודות הגבלת זמן
התוכתם לסדיש, יתן השיית שתחי' בשעה טובה
ומוצלחת בגשמיות וברוחניות ויסתדרו בסדר
חיים מאושרים בגשמיות וברוחניות ויעלית
בעבודת התתעוררות בחיכוך השוב וסידור קביעות
עתים לתורה.

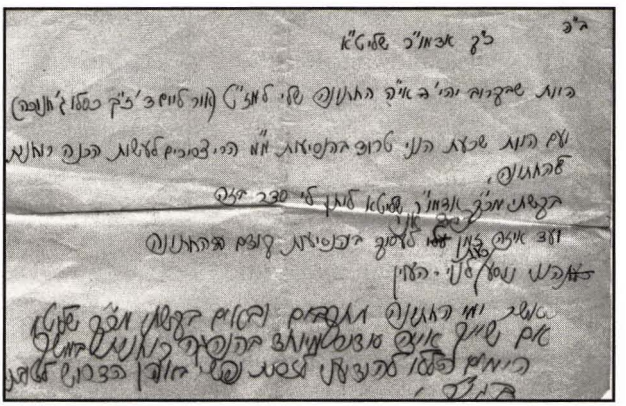
ידידו הדוש וסברכם

This draft was found among Rabbi Raichik's papers.

Baruch Hashem

Rebbe,

My wedding day is approaching, to mazel tov (on the 27th of Kislev, the third day of Chanukah), and currently I am busy with traveling. However, there are spiritual preparations to do before the wedding. Until when should I continue my travels?



See p. 123.

I would also like to ask the Rebbe if there is some kind of regimen in spiritual matters [that I should follow] during these days. Give me merit by telling me the way to benefit materially and spiritually.

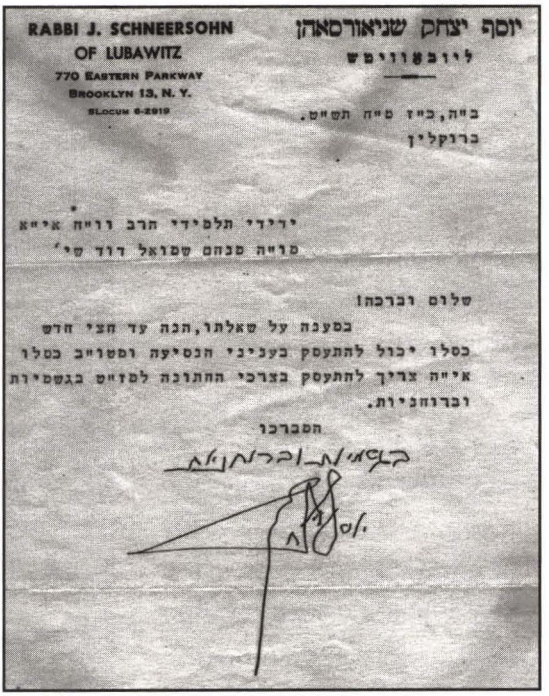
Baruch Hashem
27 Cheshvan 5709
Brooklyn

In response to your question, you should continue traveling and working

until the 15th of Kislev. Then you should do all you need to for the wedding, to a mazel tov, materially and spirituality.

With material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


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ליובאוויטש

בייה, כייז טייה תשייט.
ברוקלין

ידידי תלמידי הרב וויח אייא
מוייה מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

בסענה על שאלתו, תנה עד חצי חדש
כסלו יכול להתעסק בעניני הנסיעה ומשויב כסלו
אייה צריך להתעסק בצרכי החתונה לסזייט בגשמיות
וברוחניות.

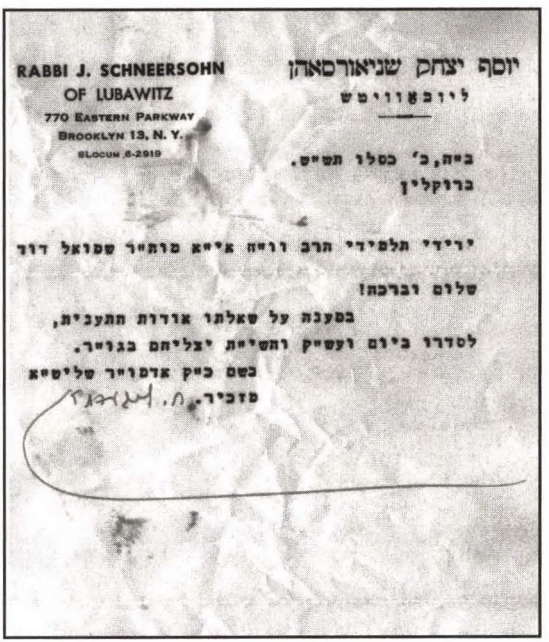
המברכו

Baruch Hashem
20 Kislev 5709
Brooklyn

In response to your question about fasting [on the day of the wedding], you should arrange to fast on Friday [preceding Chanukah]. Hashem should give you success materially and spirituality.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

בייה, כ' כסלו תשייט.
ברוקלין

ידידי תלמידי הרב וויח אייא מותייר שמואל דוד

שלום וברכה!

בסענה על שאלתו אודות התעניית,
לסדרו ביום ועשייק והשייית יצליחם בגוייר.
כשם כייק אדמוייר שליטייא
מזכיר.

Baruch Hashem
26 Kislev 5709
Brooklyn

On the day of your marriage I bless you with mazel tov, mazel tov. May the wedding be in a good and auspicious time. May you settle into a good and fortunate life with an abundance of livelihood and success in your activities.

With material and spiritual blessings,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
3 Teves 5709
Brooklyn

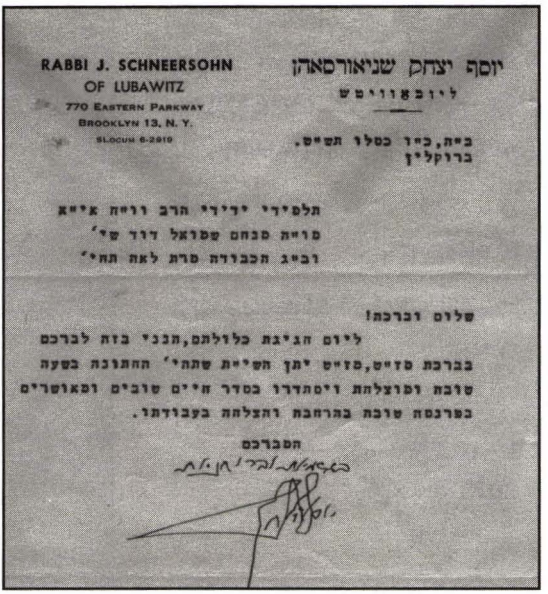
In response to your letter, surely you are going on a trip with your wife, the rebbetzin. It is proper to go for a while to rest in Lakewood [New Jersey]. While you are there, I am certain you will find time for a visit to the yeshivah [Beth Medrash Govoha] and the students who learn there.

In the name of the Rebbe,

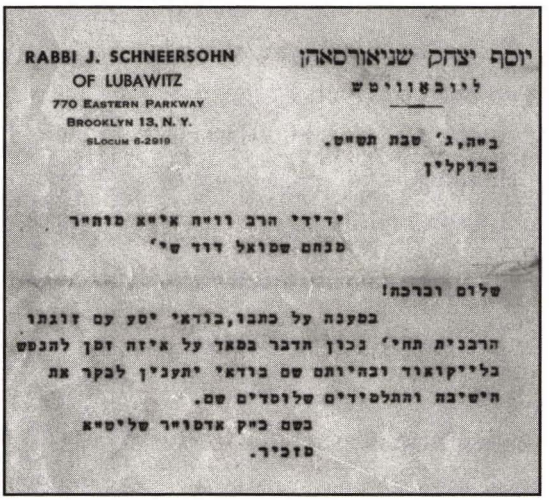
[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
2 Shevat 5709
Brooklyn

In response to my colleague about temporarily traveling close by [within New York], it is a good idea. With Hashem's help, you and your wife, the rebbetzin, should move to Los Angeles. From time to time you should travel to outlying areas of Los Angeles, as is appropriate for your work. May Hashem strengthen your health and give you success in your work to awaken the hearts of our dear fellow *anash* and G-d-fearing Jews, and to help strengthen the ways of Chassidus and the observant Yidden. May Hashem bring upon


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

them an abundance of life and much material and spiritual blessing.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
20 Adar 5709
Brooklyn

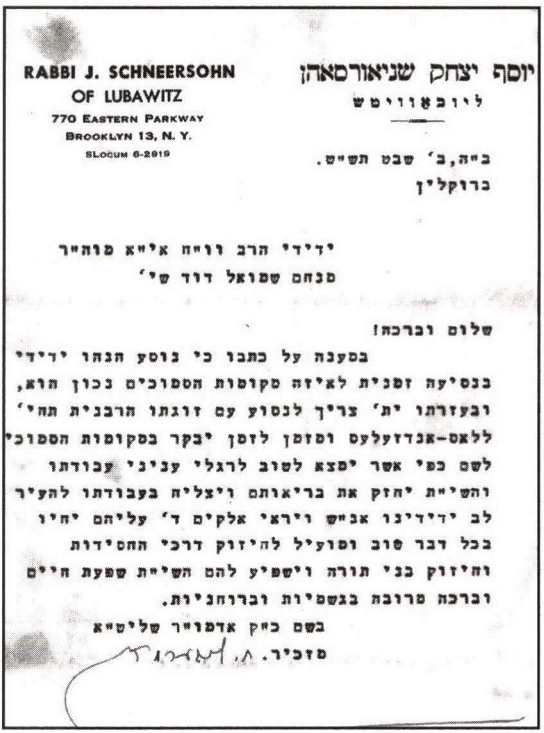
To answer your question about which apartment you should choose, you should select the furnished apartment. If on Shabbos you need to be on the other side of town, you can surely find a place to stay there. You should not make a special *minyan* in your home. You should not become involved in the starting of an Achei Tmimim school. Hashem should give you material and spiritual success.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]

Baruch Hashem
21 Adar 5709
Brooklyn

I received your letter de-



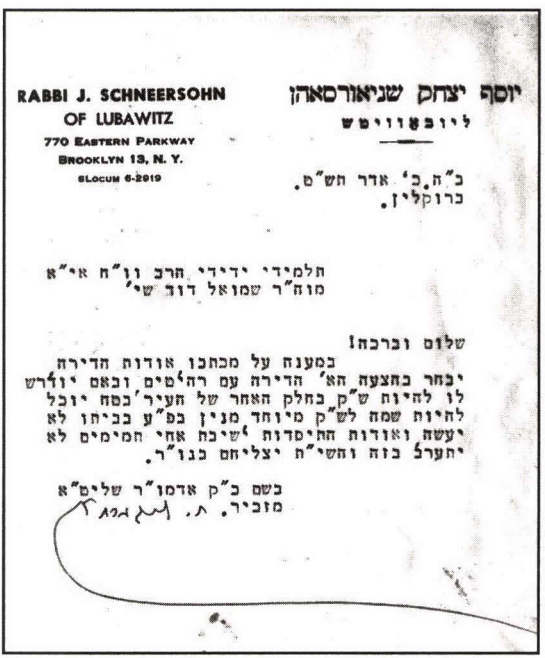
RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ב' שבט תשי"ט.
ברוקלין

ידידי הרב וויה אי"א מוהר"ר
מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!
בסענה על כתבו כי נוסע תנתו ידידי
בנסיעה זמנית לאיזה מקומות המסוכים נכון הוא,
ובעזרתו ית' צריך לנסוע עם זוגתו תרבנית תחי'
ללאס-אנדזעלעס ומזמן לזמן יבקר במקומות המסוכי'
לשם כפי אשר יפצא לשוב לרגלי עניני עבודתו
והשי"ת יחזק את בריאותם ויצליח בעבודתו להעיר
לב ידידינו אנ"ש וירצי אלקים ד' עליהם יחיו
בכל דבר טוב ופועיל להיזוק דרכי התמידות
והיזוק בני תורה וישפיע להם השי"ת שפעת חיים
וברכה מרובה בגשמיות וברוחניות.
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.



RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

כ"ה כ' אדר תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!
במענה על מכתבו אודות הדירה
יבחר בחצעה הא' הדירה עם רח'טים ובאם יורש
לו להיות ש"ק בחלק האחר של העיר כפה יוכל
להיות שמה לש"ק מיוחד מנין בפ"ע בביתו לא
יעשה ואודות החיסדות שיכת אחי תמימים לא
יתערב בזה ותשי"ח יצליחם בגו"ר.

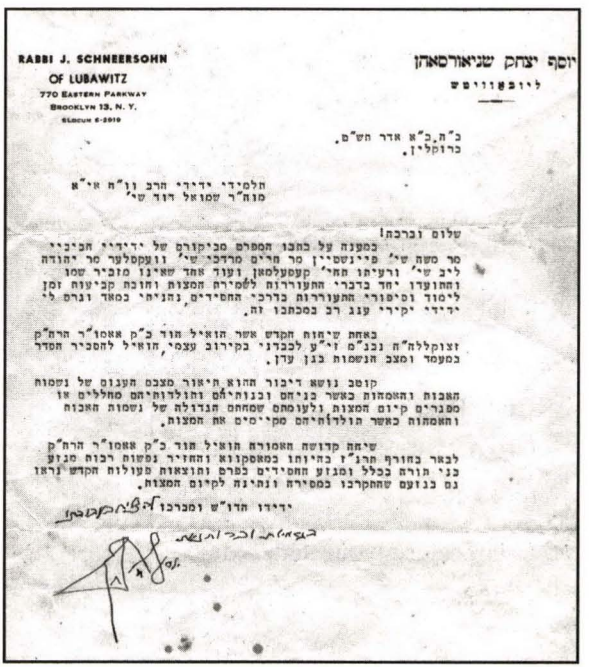
בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.



scribing your visit with my beloved associates Moshe Feinstein, Chaim Morechai Weksler, Mr. and Mrs. Yehudah Leib Kesselman, and another individual whom you do not mention by name. My dear colleague, I had great pleasure, and you caused me great satisfaction, when I read that you *farbrenged* and shared words of inspiration about the observance of mitzvahs and the duty to designate time to study [Torah].

During one of my talks with him, my father, the Rebbe Rashab, once explained the situation of the souls in Gan Eden.

He described the sad situation of the souls of the fathers and mothers whose children have chosen to neglect and desecrate the Torah and mitzvahs, and the great joy of the souls whose children observe and cherish them.


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BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2010

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

כ"ח כ"א אדר תש"ם.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ון"ח אי"ש
מוה"ר שמואל דוד ש'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו המפרט מביקורם של ידידיי הביבי׳ סר משה ש' פיינשטיין סר חיים מרדכי ש' ווינקלער סר יהודה ליב ש' ורעיתו מחי' קעסעלמאן ועוד אחד שאינו מזכיר שמו והחוערן יחד בדברי התעוררות לפשירת המצות וחוכת קביעות זמן ליסוד וכיפורי התעוררות בדרכי החסידים, נהניתי כמאד וגרם לי ידידי יקירי עונג רב בסכתבו זה.

באחת שיחות חקדש אשר הואיל הור כ"ק אאמו"ר הרח"ק זצוקללה"ה נבו"מ זי"ע לכבודי בקירוב עצמי, הואיל להסביר הסדר במעמד ומצב הנשמות בגן עדן.

קושב נושא ריבור הוא ביאור מצבם הענום של נשמות האבות והאמהות באשר בניהם ובנותיהם והולדותיהם מחללים או מסגרים קיום המצות ולעומתם שמחתם הגדולה של נשמות האבות והאמהות באשר הולדותיהם מקיימים את המצות.

שיחת קדושה האמורה הואיל הור כ"ק אאמו"ר הרח"ק לבאר בחורף תרנ"ז בהיותו במאסקווא והחזיר נפשות רבות מבני תורה בכלל ומבני תמימים בפרט והוצאות העולות הקדש נראו גם בנועם שהתקרבו בפסירת ובניגה לקיום המצות.

ידידו הדו"ש ומברכו

This holy talk the Rebbe delivered to me in the winter of 5657 (1896), while we were in Moscow, where he brought back [to Judaism] many of the descendants of observant Jews, and especially chassidim. His work can be seen today in the descendants of those Jews, who are dedicated to the observance of mitzvahs.

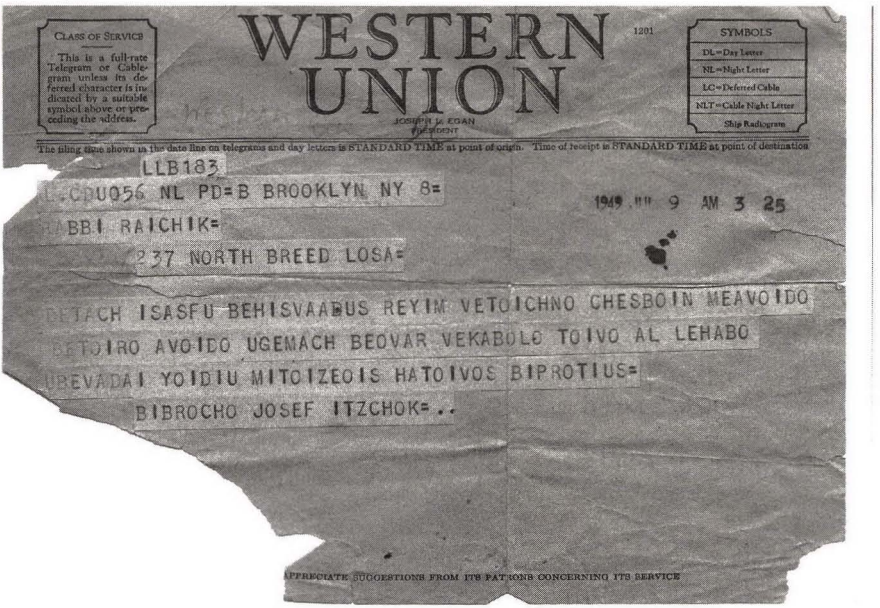
Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses your activities with material and spiritual success.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

WESTERN UNION

March 25, 1949 [24 Adar 5709, the day the Raichiks arrived in Los Angeles, see page 126]

Surely you organized a chassidic gathering where you discussed your activ-


WESTERN UNION

1201

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter

NL=Night Letter

LC=Deferred Cable

NLT=Cable Night Letter

Ship Radiogram

JOSEPH P. EGAN PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

LLB183

L.CDU056 NL PD=B BROOKLYN NY 8=

1949 MAR 9 AM 3 25

RABBI RAICHIK=

237 NORTH BREED LOSA=

DETACH ISASFU BEHISVAABUS REYIM VETOICHNO CHESBOIN MEAVOIDO

BETOIRO AVOIDO UGEMACH BEOVAR VEKABOLO TOIVO AL LEHABO

UREVADAI YOIDIU MITOIZEOIS HATOIVOS BIPROTIUS=

BIBROCHO JOSEF ITZCHOK=..

APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

ities in Torah, *avodah* and good deeds of the past, and the acceptance of good resolutions for the future. Certainly you will report the good outcomes in detail.

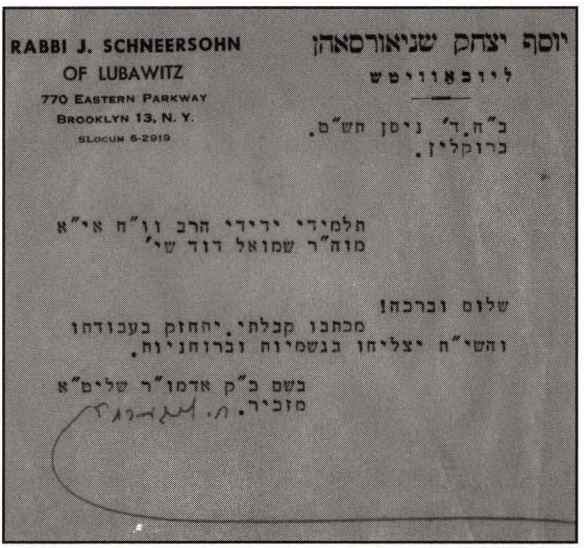
With blessing, Josef Itzchok [The Rebbe Rayatz]

Baruch Hashem
4 Nissan 5709
Brooklyn

I received your letter. You should strengthen your activities. May Hashem give you material and spiritual success.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ד' ניסן תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

מכתבו קבלתי. יחזק בעבודתו
והשי"ח יצליחו בגשמיות וברוחניות.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

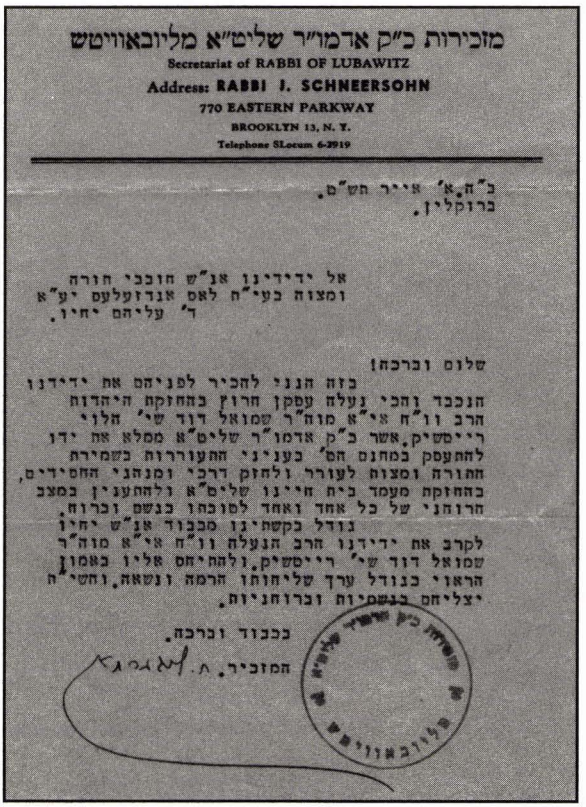
Secretariat of Rabbi of Lubawitz

Baruch Hashem
1 Iyar 5709
Brooklyn

To our friends, *anash*, the lovers of Torah and mitzvahs, in the city of Los Angeles, may you be well.

Greetings and blessings,

With this letter I introduce you to our friend, the honorable and most distinguished activist in the strengthening of Judaism, Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Halevi Raichik. The Rebbe has requested that he become ac-


מזכירות כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א מליובאוויטש
Secretariat of RABBI OF LUBAWITZ
Address: RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
Telephone SLocum 6-2919

ב"ה, אייר תש"ם.
ברוקלין.

אל ידידינו אנ"ש חובבי תורה
ומצוה בעי"ח לאס אנדזשלעס יע"א
ד' עליהם יחיו.

שלום וברכה!

זה הנני להכיר לפניהם את ידידנו
הנכבד והבי נעלה עסקן חרוץ בהחזקת היהדות
הרב וו"ח אי"א מוה"ר שמואל דוד שי' הלוי
ריישיק, אשר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א מסלא את ידו
להתעסק במתנם חס' בעניני התעוררות בשמירת
התורה ומצות לעורר ולחזק דרכי ומנהגי החסידים,
בהחזקת מעמד בית חיינו שליט"א ולהתעניין במצב
הרוחני של כל אחד ואחד לפוכחו בגשם וברוח.

גודל בקשתינו מכבוד אנ"ש יחיו
לקרב את ידידנו הרב הנעלה וו"ח אי"א מוה"ר
שמואל דוד שי' ריישיק, ולהתיחס אליו באמון
הראוי בגודל ערך שליחותו הרמה ונשאה, והשי"ח
יצליחם בגשמיות וברוחניות.

בכבוד וברכה.

המזכיר.

See p. 128.

tive in your community in encouraging the observance of Torah and mitzvahs, to motivate and inspire the ways and customs of chassidim, to strengthen the financial support of Chabad, and to inquire on the spiritual situation of every single person, for the material and spiritual good.

Great is our request that the esteemed Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik become endeared to *anash*, to give him your befitting trust in his important mission. May Hashem give you material and spiritual success.

With esteem and blessing,

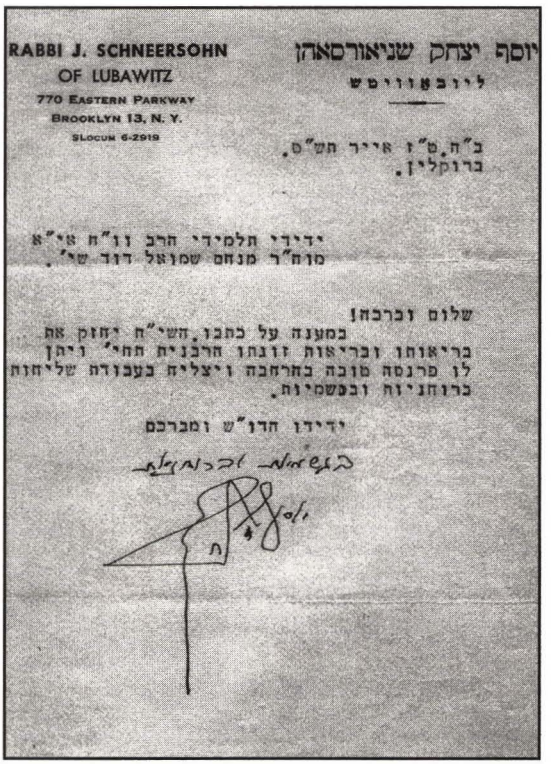
[Signed by the secretary]

Baruch Hashem
16 Iyar 5709
Brooklyn

In response to your letter, Hashem should strengthen your health and that of your wife, the rebbetzin. Hashem should give you good livelihood in abundance. You should be successful in your activities as my shluchim, materially and spiritually.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you materially and spiritually.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה. ט"ז אייר תש"ם.
ברוקלין.

ידידי תלמידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, חשי"ח יחזק את
בריאותו ובריאות זוגתו הרבנית תחי' ויתן
לו פרנסה טובה בהרחבה ויצליח בעבודת שליחות
ברוחניות ובגשמיות.

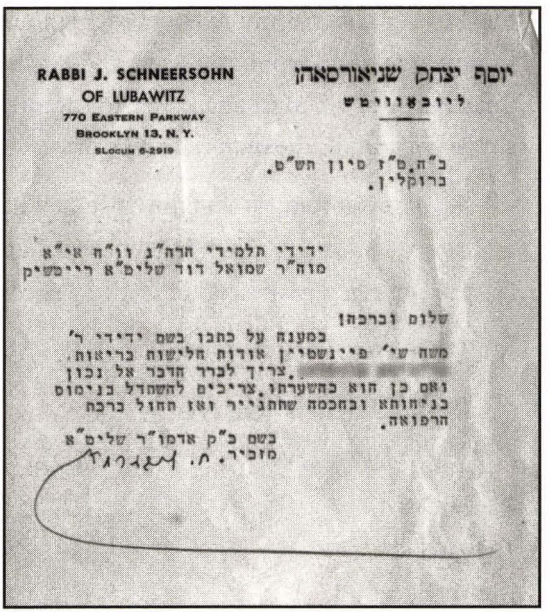
ידידו חדו"ש ומברכם

Baruch Hashem
16 Sivan 5709
Brooklyn

I received your letter requesting a blessing for Mr. Moshe Feinstein regarding the health of ——. Please do some research and find out the truth. If his assumption is true, you should make a – polite, pleasant, and clever – effort to convince her to convert, and then the blessings for health will have an effect.

In the name of the Rebbe,

[Signed by the secretariat]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ז סיון תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

ידידי תלמידי הרה"ג וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר שמואל דוד שלים"א ריישיק

שלום וברכה!

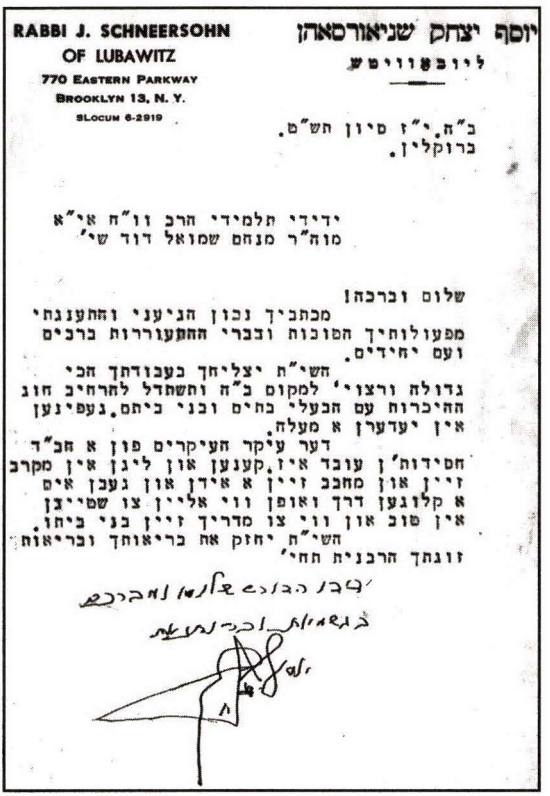
במענה על כתבו בשם ידידי ר'
משה שי' פיינשטיין אודות חלישות בריאות.
צריך לברר הדבר אל נכון,
ואם כן הוא כהשערתו, צריכים להשתדל בנימוס
בניחותא ובחכמה שתגייר זאת תחול ברכת
הרפואה.

בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א
מזכיר.

Baruch Hashem
17 Sivan 5709
Brooklyn

Your letter arrived, and I was pleased with your good activities and inspiring words shared publicly and privately.

Hashem should give you success in your great work. You should expand the numbers of those that you are in touch with and their families, and you should seek virtue in each individual. The central concept


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ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ז סיון תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

ידידי תלמידי הרב וו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

מכתבך נכון הגיעני והתענגתי
מפעולותיך הטובות ובברי התעוררות ברבים
ועם יחידים.

חשי"ח יצליחך בעבודתך הכי
גדולה ורצוי' למקום ב"ה ותשתדל להרחיב חוג
ההיכרות עם הבעלי בתים ובני ביתם, בעפיינען
אין יעדערן א מעלה.

דער עיקר העיקרים פון א חב"ד
חסידות'ן עובד אין, קענען און ליגן אין מקרב
זיין און מחבב זיין א איד אין גענען אים
א קלוגען דרך ואופן ווי אליין צו שפייזן
אין טוב און ווי צו מדריך זיין בני ביתו.

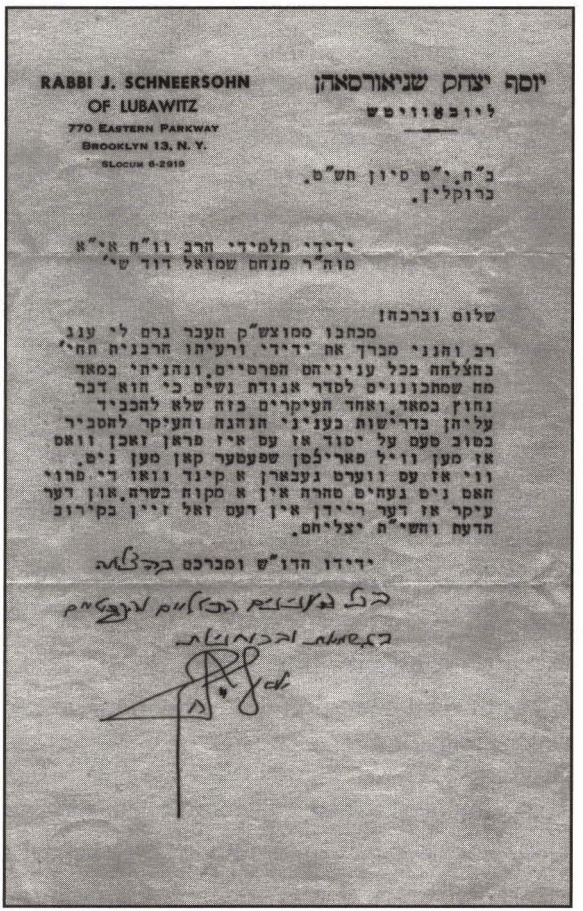
חשי"ח יחזק את בריאותך וברי'אות
זוגתך הרבנית תחי'

for a devoted student of Chabad is to cherish his fellow Jew and bring him closer to Judaism, to give him a wise path and means of his own to increase his diligence in goodness, and to properly guide his family.

Hashem should strengthen your health and that of your wife, the rebbetzin.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you materially and spiritually.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

Baruch Hashem
19 Sivan 5709
Brooklyn

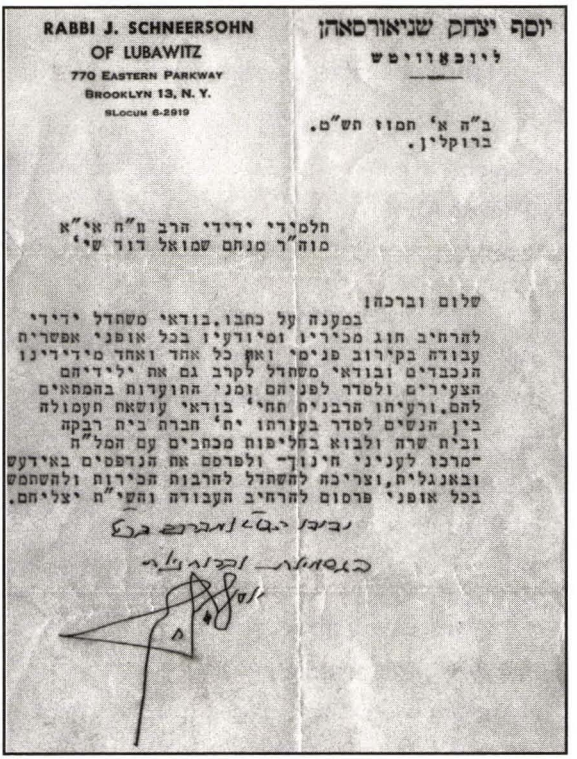
Your letter from last Motzaei Shabbos gave me much satisfaction. I bless my colleague and his wife, the rebbetzin, with success in all of the detailed activities.

I was especially happy that you are organizing a women's group. This is very important. It is not necessary to make it burdensome for the women by making many demands on their daily conduct. Rather, explain to them that there are certain actions that can never be rectified, for example, when a child is born without the mother properly observing the mitzvah of mikvah. Speak to them in a warm and friendly way. Hashem should make you successful.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you materially and spiritually in all of your communal and personal activities.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
1 Tammuz 5709


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה א' חמוז תש"ם.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ח"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, בודאי משתדל ידידי להרחיב חוג מכיריו ומיודעיו בכל אופני אשרירת עבודה בקירוב פנימי ואת כל אחד ואחד מידידינו הנכבדים ובודאי משתדל לקרב גם את ילדיהם הצעירים ולסדר לפניהם זמני התועדות בהמתאים להם, ורעיתו הרבנית תחי' בודאי עושאת תעמולה בין הנשים לסדר בעזרתו יח' חברת בית רבקה ובית שרה ולבוא בחליפות מכתבים עם הסל"ח מרכז לענייני חינוך- ולפרסם את הנדפסים באידעש ובאנגלית, וצריכה להשתדל להרבות תכירות ולהשתמש בכל אופני פרסום להרחיב העבודה והשי"ח יצליחם.

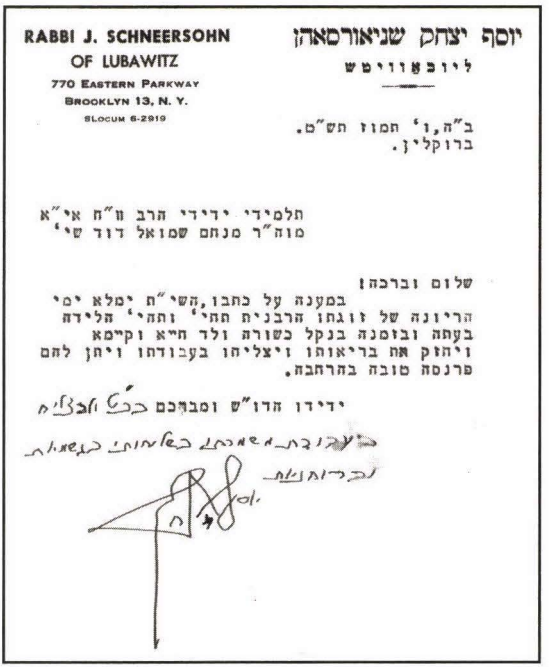
Your wife, the rebbetzin, is surely working with the women in organizing a [women's] group of Beth Rivkah and Beth Sarah. You should be in touch with Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch [the Chabad education department] to distribute what is published in Yiddish and English.

You need to make the effort to expand your reach and utilize every form of publicity to expand your activities. Hashem should give you success.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
6 Tammuz 5709


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ו' תמוז תש"מ.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

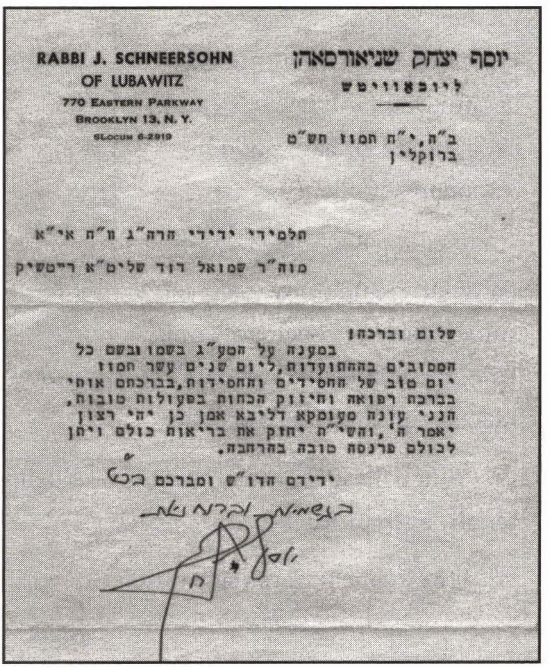
במענה על כתבו, השי"ח ימלא ימי הריונה של זוגתו הרבנית תחי' ותחי' תלידה בעתה ובזמנה בנקל כשורה ולד חייא וקיימא ויחזק את בריאותו ויצליחו בעבודתו ויתן להם פרנסה טובה בהרחבה.

ידידו הדו"ש וסבורכם בכל ובכלל

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, and success in your shlichus, materially and spiritually.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
18 Tammuz 5709


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יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"ח תמוז תש"מ
ברוקלין

תלמידי ידידי הרה"ג ו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר שמואל דוד שליט"א רייטשיק

שלום וברכה!

במענה על המע"ג בשמו ובשם כל המסובים בההתוועדות, ליום שנים עשר תמוז יום טוב של החסידים והחסידות, וברכתם אותי בברכה רפואה וחיזוק הבחוח בסעולות טובות. תנכי קונה סעוסקא דליבא אסן כן יהי רצון יאמר ה', והשי"ח יחזק את בריאות כולם ויתן לכולם פרנסה טובה בהרחבה.

ידידם הדו"ש וסבורכם בכל

I received your telegram in the name of those gathered in honor of 12 Tammuz, the Yom Tov of chassidim and of Chassidus, in which you blessed me with a complete recovery and the increasing of my strength in order to continue all the positive activities. I am responding, from the bottom of my heart, "amen, may it be G-d's will."

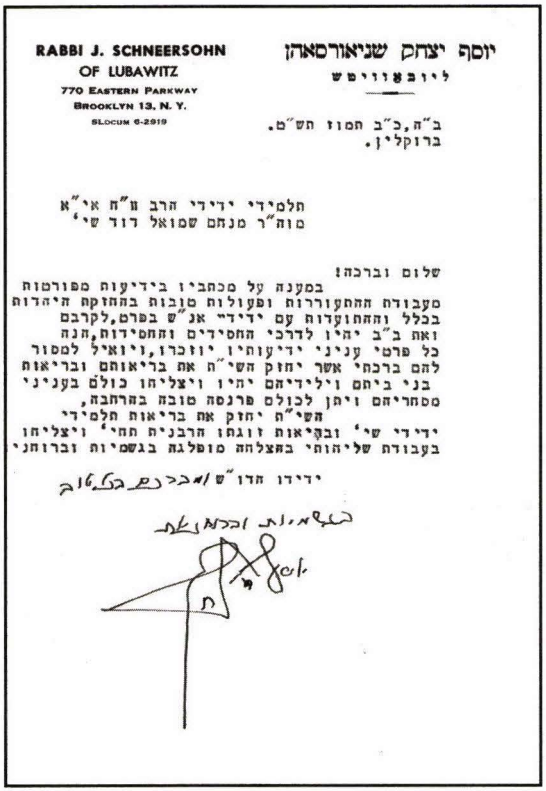
Hashem should strength-

en the health of all, and give all good livelihood in abundance.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually.

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
22 Tammuz 5709


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ב תמוז תש"ט.
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

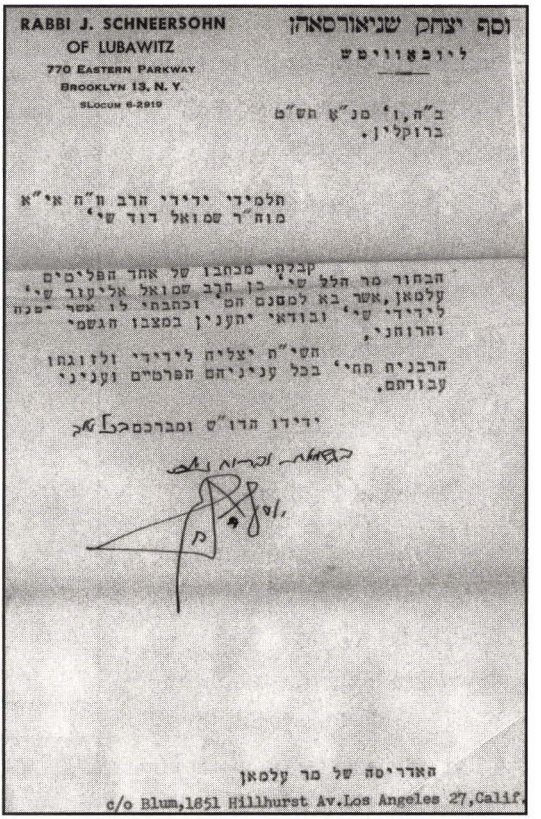
במענה על מכתביו בידיעות מפורטות מעבודת ההתעוררות ופעולות טובות בהחזקת היהדות בכלל והתחזקות עם ידידי אנ"ש בפרט, לקרבם ואת ב"ב יהיו לדרכי החסידים והחסידות, הנה כל פרטי ענייני ידיעותיו יזכרו, ויואיל למסור להם ברכתי אשר יחזק השי"ת את בריאותם ובריאות בני ביתם וילידיהם יהיו ויצליחו כולם בעניני מסחריהם ויתן לכולם פרנסה טובה בהרחבה, השי"ת יחזק את בריאות תלמידי ידידי שי' ובקיאות זוגתו הרבנית תחי' ויצליחו בעבודת שליחותי בהצלחה מופלגה בגשמיות וברוחני

ידידו הדו"ש/ומברכ"פ בהצלחה

Hashem should strengthen your health, my beloved student, and the health of your wife, the rebbetzin, and give you success in the mission I gave you, with great material and spiritual success.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

וסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, ו' מנ"ע תש"ט
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ח"ח אי"א
מוה"ר שמואל דוד שי'

קבלתי מכתבו של אחד הפליטים
החבור מר הלל שי' בן הרב שמואל אליעזר שי'
עלמאן, אשר בא למסנם הם וכתבתי לו אשר ידבר
לידידי שי' ובודאי יתענין במצבו הגשמי
והרוחני.

חשי"ת יצליח לידידי ולזוגתו
הרבניח תחי' בכל ענינים הפרטים ועניני
עבודתם.

ידידו הדו"ש ומברכם כנ"ל

האדריסה של מר עלמאן
c/o Blum, 1851 Hillhurst Av. Los Angeles 27, Calif.

Baruch Hashem
6 Menachem Av 5709
Brooklyn

I received a letter from Mr. Hillel Elman, a refugee who arrived in Los Angeles. I wrote to him that he should be in touch with you. Surely you will take an interest in his material and spiritual wellbeing.

Hashem should give you and your wife, the rebbetzin, success in all of your communal and personal activities.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
The first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul 5709
Brooklyn

In response to your letter of 19 Av, I would be interested to know if you keep a detailed list of all the people you have met and encouraged to strengthen their observance of Yiddishkeit. This should especially include their communal activities. [In addition,] do you, from time to time, keep up with them through letters?

I agree to your proposal about traveling here for the forthcoming Elul and Tishrei.

May G-d aid and bless you and your wife, the rebbetzin, with all of your needs.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all that you need, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
25 Elul 5709
Brooklyn

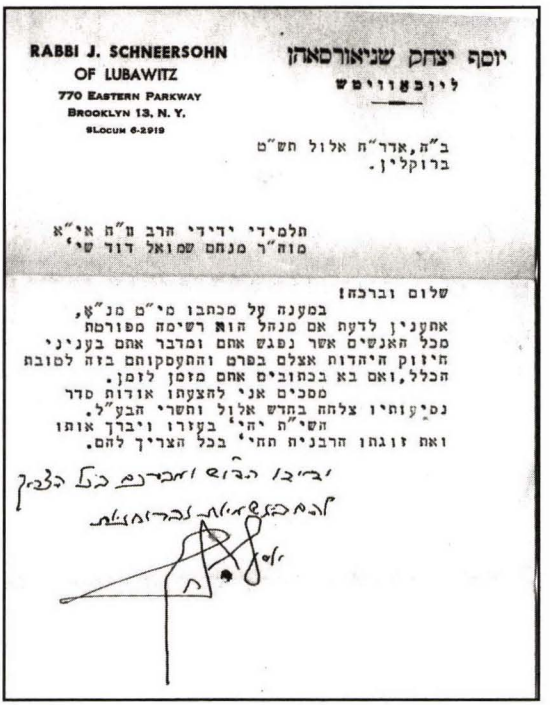
To Rebbetzin Leah,

Hashem should strengthen your health and that of your husband, my dear and treasured student, the rabbi. The blessing that I gave you for all good and success in your activities, and good livelihood in abundance, should be fulfilled.

The one who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]

Baruch Hashem
11 Cheshvan 5710
Brooklyn


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

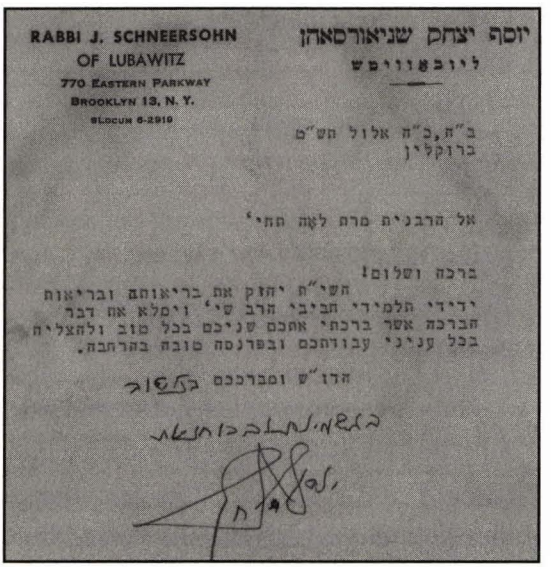
יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, אדר"ח אלול תש"ט
ברוקלין.

תלמידי ידידי הרב ח"ה אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על מכתבו מי"ט מנ"א,
אחענין לדעת אם מנהל הוא רשימה מפורטת
מכל האנשים אשר נפגש אתם ומדבר אתם בעניני
חיזוק היהדות אצלם בפרט והתעסקותם בזה לטובת
הכלל, ואם בא בכתובים אתם מזמן לזמן.
מסכים אני להצעתו אודות סדר
נסיעותיו צלחה בחדש אלול וחשרי הבע"ל.
השי"ת יהי' בעזרו ויברך אותו
ואת זוגתו הרבנית תחי' בכל הצריך להם.


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, כ"ה אלול תש"ט
ברוקלין

אל הרבנית מרת לאה תחי'

ברכה ושלום!

השי"ת יחזק את בריאותם ובריאות
ידידי תלמידי חביבי הרב שי' ויסלא את דבר
הברכה אשר ברכתי אתכם שניכם בכל טוב ולהצלי"ח
בכל עניני עבודתכם ובפרנסה טובה בהרחבה.

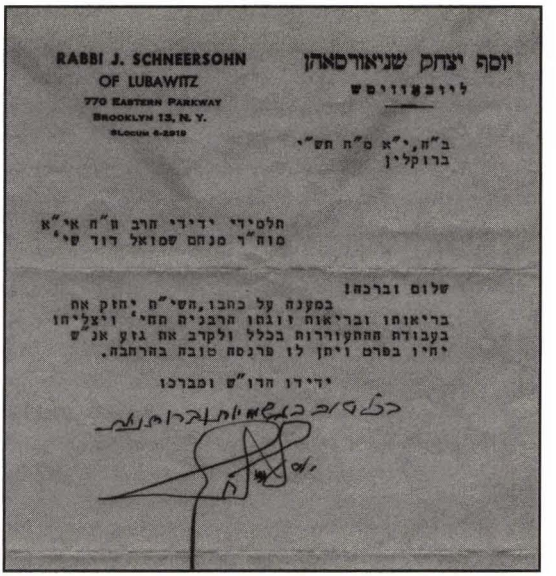
הדו"ש ומברככם בכל

In response to your letter, Hashem should strengthen your health and that of your wife, the rebbetzin. You should be successful in your activities to promulgate Yiddishkeit, and specifically in bringing closer the descendants of *anash*.

Hashem should give you good livelihood in abundance.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you with all good, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

ב"ה, י"א ס"ת תש"י
ברוקלין

תלמידי ידידי הרב ו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו, תשי"ח יחזק את
בריאותו ובריאות זוגתו הרבנית תחי' ויצליחו
בעבודת התעוררות בכלל ולקרב את גוזע אנ"ש
יחיו בסתם ויתן לו פרנסה טובה בהרחבה.

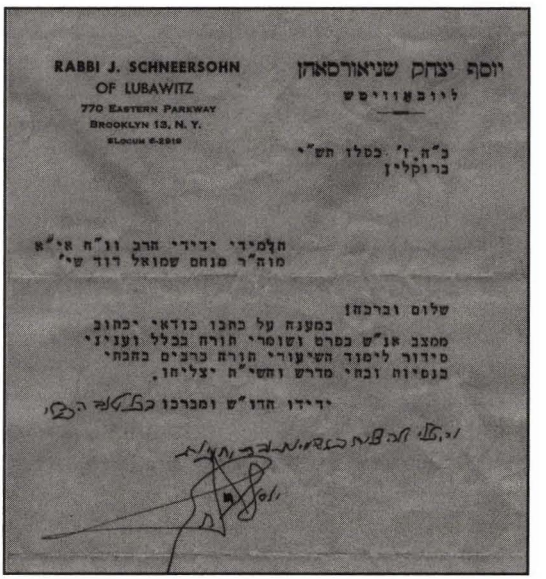
ידידו הרו"ש ומברכו

Baruch Hashem
7 Kislev 5710
Brooklyn

Regarding what you wrote, it is a good idea to write especially about the situation of *anash* and of those who observe Torah. Also write about the communal Torah classes in the shuls and study halls. May Hashem give you success.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses your personal and communal work with all good, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLocum 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

כ"ח, ז' כסלו תש"י
ברוקלין

תלמידי ידידי הרב ו"ח אי"א
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'

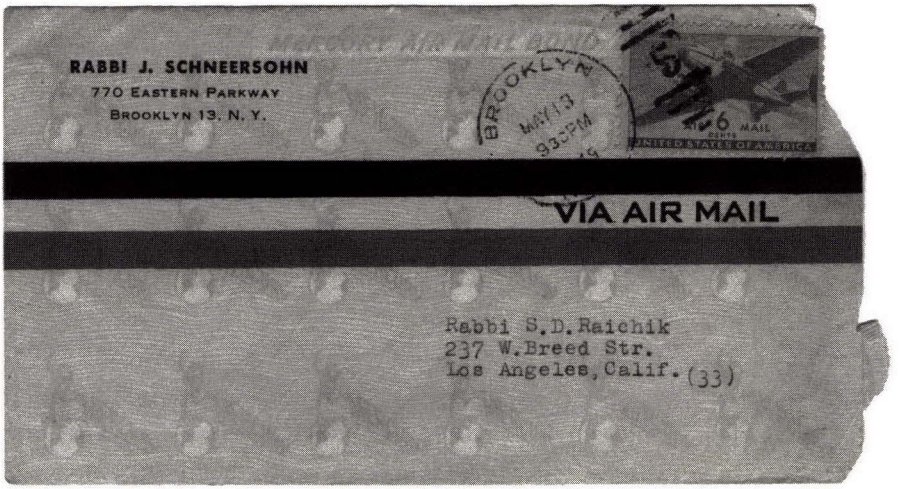
שלום וברכה!

במענה על כתבו כדאי יכתוב
ממצב אנ"ש בסתם ושומרי תורה בכלל ועניני
סידור לימוד השיעורי תורה ברבים בכתבי
בנסיות ובתי מדרש ותשי"ח יצליחו.

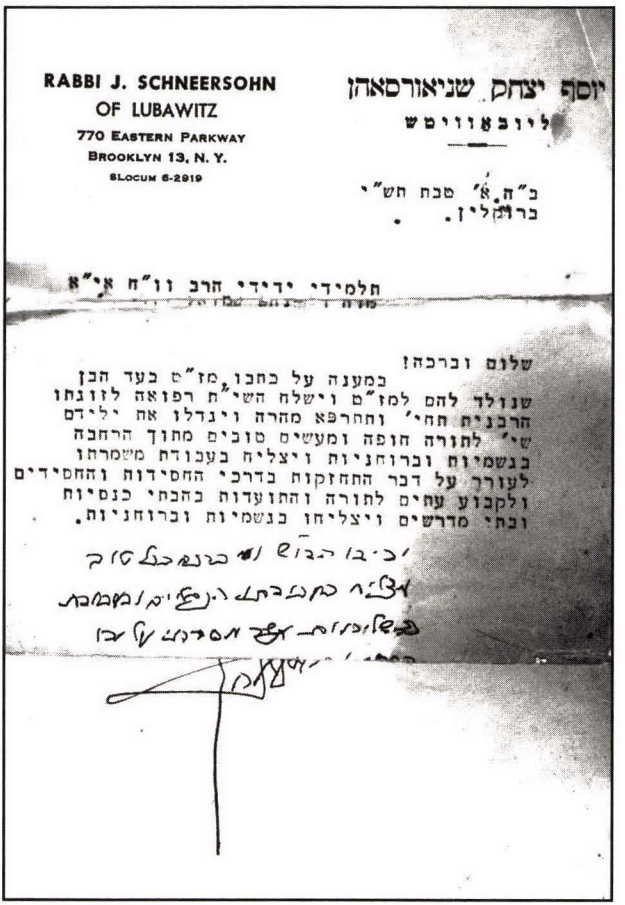
ידידו הרו"ש ומברכו

Baruch Hashem
1 Teves 5710
Brooklyn

Mazel tov on the birth of your son. Hashem should send your wife, the



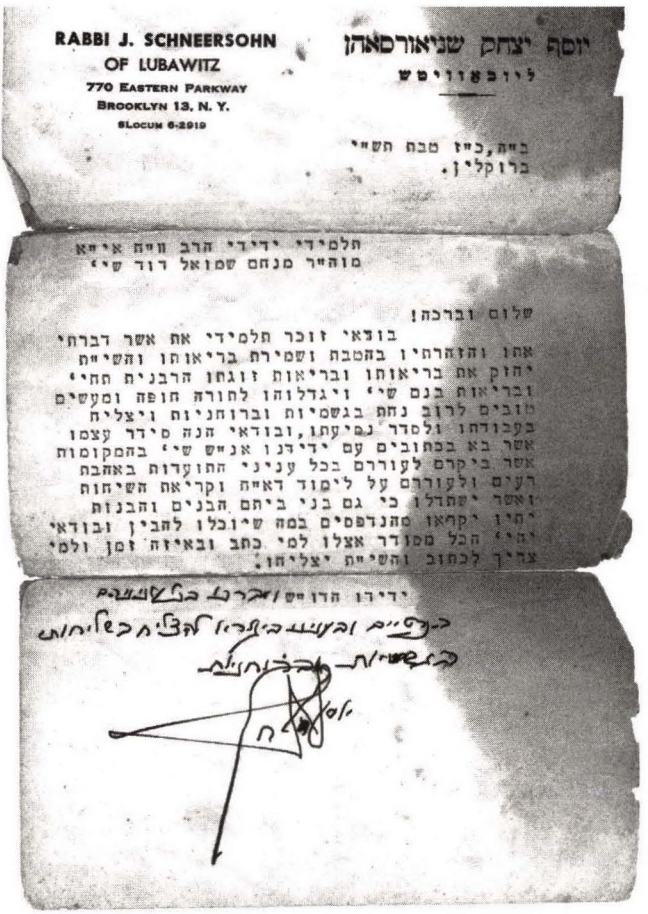
rebbetzin, a complete and speedy recovery. You should raise your children to Torah, marriage, and good deeds, amidst an abundance of all good things, material and spiritual. You should be successful in your undertaking to spread and strengthen the ways of Chassidus and chassidim, and to make set times in the shuls and study halls to learn Torah and *farbreng*. You should be successful materially and spiritually.



Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing

and blesses you with success in your efforts in fundraising and the shlichus that I gave you [...],

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
SLOCUM 6-2919

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

The last letter that Rabbi Raichik received from the Rebbe Rayatz (see p. 144)

Baruch Hashem
27 Teves 5710
Brooklyn

Surely you remember the warning I gave you about maintaining and improving your health. Hashem should strengthen you; your wife, the rebbetzin; and your son. May you raise your son to Torah, marriage, and good deeds, with

much material and spiritual *nachas*.

May you succeed in your work [in Los Angeles] and in your travels. Surely you will remain in contact with everyone you met on your visits, to encourage them to join in brotherly love at chassidic gatherings, and inspire them to study Chassidus and read the talks [of our Rebbes].

They should encourage their children to read printed material such as *Talks and Tales* and other publications [for children] that they can comprehend.

You will surely remain organized about to whom, when, and what you need to write. May G-d make you successful.

Your colleague who seeks your wellbeing and blesses you in all of your personal matters and matters related to your trips to be successful, materially and spiritually,

[The Rebbe Rayatz's signature]



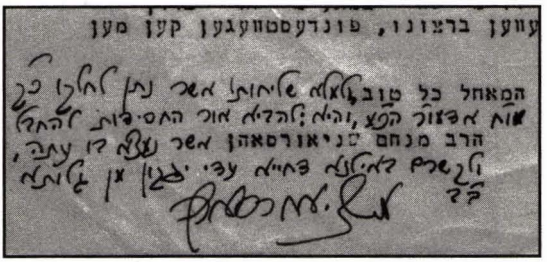
The Rebbe Rayatz on Chanukah 5710 (1949). *Courtesy of Lubavitch Archives*

[APPENDIX II]

Letters from the Rebbe (free translation)

The following three entries are handwritten notes added to pastoral letters, the English translations of which are published in I Will Write It in Their Hearts *(vol. 5, letters 598, 601 and 637).*

Kehot Publication Society

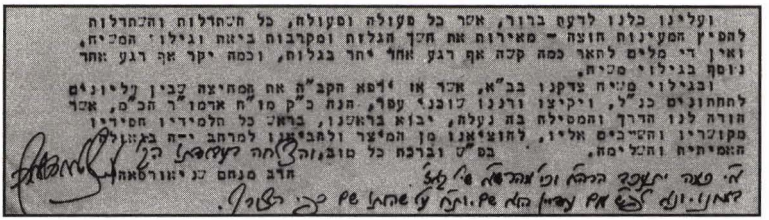


Baruch Hashem
10 Iyar 5710

The latest publication was sent to you separately. Please share it publicly in the appropriate way...

Wishing you the best in fulfilling the mission which my father-in-law, the Rebbe, of righteous memory, has given to you, to bring the light of Chassidus to the area you currently find yourself in, to connect those around you to the Tree of Life, until we are redeemed from this exile, may it be speedily in our days.

[The Rebbe's signature]



Kehot Publication Society

Baruch Hashem
Pesach Sheni 5710

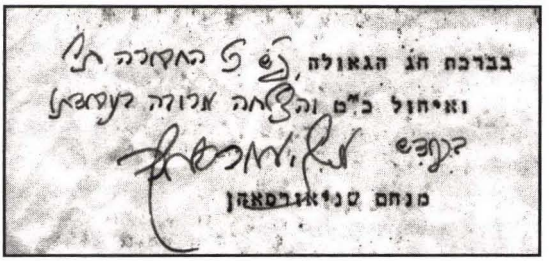
With regards and blessings for all good and success in your sacred activities.

[The Rebbe's signature]

I do not know how long Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky will be in California. If he is still there, please give him my regards. With warm thanks on your remaining there [to assist him] as needed.

Kehot Publication Society

Baruch Hashem
3 Tammuz 5710



Regards to the entire group, with wishes for all good things and much success in your sacred activities.

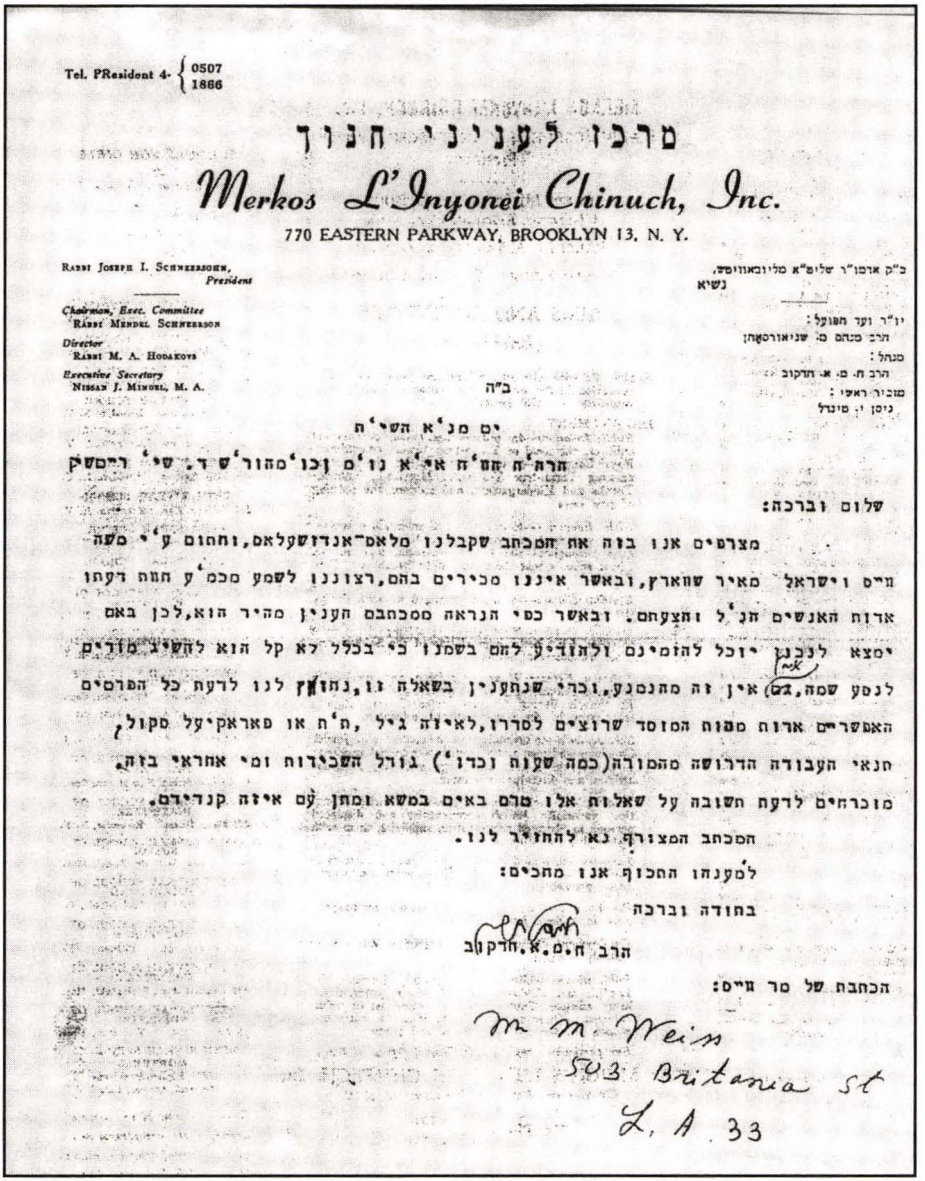
[The Rebbe's signature]

Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch Inc.

19 Av 5710

We are including here the letter that we received from Los Angeles, signed by Moshe Weiss and Yisroel Meir Schwartz. We do not know who they are. We would like to hear your opinion of these two individuals and their suggestion.

As their letter makes clear, this [the establishment of a school] will be an



Tel. PResident 4- { 0507 / 1886

מרכז לענייני חנוך

Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Inc.

770 EASTERN PARKWAY, BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.

RABBI JOSEPH I. SCHNEERSOHN, *President*

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א מליובאוויטש, נשיא

Chairman, Exec. Committee RABBI MENDEL SCHNEERSON

Director RABBI M. A. HODAKOV

Executive Secretary NISSAN J. MINDEL, M. A.

יו"ר ועד הפועל: הרב מנחם מ. שניאורסאהן
מנהל: הרב ח. מ. א. חדקוב
מזכיר ראשי: ניסן י. מינדל

ב"ה

יום מנ'א השי'ה

הרה"ח חמ"ח אי"א נו"ם וכו'מהור"ש ד. שי' ריטשק

שלום וברכה:

מצרפים אנו בזה את תמכתב שקבלנו מלאס־אנדזשעלאס, וחתום ע"י כמה
מיים וישראל מאיר שוארץ, ובאשר איננו מכירים בהם, רצוננו לשמע מכמ'ע חוה דעתו
אדות האנשים הנ'ל וחצעתם. ובאשר כפי הנראה מסמכתם הענין מהיר הוא, לכן באם
ימצא לנכון יוכל להזמינם ולהודיע להם בשמנו כי בכלל לא קל הוא להשיג מורים
לנסע שמה, גם אין זה מתנסנע, וכרי שנתענין בשאלה זו, נחזק לנו לדעת כל הפרטים
האפשריים אדות מהות המוסד שרוצים לסדרו, לאיזה גיל, ת'ח או פראקטיקל סקול,
תנאי העבודה הדרושה מהמורה (כמה שעות וכדו') גודל השכירות ומי אחראי בזה.
מוכרחים לדעת תשובה על שאלות אלו טרם באים במשא ומתן עם איזה קנדידם.

המכתב המצורף נא להחזיר לנו.

למענהו החכוף אנו מחכים:

בחודה וברכה

הרב ח.מ.א.חדקוב

הכתבת של מר מיים:

m m. Weiss
503 Britania St
L. A 33

expensive undertaking. Therefore, if you feel it is a good idea, invite them to a meeting and tell them in our name that it is not easy to find teachers to travel to Los Angeles. However, it is not impossible, and in order to explore the possibility we need all the details about the institution that they want to establish. What grades will the school include? Is it a Hebrew school or a day school? What are the conditions for the teachers (the hours, etc.)? What is the salary, and who will

be in charge of paying it?

We need the answers to these questions before we can negotiate with eligible candidates [see pages 148-150].

Please return the attached letter.

We await your timely response.

With thanks and blessings,

[Signed by Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov, the Rebbe's secretary]

Baruch Hashem
24 Av 5710

Greetings and blessings,

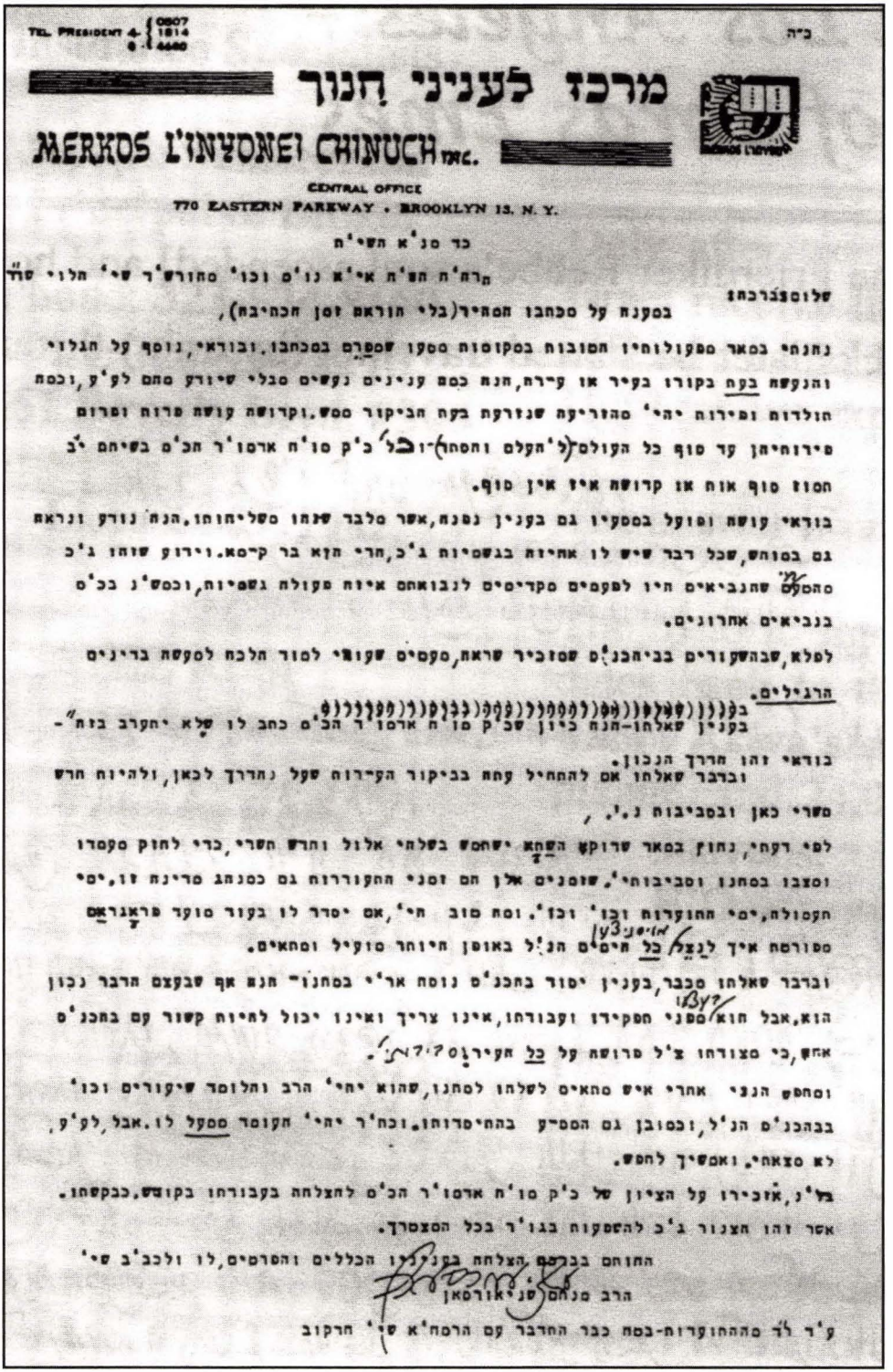
In response to your (undated) express letter:

I had great satisfaction from your detailed description of your good activities during your travels. In addition to the results that you clearly see *during* your visits in a city or town, more changes take place without your immediately being aware of them. Later fruit comes as a result of your "sowing" during your actual visit. For holiness produces fruit, and fruit from that fruit, until eternity (the Hebrew word [*olam*] shares the same letters as the word *hidden* [i.e. we may not see it, because G-dliness in our world is hidden]). As the Rebbe [Rayatz] stated, "Holiness is infinite."

Surely during your travels you are raising funds. In addition to the fact that this is your mission, it is known, and can be actually seen, that when [a spiritual arousal] is connected to a physical action, it has a lasting impact. As is known, this is one of the reasons the prophets would at times perform a particular physical activity before delivering their prophecies, as explained in many places in the works of the later prophets.

I was surprised that among the Torah classes in the shuls that you mention, there are few that study the halachah of everyday conduct.

In answer to your question, since the Rebbe [Rayatz] wrote to you "Do not become involved with this," certainly that is still the correct way to follow.



TEL. PRESIDENT 4-{0907 1814 6480

ב"ה

מרכז לעניני חנוך

MERKOS L'INYONEI CHINUCH INC.

CENTRAL OFFICE
770 EASTERN PARKWAY · BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.

כד סנ"א תשי"ח

ברח"ח תש"ח אי"א נו"נ וכו' מהורש"ר שי' חלוי שו"ב

שלומ"ג ברכה!

בסענה על מכתבו מהאיר(בלי תוראת זמן מכתיבת),

נתנתי במאר מעולותיו המובות בקומות מסעו מסעים במכתבו.ובוראי,נוסף על חגלוי והנעשה בעה בקורו בעיר או עירת,חנה כמה ענינים נעשים סבלי שיורע מהם לע"ע,וכמה חולדות ומירות יהי' מהזריעה שנזרעה בעה חביקור מש.וקרושה עושה פרות ופרום פירותיהן עד סוף כל העולם(ל'תעלם ותמחו)-ובל כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ בשיהם ל"ב חמוז סוף אות אז קרושה איז אין סוף.

בוראי עושה ופועל במסעיו גם בענין נפנה,אשר מלבר שאתו משליחותו.הנה נזרע ונראה גם בפוהש,שכל רבר שיש לו אחיזה בגשמיות ג"כ,חרי חזא בר קמא.וירוע שזהו ג"כ מהמעם שהנביאים היו למעמים מקריבים לנבואתם איזה מעולה גשמיות,וכמש"נ בכ"מ בנביאים אחרונים.

למלא,שבהשעורים בביהכנ"ם משכיר שראת,מעמים שעות"י למור הלכה למעשה ברינים הרגילים.

בענין שאלתו-הנה כיון שכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ כתב לו שלא יתערב בזה"- בוראי זהו חרך הנכון.

ובדבר שאלתו אם להתחיל עתה בביקור העירות שעל נתרך לכאן,ולהיות חרש משרי כאן ובסביבות נ.י.,

לפי רעתי,נחוץ במאר שרוקא השתא ישתמש בשלחי אלול וחרש חשרי,כרי לחזק מעמדו וסצבו בסחנו וסביבותי'.שזסנים אלו הם זסני התעוררות גם כסנהג פרינת זו,יסי תעסולה,יסי התעוררות וכו' וכו'.וסח טוב חי',אם יסרר לו בעזר מוסד פראגראם מסורסח איך לנצל כל חיסים הנ"ל באופן חיותר סועיל ומחאים.

ובדבר שאלתו מכבר,בענין יסוד בחכנ"ם נוסח אר"י במחנו- חנא אף שבעצם הדבר נכון הוא,אבל חוא/מפני חמקידו ועבודתו,אינו צריך ואינו יכול להיות קשור עם בחכנ"ם אחא,כי מצודתו צ"ל פרושה על כל תעירות.

ומחמת הנני אחרי איש מחאים לשלחו למחנו,שהוא יחי' הרב והלומד שיעורים וכו' בבחכנ"ם הנ"ל,וכמובן גם המסיע בהחיסרותו.וכח"ר יחי' חמומר מסעל לו.אבל לע"ע, לא מצאתי.ואמשיך לחמש.

בל"נ,אזכירנו על הציון של כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ להצלחה בעבודתו בקודש,כבקשתו. אשר זהו חצנור ג"כ להמשכות בגו"ר בכל המצטרך.

החותם בברכת הצלחה בענינו הכללים והפרטים,לו ולכב' שי'

הרב מנחם שניאורסון

ע"ר לד' מהחתעודות-במח כבר החדבר עם הרמח"א שי' חרקוב

Regarding your question about whether to begin visiting the cities that are on the way [to New York], and to be in New York and its vicinity for the month of Tishrei, according to my understanding it is very necessary, especially this year, that you use this Elul and Tishrei to strengthen your position and standing in your community and in its surroundings, for this is a time of spiritual inspiration. As per the customs of the United States, it is a time to gather, promote [the Yom Tov], etc. It would be desirable for you to arrange a detailed program for yourself so that you can use all these days in the most effective manner.

With regard to your prior question about founding a Nusach Ari shul in your community, in essence it is proper, but not for you personally, since your position and job cannot be connected to only one shul, because your net must be spread out over the entire city and its surroundings.

Thus I am searching for an appropriate person, who will work under your auspices, to be sent to Los Angeles to be a rabbi, to give classes in that [Chabad] shul. This person will also assist with the shul's establishment. As of now I have not found the right person. I will continue to search.

I will, G-d willing, at your request, mention you at the gravesite of the Rebbe [Rayatz] for success in your sacred work. Your activities are the medium for blessings for all your material and spiritual needs.

With blessings, for you and your family, for success in your communal and personal matters,

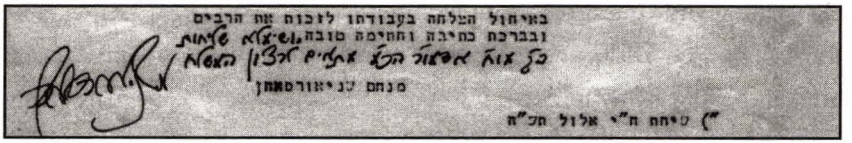
[The Rebbe's signature]

In regards to the summary of [my] talk, certainly you already spoke to Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov.

The following two entries are handwritten notes added to pastoral letters, the English translations of which are published in I Will Write It in Their Hearts *(vol. 6, letters 729 and 769).*

Kehot Publication Society
Baruch Hashem
13 Elul 5710

With wishes for success in your activities for the benefit of the community.



With blessings to be written and signed for a good [New Year]. You should fulfill your mission from the Rebbe Rayatz, as is befitting the will of the one who sent you.

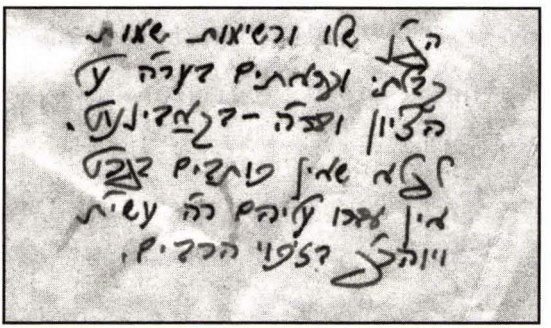
[The Rebbe's signature]

Machne Israel, Inc.

Baruch Hashem
Erev Shabbos Teshuvah 5711

Your petition and the list of names I received. I read them on the eve of Rosh Hashanah at the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz and on Rosh Hashanah in the Rebbe Rayatz's office. It is surprising that you have not written of your communal activities for Rosh Hashanah, Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, and Yom Kippur.

[The Rebbe's signature]

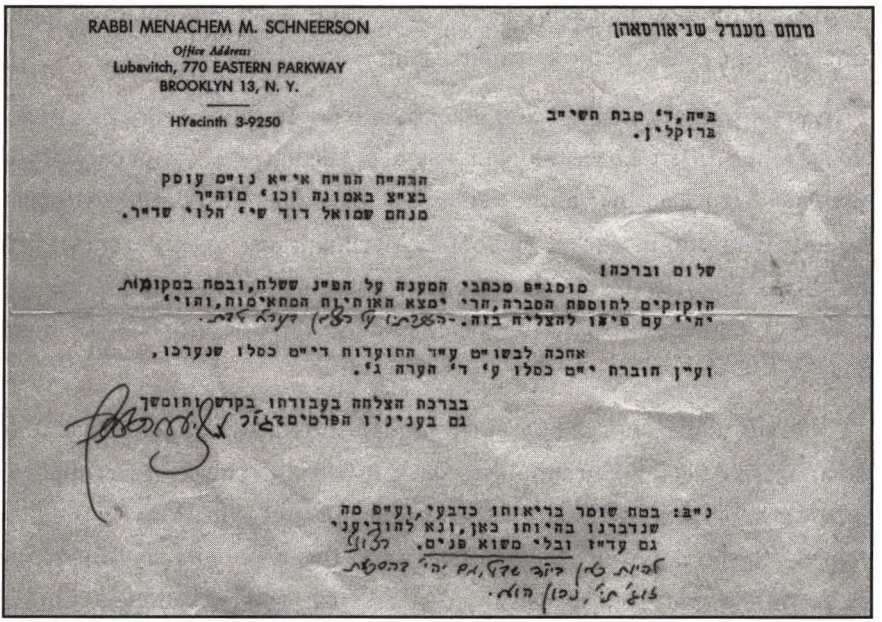


Baruch Hashem
4 Teves 5712

Included here is the response to your petition [on behalf of others]. Surely for those who need additional explanation, you will find the correct words. Hashem should give you the eloquence necessary to succeed. I mentioned you at the Rebbe Rayatz's gravesite on the eve of Rosh Chodesh Teves.

I await your good news from the farbrengen on 19 Kislev. See the new booklet for 19 Kislev, p. 4, footnote 3.

With blessings for success in your sacred activities, and may they [bring the fulfillment] of your material and spiritual needs.


RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
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HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ב"ה, ד' מבת תשי"ב
ברוקלין.

הבה"ח הנ"ח אי"א נוים עוסק
בצי"צ באמונה וכו' מוהר"
מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שריר.

שלום וברכה!

מוסגים מכתבי הסענה על הש"נ ששלח, ובמח בסקומות
הזוקוים לחוספת הסברה, תרי ימצא האותי"ת המחאימות, וזוי"
יתי' עם פי"ו להצליח בזה. -הסברה על כל הענין

אחכה לבשו"ם ע"ד החועדות די"ם כסלו שנערכו,
וע"ן חוברת י"ם כסלו ע"י ד' העדה ג'.

בברכת הצלחה בעבודתו בקדושתומשך
גם בעניניו הפרטיים כו"ל

נ"ב: במח שופר בריאותו כדבעי, ועיים מה
שנדברנו בהיותו כאן, ונא להודיעני
גם עדיין ובלי משוא פנים. רצוני

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S.: According to what we discussed when you were here, surely you are maintaining your health appropriately. Please let me know about this, *without concealing any of the details*. Regarding your suggestion to be here for the tenth of Shevat, if you have your wife's consent, it is a good idea.

This letter was in Rabbi Raichik's pocket for many years and was mostly illegible. It was the anchor to Rabbi Raichik's shlichus for over 45 years. This translation is based on the carbon copy, which was published in the Rebbe's volumes of correspondence. See copy of the letter on page 5.

Baruch Hashem
27 Teves 5712

With delight I received your letter from the 14th of Teves describing how you delivered discourses of Chassidus and conducted farbrengens during these days. My warm thanks for the above good news, for if in the past they were hungry and thirsty to receive good news – there is no good besides Torah and mitzvahs – surely in our times [such news is welcome], especially from places that are far

away (i.e., spiritually far, for physical distance is not at all relevant, even though at times it is the cause for the spiritual distance).

To my dismay, however, I find that you are not fulfilling every part of your shlichus to the fullest. I have told you several times that one of your central goals is to be an effective teacher, as the Rebbe [Rayatz] defined it: "An effective teacher is not one who simply teaches the material well, but who gives the students the capability to learn on their own. The effective teacher has success not only with the diligent student, but also with a lazy student who does not have such great talent."

All of the above applies to you. Your goal is to make frum and chassidishe Yidden in Los Angeles. You should not be satisfied with simply reviewing Chassidus in a way that they can comprehend and collecting donations for the "institutions." You should inspire them in such a way that they will come and request the above from you. Your focus should be on creating a chassidic environment in Los Angeles.

For there to be a chassidic atmosphere, it is imperative that several more *anash* should settle in the area. Therefore I asked you several times to make inquiries and determine how they could secure a livelihood there. I asked you to give me details about any positions that became available. Unfortunately, nothing was done in this area.

Not only that, but I have my suspicions that you look at residing in Los Angeles as one exiled to a foreign land, and you are waiting every day for the "awaited heralding" to arrive, when you will be freed from your duties and be able, in a good and successful time, to return to Brooklyn or Williamsburg. It is understood the impossibility that such thoughts will not disturb you and cause a shortcoming in the proper performance of your mission.

This is all in addition to the fact that this attitude is not the way of [what Chassidus describes as] a *penimi*. As the Rebbe Rashab writes (*Toras Shalom*, p. 41):

> *They sing begrudgingly... and they mean another thing entirely; they would like to already leave... Although they are active, they would rather already be done...*
>
> *In truth, however, a place where you are, you need to be. Afterwards, when*

you are in a second place [you need to be there]; however, while you are doing this [particular] activity, you need to be [fully present] there.

This is a sign that something is being done earnestly.

See there for a more detailed description.

Again, this applies to you. Your mission in [Los Angeles] is your central work, as our sages say, "to remove the precious gems from the muck."

Based on the above, wherever you find yourself, there you must be [fully]. If you felt this way, you would invest the effort to bring more *anash* there so that you would not be lonely. As it is, you would like the exact opposite: for if you are lonely there, perhaps eventually they will have mercy and redeem you from your Los Angeles exile.

This is also my response to your question regarding your wife's desire to come and visit her mother in New York when you are here for the 10th of Shevat.... Therefore you know my answer to your question [about coming to New York]...

With blessings for success in all of your communal and personal activities,

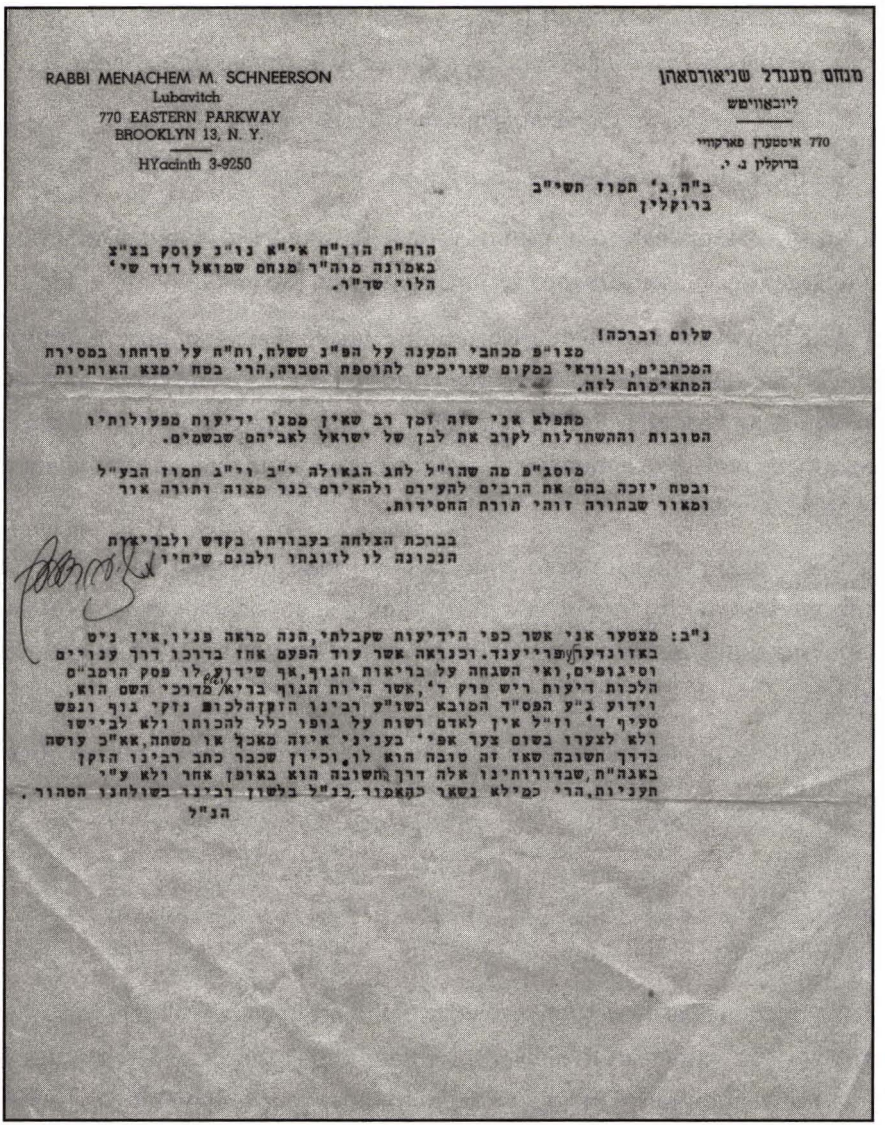
[The Rebbe's signature]

Baruch Hashem
3 Tammuz 5712

Included here is the response to your petition [on behalf of others]. A warm thank you for your effort to deliver the letters. Surely for those who need additional explanation [on the response I sent to those who sent petitions], you will find the correct words.

It is surprising that for a long time you have not sent reports about your activities and your good efforts to bring Jews closer to their Father in heaven.

I have enclosed here what was published for the 12th–13th of Tammuz. Surely you will share them with the public, to awaken and enlighten them with the candle of mitzvahs and Torah, and the luminary of the Torah, which refers to Chassidus.



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ברוקלין נ. י.

ב"ה, ג' תמוז תשי"ב
ברוקלין

הרה"ת הור"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ
באמונה פוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'
הלוי שד"ר.

שלום וברכה!

מצו"פ מכתבי המענה על הפ"נ ששלח, וח"ח על טרחתו במסירת
המכתבים, ובוראי במקום שצריכים לתוספת הסברה, הרי בטח ימצא האותיות
המתאימות לזה.

מתפלא אני שזה זמן רב שאין ממנו ידיעות מפעולותיו
הטובות וההשתדלות לקרב את לבן של ישראל לאביהם שבשמים.

מוסג"פ מה שהו"ל לחג הגאולה י"ב וי"ג תמוז הבע"ל
ובטח יזכה בהם את הרבים להעירם ולהאירם בנר מצוה ותורה אור
ומאור שבתורה זוהי תורת החסידות.

בברכת הצלחה בעבודתו בקדש ולבריאות
הנכונה לו לזוגתו ולבנם שיחיו

נ"ב: מצטער אני אשר כפי הידיעות שקבלתי, הנה מראה פניו, איז ניט
באזונדערשפרייענד. וכנראה אשר עוד הפעם אחז בדרכו דרך ענויים
וסיגופים, ואי השגחה על בריאות הגוף, אף שידוע לו פסק הרמב"ם
הלכות דיעות ריש פרק ד', אשר היות הגוף בריא מדרכי השם הוא,
וידוע ב"ע הפס"ד המובא בשו"ע רבינו הזקן הלכות נזקי גוף ונפש
סעיף ד' וז"ל אין לאדם רשות על גופו כלל להכותו ולא לביישו
ולא לצערו בשום צער אפי' בעניני איזה מאכל או משתה, אא"כ עושה
בדרך תשובה שאז זה טובה הוא לו, וכיון שכבר כתב רבינו הזקן
באגה"ת, שבדורותינו אלה דרך התשובה הוא באופן אחר ולא ע"י
תעניות, הרי כמילא נשאר כנאמור, כנ"ל בלשון רבינו בשולחנו הטהור.

הנ"ל

With blessings for success in your sacred work and for good health for you, your wife, and children,

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S.: I am pained by the information I have received, that your appearance is unhealthy. It seems that you are again following the path of afflicting yourself and neglecting your health, even though you know the ruling of the Rambam (*Hilchos Deos*, ch. 4) that "the body should be healthy and complete as is the way

of G-d." Also well known is the ruling cited in the Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe ([*Hilchos Nizkei Guf V'Nefesh*] par. 4), regarding the laws of harming the body and soul: "A man is not the governor over his body to hit it, shame it, pain it in any way – even concerning food and drink. Only if the person is doing this for repentance can it be a good thing."

The Alter Rebbe wrote in *Iggeres HaTeshuvah* that in our generations teshuvah is done in other ways, not through fasting. Therefore, the matter is left as the Alter Rebbe wrote in his Shulchan Aruch [that it is not allowed].

The above signee

Baruch Hashem
24 Tammuz 5712

I am confirming the receipt of your letter of the 20th of Tammuz. Finally you report on your good activities, although it is very short. It should be G-d's will that this is just the beginning.

You write that you met an engineer who became frum, and you included a letter in English that you asked me to respond to.

In addition, you mention the former student of the Lubavitch Yeshivah [in Otwock, Poland].... It has already reached the time to influence him to become more observant, and not just in the central observances of Yiddishkeit. It is important that he remember that a former Lubavitch student is one who brings light to others. Surely, since you know him, you will find the correct words to motivate him. It is also known what the Rebbe wrote (if I am not mistaken, it is in *Hayom Yom*), "Even though baking bread is important, if you could be a diamond merchant and instead you become a baker of bread, it is not the befitting path."

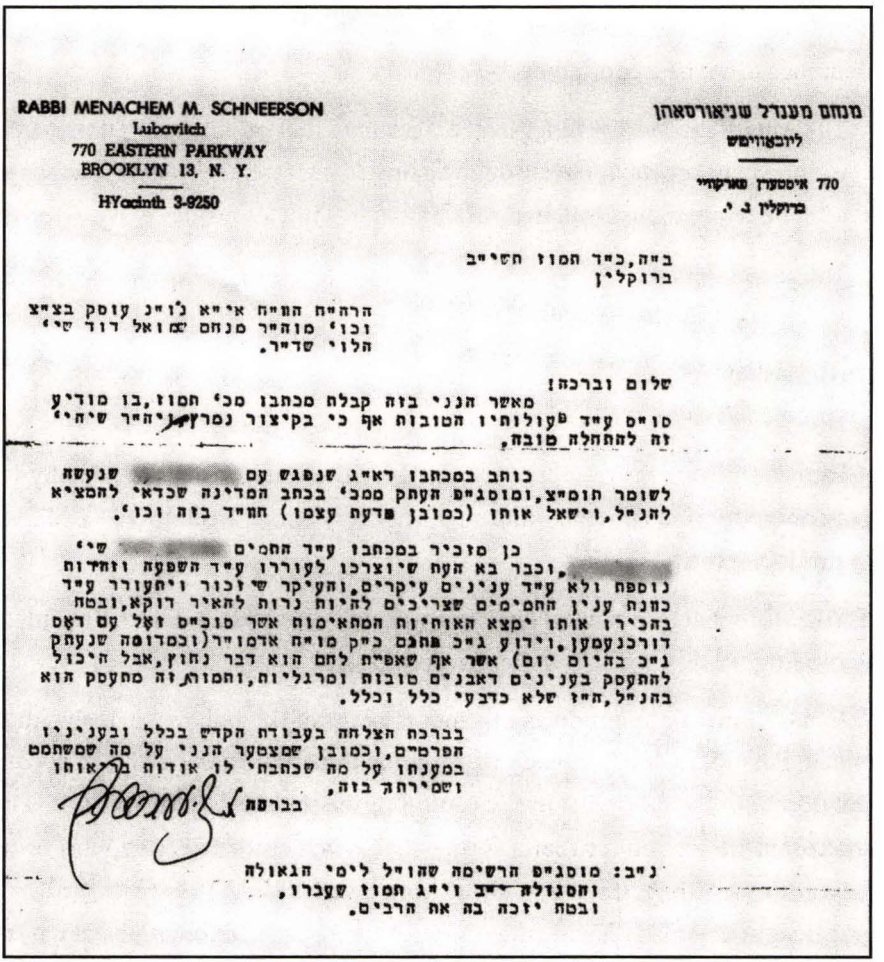
With blessings for success in your sacred work and in your personal life – it is understood that I am pained that you did not respond to what I wrote about your health.

With blessing,

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S. Included here is what we published for the 12th and 13th of Tammuz.

Certainly you will share it with the public.



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ברוקלין נ. י.

ב"ה, כ"ד תמוז תש"ב
ברוקלין

הרה"ח הנ"ח אי"א נ' נ' עוסק בצ"צ
וכו' מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי'
הלוי שדיר.

שלום וברכה!

מאשר הנני בזה קבלת מכתבו מכ' תמוז, בו מודיע סו"ס ע"ד [redacted] עזלותיו הטובות אף כי בקיצור נמרץ[illegible] שי', זה להתחלה טובה.

כותב בסכתבו דא"ג שנפגש עם [redacted] שנעשה לשומר תומ"צ, ומוסגי"פ הענין מסכ' בכתב המדינה שכדאי להמצי"א להנ"ל, וישאל אותו (כסובן מדעת עצמו) חו"ד בזה וכו'.

כן מזכיר בסכתבו ע"ד החמי"ם [redacted] שי', [redacted], וכבר בא הענין שיוצרכו לעוררו ע"ד השפעה וזהדוה נוספה ולא ע"ד ענינים עיקריים, והעיקר שיזכור ויתעורר ע"ד כתנה ענין החמי"ם שצריכים להיות נרות להאיר רוקא, ובטח בהכירו אותו יקצא האוחיות המתאימות אשר סוכי"ם זאל עם דאס דורכנעמען, וירוץ ג"כ מחגם כי"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר (וכמדומה שנעתק ג"כ בהיום יום) אשר אף שאפי"ה לחם הוא דבר נחות, אבל היכול להתעסק בענינים דאבנים טובות וסרגליות, וחמות, זה מחעסק הוא בהנ"ל, ח"ו שלא כדבעי כלל וכלל.

בברכת הצלחה בעבודת הקדש בכלל ובענינים הפרטים, וכסובן שמצטער הנני על מה שמשתמט במענתו על מה שכתבתי לו אודות בקאוחו ושמירתך בזה,

בברכה

נ"ב: מוסגי"פ הרשימה שהו"ל ליסי הגאולה וחסגולה ר"ת וי"ג חמוז שעברו, ובטח יזכה בה את הרבים.

Baruch Hashem
27 Tammuz 5712

Enclosed is my response to ——, and surely you will deliver it to him with proper explanation.

His notes and the included materials were received.

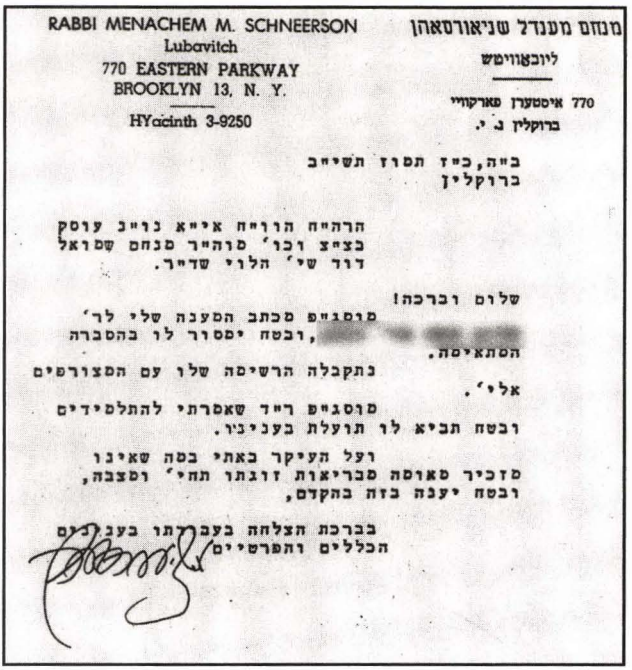
I also included my words to the students. This will certainly come to use in

your activities.

The main point of my letter is to inquire why you have not informed me about your wife's health and her situation. Certainly you will respond as soon as possible.

With blessing for success in your communal and personal activities,

[The Rebbe's signature]


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ברוקלין נ. י.

בייה, כ"ז תמוז תשי"ב
ברוקלין

הרה"ח הוו"ח אי"א נוי"נ עוסק
בצ"צ וכו' מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל
דוב שי' הלוי שדיר.

שלום וברכה!

מוסגי"ם מכתב המענה שלי לר',
[redacted], ובמה יפסור לו בהסברה
הסתאימה.

בתקבלה הרשימה שלו עם הפצורפים
אלי'.

מוסגי"ם ר"ל שאפרתי להתלפידים
ובמה תביא לו תועלת בעניני.

ועל העיקר באתי במה שאינו
מזכיר פאומה סבריאות זוגתו תחי', ומצבה,
ובמה יענה בזה בהקדם,

בברכת הצלחה בעבודתו בעניני
הכללים והפרטיים

Baruch Hashem
27 Av 5712

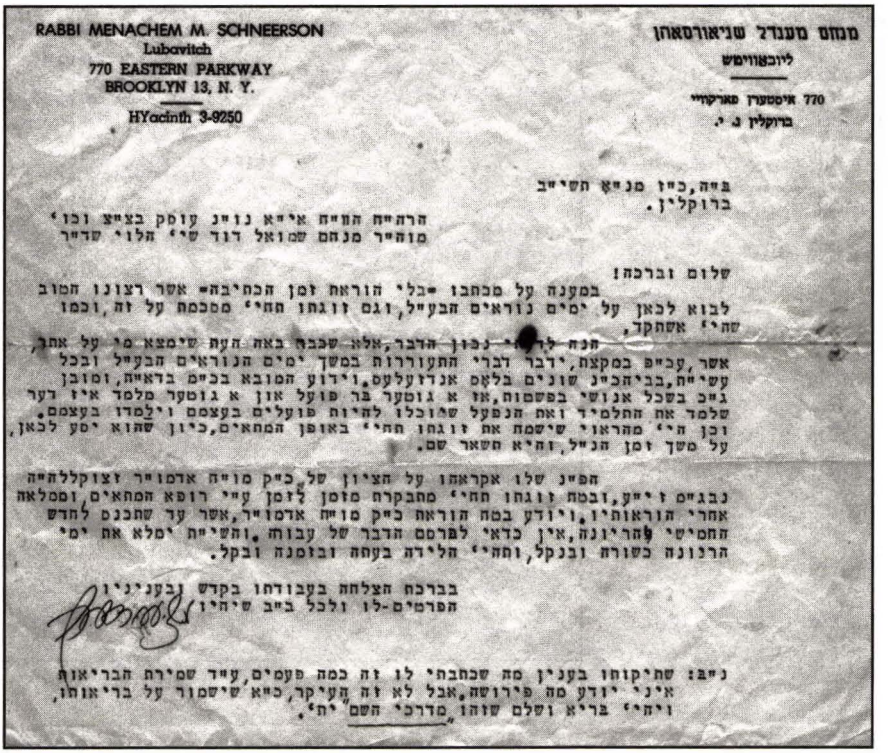
I received your undated letter requesting to come here for the High Holidays. You write that, as in times past, your wife agrees to the plan.

In my opinion it is a good idea; however, it has come time for you to find someone there who could take your place, at least partially, and speak in the Los Angeles shuls words of inspiration during the Yomim Noraim and Aseres Yemei Teshuvah.

As it is explained in Chassidus, and is also self-understood, a good activist and teacher influences others to become activists and teachers themselves.

Since you will be traveling here and your wife will remain there, make an extra effort to gladden her [with gifts of jewelry and clothing] as specified by Jewish law.

I will read your petition at the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz. Surely your wife visits the appropriate doctor from time to time and follows the instructions given. The Rebbe [Rayatz]'s guidance that a woman should not publicize her pregnancy



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770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין נ. י.

בס"ד, כ"ז מנ"א תשי"ב
ברוקלין.

הרה"ח הת"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ וכו'
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שדייר

שלום וברכה!

במענה על מכתבו "בלי הוראת זמן הכתי"ב" אשר רצונו תמוב לבוא לכאן על ימים נוראים תבע"ל, וגם זוגתו תחי' מסכמת על זה, וכמו שה' אשתקד,

הנה לדידי נכון הדבר, אלא שכבר באה השעה שימצא מי על אתך, אשר עכ"פ במקצת, ידבר דברי התעוררות במשך ימים הנוראים תבע"ל ובכל עש"ת, בבי"כ"ש שונים בלאם אנדזעלעס, וידוע המובא בכ"מ בראי"ה, ומובן ג"כ בשכל אנושי בפשטות, אז א גומער בר פועל און א גומער מלמד איז דער שלמד את התלמיד ואת הנפעל שהוכלו להיות פועלים בעצמם וילמדו בעצמם. וכן ה' מהראוי שישמח את זוגתו תחי' באופן המתאים, כיון שהוא יסע לכאן, על משך זמן הנ"ל, וזה"א משאר שם.

הפיג שלו אקראתו על חציון של כ"ק מוה"ר אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ ז' י"ע, ובטח זוגתו תחי' מחבקרה מזמן לזמן ע"י רופא המתאים, ומסלאה אחרי הוראותיו, וידוע בטח הוראת כ"ק מוה"ר אדמו"ר, אשר עד שתכנס לחדש התחיש להרונה, אין כדאי לפרסם הדבר של עבוה, והשי"ת ימלא את ימי הרנונה כשורה ובנקל, ותחי' תלידה בעתה ובזמנה ובקל.

בברכת הצלחה בעבודתו בקדש ובענינינו הפרטים-לו ולכל ב"ב שיחיו

נ"ב: שתיקותו בענין מה שכתבתי לו זה כמה פעמים, עי"ד שמירת הבריאות איני יודע מה פירושה, אבל לא זה העיקר, כ"א שישמור על בריאותו, וית' בריא ושלם שזהו מדרכי השם יתי'.

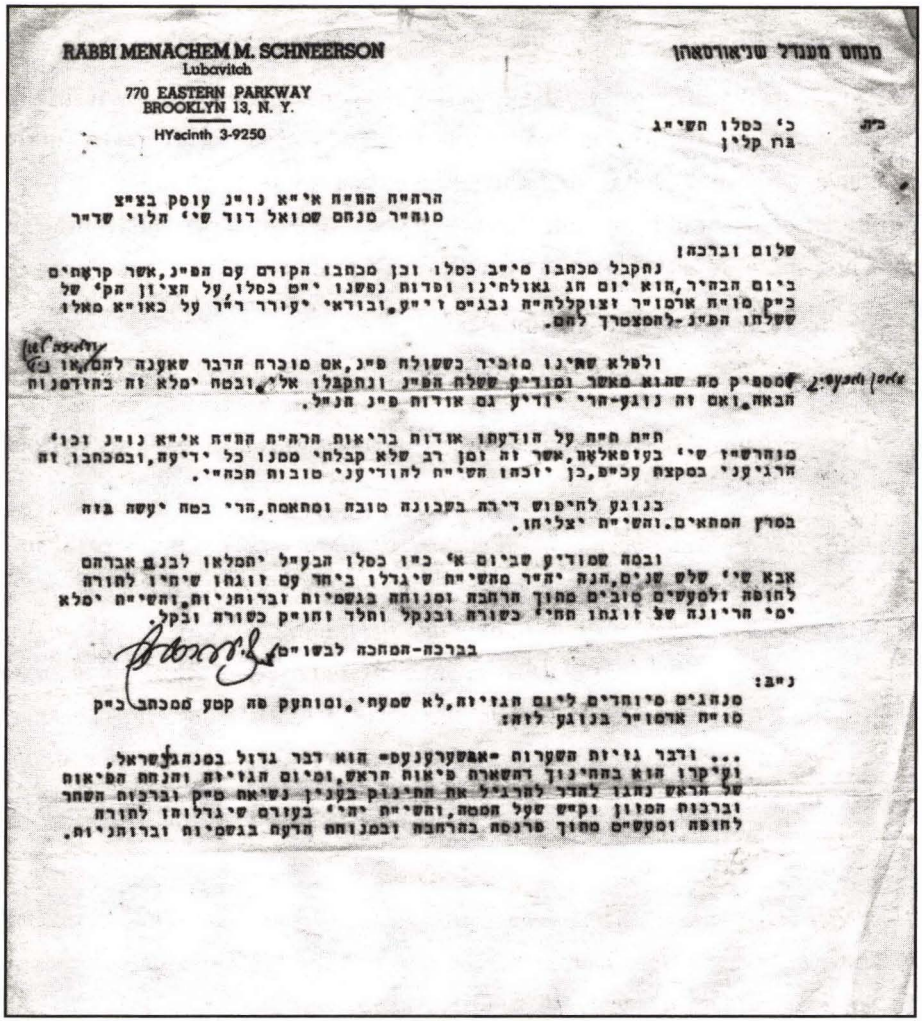
until the fifth month is well known. Hashem should make the days of pregnancy smooth and easy, and the birth should be easy and at the proper time.

With blessings for success in your sacred work and the personal endeavors of you and your family,

P.S.: I don't know how to interpret your silence concerning your health. Regardless, you must make it a priority to guard your health, for this is *from the ways of G-d.*

Baruch Hashem
20 Kislev 5713

Your letter from the 12th of Kislev, the previous letter, and the petition, were received and read at the Rebbe [Rayatz]'s gravesite on the auspicious day of the 19th of Kislev. Surely he will evoke great [Divine] mercy on every one of those who sent a petition so that their needs will be fulfilled.



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בס"ד
כ' כסלו תשי"ג
גח קלין

הרה"ח הת"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' חלוי שריר

שלום וברכה!

נתקבל מכתבו מי"ב כסלו וכן מכתבו הקודם עם הפי"נ, אשר קראתים ביום הבהיר, הוא יום חג גאולתינו ופדות נפשנו י"ט, ובודאי יעורר ר"ח על כאו"א מאלו ששלחו הפי"נ - להמצטרף להם.

ולפלא שאינו מזכיר כששולח פי"נ, אם מוכרח הדבר שאענה להם, או נסמפיק מה שהוא מאשר ומודיע ששלח הפי"נ ונתקבלו אלי, ובטח יפלא זה בהזדמנות הבאה, ואם זה נוגע - הרי יודיע גם אודות פי"נ הנ"ל.

חיים חיית על הודעתו אודות בריאות הרה"ח הת"ח אי"א נו"נ וכו' מנחרשי"ז שי' בעזפאלאה, אשר זה זמן רב שלא קבלתי ממנו כל ידיעה, ובמכתבו זה הרגיעני בסקצה עכ"פ, כן יזכו משי"ח לחוריעני טובות תכה"י.

בנוגע לחיפוש דירה בשכונה טובה ומתאמת, הרי בטח יעשה בזה בסדר המתאים. והשי"ת יצליחו.

ובטח שמודיע שבי"ט אי' כי"ו כסלו הבע"ל יחמלאו לבנו אברהם אבא שי' שלש שנים, הנה יה"ר מהשי"ת שיגדלו ביחד עם זוגתו שיחיו לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים מתוך חרחבת ומנוחה בגשמיות וברוחניות, והשי"ת ישלא יסי' תרי"ג של זוגתו תחי' כשורה ובנקל וחלד וחוזק כשורה ובקל.

בברכה - המחכה לבשו"ט

נ"ב:

מנהגים פיוחדים ליום הגזירות, לא שמעתי, ומוחעק פה קטע מספר כי"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר בנוגע לזה:

... ודבר גזירות השערות "אשערקנעס" הוא דבר גדול בכנסת ישראל, ועיקרו הוא בהתינוך דהשארת פיאות הראש, ביום הגזירות והנחת הפיאות של הראש נתנו למדר לחרגיל את התינוק בענין נשיאת כי"ק וברכת השחר וברכות המזון וקיש שעל המטה, והשי"ת יתי' בעזרם שיגדלו לתורה לחופה ומעשים מתוך פרנסה בהרחבה ובמנוחה הדעת בגשמיות וברוחניות.

It is surprising that when you sent the petitions you did not specify whether they required a response and if so, in what language. If there is no need to respond, you should at least let them know that the petition was received. Surely you will provide us this information in the future. If a response is required for this one or a previous one, please let us know.

Thank you for reporting on the health of Rabbi Shmuel Bezpalov, from whom I have not heard in a long time. Reading your letter, I was somewhat calmed [about his health situation]. You should merit to report only good news in the future.

Regarding your search for an apartment, surely you will undertake it with the appropriate enthusiasm. Hashem should give you success.

You write that your son will be three years old on the 26th of Kislev. It should be Hashem's will that together with your wife you should raise him to Torah, marriage, and good deeds, amidst material and spiritual abundance and tranquility. Hashem should complete the days of your wife's pregnancy in health and ease, and she should give birth to a healthy child properly and on time.

With blessing. I await your good news.

[The Rebbe's signature]

I have not heard of specific customs for the *upsherenish*. Here is a quote from [a letter of] the Rebbe [Rayatz]:

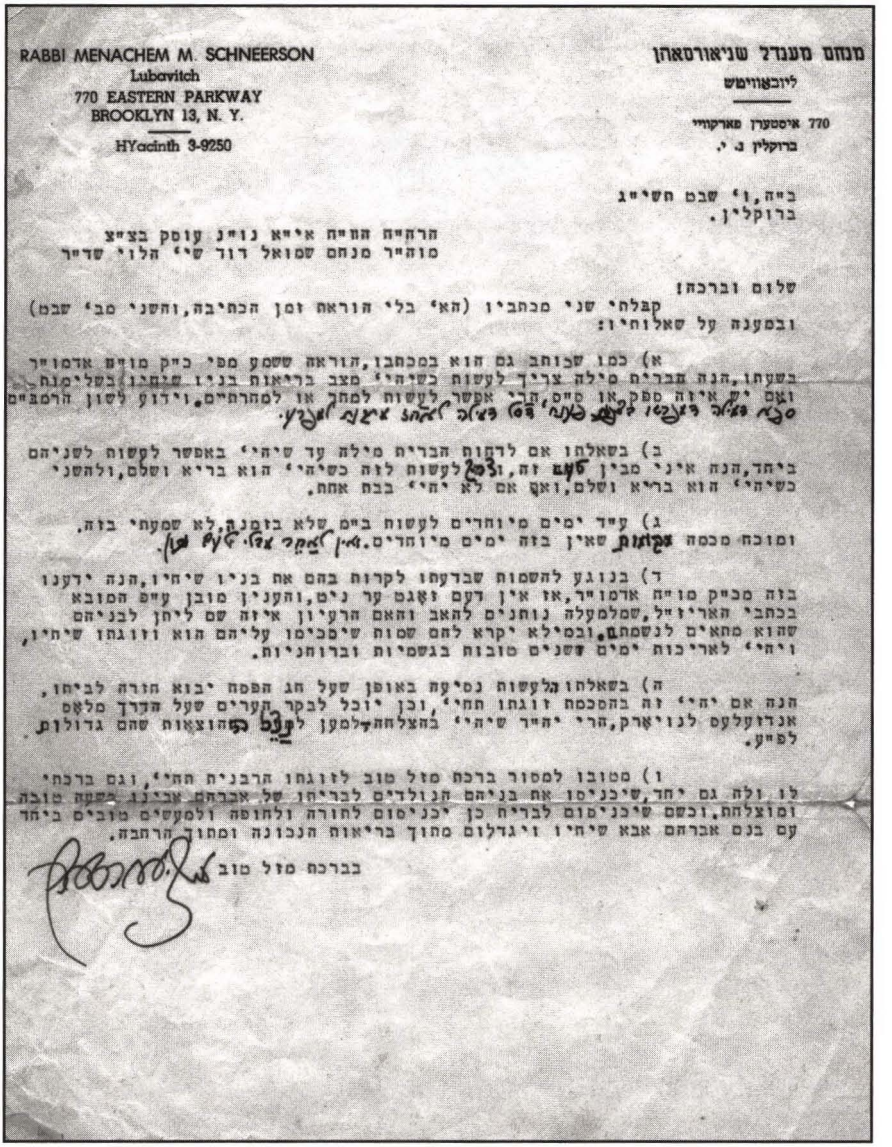
> *With regard to the day of haircutting, the upsherenish, it is of great significance in Jewish tradition. Its essential purpose is to leave the peyos on the head. From the day of the haircut and the leaving of peyos, it is customary to carefully train the child to wear tzitzis and to recite the morning blessings, the Grace after Meals, and the Shema before retiring. May G-d assist you to raise your child to Torah, marriage, and good deeds amidst abundant sustenance and peace of mind in both material and spiritual matters.*

This letter was written shortly after the birth of the Raichik twins. They were born in Teves, but because they were small the bris was postponed. Yossi's bris was in Shevat, and Shimon's a few months later, in Nissan.

Baruch Hashem
6 Shevat 5713

I received your two letters, one undated and another from the 2nd of Shevat. In response to your questions:

As you wrote in your letter, the directive of the Rebbe [Rayatz] was that the bris be done when a child is 100 percent healthy. If there is any doubt in this area, even a remote one, it should be postponed for a day or two. It is also known what the Rambam writes (at the end of the third chapter of *Milah*), as explained by the Rogatchover, that when a bris is postponed, it corrects the past too.



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ב"ה, ו' שבט תשי"ג
ברוקלין.

הרה"ח הת"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ
מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שדיר

שלום וברכה!
קבלתי שני מכתביו (הא' בלי תוראה זמן הכתיבה, והשני מב' שבט)
ובמענה על שאלותיו:

א) כמו שכותב גם הוא במכתבו, תוראה ששמע מפי כ"ק מוה"ר אדמו"ר
בשעתו, הנה מבררים מילה צריך לעשות כשיהיי' מצב בריאות בניו שמותר, בשלימות.
ואם יש איזה ספק או ס"ס, הרי אפשר לעשות למחר או למחרתים, וידוע לשון הרמב"ם

ב) בשאלתו אם לדחות הבריח מילה עד שיהיי' באפשר לעשות לשניהם
ביחד, הנה איני מבין שום זה, ולמה לעשות לזה כשיהיי' הוא בריא ושלם, ולהשני
כשיהיי' הוא בריא ושלם, ואף אם לא יהיי' בבת אחת.

ג) עייד ימים מיוחדים לעשות ברית מילה בים שלא בזמנה, לא שמעתי בזה.
ומוכח מכמה שאין בזה ימים מיוחדים.

ד) בנוגע להשמות שבדעתו לקרות בהם את בניו שיחיו, הנה ידענו
בזה מכ"ק מוה"ר אדמו"ר, אז אין דעם זאגט קיין נישט, והעניין מובן עיין המובא
בכתבי האריז"ל, שלמעלה נוחנים להאב והאם הרעיון איזה שם ליתן לבניהם
שהוא מתאים לנשמתם, ובמילא יקרא להם שמות שיסכימו עליהם הוא וזוגתו שיחיו,
ויהיי' לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות בגשמיות וברוחניות.

ה) בשאלתו לעשות נסיעה באופן שעל חג הפסח יבוא הזרע לביתו,
הנה אם יהיי' זה בהסכמת זוגתו תחי', וכן יוכל לבקר הקברים שעל הדרך מלפא
אנדזעלעס לנויארק, הרי יהיי' שיהיי' בהצלחה לעניני הנסיעה ולמען תהיינה הוצאות שהם גדולות
לפ"ע.

ו) מטובו למסור ברכת מזל טוב לזוגתו תרבנית תחי', וגם ברכתי
לו ולה גם יחד, שיכניסו את בניהם הנולדים לבריתו של אברהם אבינו בשעה טובה
ומוצלחת. וכשם שיכניסום לבריתו כן יכניסום לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים ביחד
עם בנם אברהם אבא שיחיו ויגדלום מתוך בריאות הנכונה ומתוך הרחבה.

בברכת מזל טוב

You ask whether to push off the bris of one twin so that the circumcisions can be done together. I do not understand what the reason would be for this. It should be done as soon as he is healthy, and the second twin should have his bris when he will be completely healthy. This is the way it should be.

Regarding the question of whether to wait and do the bris on an auspicious day, since it has already been postponed from the eighth day, I have never heard

of this. It is clear from several sources that there are no special days in this regard. The bris should not be further postponed for no good reason.

About names, it is known that the Rebbe [Rayatz] said, "In this I have nothing to say." The Arizal says, "From Above they give the father and mother the idea of which name to give their children, as befits their soul." Therefore you should call the children whatever names you agree upon with your wife. It should all be for a lengthy and good life, materially and spiritually.

Regarding your organizing your travels so that you will be home for Pesach, if your wife approves and you will be able to visit the cities on the way from Los Angeles to New York, it should be with success. You should capitalize on the expenses, which are large.

It is understood that you should give your wife, the rebbetzin, a mazel tov [from me]. In addition, my blessings to you and her together for bringing your children, in a good and auspicious time, into the bris of Avraham Avinu. The same way you brought them into the bris of Avraham Avinu, you should raise them to Torah, marriage, and good deeds, together with your son Avraham Aba. You should raise them in health and abundance.

With blessings for mazel tov,

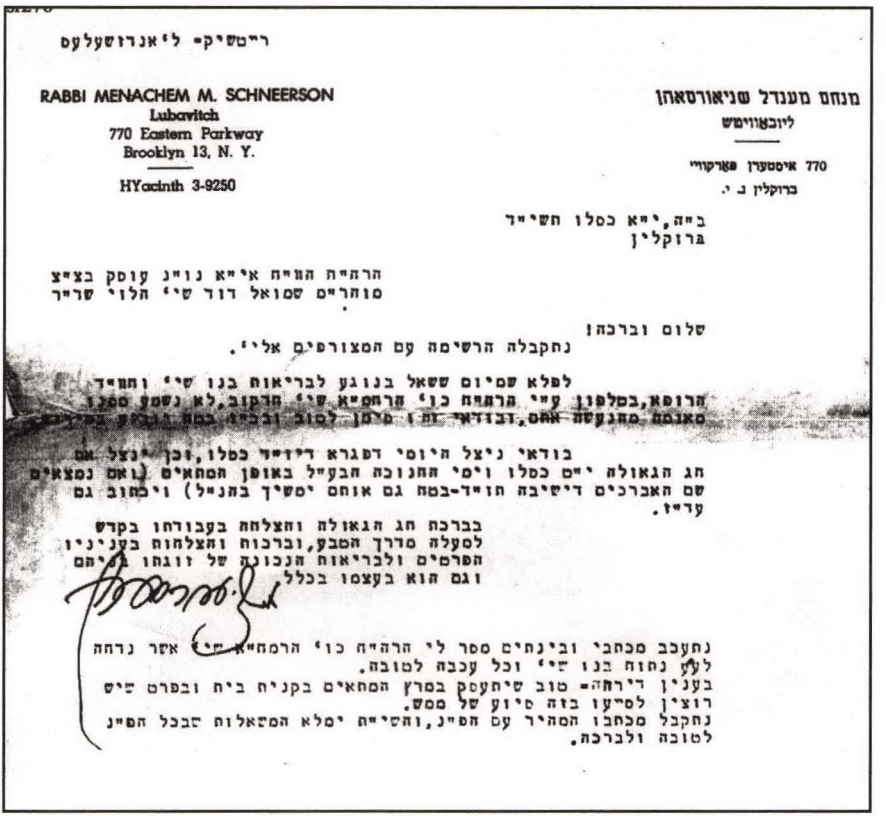
[The Rebbe's signature]

Baruch Hashem
11 Kislev 5714
Brooklyn

I received your list and the enclosed materials.

It is surprising that since Rabbi Hodakov called you about the health of your son and the doctor's directives, we have heard nothing from you. Surely it is because everything turned out well. Certainly you will report what happened.

No doubt you utilized the auspicious day of the 10th of Kislev, and you will utilize the 19th of Kislev and Chanukah in the proper way. (If there are yeshivah students [in Los Angeles], surely you will bring them to the above gatherings.) Please write about this as well.



ר״מ שי״ק - ל׳ אנדזשעלעס

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ברוקלין נ. י.

ב״ה, י״א כסלו תשי״ד
ברוקלין

הרה״ת הוו״ח אי״א נוי״נ עוסק בצ״צ
מוהר״ם שמואל דוד שי׳ הלוי שרייר

שלום וברכה!

נתקבלה הרשימה עם המצורפים אלי׳.

לפלא שמים ששאל בנוגע לבריאות בנו שי׳ ותשיד
הרופא, בפלפון ע״י הרה״ת כו׳ הרה״ג ש״י הדקוב, לא נשמע מפנו
מאומה מהנעשה אתם, ובודאי זה סימן לטוב ובקרוב בטח בקבלת

בודאי ניצל היוסי דפגרא דיזיד כפלו, זכן ״נצל אם
חג הגאולה יים כפלו ויסי החנוכה הבע״ל באופן המחאים (ואם נמצאים
שם האברכים דישיבה תוויד-בטח גם אותם ישייך בתנ״ל) ויכתוב גם
עדיז.

בברכת חג הגאולה והצלחה בעבודתו בקדש
לסעלה סדרך הטבע, וברכות והצלחות בעניניו
הפרטים ולבריאות הנכונה של זוגתו בתיחי
וגם הוא בעצמו בכלל

נתעכב מכתבי ובינתים מסר לי הרה״ת כו׳ הרמחיא שי׳ אשר נדחה
לעת נחוה בנו שי׳ וכל עכבה לטובה.
בענין דירה- טוב שיתעסק בסרן המחאים בקניה בית ובפרט שיש
רוצין למסרו בזה סיוע של מסס.
נתקבל מכתבו המהיר עם המיג, והשיית יסלא המסאלות שבכל המיג
לטובה ולברכה.

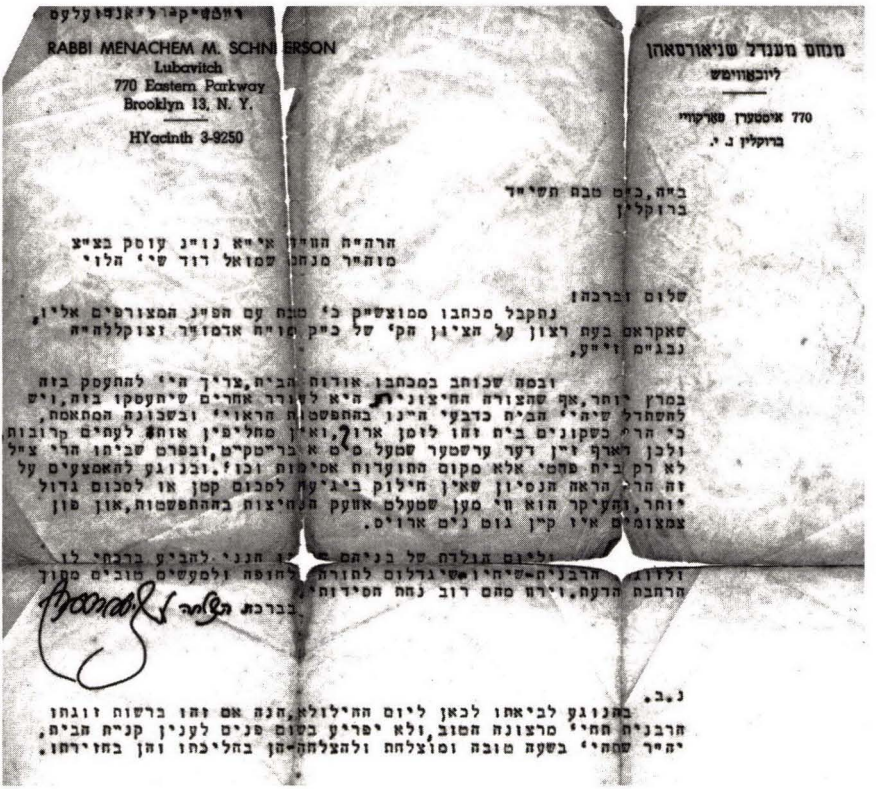
With blessings for the *chag hageulah* and supernatural success in your sacred work. With blessings for the fulfillment of your personal needs and proper health for your wife, your children, and you as well,

[The Rebbe's signature]

My letter was delayed, and in the meantime Rabbi Hodakov informed me that your son's surgery was postponed. All delays are for the good.

Regarding finding a place to live, it is a good idea that you should diligently work toward purchasing a home, especially since there are people who want to assist you.

Your express letter with the petition was received. Hashem should fulfill the needs you described therein for good and with blessings.



Baruch Hashem
29 Teves 5714

Your letter of 20 Teves and the petitions included with it were received. I will read them at the resting place of the Rebbe Rayatz.

You write that you are still searching for a house. You must invest great effort and enthusiasm in the process, by encouraging others [i.e., the real estate agent and his acquaintances] to work on it. See to it that the house is a proper and spacious one in the right neighborhood, since when you buy, it is for the long term and is difficult to change. Therefore your initial outlook must be expansive, especially since it is not merely a private house, but rather a place for farbrengens, meetings, etc.

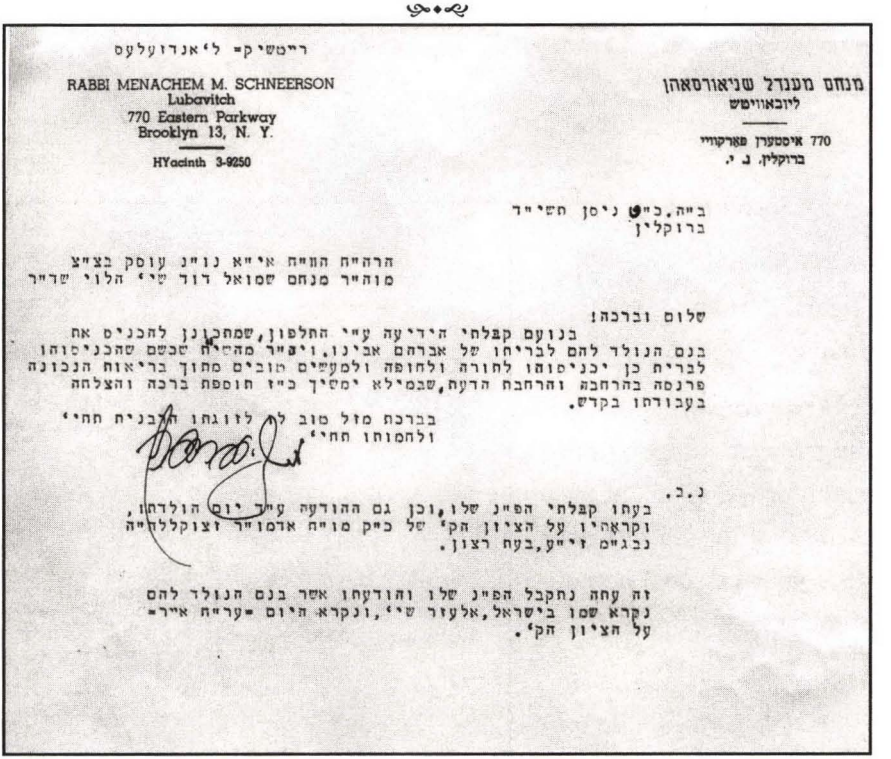
Regarding the funding, experience has shown that the effort required to raise a large sum is the same as that required for a smaller one. It is of great importance to think in broad terms. Nothing good comes of being cheap.

On the occasion of your sons' birthday, I give my blessings to you and your wife, the rebbetzin, that you should raise them to Torah, marriage, and good deeds, in tranquility. You should have much nachas from them.

With blessing for success,

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S. I agree to your coming here for the tenth of Shevat, if your wife agrees and if it does not disturb the process of purchasing a home. The trip should be in a good time, with success in your going and returning.



ריטשיק= ל'אנדזעלעס

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

ב"ה, כ"ט ניסן תשי"ד
ברוקלין

הרה"ח הנ"ח אי"א נוחם עוסק בצ"צ
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שריר

שלום וברכה!

בנועם קבלתי הידיעה ע"י התלפון, שמתכונן להכניס את בנם הנולד להם לבריתו של אברהם אבינו, וי"ל מהמ"ח שכשם שהכניסוהו לבריתו כן יכניסוהו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים מתוך בריאות הנכונה פרנסה בהרחבה והרחבת הדעת, שבמילא ימשיך כ"ז תוספת ברכה והצלחה בעבודתו בקדש.

בברכת מזל טוב לו לזוגתו תהלבניח תחי'
ולחסותו תחי'

נ.ב.
בעתו קבלתי הפ"נ שלו, וכן גם ההודעה ע"ד יום הולדתו, וקראתיו על הציון הק' של כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ ז"ע, בעת רצון.

זה עתה נתקבל הפ"נ שלו והודעתו אשר בנם הנולד להם נקרא שמו בישראל, אלעזר שי', ונקרא היום "עריית איר" על הציון הק'.

Baruch Hashem
29 Nissan 5714
Brooklyn

I was pleased to receive the news, via telephone, that you are preparing to enter your son into the bris of Avraham Avinu. May it be Hashem's will that just

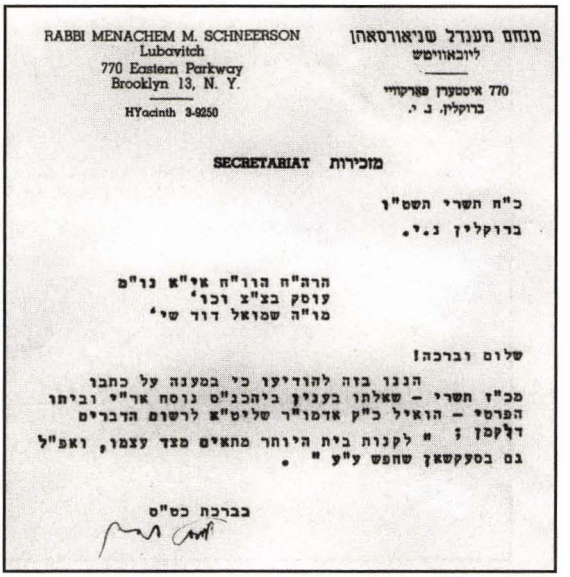
as you enter him into the covenant of Avraham, so too you raise him to Torah, marriage, and good deeds. This should be done in good health, with an abundance of livelihood, in tranquility, bringing additional blessings and success to your sacred work.

With blessings of mazel tov to you, your wife and your mother-in-law,

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S. I received your petition and notification of your birthday in good time, and read them at the resting place of the Rebbe Rayatz.

Just now I also received your petition, and the news that your son was named Elozor. It was read today – on the eve of the month of Iyar – at the [Rebbe Rayatz's] holy resting place.



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ברוקלין, נ. י.

SECRETARIAT מזכירות

כ"ח תשרי תשפ"ו
ברוקלין נ.י.

הרה"ח הור"ח אי"א נו"נ
עוסק בצ"צ וכו'
מו"ה שמואל דוד שי'

שלום וברכה!

הנני בזה להודיעו כי במענה על כתבו
מכ"ז תשרי – שאלתו בענין ביהכנ"ס נוסח אר"י וביתו
הפרטי – הואיל כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א לרשום הדברים
דלקמן: " לקנות בית היותר מתאים מצד עצמו, ואפ"ל
גם בסעקשאן שחפש ע"ש ".

בברכת כט"ס

Secretariat

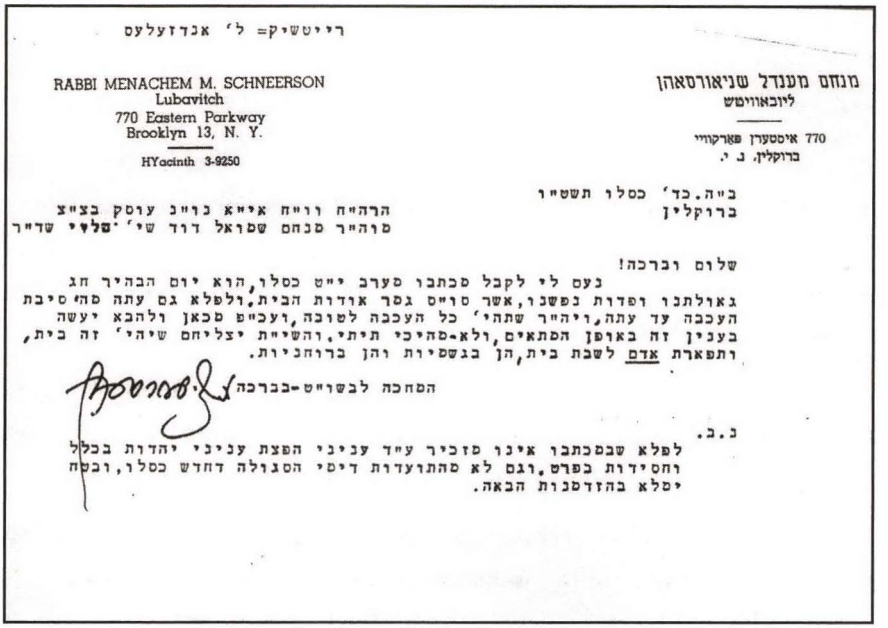
Baruch Hashem
25 Tishrei 5715
Brooklyn

We are conveying the response to your question from the 27th of Tishrei about the proximity of the Nusach Ari shul to your personal home. The Rebbe said:

> *Purchase a home that is fit for use on its own, and perhaps even in the section where you were searching for a house until now.*

With blessing for all good,

The Secretariat



ריטשיק= ל' אנדזעלעס

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
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ברוקלין, נ. י.

ב"ה. כד' כסלו תשט"ו
ברוקלין

הרה"ח וו"ח א"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ
מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' שלזי שדיר

שלום וברכה!

נעם לי לקבל מכתבו מערב י"ט כסלו, הוא יום ההיר חג גאולתנו ופדות נפשנו, אשר סו"ס גסר אודות הבית, ולפלא גם עתה מה סיבת העכבה עד עתה, ויה"ר שתהי' כל העכבה לשובה, ועכ"פ מכאן ולהבא יעשה בענין זה באופן המתאים, ולא-מהיכי תיתי, והשי"ת יצליחם שיהי' זה בית, ותפארת אדם לשבת בית, הן בגשמיות והן ברוחניות.

המחכה לבשו"ט-בברכה

נ.ב.
לפלא שבמכתבו אינו מזכיר ע"ד עניני הפצת עניני יהדות בכלל וחסידות בפרט, וגם לא מהתועדות דיסי הסגולה דחדש כסלו, ובטח יפלא בהזדמנות הבאה.

Baruch Hashem
24 Kislev 5715
Brooklyn

I was pleased to receive your letter of the eve of the 19th of Kislev, the auspicious day of the redemption of our soul, informing me that you completed everything required for [the purchase of] the home. It is surprising, even now, that it took so long. It should be the will of Hashem that all delays should be for the good. At least from now on, the process [of moving in and settling down] should be completed in the proper way, and not with the assumption that it will happen on its own. Hashem should give you success that this home should be beautiful for the person who resides in it, materially and spiritually.

Awaiting good news, with blessings,

[The Rebbe's signature]

P.S.: I was surprised that in your letter you do not mention anything about the spreading of Judaism in general, and especially of Chassidus. You also don't write anything about farbrengens during the auspicious month of Kislev. Surely you will report on these happenings in your next letter.

Baruch Hashem
6 Teves 5715
Brooklyn

Surely you have already received my previous letter. I received your letter, and the enclosed materials, of the 26th of Kislev. I was surprised to read that you will be moving into your new home next week, since you have not mentioned anything about it until now. I hope that at least from now on you will provide details about how things went [with the purchase].

I repeat my blessings that the move should fulfill the maxim that "changing one's place changes one's mazel for the good and for blessing." The move should bring you to a higher standard, materially and spiritually.

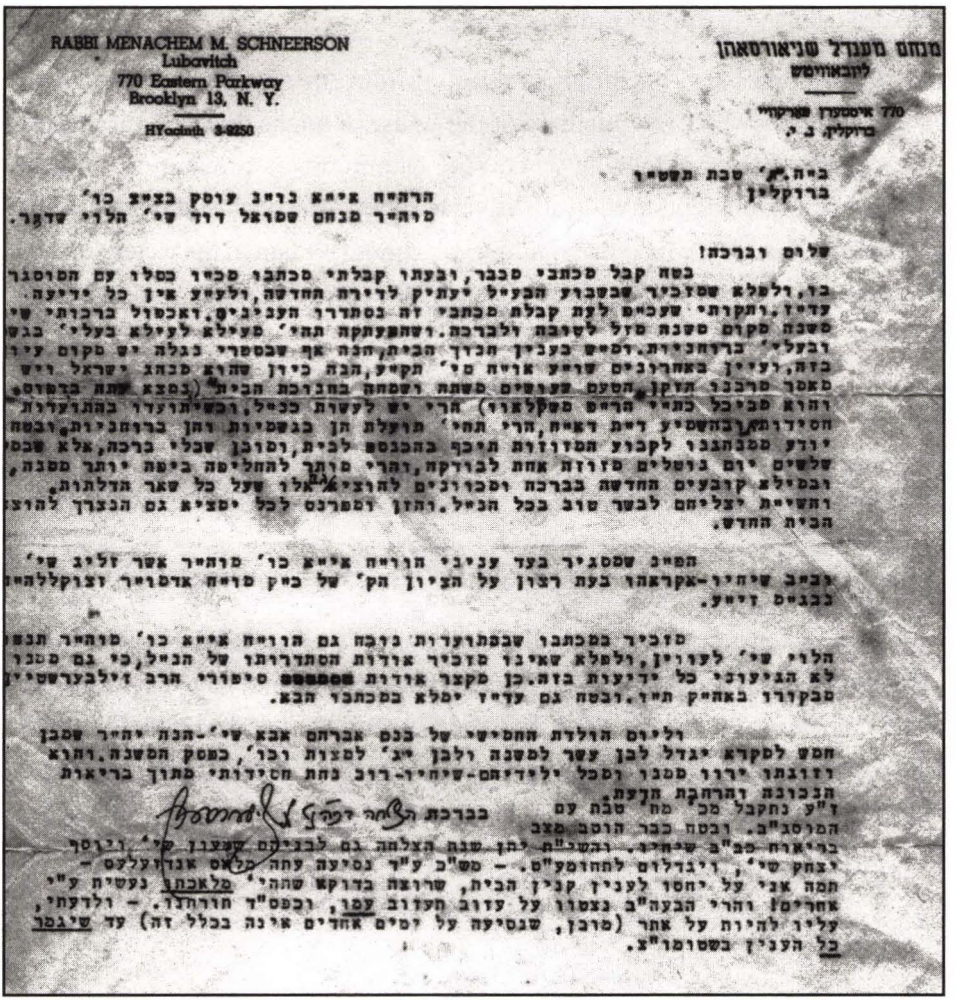
Regarding your question about the dedication of the house *(chanukas habayis)*, it is true that based on Talmudic sources there is room to question whether the custom has merit (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, sec. 570). Nevertheless, since it is a Jewish custom, and there is a discourse of the Alter Rebbe (which is in the midst of being printed from the manuscript of Reb Pinchas Reizes of Shklov), entitled "The Reason Why Dedicating a Home Is a Joyous Occasion," you should make a chassidishe farbrengen and say Chassidus, and this will help materially and spiritually.

Surely you know our custom to immediately affix all the mezuzahs without a blessing when you move into a new home. After thirty days you remove one to check it, and then it is permissible to exchange it for a nicer one. You affix the new mezuzah with a blessing, having in mind all the others as well.

May G-d grant you success that you will have good to report in all the above areas. May the One who sustains all creatures also fulfill the material needs incurred by the expenditures on your home.

The petition you included for the needs of —— and his family, I will read at an auspicious time at the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz.

You mention in your letter the farbrengen where —— was in attendance; however, surprisingly, you do not describe how he is acclimating there. I have also not received a report from him about this. You wrote little about the trip of Rabbi —— to Israel. Surely you will say more about it, too, in your next letter.



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ברוקלין, נ. י.

ברוקלין
הרה"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ כו'
מוה"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שדגר.

שלום וברכה!

בשה קבל מכתבי מכבר, ובעתו קבלתי מכתבו מכיו בסלו עם המוסגר בו, ולולא שמזכיר שבשבוע הבעיל יעתיק לידיה תחדשה, ולע"ע אין כל ידיעה עדיין. ותקותי שעכ"פ לעת קבלת מכתבי זה נסתדרו הענינים, ואכסול ברכותי שי' משנה מקום משנה מזל לטובה ולברכה. ושתעתיקה תחי' מעילא לעילא בגשמי ובעלי' ברוחניות. ומ"ש בענין תכדין הבית, תנה אף שבספרי נגלה יש מקום עיון בזה, עיין באחרונים שי"ע אויח סי' תקי"ג, הבה כיון שהוא מכתב ישראל ויש מאסר מרבנן תקון, מסתם מעשים משתה ושמחה בחנוכת הבית" (נמצא אתה בדפוס. והוא מביכל כמה"י הרי"ם משקלאוו) הרי יש לעשות ככלל, ובשיתוערו בהתוערות חסידות, ובהשטיע ד"ת דאי"ת, הרי תחי' תועלת תן בנשמיות ותן ברוחניות, ובשה יודע מבחבגו לקבוע מזוזות תיכף בהכנסם לבית, ומובן שכלי ברכה, אלא שבכ שלשים יום נושלים מזוזה אחת לבודקה, והרי מותר להחליפה ביום יותר מפעם, ובמילא קובעים החדשה בברכה ומכוונים להוציא אלו שעל כל שאר מדלתות, ותשי"ת יצליחם לבער שוב בכל תכ"ל, ותזן ותפרנס לכל יפציא גם הנצרך להוצ הבית החדש.

תמי"ב שמסגיר בעד עניבי הוריח אי"א כו' מוה"ר אשר זליב שי' בבי"ב שיחיו-אקראתו בעת רצון על הציון תק' של כי"ק מויח אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה בבגי"ש זי"ע.

מזכיר במכתבו שבמתערות נזכה גם הוריח אי"א כו' מוה"ר תנח הלוי שי' לעורין, ולולא שאינו מזכיר אודות המתרחתו של תכ"ל, כי גם מכנו לא הגיעוני כל ידיעות בזה. כן מקצר אודות [illegible] סיפורי הרב זילבערשטיין מבקורו באמ"ק תי"ו. ובטח גם עדיין יפלא במכתבי הבא.

ולימים הולדת מחמישי של בנם אברהם אבא שי'-תנח יחי' שמכן חמש לסקרא יגדל לבן עשר למשנה ולבן י"ג למצות וכו', כמסק המשנה, והוא ודוגמתו ירוו מכנו ומכל ילידיהם-שיחיו-רוב נחת מהידותי מתוך בריאות הנכונה והרחבת הדעת.

ז"ע נחקבל מכ' מח שבת עם ברכת [illegible]
המוסג"ב. ובטח כבר הוסב מצב
בריאות כב"ב שיחיו. ובשב"ח יתן שנה הצלחה גם לבניהם שיחיו, ויוסף יצחק שי', ויגדלום לתחומ"ע. - מש"כ ע"ד נסיעה עתה מלאס אנדזשעלעס - תמה אני על יחסו לענין קנין הבית, שרוצה בדוקא שתהי' מלאכתו נעשית ע"י אחרים! והרי הבעה"ב נצטוו על עזוב תעזוב עמו, וכפס"ד תורתנו. - ולדעתי, עליו להיות על אתר (מובן, שנסיעה על ימים אחדים אינה בכלל זה) עד שיגמר כל הענין בשמו"ב.

For the fifth birthday of your Avraham Aba, may it be the will of Hashem that from five years [when a child is introduced] to Torah, he will grow up to ten, when he will study Mishnah, until the age of thirteen, when he will be obligated in mitzvahs, etc. May you and your wife have much *chassidishe nachas* from him and your other children, with proper health and peace of mind.

With blessings for success in all of the above,

[The Rebbe's signature]

I just received your letter, and what you included with it, of the 8th of Teves. Surely the situation in your home has improved. Hashem should grant a successful year to your children Shimon and Yosef Yitzchak, and you should raise them

to Torah, marriage, and good deeds.

Regarding what you write about traveling from Los Angeles, I wonder about your attitude towards the purchase of the house. It seems that you specifically want *your work* to be done by others. The community is commanded to help you [not to do the job for you], as the verse states, "You shall surely help along *with him*" [Shemos 23:5]. In my opinion, you should remain in the vicinity of Los Angeles, apart from making short trips for a few days at a time, until the *entire* process will be concluded in an auspicious time.

Secretariat

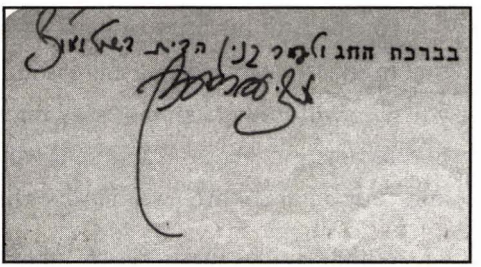
Baruch Hashem
12 Teves 5715
Brooklyn

A mistake was discovered in the Rebbe's letter to you of the 6th of Teves. The source given was *Shulchan Aruch* sec. 570, but it should have been 568. See there Magen Avraham, subsec. 5, and Yad Efrayim. It should be noted that this question is also addressed by Chasam Sofer, *Shaalos Uteshuvos* 138, and Toras Hashelamim, ch. 19.

With esteem and blessings,

The Secretariat

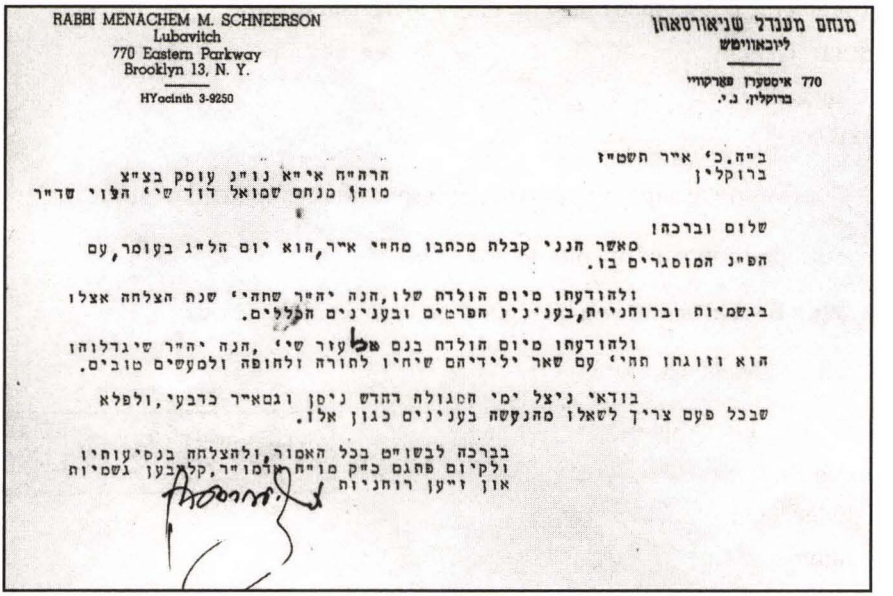
Baruch Hashem
11 Nissan 5715



Your letter and the enclosed materials were received...

With blessings for Yom Tov, and for the completion of the purchase of the home, in a good and auspicious time,

[The Rebbe's signature]



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ברוקלין, נ.י.

ב"ה, כ' אייר תשט"ז
ברוקלין

הרה"ח אי"א נו"נ עוסק בצ"צ
מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי שריר

שלום וברכה!

מאשר הנני קבלת מכתבו מחיי אייר, הוא יום הל"ג בעומר, עם
הפיין המוסגרים בו.

ולהודעתו מיום הולדת שלו, הנה יהיר שתחי' שנת הצלחה אצלו
בגשמיות וברוחניות, בעניניו הפרטים ובעניינים הכלליים.

ולהודעתו מיום הולדת בנם שי' עזר שי', הנה יהיר שיגדלוהו
הוא וזוגתו תחי' עם שאר ילדיהם שיחיו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים.

בודאי ניצל ימי הסגולה דחדש ניסן וגמאיר כדבעי, ולפלא
שבכל פעם צריך לשאול מהנעשה בענינים כגון אלו.

בברכה לבשורות בכל האמור, ולהצלחה בנסיעותיו
ולקיום פתגם כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר, קלאבען גשמיות
און זייען רוחניות

Baruch Hashem
20 Iyar 5716
Brooklyn

I am confirming receipt of your letter of the 18th of Iyar, the day of Lag Baomer, with the petitions that were included.

Thank you for notifying me about your birthday. May it be Hashem's will that it be a materially and spiritually successful year.

You informed me of your son's birthday as well. May it be Hashem's will that you and your wife raise him, with the rest of your children, to Torah, marriage, and good deeds.

Certainly you are taking good advantage of the auspicious days of Nissan, and also Iyar. It is surprising that I need to ask you anew what is happening with regard to your activities.

With blessings for good news in all of the above and for success in your travels. May you fulfill the directive of the Rebbe Rayatz to "collect the material while planting the spiritual."

[The Rebbe's signature]

The following is a handwritten note added to a pastoral letter.

Baruch Hashem

11 Shevat 5722

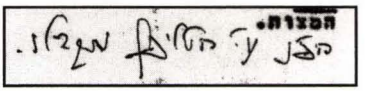
Brooklyn

Confirming receipt of your two petitions and the included materials...

Your petition over the phone was received.

With blessings that you hear good news in all of the above,

[The Rebbe's signature]



Baruch Hashem

13 Kislev 5729

Brooklyn

To Rebbetzin Leah,

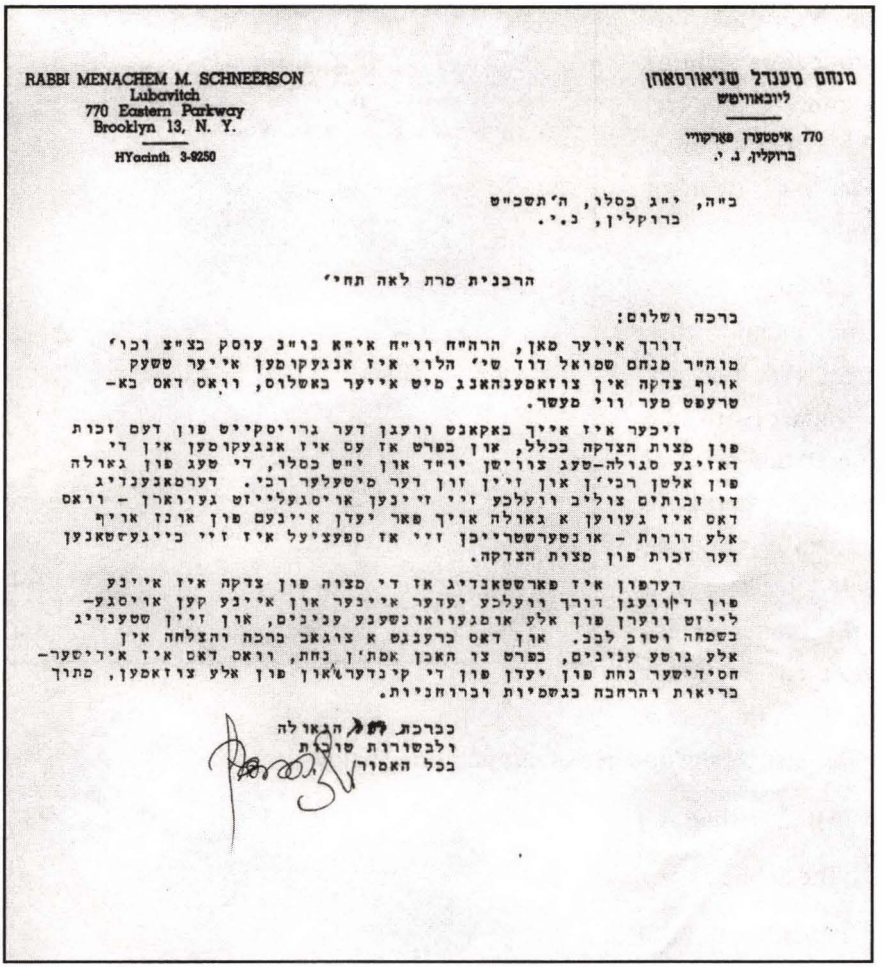
Through your husband, Rabbi Raichik, I received your check for tzedakah, together with your resolution to give more than just *maaser*.

Surely you know the great mitzvah and merit of giving tzedakah in general, and specifically during these auspicious days between the 10th and 19th of Kislev, the days when the Alter and Mitteler Rebbes were released from prison. Remember that the merit in which they were released – a redemption for every one of us throughout the generations – was specifically the virtue embodied in the mitzvah of tzedakah.

It is understood, therefore, that this mitzvah has the power to liberate us from all undesirable constraints and to gladden our hearts. Your donation and resolution will surely bring additional blessing and success in all good things, especially to have true nachas, which is Jewish and chassidishe nachas from every one of your children, and all of them together, with deep love and abundance, materially and spiritually.

With blessings for the Chag Hageulah and for good news in all of the above,

[The Rebbe's signature]



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ברוקלין, נ. י.

ב"ה, י"ג כסלו, ה'תשכ"ט
ברוקלין, נ.י.

הרבנית מרת לאה תחי'

ברכה ושלום:

דורך אייער מאן, הרה"ח וו"ח א"א נויע עוסק בצ"צ וכו' מוהר"ר מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי איז אנגעקומען אייער ששק אויף צדקה אין צוזאמענהאנג מיט אייער באשלוס, וואס דאס בא-טרעפט מער ווי מעשר.

זיכער איז אייך באקאנט וועגן דער גרויסקייט פון דעם זכות פון מצות הצדקה בכלל, און בפרט אז עס איז אנגעקומען אין די דאזיגע סגולה-טעג צווישן יוד"ד און י"ט כסלו, די טעג פון גאולה פון אלטן רבי'ן און זיין זון דער מיטעלער רבי. דערמאנענדיג די זכותים צוליב וועלכע זיי זיינען אויסגעלייזט געווארן - וואס דאס איז געווען א גאולה אויך פאר יעדן איינעם פון אונז אויף אלע דורות - אונטערשטרייכן זיי אז טפעציעל איז זיי בייגעשאנען דער זכות פון מצות הצדקה.

דערפון איז פארשטאנדיג אז די מצוה פון צדקה איז איינע פון די וועגן דורך וועלכע יעדער אייגער און איינע קען אויסגע-לייזט ווערן פון אלע אומגעוואונשענע ענינים, און זיין טשענדיג בשפחה וטוב לבב. און דאס ברענגט א צוגאב ברכה והצלחה אין אלע גוטע ענינים, בפרט צו האבן אמת'ן נחת, וואס דאס איז אירישער-חסידישער נחת פון יעדן פון די קינדער, און פון אלע צוזאמען, מתוך בריאות והרחבה בגשמיות וברוחניות.

בכרכת הגאולה
ולבשורות טובות
בכל האמור

This letter was written in English to a member of the Los Angeles community.

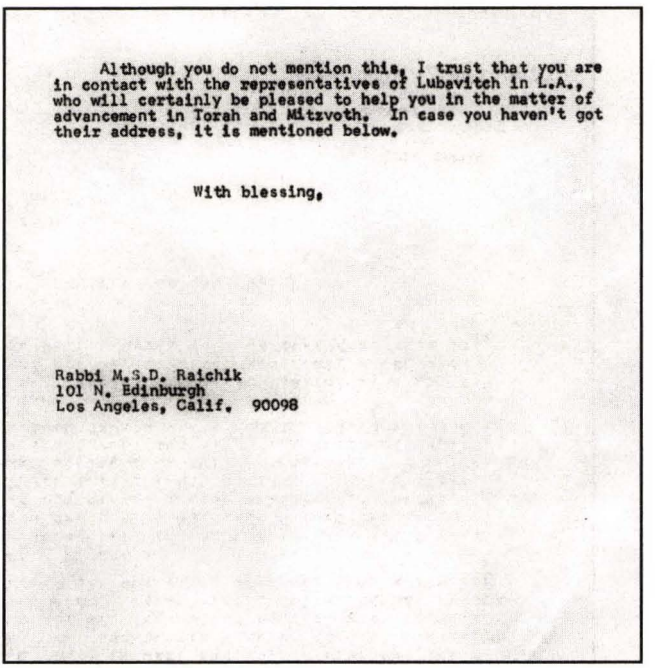
By the Grace of G-d
3rd of Kislev, 5730
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Mrs. Brocho ——
Los Angeles, Calif.

Blessing and Greeting:

I am in receipt of your letter of October 30th, in which you write that you are now pregnant…

I trust that you know of the good custom of Jewish women to put aside a

small coin for Tzedoko before lighting the candle. The Tzedoko part of it should be Bli-Neder (without a vow).



Although you do not mention this, I trust that you are in contact with the representatives of Lubavitch in L.A., who will certainly be pleased to help you in the matter of advancement in Torah and Mitzvoth. In case you haven't got their address, it is mentioned below.

With blessing,

[The Rebbe's signature]

Rabbi M.S.D. Raichik

101 N. Edinburgh

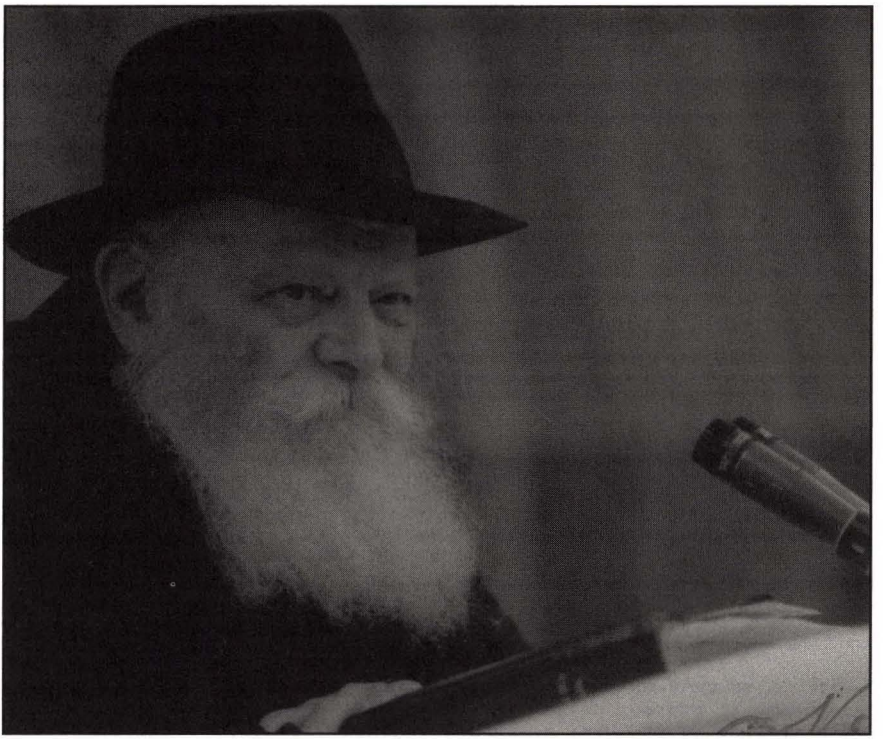
Los Angeles, Calif. 90098

Secretariat

Baruch Hashem
2 Adar 5734

Below is the Rebbe's response:

> *Warm thanks for your good tidings and for the idea, etc. In general,* it is understood *and correct.*



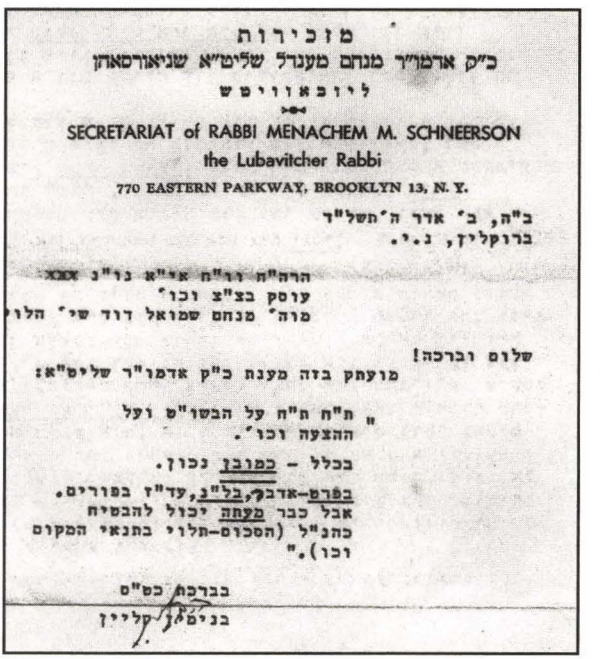
The Rebbe, circa 5752 (1991).

More specifically *I will, without promising, talk about this on Purim.*

However, already from now *you could guarantee the above (the amount depends on the place, etc.).*

For blessings in all good,

[The secretary's signature]



מזכירות
כ"ק אדמו"ר מנחם מענדל שליט"א שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

SECRETARIAT of RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
the Lubavitcher Rabbi

770 EASTERN PARKWAY, BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.

ב"ה, ב' אדר ה'תשל"ד
ברוקלין, נ.י.

הרה"ח ור"ח אי"א נו"נ xxx
עוסק בצ"צ וכו'
מוה' מנחם שמואל דוד שי' הלוי

שלום וברכה!

מועתק בזה מענת כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א:

" ת"ח ת"ח על הבטו"ם ועל
ההצעה וכו'."

בכלל - כמובן נכון.

בפרט-אדבר, בל"נ, עד"ז בפורים.
אבל כבר מעתה יכול להבטיח
כהנ"ל (הסכום-תלוי בתנאי המקום
וכו)."

בברכת כט"ס

בנימין קליין

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213
493-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

ב"ה, ל"ג בעומר ה'תשמ"ו
ברוקלין, נ.י.

צו אלע אנטיילנעמער אין דעם דריטן
יערלעכן באנקעט לכבוד ישיבת אור אלחנן
הב"ד,

ה' עליהם יחיו

שלום וברכה:

עס האט מיר בעפריידט צו באקומען די ידיעה, אז דער הייארדיגער באנקעט איז געווידמעט לכבוד הרה"ח וו"ח אי"א נו"מ עוסק בצרכי צבור רב פעלים וכו' הרב שמואל דוד הלוי שי' רייטשיק ו'וג' הרבנית תחי'. בפרט אז דער אורח הכבוד איז פון די ערשטע שלוחים וואס דער רבי דער סוועד נשיא דורנו האט באשטימט אויף זייערע פאסטנס אין פארשידענע טיילן פון לאנד צו גרינדן מוסדות תורה וחינוך און מארשפרייטן אידישקייט על טהרת הקודש. די הצלחה און אויפטאונגען פון דער שליחות במשך די אלע יארן ריידן מאר זיך אליין.

והזמן גרמא, דאס וואס דער באנקעט קומט פאר ראש-חודש סיון, און די ידיעה איז אנגעקומען אין די טעג פון ספירה בסמיכות צו ל"ג בעומר - דער דאשטם פון דעם בריוו - האט א ספעציעלע פארבינדונג מיט דער דאזיגער געשעענישס.

אין צוגאב צו דעם וואס די ימי הספירה זיינען בכלל א דירעקטע הכנה צו קבלת התורה, און בפרט ראש-חודש סיון, ווען א ידן זיינען אנגעקומען צום בארג סיני כולם כאיש אחד בלב אחד (אלע ווי איין מענטש, מיט איין הארץ און איין נעדאנק) - איז דאך ל"ג בעומר, כידוע, ספעציעל אנגעפילט אלס א יום סגולה און הילולא פון רבי שמעון בר יוחאי (רשב"י).

וועלן מיר זיך דא אפשטעלן אויף אייניג פון די אומציליגע תורות, הלכות און הוראות וואס תורה-שבעל-פה אנטהאלט פון אן ווען דעם נעל ההילולא;- אן ענין פון מעשה בפועל, וואס דאס גופא האט א ספעציעלע באדיימונג אין שייכות מיט רשב"י, וואס בא עם איז געווען תורתו אומנתו, און צוזאמען דערמיט, אלס תלמיד פון רבי עקיבא, וואס האט מרגיש געווען גדול תלמוד גדול תלמוד און דאס האט געברענט צום וגמרו - ענדגילטיקן באשלוס: גדול תלמוד שמביא לידי מעשה.

דאס איז דער סיפור - און יעדער סיפור איז תורה, מלשון הוראה, בפרט אז עס ווערט דערציילט בפרטיות ובהדגשה, איז דאך א הוראה בפועל פאר יעדן איידן און אלע איידן אין אלע דורות - אז בשעת רשב"י און זיין זון רבי אלעזר האבן זיך אומגעקערט צו זייער שטאט, נאכדעם ווי זיי זיינען געווען אפגעזונדערט פון דער באנצער וועלט און אפגעריסן פון זייער ישיבה, תלמידים און חברים במשך 12-13 יאר, איז רשב"י'ס ערשטע מראגע בעווען איכא מילתא דמעיל לחיקוני (איז דא א זאך וואס מ'דארף פאר-ריכטן). און אז מ'האט אים בעזאגט, אז ס'איז דא אן ארט וואו כהנים קענען נים דורכגיין צוליב א ספק טומאה, האט ער זיך באלד ארייגעטאן אין דער זאך ביז ער האט פעסטגעשטעלט, אז דער ארט איז טהור, אזוי אז די כהנים (וועלכע זיינען בעווען א קליינע סיזל פון דער שטאטישער באפעלקערונג) האבן בעקענט איינשפארן זיך איבעריגע טירחה (ווארום עס זיינען דאך בעווען אויך אנדערע וועבען).

דערפון איז א קלארע תורה-אור הזראה וויי וויים עס דערגרייכט דער

ענין פון אהבת-ישראל - צו פאן אידן א טובה, אפילו א קליינע בשמיות'דיגע טובה, אפילו צו א קליינע צאל אידן. איז דאך פארשטאנדיג דער וועל אחת כמה וכמה ווען עס האנדלט זיך וועגן א טובה רוחנית, בפרט פאר א ריבוי אידן, בפרט אין בעביס פון תורה-חינוך, וואס איז נוגע לדורי-דורות.

אזוי האט זיך נוהג געווען דער רבי דער שווער, נשיא דורנו, בשעת ער איז אנגעקומען קיין אמעריקע, נאך אלע יארן פון איבערלעבונגען און וואנדלענישן. ער האט,פארשטייט זיך, נית געדארפט פרעגן צי ס'איז דא קפעס צו מתקן זיין אין אמעריקע; ער האט זיך אריינגעווארפן כיט ליב און לעכן צו מאכן אמעריקע א מקום תורה פאר אידן אפילו אין פארווארפענע ערטער. און, ווי געזאגט, די בליענדע מוסדות פון תורה און חינוך איז פארשידענע טיילן פון אמעריקע, און אין מערב ברעג פון אמעריקע בפרט, האבן אויפגעשטעלט און שאפן א ככבודיגע "דירה" פאר דער ג-טלעכער שכינה, דורך אריינברענגען די ליכטיקייט פון תורה און מצוות, דורכבעדרונגען מיט חסידיזם וואראמקייט און לעבעדיקייט, אין פיל, פיל אידישע היימען און אידישע הערצער, מיט הדגשה אויף מעשה בפועל, קיום המצוות בשמחה ובטוב לבב.

ס'איז איבעריג צו אונטערשטרייכן די גרויסקייט פון דעם זכות פון יעדן אייגעם און אייגע וואס האט א חלק און נעמט אן אקטיוון אנטייל אין דער דאזיגער עבודת-הקודש בכלל, און לטובת דער ישיבה אור אלחנן חב"ד בפרט. און זיבער וועט מען מוסיף זיין אין דעם, נית נאר בפשטות מיט א בריטהארציגע בעלט-טטיצע, נאר אויך בנשמתו, מיט א נשמה'דיגע איבערגענקייט, און דינען אלע א מוסטער און דערמוטיקונג פאר אנדערע.

אין צוגאב צום עיקר, דער עצם זכות פון דער זאך אליין, וועט השי"ת זיבער מוסיף זיין, בחוספת ברובה על העיקר, אין זיינע ג-טלעכע ברכות בכל המצטרך בגשמיות וברוחניות גם יחד.

בכבוד ובברכה להצלחה מרובה
ולבשורות טובות בכל האמור

FREE TRANSLATION

Blessed be G-d, Lag B'Omer 5746
Brooklyn N.Y.

To all participants in the Third Annual Banquet
benefitting Yeshivas Ohr Elchonon-Chabad,
G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to receive notification that this year's Banquet is dedicated in honor of the Rabbi and Chossid, earnest and pious, G-d-fearing, esteemed and respected, active in serving communal needs with great accomplishments, etc., Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Halevi Raichik, may he be well, and his wife, the Rebbitzen, may she be well. Especially as the aforementioned Guest of Honor is one of the first Shluchim (emissaries) whom the previous Rebbe, my father-in-law, leader of this generation, appointed to their posts in various parts of the land to establish institutions of Torah-study and education and spread Judaism in its purest and holiest form. The success and accomplishments of this mission in the course of all these years speak for themselves.

The time is also appropriate: the fact that the Banquet is taking place on Rosh Chodesh Sivan, and that notification reached me in the days of Sefirah (Counting the Omer), close to Lag B'Omer - the date of this letter - has a special connection with this event.

Besides the fact that the days of Sefirah are a direct preparation to receiving the Torah, particularly Rosh Chodesh Sivan itself, when the Jewish people arrived before Mount Sinai "all together like one man, with one heart" and one mind, besides this, Lag B'Omer is, as is known, specially distinguished as an auspicious day and the Hilulo (passing-away) of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (Rashbi).

We will therefore dwell here upon one of the countless Torah-insights, laws and teachings which the Oral Torah contains from and about the Baal HaHilulo, a practical aspect, which this in itself has a special meaning in relation to Rashbi since "his Torah was his trade," and at the same time he was a disciple of Rabbi Akiva who emphasized the greatness of Torah-study which led to the final decision that "the greatness of Torah-study is that it leads to practice" (of the Mitzvos).

This is the theme of the narrative - and every narrative in the Torah, which is derived from the word horo'oh "lesson" (especially as this narrative is told in detail and with a definite emphasis), is a practical leson for every Jew and all Jews in all generations - that when Rashbi and his son Rabbi Elazor returned to their hometown, after they were secluded from the whole world and separated from their Yeshivah, disciples and colleagues for 12-13 years, Rashbi's first question was: "Is there anything that needs remedying?" When he was told that there was a place where Kohanim could not walk through because of a possibility of ritual impurity, he immediately set himself to work till he determined that the place was ritually clean so that the Kohanim (who were a small proportion of the town's population) could save themselves the extra bother (since there were other ways to go around).

From here we have a clear Torah-illuminated lesson how far extends the love of one's fellow Jew - to do a favor to Jews, even a small material favor and even to a small number of Jews. One can understand how much more so when a favor on the spiritual level is involved, particularly to many Jews, especially in the field of Torah-education which has an effect over many, many generations in the future.

This was the way the Rebbe, my father-in-law, conducted himself when he arrived in America after all the years of tribulations and wanderings. He did not, of course, have to ask if anything needed remedying in America; he threw himself body and soul into the task of transforming America into a place of Torah for Jews even in out-of-the-way places. And as we have said, the flourishing institutions of Torah-study and education in various parts of America, especially on the West Coast of America, have erected and serve as an honorable "dwelling place" for the Divine Presence, by introducing the illumination of Torah and Mitzvos, permeated with Chassidic warmth and vitality, into many, many Jewish homes and Jewish hearts, with the emphasis on practice, performing the Mitzvos with joy and gladness of heart.

It is unnecessary to stress the greatness of the privilege of each man and woman who has a portion and actively participates in this holy work in general, and particularly for the benefit of the Yeshivah Ohr Elchonon-Chabad. Certainly everyone will increase in all this, not just in the ordinary sense with generous financial support, but also with one's Neshomoh, a dedication from the depths of one's soul, and serve thereby as a model and encouragement for others.

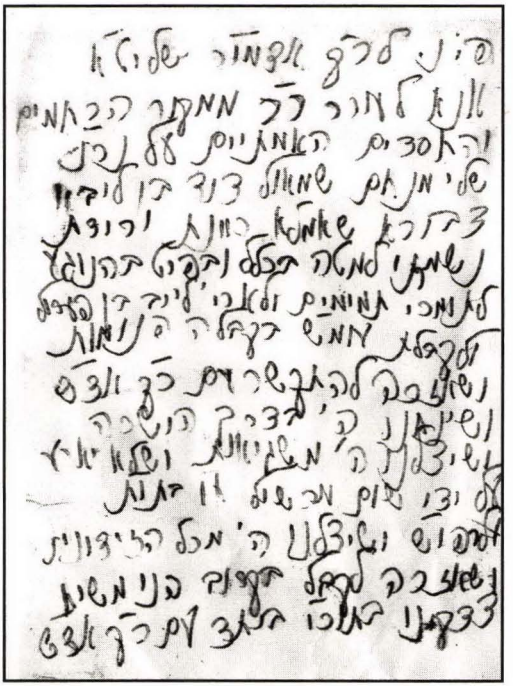
In addition to the main point, which is the actual privilege of doing this work itself, G-d will surely increase, with an "increasement greater than the principal," in His Divine blessings in everything one needs, both materially and spiritually together.

Respectfully and with blessing for great success, and for good news in all the above,
/Signed: Menachem Schneerson/

[APPENDIX III]

Petitions to the Rebbe Rayatz

The following are undated drafts of the traditional petition for blessing, known as a pan, *which Rabbi Raichik wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz during the war. Because mail service was unreliable or nonexistent, they were never actually sent, and were found after Rabbi Raichik's passing, tucked between the pages of a* Tanya. *As is customary, every pan begins with a standard sentence, asking the Rebbe to arouse Divine mercy upon the petitioner's soul, after which the chassid adds his or her personal requests.*



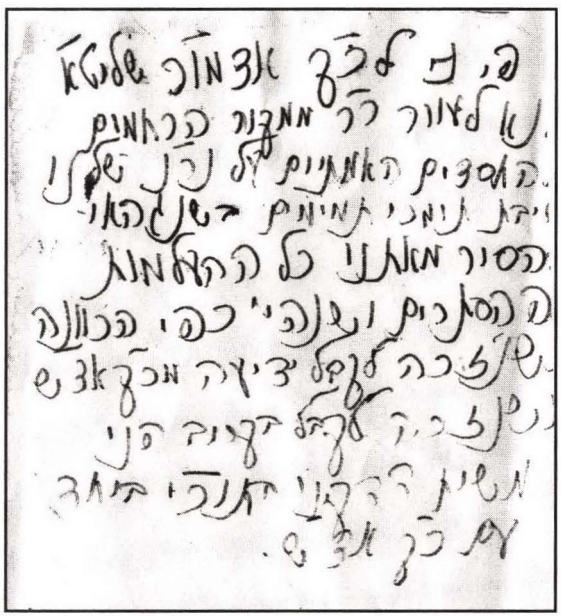
[the month of Elul]

To awaken to true teshuvah, to be awoken and to accept internally the yoke of Hashem, that I should be a

tamim in accordance with the *kavanah ha'amitis*. I should be able to fulfill my mission generally, and especially in the Yeshivah of Tomchei Tmimim, and there should be no stumbling through me. I should have a *kesivah vechasimah tovah* for diligence and success in learning, for health and a *refuah sheleimah*, and I should merit to greet Moshiach together with the Rebbe. The student Menachem Shmuel Dovid Raichik.

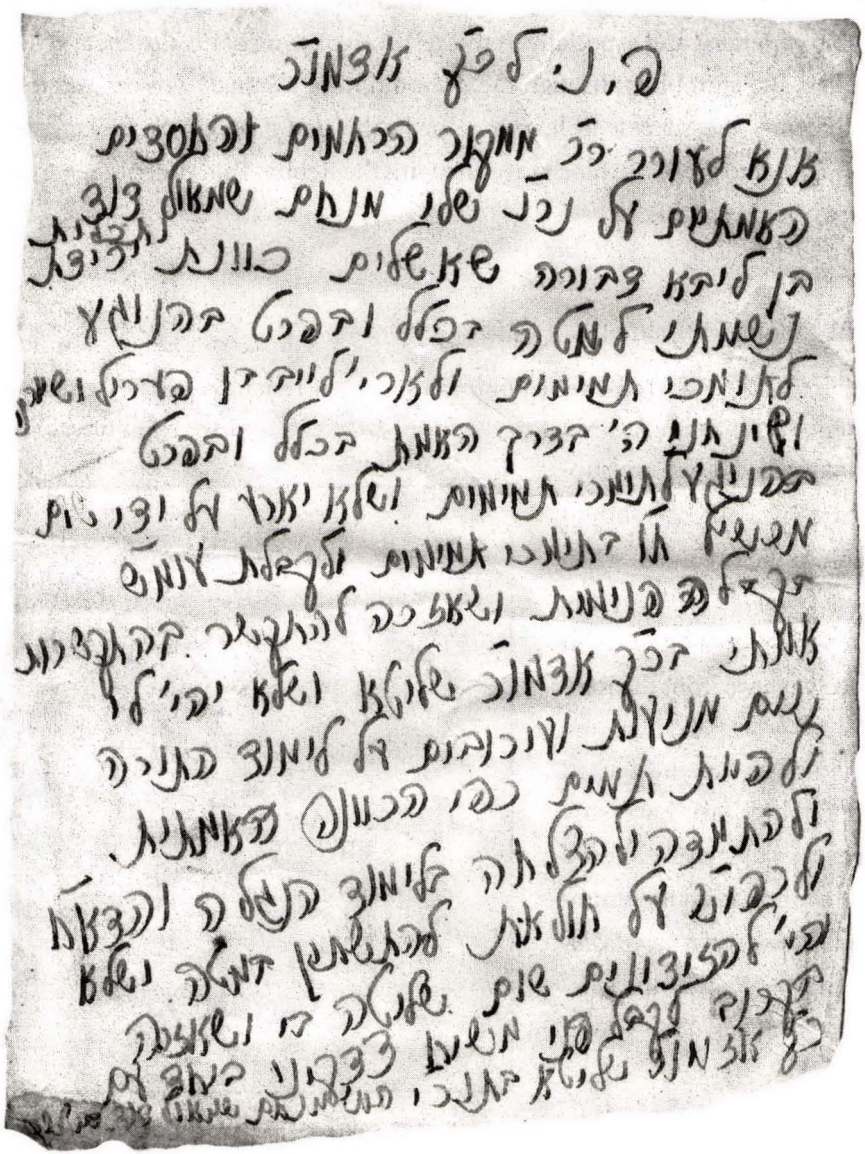
[the month of Tishrei]

For the Yeshivah Tomchei Tmimim in Shanghai, that it should be in the spirit of Tomchei Tmimim according to the inner *kavanah*, and we should fulfill the kavanah of what we are supposed to do, and we should be able to be involved in Torah and *avodah* without any disturbance, and merit soon to receive news from the Rebbe, and we shouldn't have any stumbling, and all the wicked ones should not have any power over us, and we should merit soon with all the tmimim to be *mekabel p'nei Moshiach* with the Rebbe, and a *gemar chasimah tovah*.



[Unkown]

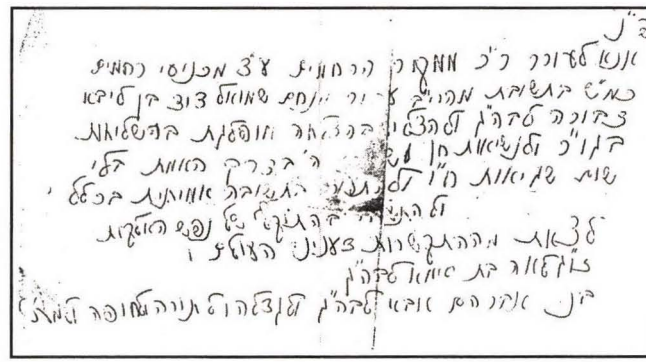
The *Aibeshter* should help that I should fulfill the purpose for which my *neshamah* came down here, generally, and particularly with regard to Tomchei Tmimim, and also for Aryeh Leib ben Perel... and the Aibeshter should lead [us] in the true path generally, and especially concerning Tomchei Tmimim. I am constantly in doubt, and Hashem should protect me from mistakes and through me there shouldn't be any stumbling, *chas veshalom*, in Tomchei Tmimim, and



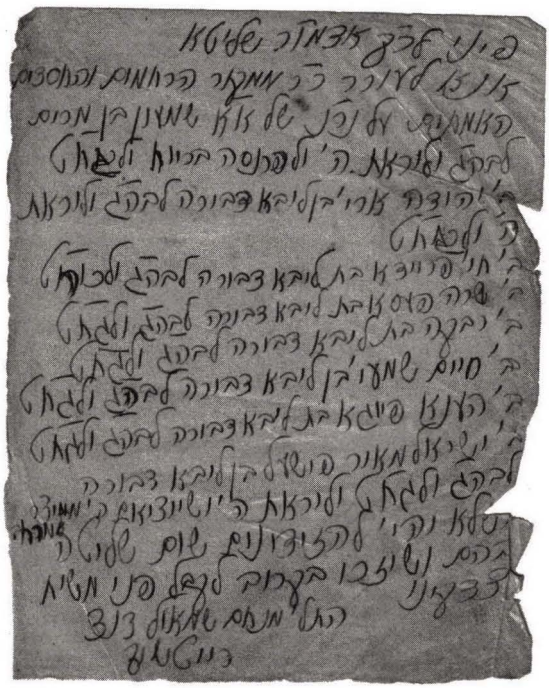
to accept the yoke of heaven with an inner acceptance, and I should merit to connect myself with a true connection to the Rebbe and be a tamim according to the *kavanah ha'amitis,* and I shouldn't have anything preventing me from involvement in Torah and diligence and success in learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus, and health. And the wickedness should have no power over me, and I should merit to be *mekabel* soon, together with the Rebbe, *p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*. The student

Menachem Shmuel Dovid.

[New York (found in a volume of *Sefer Ma'amarim*)]



Health, great success in shlichus physically and spiritually, and *nesinas chein*, and Hashem should guide me in the true path, without mistakes, *chas ve-shalom*, and to be awoken in true te-shuvah… and to awake the strength of the G-dly soul to get out of the connection to worldly things, and also for my wife and my son…

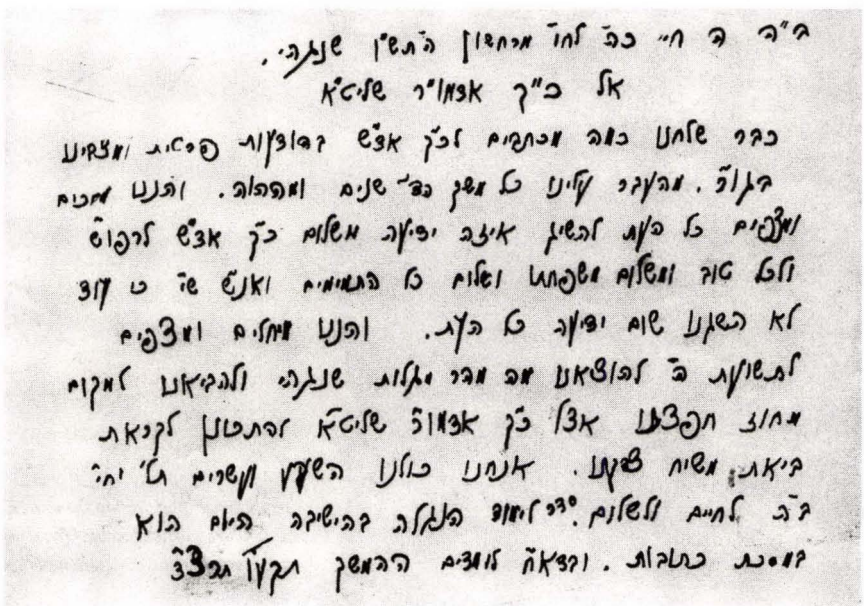


In a pan written during the war, Rabbi Raichik requests blessings for a sweet new year for his family members, all of whom later perished.

[APPENDIX IV]

Draft Report to the Rebbe Rayatz

A draft of a report to the Rebbe Rayatz, written after WWII ended. It details their stay in Japan and Shanghai, what they studied and how they fared (see pp. 66-81).



[APPENDIX V]

The Vilna Pilpul

At the Rebbe Rayatz's request, Rabbi Raichik said a pilpul (scholarly talk) in Vilna (see page 45). His grandson Rabbi Yisroel Noach Raichik reconstructed the pilpul in Hebrew based on notes found after Rabbi Raichik's passing.

כתב המהרי"ק בשורש לב בענין קטן שקידש אי חוששין לקידושין: "מצאתי כתוב שר' נתן המכירי שאל מאת ר' יצחק בן ר' יהודה (ר"י ברזילי) בן י"א שנה שקידש לו אביו בטבעת ובעצים, אם ימאן (הבן) האם אשתו צריכה גט או לא, והשיב ע"ז (הר"י ברזילי) שני טעמים לכך שצריכה גט: א. שמצינו בכל מקום שזכין לאדם שלא בפניו (ולכן נחשב הקידושין שקידש לו אביו לקידושין גמורין וצריכה גט). ב. ועוד, מאחר שלא מיחה בקידושי אביו עד י"ג שנים ומחצה, מאן לימא לן דלא ארצויי ארצי לאחר שגדל ושתיק וקיבל ולאחר מכאן חזר בו דאינה חזרה ואינה יוצאה בלא גט, ושלא יהי' בנות ישראל כהפקר, ואין לפקפק באיסור א"א". ע"כ.

והנה בנודע ביהודה מהדו"ת, אבן העזר סי' ע, מביא קושיית בנו על טעם הא' הנ"ל של הר"י ברזילי, (דהיות שזכין לאדם שלא בפניו לכן קידושי אביו הוי קידושין) דלכאורה הא דזכין לאדם שלא בפניו הוא מצד שליחות וידוע הכלל דאמרינן בנזיר (דף י, ב) מילתא דלא מצי עביד לי' השתא לא מצי עביד שליח, וא"כ היות שקטן עצמו אינו יכול לקדש אשה, לכאורה גם אביו אינו יכול לקדש אשה בשבילו, והגם שזכין לאדם שלא בפניו, הנה זהו רק במקום שהאדם עצמו הי' יכול לעשות דבר זה, ואיך אמר הר"י ברזילי דהוה קידושין.

ותי' הנודע ביהודה דמה שאמרינן מילתא דלא מצי עביד השתא לא משוי שליח אין הכוונה שהמשלח יהי' מצי עביד השתא, אלא הכוונה שהשליח יהי' מצי עביד שליחותו השתא, אבל בהמשלח לא איכפת לן אלא רק שיהי' בתורת אותו הדבר שרוצה לעשות שליח.

אבל לכאורה תירוצו של הנודע ביהודה דרוש ביאור; דהלוא משמע מכל הפוסקים1 ראשונים ואחרונים דמילתא דלא מצי עביד השתא הולך על המשלח ולא על השליח אם יכול לעשותו שליחותו. וכן משמע מרש"י ותוס' במס' נזיר שם, שרש"י - כשמפ' דברי הגמ' - מעתיק המילים "דמצי עביד איהו גופי' השתא", ומזה משמע שתלוי בהמשלח - אם הוא יכול לעשות דבר זה בעצמו. וכן בתוס' ד"ה מ"ט באמצע הדיבור "...ומשני כי משוי איניש שליח במילתי' דאיהו מצי עביד פי' ודאי . . אבל שליחותא שאני דלא מצי איניש משוי שליח אלא במילתא דמצי עביד נפשי' בשעה שעושה השליח", דמזה משמע נמי שקאי על המשלח - שצריך להיות בכוחו של המשלח לעשות דבר השליחות, ולא רק בכח של השליח לעשותו, וא"כ חזרה קושי' לדוכתא, מהו הביאור בהר"י ברזילי דאב שקידש בשביל בנו הקטן הוו קידושין מטעם זכין לאדם שלא בפניו, דהרי הקטן עצמו אין יכול לקדש אשה ואיך אביו יכול להיות השליח בשבילו לקדש אשה.

ויש לבאר זה, ובהקדים דברי הרמב"ם בהלכות אישות פ"ד ה"ז: "קטן שקידש אין קידושיו קידושין", והמשנה למלך מעתיק דברי הרמב"ם וכותב: "זה פשוט במשנה פרק האיש מקדש אבל נסתפקתי בקטן שקידש ואמר הרי את מקודשת לי לאחר שאגדיל, אם הוי קידושין או לא, ומסיק "דיש בזה מחלוקת רש"י ותוס' במסכת יבמות דף לד, א, דאמרינן התם אמר רב עמרם אמר רב בשופעת מתוך י"ג לאחר י"ג לאחיובי אינהו, מתוך י"ב לאחר י"ב לאחיובי אינהו. ע"כ לשון הגמ'.

והמתבאר מדברי רש"י שם הוא, דבעודם קטנים - הזכרים והנקיבות - וקדשו ואמרו שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדלו ותיכף כשגדלו חלו הקידושין. . וזה פשוט למתבונן בדברי רש"י ז"ל. אך התוס' שם היקשו על פי' רש"י וז"ל: וקשה דלא הוי בבת אחת דנידות חל עליו תחילה שאין יכול לקדש ולא לעשות שליח עד שיגדיל דאין מעשה הקטן כלום. עכ"ל התוס'. והרי שכתבו מפורש שאין יכול לקדש כשהוא קטן אף כשאומר שלא יחולו הקידושין אלא לאחר שיגדיל". ע"כ לשונו של המשנה למלך.

והמתבאר מדברי המל"מ הוא, דבודאי קטן שקידש אין קידושיו קידושין, אבל קטן שקידש בשביל שיחולו הקידושין לאחרי שיגדיל, ה"ה מחלוקת רש"י ותוס', דרש"י סובר דהוי קידושין אבל תוס' ס"ל דלא הוי קידושין - דאין מעשה הקטן נחשב לכלום.

אבל לכאורה צלה"ב מהו הביאור בשיטת רש"י; למה נחשב קידושי קטן קידושין, והא אין מעשה קטן כלום וע"ד שהקשה תוס', ואיך יתרץ רש"י קושיית התוס'.

ויש לבאר זה עפ"י מה שכותב באבני מילואים עמ"ס קידושין (סימן מג סעיף ב), שמביא דברי הר"י ברזילי שקטן שקידש לו אביו אשה כשהי' בן י"א שנה ולאחר בר מצוה לא רצה בהקדושין, אשתו צריכה ממנו גט, מדוע כשהקטן עצמו עשה הקידושין אינו קידושין, דלמה קידושי קטן אינו נחשב לכלום, והא קטן אית לי' זכי' כשדעת אחרת מקנה לו, וכאן בקידושין האיש הוא הקונה והאשה הוא המקנה - שהאיש קונה האשה כדתנן במתניתנין "האשה נקנית", וא"כ למה אין הקטן יכול לעשות קידושין, הרי לכאורה יש כאן דעת אחרת מקנה לו - שהאשה מקנה עצמה להקטן - וא"כ יהי' נחשב לקידושין.

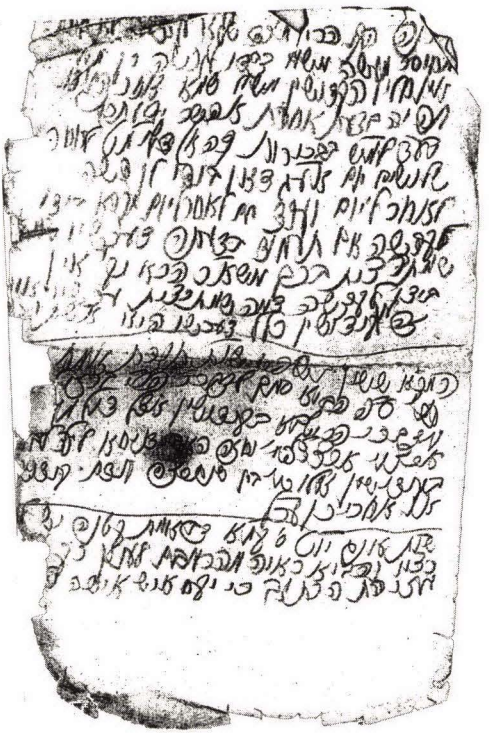
ותי' האבני מילואים (ע"פ המגיד משנה בהלכות מכירה פכ"ט), "דבכסף ושטר אין קטן יכול לקדש לפי שהוא צריך ליתן כסף ושטר להאשה דהיינו שתזכה האשה בהכסף ובהשטר, ואין להקטן כח לזכות להאשה הכסף והשטר שיצא מרשותו לרשות האשה, וזאת לפי שאין נתינתו של הקטן נחשבת לכלום ולכן אין האשה מקודשת, אבל עדיין אינו מבואר למה אין הקטן יכול לקדש ע"י ביאה.

והאבני מילואים מבאר זה בהקדם דברי הר"ן בנדרים (דף ל) דכתב "כיון שהתורה אמרה כי יקח איש אשה ולא כי תלקח אשה לאיש, לא כל הימנה שתכניס עצמה לרשות הבעל . . אלא כיון שהיא מסכמת

ומבטלת רצונה לקידושי האיש, הרי משוי עצמה לבעלה כדבר של הפקר והבעל מכ־ניסה לרשותו. ע"כ לשון הר"ן.

ועפ"ז מבאר, שכאן כשקטן מקדש אשה אין האשה מקנה עצמה לקטן, דאדר־בה, היא מבטלת דעתה ורצונה, והקידושין נפעלים ע"י האיש, והיות שאין מעשה קטן נחשב לכלום - דאינו יכול לעשות המעשה הקידושין - אין קידושי קטן כלום.

ואח"כ מביא האבני מילואים, דאפי' בהפקר אולי י"ל דעת אחרת מקנה לו, ומ־ביא דברי המשנה למלך בהלכות מכירה פכ"ט הל' יא בנוגע לקטן אם יכול לזכות בהפקר, שתלוי במחלוקת רש"י ותוס' בפ"ק דבב"מ דף יב בסוגיית זרק ארנ־קי, דשיטת רש"י היא דגם בהפקר מדעת אמרינן דעת אחרת מקנה לו, ולכן יכול הקטן לזכות בהפקר מדעת (דהיינו שאדם נטל דבר משלו והפקירו), אבל לפי שיטת התוס', לא אמרינן דהפקר מדעת הוי דעת אחרת מקנה לו, ולכן אין הקטן זוכה בדבר של הפקר.



Rabbi Raichik's notes on the pilpul he delivered in Vilna.

ולפי"ז מתרץ האבני מילואים (יש עוד תי' עי' שם) השאלה שהקשה דלמה לא אמרינן שקידושי קטן הוי קידושין מטעם שהאשה מקנה עצמה לקטן, דקטן קונה מן התורה כשדעת אחרת מקנה לו, דלפי תוס' לא קשה כלל היות דכאן מדבר בהפקר - שהאשה מפקרת דעתה ורצונה והקידושין נפעלים ע"י האיש, ולכן אין הקטן יכול לעשות הקידושין דאין בכוחו לקדש אשה בין בכסף בין בשטר ובין בביאה. אבל מסיק האבני מילואים דלפי שיטת רש"י, דאמרינן דעת אחרת מקנה אפי' בהפקר נמצא דבקידושי כסף וקידושי שטר שאמרנו לעיל שצריך נתינה מהאיש, אין ה"דעת אחרת מקנה" של האשה יכולה לפעול הקידושין, אבל בביאה שאין צריך נתינה מיוחדת מהאיש, וביאתו של קטן (לאחר ט' שנים) נחשבת לביאה הנה יכול הקטן לקדש אשה בביאה, היות שיש דעת אחרת מקנה לו מהאשה.

אבל לכאורה קצת חידוש לומר כן; דבפשטות מסתמא דתלמודא בכל מקום משמע שקידושי קטן לאו כלום הם, וכמפורש במשנה בדף נ' "המקדש שתי נשים בשוה פרוטה או אשה אחת בפחות משוה פרוטה אע"פ ששלח סבלונות לאחר מכאן אינה מקודשת שעל דעת קידושין הראשונים שלח, וכן קטן שקידש [ושלח סבלונות משהגדיל. רש"י] הרי מפורש דקידושי קטן אינו כלום. ואע"פ שבכתובות דף עד, יש תוס־פתא דנאמר בה "קידש בטעות ופחות משוה פרוטה וכן קטן שקידש אע"פ ששלח סבלונות מאחר מכן אינה מקודשת דמחמת קידושין הראשונים שלח ואם בעלו קנו", ויש ראשונים שמפרשים "ואם בעלו" – מיד, דהיינו שאם בעל הקטן את האשה מקודשת, וזה שאמרו קטן שקידש אינה מקודשת הר"ז רק בשטר וכסף,

ועפ"ז יומתקו דברי האבני מילואים.

אך מ"מ הוא חלק יותר לומר בפשטות, שקידושי קטן לאו כלום הם גם בקידושי ביאה, כמו שאמרה המשנה בקידושין סתם ולא חלקה בין כסף ושטר לביאה, וזה שכתוב בברייתא במס' כתובות שאם בעלו קנו, צ"ל בפשטות שמדובר לאחר שהגדיל, ולכן היות שרש"י בכתובות לא פי' שמדבר רק בשטר וביאה, ולא פי' על שאם בעלו קנו שזה מדובר אפי' בקטן, נראה לומר בפשטות שגם רש"י סובר דקידושי קטן לאו כלום הוא אפי' אם קידש בביאה, ואדרבה מרש"י שם משמע דבכל מקום לא הוי קידושין, דבד"ה קטן מפרש רש"י "אין קידושיו כלום דלאו בר קיחה הוא כי יקח איש כתיב", ומזה משמע שאין קיחה – קידושין - לקטן כלל ואפי' בביאה.

וא"כ הדרא קושיית האבני מילואים לדוכתא, מדוע קידושי קטן אינם קידושין לפי שיטת רש"י; דב־כסף ושטר מובן מדוע אינם קידושין לפי שצריכים נתינה מהאיש ונתינת קטן לאו כלום היא, אבל בביאה שאין צריכים נתינה, וביאת בן ט' שנים נחשב לביאה, ולפי שיטת רש"י יש הרי "הדעת אחרת מקנה" למה קטן שקידש בביאה אינה מקודשת.

ויש לבאר זה ע"פ מ"ש רש"י במסכת כתובות דף עג, ב שהבאנו לעיל. דרש"י שם בד"ה קטן מבאר "אין קידושיו (של קטן) כלום דלאו בר קיימא הוא, כי יקח איש כתיב". עכ"ל. ומזה משמע שרש"י לומד שהטעם שקטן אינו יכול לקדש אשה אינה מסברא (דאין מעשיו כלום, ואין נתינתו כלום...), אלא גזירת הכתוב הוא, וא"כ נמצא דלפי שיטת התוס', היות שמדובר בהפקר (האשה מפקרת דעתה ורצונה) לא אמרינן דעת אחרת מקנה, ומובן מסברא שאין קידושי קטן כלום.

משא"כ לפי דעת רש"י שאפי' בהפקר אמרינן דעת אחרת מקנה, נמצא דמצד הסברא היו צריכים להיות קידושי קטן קידושין, וכל הטעם שאינו קידושין הוא רק מצד גזירת הכתוב ד"כי יקח איש" - איש ולא קטן.

[עיין נודע ביהודה מהדורה תניינא סי' נב שהקשה שאלה זו של האבני מילואים מדוע קידושי קטן אינם כלום, ולמה לא יהיו קידושין מטעם דעת אחרת מקנה, ותי' לכל הדיעות מצד הפסוק דכי יקח איש שהוא גזה"כ, אבל אנו נוטלים סברה זו רק לרש"י, דרש"י אומר כן בהדי' כמו שהבאנו לעיל, וגם לפי שיטת התוס' יש לנו את סברת האבני מילואים מהר"ן דכאן אין האשה עושה הקנין אלא האיש].

והנה עפ"י הנ"ל יש לבאר מה שאמר המשנה למלך שאם קטן קידש אשה בשביל שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל, יש בזה מחלוקת רש"י ותוס'; דלפי שיטת רש"י חלו הקידושין כשיגדיל, משא"כ לפי שיטת התוס' אין מעשיו של קטן כלום ואפי' כשיגדיל לא יהיו קידושין [סברא זו שמביאים מיוסד על הנודע ביהודה סי' נד דלעיל, אבל שם ביאר מחלוקת רש"י ותוס' באופן אחר עיי"ש].

ורש"י ותוס' לשיטתם אזלי, דביארנו לעיל מהר"ן בנדרים שגדר קידושין הוא שהאשה מפקרת דעתה ורצונה, ולפי שיטת התוס' דלעיל (מהמשנה למלך הלכות מכירה) שתוס' סובר דבהפקר אין אומרים דעת אחרת מקנה, ולכן אין קטן יכול לזכות (מן התורה) בהפקר, מובן הדבר מצד הסברא שקידושי קטן לאו כלום הם היות דאינם נפעלים ע"י האשה, אלא המעשה קידושין נפעל ע"י האיש לכן אין קידושיו כלום (וכמו שהקשה תוס' על רש"י (ביבמות דף לד) והא אין מעשה קטן כלום).

משא"כ לפי שיטת רש"י - דאפי' בהפקר אומרים דעת אחרת מקנה (ולכאורה הטעם לזה הוא דגם כשמפקירו יש איזה קנין שהבעלים מקנים אותו להזוכה מן ההפקר ולא רק שעושים סילוק) - כמו שאמר המשנה למלך בהלכות מכירה, הנה מצד הסברא היו צריכים להיות קידושי קטן קידושין ורק הטעם שקידו־

שי קטן אינם קידושין הוא מצד גזירת הכתוב ד"כי יקח איש" - איש ולא קטן, וממילא יכולים לומר שקטן שקידש אשה בשביל שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל הוו קידושין, דהיות שכל הטעם שאינו קידושין הוא מצד חידוש הקרא דקטן אינו יכול לקדש, אין לומר דהחידוש יהי' אפי' כשיגדיל.

וי"ל הביאור בזה: דבאמת המעשה קידושין הוי מעשה קידושין, היות דדעת אחרת מקנה, ורק הגזירת הכתוב היא שקטן לא יכול לקדש, אבל כאן אין הקידושין חלים כשהוא קטן אלא כשהוא גדול, ולכן נראה לומר דרק מצד הסברא אין הקטן יכול לקדש לפי שאין מעשיו נחשב לכלום, ולכן אפי' אם קידש בשביל שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל אינם קידושין, דהמעשה קידושין לא נחשב לכלום היות שנעשה ע"י הקטן. אבל אם לומדים שזהו מצד גזירת הכתוב, משא"כ מצד הסברא כן הוי קידושין אין הגזירת הכתוב עושה שאין מעשיו נחשב לכלום, אלא שקטן לא יוכל לקדש, וממילא כשקידש אשה בשביל שיחולו כשיגדיל, חלו הקידושין כשיגדיל, דמעשיו כשהי' קטן הוי מעשה קידושין מצד דעת אחרת מקנה, ויחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל לפי שהגזה"כ הוא רק על קטן, ועכשיו הוא גדול.

ועפי"ז מובן שרש"י ותוס' - לגבי הלימוד דקידושין (ע"פ המשנה למלך בהלכות מכירה) - הם לשי־טתם בהדין דקטן שקידש שיחולו כשיגדיל ביבמות בסוגי' דשופעת.

אבל א"א לומר כן, דמה שביארנו הטעם שרש"י סובר שקטן שקידש אין קידושיו כלום הוא מצד חידוש הקרא, הי' מיוסד על מה שאמר האבני מילואים - דבאמת מצד הסברה לפי שיטת רש"י הי' צ"ל קידושי קטן קידושין, משום דגדר הקידושין הוא שהאשה מפקיר עצמה (מפקרת דעתה ורצונה), ורש"י סובר שאפי' בהפקר אמרינן דעת אחרת מקנה, ולכן מצד הסברא יכול הקטן לקדש אשה ע"י שהאשה מקנה עצמה להקטן.

אבל לכאורה, מה שמבאר האבני מילואים בהר"ן דרוש ביאור: א. דלכאורה אין שייך ענין הפקר כשהוא בר דעת שמפקירה עצמה לו, אלא בפשטות היא ג"כ מציאות ורוצה לינשא לאיש זה דוקא, ולא הפקירה עצמה לכל מי שירצה לישא אותה, והאבני מילואים רוצה לומר שהגדר דקידושין לפי שיטת רש"י יהי' באופן שמקנה עצמה לו מצד הדין דהפקר, אבל לכאורה אינו מובן איך אומרים הפקר כפשוטו כבר דעת.

ב. (ועיקר): מלשון הר"ן לא משמע כן, דמלשון הר"ן לא משמע שהיא הפקר ממש, אלא כאילו היא הפקר והוא זה שעושה המעשה קידושין, אבל היא אינה חלק מהמעשה קידושין, ואדרבה כל כוונת הר"ן הוא לבאר שכתיב כי יקח איש ולכן הוא עושה המעשה הקידושין, והאבני מילואים רוצה לבאר ע"פ הר"ן שעושה עצמה כהפקר, ולכן לפי שיטת רש"י יהיו קידושין מצד הסברא דהיא מקנה עצמה לו, דהיא עושה הקידושין, ולכאורה זהו היפך כל כוונת הר"ן.

לכאורה עדיין יכולים לבאר (המשנה למלך) מח' רש"י ותוס' ביבמות בקטן שקידש בשביל שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל; דרש"י סובר שהוו קידושין ותוס' סובר שלא הוו קידושין כמו שביארנו לעיל שתוס' סובר כהר"ן דאשה מפקרת דעתה ורצונה ולכן מצד הסברא א"א לומר שקידושי קטן קידושין, דמעשיו אינו נחשב לכלום, משא"כ בשיטת רש"י יכולים לומר שחולק על הר"ן, והוא סובר שהאשה כן נחשבת מקנה, ולכן יש להסברא דמפקרת דעתה ורצונה, וכל הטעם שקידושי קטן אינם קידושין הוא משום גזירת הכתוב דחידש קרא דלא להוי קידושין, ולכן אם קידש בשביל שיחולו הקידושין כשיגדיל הוי קידושין.

[APPENDIX V]

Reports to the Rebbe Rayatz

Draft reports from the year 5707 (1946-7) to the Rebbe Rayatz, which describes his visits to cities throughout the United States (see pp. 92-97).

לכ"ק אדמו"ר מוהריי"ץ בשנת ה'תש"ז אודות נסיעותיו כשליח המל"ח.

ר"ח ניסן

על ש"ק פ' ויקרא באתי לברידזשפאט דברתי לפני הקהל קודם תפילת מוסף בביהכ"נ אנשי ליובאוויטש אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש ובפרט אודות המל"ח ואודות זכרון מקור מחצבתם אודות לימוד התורה וחינוך הכשר,

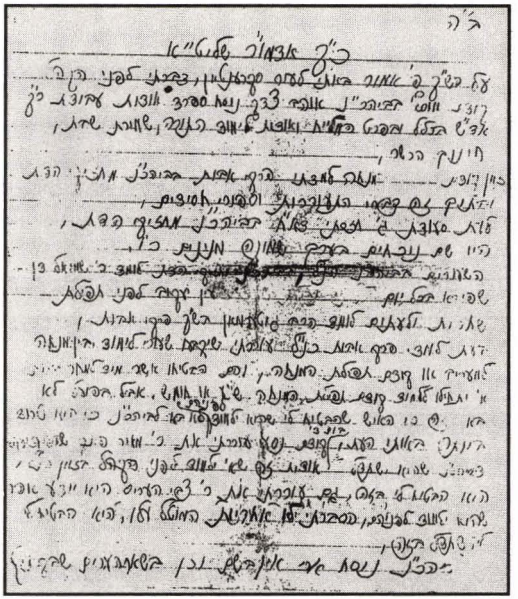
אחר התפילה הי' קידוש, בעת הקידוש ספרתי סיפור חסידי, ודיברתי דברי התעוררות,

לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי מאמר דא"ח בבית הכנסת נוסח אשכנז. כי בביהכ"נ אנשי ליובאוויטש אין מתפללים רק בליל שבת ובשבת בוקר, כי הוא רחוק מהמרכז היהודים.

במוצש"ק ב' ניסן נסעתי ביחד עם ר' ישראל סטאק לניו האוועז, והתוועדנו שם בבית ר' משה העכט גם היו שם נוכחים ר' זלמן שעכטער, והרב זאב שולדקראט

הנני נוסע אי"ה היום לנארפאלק

יתן ה' שאצליח בעבודתי ושאשלים הכוונה של כ"ק.



A draft report to the Rebbe Rayatz.

ב"ה

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

באור ליום ה' ו' ניסן נסעתי לנא־
רפאלק,

בש"ק פ' צו דברתי לפני הקהל אחר מוסף בביהכ"נ בית אברהם נוסח אשכ־נז (נוסח אר"י אין בשם) אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש בכלל ובפרט המל"ח ועוררתי אודות לימוד התורה שמירת שבת ואודות לימוד בנים ובנות בחדרים כשרים,

לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי מאמר דא"ח,

ביום א' ט' ניסן הייתי בפארטפמוט (הסמוך לנארפאלק) דברתי זמן ארוך עם הרב יצחק גרינפעלד אודות ענייני חינוך ועוררתי בדברים ברורים אודות גודל אח־ריות עליו מפני כמה פרטים באופן החינוך בתלמוד תורה שלו, וקודם נסיעתי צלצלתי לו עוה"פ, אחר תפילת ערבית דברתי שם לפני הקהל בבהכ"נ גומלי חסד נוסח אשכנז אודות תוכן הנ"ל.

באור ליום ב' הייתי בבית ר' שמואל סטאם והתוועדתי עמו, גם עוררתיו ביותר אודות המצב הנוכחי בהעיר שהוא בשפל המדרגה מאוד, ואשר עליו מוטל להשתדל בחיזוק היהדות, קודם הפרדי אמר לי שהוא בטוח שאם אבוא לשנה הבאה אז יהי' המצב הרוחני בהעיר באופן אחר לגמרי לטוב,

עיקר תקוותו הוא מפני כי ע"פ השתדלותו נבנה בשם ביהכנ"ס ותלמוד תורה בניין גדול ומפואר מאוד, ובעוד בערך שני חדשים יוגמר הבניין, והוא משתדל להביא שם לרב -תלמיד ישיבת תורה ודעת אשר גמר בקאלעדזש ג"כ, הוא מצפה אשר ביחד עם הרב יהי' באפשרותו לפעול הרבה בהחזקת היהדות, וגם יפתח תלמוד תורה כשרה, (עד היום אין בשם תלמוד תורה כשרה), אפשר הי' מהראוי להשתדל שיקחו לרב א' מתלמידי ישיבתינו דאה"ב,

בעת היותי בערים הנ"ל וכמו"כ כמעט בכל העיר שהייתי עד הנה, הנה בכל הזדמנות שהי' לי לדבר עם א' מישראל הנה השתדלתי לעשות אתו מדובר אודות ענייני תומ"צ ועוררתיו או בכללות או אודות איזה מצווה פרטית, א' בעל חנות שדיברתי איתו כמה פעמים הבטיח לי שישתדל לסגור החנות בשבת.

הרב גרינפעלד הבטיח לי להשיג תמיכה מהפעדעריישען בפארטפמוט בעד המל"ח וגם מר סאטם הבטיח לי להשתדל אודות זה בנארפאלק.

ב"ה

ביום א' דחה"פ דברתי לפני הקהל בבית הכנסת בית עם הרב סיימאן

ביום ב' דחה"פ דברתי בבה"כ נוסח ספרד על רחוב פרעזידענט אצל ראדזשעס,

ביום שביעי של פסח דברתי בבה"כ שבת אחים נוסח ספרד, דברתי ועוררתי בחיזוק היהדות בכלל ובפרטות אודות שמירת שבת וגם דברתי בפרטיות אודות החינוך הכשר,

על יום אחרון של פסח התדברתי עם מנהיגי ביהכ"נ בית דוד גרשון ונתנו לי רשות לנאום קודם יזכור, רק בפועל הי' התנגדות מצד אחדים והי' מחלוקת ולא דברתי, והי' הזמן מאוחר ללכת לבית הכנסת אחר.

בשבת מברכים אייר דברתי בביה"כ נוסח ארי אנשי ליאדי קודם מוסף, אודות חיזוק היהדות בכלל ובפרטיות אודות שמירת שבת ואודות לימוד הלכות שבת ואודות חינוך הכשר,

לעת השלש סעודות, חזרתי שם מאמר דא"ח אחר דא"ח ספרתי להם ספור חסידי

גם עוררתי עוה"פ, אודות לימוד הלכות שבת והבטיחו לי שמשבת הבא ילמדו ברבים חצי שעה הלכות שבת.

ב"ה

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

ביום ג' ב' אייר בקרתי בעיר פעטערסאן את ר' בן ציון פרידמאן שי' הייתי בביתו התוועדתי עמו, עוררתיו ביותר אודות נכדו ישעי' דוב שאינו רוצה ללמוד כלל, מר פרידמאן הסכים לשולחו לישיבתינו רק נכדו הנ"ל היות שהוא רך בשנים אינו רוצה ליסע מביתו,

בין מנחה למעריב למדתי חובש בביהכ"נ נוסח אר"י אנשי ליובאוויטש ובתוך הלימוד דברי התעוררות וסיפורי חסידים,

על ש"ק פ' אחרי-קדושים באתי לעיר פאסויאיק דברתי לפני הקהל קודם קה"ת בביהכ"נ אוהבי שלום אנשי ליובאוויטש אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש ובפרט המל"ח ואודות שמירת שבת ולימוד הלכות שבת ואודות חינוך הכשר יותר משעה,

קודם תפילת המנחה למדתי פרקי-אבות, ובתוך זה דברי התעוררות וסיפורי חסידים,

לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי לפניהם מאמר דא"ח,

השיעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל בין מנחה למעריב לומד לפניהם הרב קעלנער עין יעקב,

אחר חזרתי דא"ח עוררתי אותם עוה"פ אודות לימוד הלכות שבת כל ש"ק קודם תפילת מנחה, גם עוררתי את ר' שלומה יאפע, הוא הבטיח לי שמשבת הבא ילמוד לפניהם הלכות שבת,

ביום א' נסעתי מפאסויאיק לעטערסאון ביחוד לעורר אודות קביעות עתים לתורה, בביהכ"נ דיברתי

עם ר' מנחם מענדל צוקערמאן הוא הבטיח לי שישתדל לבוא בכל יום קודם תפילת המנחה ללמוד לפני הקהל עין יעקב,

ב"ה

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

על הש"ק פ' אמור באתי לעיר סקרענטאן, דברתי לפני הקהל קודם מוסף בביהכ"נ אוהב צדק נוסח ספרד אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש בכלל ובפרט המל"ח ואודות לימוד התורה, שמירת שבת, חינוך הכשר, זמן קודם עלות המנחה למדתי פרקי אבות בביהכ"נ מחזיקי הדת ובתוך זה דברי התעוררות וסיפורי חסידים, לעת סעודת ג' חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ מחזיקי הדת, היו שם נוכחים בערך שמונה מנינים כ"י.

השיעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל, בביהכ"נ מחזיקי הדת לומד ר' שמואל דן שפירא בכל יום עין יעקב לפני תפילת שחרית ולעתים לומד הרב גוטערמאן בש"ק פרקי אבות, בעת למדי פרקי אבות כנ"ל עוררתי שיקבעו שעורי לימוד בין מנחה למעריב או קודם תפילת המנחה, והם הבטיחו אשר מיד לאחר היום א' יתחילו ללמוד קודם תפילת המנחה ש"ע או חומש. אבל בפועל לא בא זה כי האיש שהבטיח לי שהוא ילמוד לפניהם לא בא לביהכ"נ כי הוא טרוד ביותר באותו העת, ביום ד' קודם נסעי עוררתי את ר' מאיר פרנק הפרעזידענט דביהכ"נ שהוא ישתדל אודות זה שא' ילמוד לפני הקהל בזמן הנ"ל, הוא הבטיח לי בזה, גם עוררתי את ר' צבי העריס הוא יודע ספר שהוא ילמוד לפניהם, הסברתי לו אחריות המוטל עליו, הוא הבטיח לי להשתדל בזה,

ביהכ"נ נוסח אר"י אין שם, וכן בשאר הערים שביקרתי.

בביהכ"נ אוהב צדק נוסח ספרד לומד הרב אהרן יהודא נאדלער בכל ש"ק פרקי אבות, ביום ג' אחר תפילת ערבית עוררתי אותם שיקבעו שעור לימוד בכ"י קודם תפילת המנחה, גם דברתי זמן ארוך אודות זה עם הרב נאדלער לבסוף הבטיח לי שהוא ילמוד לפניהם בכל יום קודם תפילת המנחה,

ביום ב' בקרתי את ביהכ"נ בני ישראל אנשי ספרד, אחר תפילת ערבית עוררתי אותם שיקבעו שעורי לימוד בכ"י, הם אמרו שזה עתה קבלו חזן חדש בביהכ"נ שלהם הוא יודע ספר ואי"ה יקבעו שהוא ילמוד לפניהם בכ"י.

גם נפגשתי עם הגבאים דביהכ"נ בני ישראל אהבת אחים, בכל ש"ק לומדים שם חומש או פרק עוררתי אותם שיקבעו שעור לימוד בכ"י, הם הבטיחו לי להשתדל בזה,

ביום ג' פ' בה"ב נזדמנתי לעיר אלעפאנט, ישוב קטן מיהודים סמוך לסקרענטאן, נפגשתי בשם עם הפרעזידענט דביהכ"נ ביקור חולים ר' מאיר ראזענפעלד הוא שומר שבת, עוררתי אותו להתענין אודות מצב היהדות במקומו, בביהכ"נ הנ"ל לומדים בכל ש"ק פרקי אבות (למנחה בכ"י אין מנין).

גם נפגשתי שם עם אשר זעליג גאלדבערגער פרעזידענט דחברה אוהב שלום בדיקסאן סיטי הוא ג"כ ישוב קטן, התועדתי עמו זמן ארוך הוא נתעורר במאוד והבטיח לי להשתדל לקבוע שעורי לימוד בביהכ"נ שלו,

בסקרענטאן דברו אתי כמה בע"ב אודות ליסד בעירם ישיבת אחי תמימים, אופיציאלי דיבר אתי

אודות זה ר' מאיר פינק פרעזידענט דביהכ"נ מחזיקי הדת, הוא מסר לי שזה עתה התחילו לבנות בנין גדול בעד ביהכ"נ שלהם ביחד עם מאדערנע מקוה ותלמוד תורה, ראשית ייגמר חלק הבנין של הת"ת כי זה מוכרח להם ביותר כי אין כלל בעירם ת"ת ולכן הוא מבקש לרחם עליהם ולסיד בעירם ישיבת אחי תמי־מים והנ"ל אמר שהם מקבלים עליהם לכלכל כל ההוצאה, הם בקשו כבר כמה פעמים אודות זה מהמרכז תת"ל אבל עד עתה לא בא זה בפועל, והנה באמת הרחמנות עליהם גדולה עד למאד כי בכלל מצב היהדות בסקרענטאן היא במדריגה גבוה הרבה יותר לגבי ערים אחרים, אבל בענין החינוך הנה המצב נורא מאד כי אין להם כלל ת"ת,

ביום ד' בה"ב לעת ערב באתי לעיר העזילטאון, שם יש ביהכ"נ אחת "אגודת-ישראל" הרב ראקאלי שמש דביהכ"נ לומד לפני הקהל בכ"י קודם מנחה עין יעקב, בין מנחה למעריב קצש"ע, בש"ק פרקי אבות, לדבר לפני הקהל לא הי' לי שם אפשרות, רק דברתי עם יחידים ועוררתי אותם, גם עוררתי את יעקב נערו, מוצאו מטשערניגוב הוא מאנ"ש ואחד משה גאלד ליסד מנין מיוחד בש"ק ויו"ט כי בזמן האחרון הנהיגו בביהכ"נ שלהם מנהגים קאנסערוואטיבים, הם הבטיחו לו להשתדל להביא זה בפועל,

על הש"ק פ' בה"ב באתי לעיר ווילקעס בערי דברתי לפני הקהל בביהכ"נ בית יעקב אודות עבודת כ"ק ובפרט אודות המל"ח ואודות לימוד התורה, שמירת שבת, חינוך הכשר, קודם תפילת המנחה דברתי בביהכ"נ הולכי יושר בתוכן הנ"ל רק באריכות יותר, לעת סעודת ג' חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ אוהב צדק (אונגארישע) היו שם נוכחים בערך ששה מנינים כ"י,

בביהכ"נ הולכי יושר לומד הרב דעוידסאן בכל ש"ק מדרש, עוררתי אותם לקבוע שעורי לימוד בכ"י, והבטיחו לי בזה כי קבלו עתה חזן חדש הוא יודע תורה ולכן יקבעו שהוא ילמוד לפניהם בכ"י,

בביהכ"נ אוהב צדק לומדים בש"ק עין יעקב או גמרא, התחלתי להשתדל שיקבעו שיעורי לימוד בכ"י, אבל נסעתי משם באמצע העבודה, כי נדברתי עמהם לבוא עוה"פ לעירם על ש"ק, ואפשר אסע לשם אי"ה על ש"ק פ' בהעלותך, מצאתי שם שני אנשים מאנ"ש א' מוצאו מבארוסאו, והשני מדריסק הסמוך לארשא. הם חתנו של בן ציון אחיו של הרה"ח ר' שמואל דוב מבאריסאו התוועדתי עמהם בייחוד אודות ליסד ביהכ"נ אצלם,

בלוצערין (ג"כ ישוב קטן מיהודים) נפגשתי עם הרב דוד איזאק ועוררתי אותו שאין צריכים לה־תייאש כך צריכים להשתדל בכל היכולת אודות מצבם הרוחני של אנשי מקומו, וברית כרותה לתעמולה שאינה חוזרת ריקם,

ביום ב' במדבר לעת ערב באתי לעיר אלענטאון,

ביום ג' בין מנחה למעריב חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ אגודת אחים, השעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל בכ"י בין מנחה למעריב דף גמרא או עין יעקב, בש"ק פרקי אבות, הלומד לפניהם הוא הרב שלומה זלמן בן ר' שמעון קרעוסקי מוצאו מסמארגאן הוא מאנ"ש,

ביום ד' בין מנחה למעריב דברתי בביהכ"נ שערי שלום אודות לימוד התורה שמירת שבת חינוך הכשר הבטיחו לי להשתדל לקבוע שעורי לימוד בביהכ"נ שלהם,

ביום ד' בקרתי בבית בנימין שעיפער הוא רחוק קצת מהעיר, התוועדתי עמהם איזה זמן ונתעוררו במאוד, אח"כ הוליכו אותי להעיר, לתפילת ערבית לקחתי אותו לביהמ"ד להתפלל ערבית, אחרי תפילת ערבית אמר לי שזה כעשר שנים שלא התפלל תפילת ערבית, עוררתי אותו להניח תפילין בכ"י, ואפשר

יבא זה בפועל.

ב"ה

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

על ש"ק פ' בהעלותך באתי בפעם השני' לווילקעס בערי, דברתי לפני הקהל קודם מוסף בביהכ"נ אהבת אחים אנשי ספרד אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש ובפרטות אודות המל"ח ועוררתי אודות שמירת ש"ק, קביעות שיעורי לימוד, חינוך הכשר,

אחר התפילה היה קידוש, הסברתי דברי התעוררות וספרתי ספור חסידי,

בשעת מעשה כמעט כולם נתעוררו והבטיחו שיבואו להשיעורים אבל בפועל לא בא. אמרו שהסיבה היא כי הלומד לפניהם חסר לו כח הסברה להסביר מה שלומד, קודם נסעי עוררתי אותם עוה"פ והבטיחו לי להשתדל לקבוע שיעורי לימוד בכ"י,

לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי מאמר דא"ח בביהכ"נ אוהב צדק,

אחר דא"ח דברתי אודות עניינים הנ"ל וגם אודות הכוחות שישנו בכ"א מישראל, ספרתי להם ספור חסידי, אחר ברכת המזון נתעוררו כמה בע"ב ודברו ביניהם אודות לקבוע שיעורי לימוד בביהכ"נ שלהם בכ"י ותבעו ממר פריפשטיין (הוא לומד לפניהם בכל ש"ק פרקי אבות) שילמוד עמהם ג"כ בכ"י, ע"ז ענה להם שמצדו לא יהי' שום מניעה, ביום א' לא למדו יכול להיות שהמניעה הי' כי הי' שם חתונה, ביום ב' שלח למד לפניהם.

ב"ה

על ש"ק פ' שלח באתי לק"ק דעטראיט, דברתי לפני הקהל קודם מוסף בביהכ"נ נוסח אר"י אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש בכלל ובפרט המל"ח ואודות זכרון מקור מחצבתם שמירת שבת, לימוד התורה, חינוך הכשר, אחר התפילה היה קידוש, בעת הקידוש ספרתי ספור חסידי וגם הפרעזידענט דביהכ"נ מרדכי זאב אקסעלראד מאנ"ש מוצאו מראמעין פלך פאלטאווא ספר סיפור מכ"ק אדמו"ר הזקן ששמע בעיר מולדתו

לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ הנ"ל.

ביום ב' למדתי שם חומש בין מנחה למעריב ובתוך זה דברי התעוררות וסיפורי חסידים,

ביום ד' א' דר"ח תמוז אחר תפילת הבוקר לעת לקחם משקה ספרתי סיפור חסידי וא' מאנ"ש משה קצב מוצאו מאושאף ספר ג"כ ספור חסידי מה שקרה אצלו,

ביום ה' ב' דר"ח תמוז אחר התפילה סדרתי התוועדות ספרתי ספורי חסידים ודברתי דברי התעוררות, גם עוררתי אותם לסדר התועדות בימי חג הגאולה י"ב-י"ג תמוז, והבטיחו לי בזה, השיעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל הם בכ"י קודם תפילת המנחה משניות בש"ק עין יעקב, הלומד לפניהם הרב דוד ריינין, עד ביאתי לשם לא בא הרב ריינין ללמוד לפניהם רק פעמים אחדים בשבוע ולא בכ"י, כשבאתי עוררתי אותו כמה

פעמים שיבוא בכ"י ללמוד לפניהם לבסוף הבטיח לי.

ב"ה

כ"ק אד"ש

על ש"ק פ' קרח באתי לעיר ראק איילענד, דברתי לפני הקהל אחר שחרית בביהכ"נ בני יעקב אודות ג' תמוז ואודות לימוד התורה.

לעת ש"ס חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ בני יעקב, השתדלתי הרבה שיעשו מקווה דיברתי עם הר' לעוינטאן ועם כמה מב"ב וכאשר היה נראה קודם נסיעתי משם, עבודתי עשו ב"ה פרי ויבוא זה אי"ה בפועל בקרוב, שם נזדמנתי עם א' יעקב ארשאק כאשר סיפר לי אביו ר' שמואל חרשק הי' איזה זמן שד"ר אצל כ"ק אדמו"ר מהר"ש נ"ע התועדתי איתו בפרטיות.

השעורים בביהכ"נ בני יעקב ביום א' בין מנחה למעריב גמרא בכ"י בין מנחה למעריב משניות בש"ק קודם מנחה עין יעקב בש"ש תורה, הלומד הרב שלומה יהודא לייב לעויטאן, ראקפארד הרב ישעיה אייזלער

על ש"ק פ' חקת באתי לעיר דעי מאנסי,

ב"ה

כאשר כבר כתבתי במכתבי הקודם בש"ק פ' חקת הייתי בעיר דע מאינס, התועדתי שם עם הרב פסח גארעליק ועוררתי אותו אודות השיעורי לימוד ובכלל, הוא לומד בביהכ"נ ביום א' עין יעקב בש"ק בקיץ ... ובחורף חומש, ובכ"י לומד לעתים חיי אדם,

ביום ב' בלק י"ב תמוז עוררתי א' שבא לאמור קדיש בביהכ"נ בני ישראל שיניח תפילין, והניח תפילין,

ביום ד' באתי לעיר סין-סיטי, את הרב בלאוטניקאץ דשם לא מצאנו בביתו,

ביום ה' בין מנחה למעריב דברתי בביהכ"נ בית אברהם נוסח אנשי ספרד להם אודות פרשת חג הגאולה י"ב וי"ג תמוז ועוררתי אותם לקבוע שעורי לימוד בכ"י לעתים לומד שם הרב באלאטניקאץ ואותו לא מצאתי בביתו – בביהכ"נ עדת ישורון עוררתי את השו"ב לעניין שילמוד לפניהם בכ"י, ביום ה' בוקר עוררתי א' שבא לביהכ"נ עדת ישורון לאמור קדיש שיניח תפילין והניח תפילין.

על ש"ק פ' בלק באתי לעיר אמאהא, דיברתי לפני הקהל קודם מוסף בביהכ"נ עדת ישורון, אודות עבודת כ"ק אדמור ובפרט המל"ח לימוד תורה וחינוך הכשר, אחר התפילה בעת הקידוש ספרתי סיפורי חסידים לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי דא"ח בביהמ"ד הגדול,

השיעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל בביהכ"נ עדת ישורון לומד הרב מנחם נחום פעלדמאן בש"ק מדרש, עוררתי אותו שילמוד בכ"י, בביהמ"ד הגדול לומד הרב מאושאויטש בכל ש"ק גמרא, עוררתי אותם שישת־

דלו ליקח להם א' שילמוד לפניהם בכ"י בין מנחה למעריב

ביום א' פנחס עוררתי א' שבא לביהכ"נ אחר התפילה להרב שיניח תפילין והתפלל הוא עשה זאת, והבטיח להניח תפילין בכ"י, ביום ב' עוררתי ב' אנשים בביהכ"נ שיניחו תפילין והניחו תפילין אח"ז דברתי עמו שיניחו תפילין ויתפלל בכ"י והבטיח זה,

ביום ב' פנחס עוררתי ב' אנשים בביהמ"ד הגדול שיניחו תפילין והניחו תפילין, הייתי שם אצל דר. אגוסט ועוררתי אותו ואת גיסו שיניחו תפילין ויתפללו והבטיח זה ובעת היותי שם אמרו לי בכ"י שהניחו תפילין והתפללו היום והבטיחו לקום זה בסדר,

על ש"ק פ' פנחס באתי לעיר שאיען דברתי לפני הקהל קודם מוסף, בערך מאה משפחות בביהכ"נ הר סיני אודות עבודת כ"ק אד"ש בכלל ובפרט המל"ח לימוד התורה, שמירת שבת חינוך הכשר, קודם מנחה למדתי לפני הקהל פרקי אבות ובתוך זה דברי התעוררות וסיפורי חסידים, לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי דא"ח,

עוררתי אותם לקבוע שעור לימוד בכל ש"ק, ועוררתי את השו"ב זלמן ואלף מאיר שילמוד לפניהם והבטיח זה, הוא לומד שם בהת"ת בכ"י עם 41 ילדים וביום א' 25 ילדים, עוררתי אותו אודות אחריות המוטלת עליו בעניין חינוך הילדים להחדיר בלבם י"ש.

ביום ג' מטו"מ באתי לעיר סאן פראנציסקו דברתי לפני הקהל בש"ק קודם מוסף בביהכ"נ אנשי ספרד אודות כ"ק אד"ש ובפרט המל"ח לימוד התורה שמירת שבת חינוך הכשר לעת השלוש סעודות חזרתי דא"ח בביהכ"נ כנסת ישראל.

השיעורים בביהכ"נ הנ"ל בביהכ"נ אנשי ספרד לומד ר' פייויש הורוויץ בכ"י אחר התפילה משניות קודם מנחה לומד ר' אברהם יצחק האלץ עין יעקב ובש"ק לומד מר הורוויס משניות,

בביהכ"נ כנסת ישראל עוררתי הרב דוד מארטין שיסדר שיעורים ללימוד התורה בביהכ"נ שלו והבטיח להשתדל בזה, גם עוררתי את השו"ב יוסף קוסטלינגער אודות זה ובכלל אודות מצב היהדות

הרב מארטין מנהל שם ישיבה קטנה לומדים בה בערך 36 ילדים, ידעתי וגם זה דעת הרבה בע"ב כי אם ישיבתינו קבלה הנהלת הישיבה אז גרמה הגדלת הישיבה באין ערוך לכן הוא מבקש שמרכז תת"ל יקבל הנהלת הישיבה,

ביום א' דברים עוררתי א' בביהכ"נ כנסת ישראל שיניח תפילין והניח תפילין אח"כ דברתי איתו שיניח תפילין בכ"י, ביום ג' עוררתי א' בביהכ"נ אנשי ספרד שיניח תפילין והניח תפילין

גם ביום ו' עוררתי א' שיניח תפילין כ"י

בש"ק דברים עוררתי את הרב מארטען שידבר לפני הקהל אודות חינוך הכשר,

ביום ג' ואתחנן באתי לעיר פארטלאנד

Glossary

Cross references are marked with an asterisk (*). Years are given using both the Hebrew and Georgian calendars (5778/2018).

Acharon shel Pesach. The last day of Passover (Hebrew). It is known to have a special connection with Moshiach*, and chassidim mark it with a Moshiach Seudah (feast)*, during the last hours of the holiday.

Aibeshter. "The One above" (Yiddish). G-d Almighty.

aliyah. "An ascent" (Heb.). In a prayer service, the term describes the honor of being called up to the reading table to make a blessing on the Torah scroll before it is read.

alter heim. "Old home" (Yid.). A nostalgic term for life in the small towns of pre-war Europe, see *shtetel.*

Alter Rebbe. "Old Rebbe" (Yid.). Schneur Zalman of Liadi (5505/1745-5573/1812), the founder of the Chabad* movement and author of the *Tanya**, its foundational work.

anash. An acronym for "people of peace," it refers to the followers of a specific philosophy or Chassidic* group.

Aseres Yemei Teshuvah. "Ten days of returning" (Heb.). The days from Rosh Hashanah* to Yom Kippur*, considered an auspicious time to review past misdoings and rededicate oneself to the service of G-d, see *teshuvah.*

aufruf. "Called up" (Yid.). The aliyah* given to a groom on the Sabbath before his wedding, traditionally followed by a small celebration.

avodah. "Service" or "work" (Heb.). In Chabad tradition, the term refers to serving G-d through prayer, which includes contemplating G-d's greatness, how He recreates the world from nothing every moment and controls even the most minor events. Prayer with deep concentration is often accompanied by a *niggun**.

b'arichus. "At length" (Heb.). Davening* b'arichus is the custom of praying at length with intense concentration.

baal korei. "Master of reading" (Heb.). One who reads from the Torah scroll during prayer services.

baalebateshe. "Like a homeowner" (Yid.). Used to describe a person who is mindful of material concerns, respectable, and well-mannered.

Baal Shem Tov. "Master of the good name" (Heb.). Rabbi Israel the son of Eliezer (d. 5520/1760), founder of the Chassidic* movement.

beinoni. "Intermediate one" (Heb.). An individual whose spiritual labors have brought him to a level of perfection in thought, word, and deed, despite his still-active evil inclination (see *Tanya**, chapter 12). Also the name of a melody that was a favorite of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe.

beis din. "House of judgment" (Heb.). A rabbinical court comprised of at least three rabbis who render decisions in Jewish law.

Beis Hamikdash. "House of holiness" (Heb.). The Holy Temple in Jerusalem, built and destroyed twice. The first was completed in 2935/827 BCE, the second in 3412/349 BCE. The third, and last, will be built with the coming of Moshiach*.

bentch (past tense **bentched**). "To say a blessing" (Yid.). Reciting grace after meals.

berachah (pl. **berachos**). "Blessing" (Heb.). Jewish law requires a blessing to be recited before eating, before performing certain mitzvahs, and on various occasions of importance in an individual's life; also a blessing given to another.

Birchas Hashachar. Morning blessings recited upon arising, thanking G-d for the world and the basic functions of one's body (Heb.).

bochur (plural **bochurim**). A young, unmarried man, often a yeshivah* student.

bris. "Covenant" (Heb.). The ritual circumcision of a Jewish boy, usually performed at eight days old.

Chabad. An acronym for the Hebrew words *chochmah*, *binah*, and

daat (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge). Chabad (or Lubavitch*) is a branch of the Chassidic* movement that takes an intellectual approach to the service of G-d. In the second half of the 20th century, Chabad became known for bolstering Jewish life across the globe.

Chai Elul. A special day on the Chabad calendar, the 18th day of the Hebrew month of Elul marks the birthdays of both the Baal Shem Tov* and the Alter Rebbe*.

chametz. "Leaven" (Heb.). Any food made of wheat, barley, oats, spelt, or rye that has come into contact with water and been allowed to ferment for more than 18 minutes. Jews are forbidden to consume, or even own, *chametz* on Passover.

Chassidism; chassid; Chassidic. From the Hebrew word *chesed* (kindness), the Chassidic movement was founded in the 18th century by Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, later known as the Baal Shem Tov*. Chassidic philosophy uses the mystical teachings of the Kabbalah to illuminate the deeper significance of Jewish prayer and ritual. The *chassid* serves G-d with love and joy, recognizing the role of divine providence in every aspect of his or her life.

Chanukah. The eight-day holiday celebrating the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in the second century BCE, observed by kindling an additional light on the nine-branched menorah (candelabra) each night.

Chassidus. Chassidic philosophy as codified in the teachings of Chassidic leaders, see *Chassidism*.

chassunah. A Jewish wedding (Heb.).

chatzos. Midday or midnight (Heb.). In Jewish law, the halfway point between sunrise and sunset, or vice versa.

chazarah. "Repetition" (Heb.). Among Chabad chassidim, reviewing a talk or discourse of a Rebbe.*

chazan. Cantor (Heb.). One who leads prayer services in a synagogue.

cheder. "Room" (Heb.). Originally a one-room school where Jewish boys were taught Hebrew and religious studies. Today it is sometimes used to describe primary schools.

Cheshvan. The second month on the Hebrew calendar, usually coincides with October/November.

chiddushim. "Novel ideas" (Heb.). Innovative interpretations of the written or oral Torah*.

cholov Yisroel. "Jewish milk" (Heb.). Milk produced under the supervision of a Jew.

chosson. A groom (Heb.).

Chumash. The Five Books of Moses, the Pentateuch.

chupah. The wedding canopy (Heb.). Also refers to the marriage ceremony itself, performed under a square canopy. The Chabad custom is to do it outside.

daven. (present tense, **davening**). The act of praying (Yid.).

dayan. "Judge" (Heb.). Member of a rabbinical court, see *beis din*.

Dovid Hamelech. The biblical King David, the second king of Israel.

dveikus niggunim. Soul-stirring Chassidic* melodies (Yid.).

ehrliche. "Straight" (Yid.). An honest and refined person.

Ein Yaakov. "The Eye of Jacob." A collection of tales from the Talmud compiled by Jacob ben Solomon ibn Habib (c. 1445-c.1515).

Elul. The last month on the Hebrew calendar, it is devoted to introspection and preparation for the upcoming High Holidays.

emes. Truth or truthful (Heb.).

emunah. Faith in G-d (Heb.).

esrog (pl. **esrogim**). Citron used during the festival of Sukkos* to perform the mitzvah of the Four Kinds, see also *lulav* and *hadas*.

farbrengen. "Gathering" (Yid.). An assemblage where Chassidic teachings and stories are shared, interspersed with niggunim*. Farbrengens are an integral part of Chabad Chassidism, intended to renew the chassid's fervor for divine service*. The Chabad Rebbes held farbrengens, where they shared words of inspiration, Torah ideas, and original Chassidic* discourses.

farbreng. To take part in a farbrengen*.

frum (pl. **frumme**). "Pious" (Yid.). One who is careful in the strict observance of Jewish law.

G-d. To indicate its holiness, the divine name is not written in its entirety, even in translation.

gabbai. The synagogue beadle or sexton.

galus. Exile (Heb.). Usually refers to the historic exile of the Jews from the land of Israel, when services in the Beis Hamikdash* have ceased.

gartel. A sash or cord worn around the waist by Chassidic men and other religious Jews during prayer services, marking a symbolic separation between the higher and lower (less spiritual) parts of the body.

Gemara. The Talmud is composed of the Mishnah, the oral laws, and the commentary and discussion

by the sages. Completed in the year 475 CE, it is the basis for the code of Jewish law, and its study, usually accompanied by lively debate, is the foundation of Jewish education.

gmar chasimah tovah. "It should be a completed inscription for good" (Heb.). A blessing traditionally given before Yom Kippur*.

gornisht. Nothing (Yid.).

Gur. The Polish town of Góra Kalwaria was called Gur in Yiddish. The name also refers to the Chassidic* dynasty founded there by Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter (5559/1799-5626/1866), known as the Chiddushei Harim.

hadas. Myrtle, one of the Four Kinds used during the holiday of Sukkos*, see also *lulav* and *esrog*.

hakafos. "Encircling" (Heb.). The dances performed with the Torah scrolls on Shemini Atzeres* and Simchas Torah*, which circle the table where the Torah is read.

halachah. "The way" (Heb.). The body of Jewish law, as codified in the *Shulchan Aruch*, the code of Jewish law; also used to refer to an individual law ("a *halachah*").

Hashem. "The Name" (Heb.). G-d*.

hashgacha pratis. Divine individual providence, which, Chassidism teaches, extends to even the smallest blade of grass.

Hayom Yom. "Today Is a Day." An anthology of aphorisms, anecdotes, and customs from the teachings of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, compiled and arranged according to the calendar by the Rebbe*.

hiskashrus. "Connection" (Heb.). The relationship and spiritual bond between a chassid* and his rebbe*.

histalkus. "Departure" (Heb.). A person's passing (usually a *tzaddik**).

kabbalas panim. The wedding reception hosted by the bride and groom before the ceremony.

Kaddish. "Holy" (Heb.). A prayer recited by the cantor at various points during the service. It is also recited by mourners during the funeral and prayer services for the first eleven months after the passing of an immediate relative, such as a parent or child, and on a yahrtzeit*.

kapote. The frock coat worn by Chabad chassidim* usually on the Sabbath and holidays.

kashrus. See kosher.

kavod. Honor or respect (Heb.).

kesivah vechasimah tovah. "You should be written and inscribed for good" (Heb.). A blessing for the Jewish New Year.

kichel (plural **kichelach**). A biscuit, commonly made with eggs, it lacks any defined taste without a sugar coating.

Kiddush. "Sanctification" (Heb.). The prayer said before a Sabbath or holiday meal, usually over a cup of wine.

Kinus Hashluchim. The annual gathering of Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries at Lubavitch Headquarters, in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn.

kinus Torah. "Assemblage of Torah" (Heb.). A gathering of scholars to discuss novel Torah* ideas.

kippah. "Dome" (Heb.). The skullcap worn by boys and men reminding them that there is a G-d above that sees and knows everything below.

kiruvim. "Signs of endearment" (Heb.). Here it refers to the affection the Rebbe* shows to a chassid.

Kislev. The third month on the Hebrew calendar, usually corresponding to November/December.

koch. "Cook" (Yid.). Here used figuratively to describe excitement and involvement in a particular activity or course of study.

Kohen (pl. **Kohanim**). A descendant of Aaron, brother of Moses, who served as high priest in the Tabernacle. *Kohanim* were the priests in the Holy Temple and are still given honorary duties during Torah reading, prayer services, and other occasions.

kollel. "Gathering," (Heb.). An advanced Torah academy for married men.

kos shel brachah. "Cup of blessing" (Heb.). The cup of wine over which a blessing has been recited. The Rebbe would distribute wine from his cup after a holiday *havdalah* (ceremony marking the end of the holy day).

kosher. "Fit" (Heb.). Refers to food that is prepared according to the Jewish dietary laws.

koshering. The act of making something kosher.

l'chaim. "To life" (Heb.). The traditional Jewish toast. At a *farbrengen**, participants toast each other, offering blessings for material and spiritual abundance.

Lag BaOmer. The 33rd day of the Omer (the seven-week period between the holidays of Passover and Shavuos), celebrated as a minor holiday. On that day a plague on the students of the great sage Rabbi Akiva (c. 50-135 CE) came to an end. It is also the date of passing of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, author of the *Zohar*.

lekach. "To take" (Heb.). Honey cake distributed on the eve of Yom

Kippur*, with wishes for a sweet year. It is customary to ask for a piece in the hope that it will be the only thing one needs to ask for that year.

Levi: A descendant of the tribe of Levi. In the Temple, they had specific duties and honors. Today, they are still given honorary duties during Torah readings, prayer services, and other occasions.

Lubavitch; Lubavitcher. Literally "the town of love," Lubavitch is the Yiddish name for the Russian village where the Chabad movement was based for over a century. The movement, its followers, and leaders became known as "Lubavitch" or "Lubavitchers," see also *Chabad*.

lulav. A closed palm branch bound with myrtle and willow and used during Sukkos* to fulfill the mitzvah of the Four Kinds (see also *esrog*).

ma'amar (plural **ma'amarim**). A formal discourse of Chassidic philosophy delivered by a Chabad Rebbe*.

Maariv. The evening prayer service.

maggid shiur. A teacher of Torah in a yeshivah* (Heb.).

maggid. A preacher (Heb.).

malachim. Angels (Heb.).

mashgiach. "Supervisor" (Heb.). Here it refers to someone who oversees the daily operation of a yeshivah*.

mashpia. "Mentor" (Heb.). A spiritual mentor, either in a yeshivah or in civilian life. The Rebbe encouraged all his followers to have a mashpia.

maskil. "An intellectual" (Heb.). An expert in the intellectual aspect of Chabad* philosophy.

masmid. "A diligent person" (Heb.). A devoted and studious student of Torah*.

matzah. Unleavened, cracker-like bread eaten during Passover. It commemorates the Exodus from Egypt, when the Jews fled in such haste that they did not have time to let their bread rise.

mayven. An expert (Yid.).

mazel. Fortune (Heb.).

mazel tov. "Good fortune." A wish of congratulations on a happy occasion, such as a birth or marriage.

melaveh malkah. "Escorting the queen" (Heb.). The traditional meal after the Sabbath to bid farewell to the Sabbath queen.

menorah. The nine-branched candelabra lit on Chanukah* in commemoration of the miracle of the oil, which, though enough for only one day, burned for eight.

mentchlich. "As befits a person"

(Yid.). Describes a person or behavior that demonstrates integrity and consideration for others.

mesader kiddushin. The rabbi who officiates at a Jewish wedding.

meshulashim. "Threefold" (Heb.). Describes a myrtle, used for the mitzvah of the Four Kinds on Sukkos* (see *hadas*), whose leaves are symmetrical.

mesiras nefesh. Giving up personal desires, to the point of sacrificing one's life, for observance.

mesivta. A yeshivah* high school.

mezuzah. "Doorpost" (Heb.). The parchment scroll affixed on the doorposts of a Jewish home or business, containing portions of the Shema* prayer.

Mi Keil Kamocha. "Who is like You, G-d." The ma'amar* of the fourth Chabad Rebbe, known as the Rebbe Maharash*.

mikvah. "A gathering of water" (Heb.). A ritual bath built according to the detailed specifications of Jewish law. Jewish law requires married women to immerse in a mikvah every month, but men may also use it to remove spiritual impurities.

Minchah. The afternoon prayer, said before nightfall. Though it is short, minchah is an important service, allowing the Jew to show his or her devotion to G-d by interrupting the day's business to pray.

minhagim. Jewish customs or traditions (Heb.).

mishloach manos. "Sending of portions" (Heb.). One of the four mitzvahs* of Purim, to send a friend a gift comprised of two types of food.

Mishnah. "Repetition" (Heb.). The first written compilation of the oral law, authored by Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi (approx. 200 C.E.). It is comprised of the germinal statements of law, later elucidated by the Gemara*; also a single statement of law from this work.

mitzvah (pl. **mitzvos**). A commandment (Heb.). The Torah contains 613 mitzvos. The word is also used loosely for any good deed. The Rebbe* initiated campaigns to promote the observance of particular mitzvos.

mivtzoim. The mitzvah campaigns instituted by the Rebbe; also the practice of promoting those campaigns by approaching Jews individually on the street or in the workplace.

mohel. The highly trained individual who performs ritual circumcisions.

Moshiach. Literally "the anointed one" (Heb.). The man who will

bring Jewish history to a close and usher in a new age when, "the Earth shall be full of knowledge of the L-rd, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). Belief in the coming of Moshiach is one of the core principles of Jewish faith.

Moshiach Seudah. Feast of Moshiach* (Heb.). A meal established by the Baal Shem Tov* on the last day of Passover to increase awareness of the future redemption. It is customary to have four cups of wine and matzah,* as at the *Seder**.

motzei. The night after (Heb.).

Musaf. "Additional" (Heb.). The additional standing prayer, corresponding to the additional sacrifice offered in Temple times, recited on the Sabbath, holidays and Rosh Chodesh *.

naanuim. "Shaking" (Heb.). The shaking of the Four Kinds, see *lulav* and *esrog*, in six directions: east, west, north, south, up, and down, a mitzvah performed every day of the holiday of Sukkos*.

nachas ruach. Spiritual satisfaction (Heb.).

negel vasser. "Nail water" (Yid.). The ritual hand washing upon awakening in the morning.

Ne'ilah. The fifth prayer service recited before the conclusion of Yom Kippur*, just before the gates of Heaven "close."

neshamah. Soul (Heb.).

nigleh: "Revealed" (Heb.). Refers to the non-mystical part of Torah, especially the Talmud and Jewish law.

niggun (pl. **niggunim**). Chassidic melody, often wordless and repeated several times, which is intended to express and stir the soul.

nusach. "Arrangement" (Heb.). A specific order and version of the prayer service used by a particular Jewish community.

Ohel. "Tent" (Heb.). The resting place of a tzaddik*.

parshah. "Portion" (Heb.). The portion read from the Torah scroll in synagogue on the Sabbath.

Pesach: Passover, the eight-day holiday marking the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt.

Pesach Sheni. "Second Passover." During Biblical times, those who were not able to offer the Passover sacrifice on the holiday were given another opportunity a month later. In Chabad teachings the day is used to emphasize the lesson that "it is never too late" for a second chance.

pilpul. "A [hot] pepper" (Heb.). A sharp analysis of a Torah discourse.

Purim. The joyous holiday com-

memorating the Jews' salvation from Haman's plot to annihilate them in Persia, in the year 3406/355 BCE.

Ramash. An acronym for Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994). The man who would become the seventh Chabad Rebbe was known informally as the Ramash before he assumed leadership of the movement.

Rashag. An acronym for Rabbi Shemaryahu Gurary (1898-1989), the eldest son-in-law of the sixth Chabad Rebbe.

Rayatz. Acronym for the sixth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn (1880-1950).

rebbe. "Teacher" (Heb.). The term also refers to a Chassidic leader. In this book, "the Rebbe" is the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994).

Maharash. An acronym for the fourth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel Schneersohn (1834-1882).

Rashab. An acronym for the fifth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom DovBer Schneersohn (1860-1920).

rebbetzin. The honorary title for the wife of a rabbi.

Rosh Chodesh. A one or two day minor holiday marking the beginning of a new month on the Jewish calendar.

Rosh Hashanah. "Head of the year" (Heb.). The Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first and second days of the Hebrew month of Tishrei*.

rosh yeshivah: Academic leader or dean of a yeshivah.

Seder: Literally "order" (Heb.). The ritual service performed on the first two nights of Passover. It includes the mitzvos of eating matzah and bitter herbs and drinking four cups of wine.

sefer (pl. **seforim).** A Torah* book (Heb.).

sefer Torah. A Torah* scroll. The Five Books of Moses, written by hand with a quill on parchment, according to detailed specifications of Jewish law. It is the holiest object in Jewish life today.

Sephardic. Of or related to Jews from Spain and other Mediterranean countries, known as Sephardim. Their prayer services, customs and pronunciation of Hebrew differ from those of *Ashkenazic* Jews.

seudas: "Meal" (Heb.). The festive Sabbath or holiday meal.

Shabbos. The Jewish Sabbath, which commemorates the completion of the six days of creation and G-d's resting on the seventh day. It is observed each week from sunset

on Friday until Saturday night with festive meals and special prayer services. Weekday activities such as driving, writing, and cooking are prohibited on Shabbos.

Shacharis: The morning prayer service.

shadar. Hebrew acronym for *shlucha derabana* (personal emissary of the rabbi). Here it refers to an emissary of the Chabad Rebbes, who promotes Jewish observance and raises funds to support Jewish programs.

shalosh seudas. The third meal on Sabbath, usually eaten toward evening on Saturday.

shanah tovah. "A good year." A traditional Jewish New Year's greeting.

Shas. Acronym for the six orders of the Talmud. A "set of Shas" is a complete set of Talmud.

shechitah. Ritual slaughter (Heb.), performed with a sharp knife according to the detailed directives of Jewish law.

sheitel. A wig (Yid.), worn by Jewish women as a head covering after marriage.

Shema. The daily declaration of faith and the unity of G-d, "Hear, O Israel," recited in the morning and evening prayers and before retiring for the night.

Shemini Atzeres. The seventh and eighth days of Sukkos*, a holiday in its own right, celebrated with great joy.

sheva berachos. The seven blessings recited under the wedding canopy; also the week of festivities following the wedding, during which the blessings are repeated each night.

shidduch. A match (Yid.), especially for marriage.

shiur. A class on a Torah subject.

shiva. The seven-day mourning period observed after the passing of a close relative.

shliach; **shluchah** (plural **shluchim**). "Emissary" (Heb.). Here it refers to Chabad representatives, and their work to strengthen Jewish observance around the world.

shlichus. The mission of the *shliach** and *shluchah**.

shmurah matzah. "Guarded *matzah*" (Heb.). Matzah* used on Passover (usually handmade) made from wheat guarded under rabbinical supervision from the time of harvest until it is baked to ensure that it does not become chametz*.

shochet. A person trained to ritually slaughter animals according to Jewish law.

shofar. Hollowed out ram's horn sounded during the month of Elul*,

on Rosh Hashanah*, and at the close of Yom Kippur*.

shtetel: Small townships in Eastern Europe (Yid.), where Jews lived in previous centuries.

shtiebel. "Small house" (Yid.). A small synagogue, usually Chassidic.

shtreimlach. Traditional fur hats worn by married men in certain Chassidic* groups.

shul: Synagogue.

sicha. A talk (Heb.). Here, a talk given by a rebbe*.

siddur (plural **siddurim**). A prayer book.

Simchas Torah. "Rejoicing of the Torah" (Heb.). The holiday that celebrates the completion of the yearly Torah* reading cycle. Simchas Torah is observed on the second day of the festival of Shemini Atzeres*.

sukkah. A small hut erected outdoors, commemorating the clouds that protected the Jews as they traveled through the desert from Egypt to the land of Israel. During the holiday of Sukkos*, all meals and regular activities are conducted in the sukkah.

Sukkos. The eight-day festival that follows the high holy days of Rosh Hashanah* and Yom Kippur*, celebrated by dwelling in a sukkah* and the mitzvah of the Four Kinds.

taharas hamishpacha. "Family purity" (Heb.). The laws that govern Jewish marital life, requiring a woman to use the mikvah* at the conclusion of her menstrual cycle.

taivos. Desires (Heb.). Here it refers to physical pleasures of this world.

tallis. Prayer shawl (Heb.).

talmid chocham. Torah scholar (Heb.).

talmidim. Students.

talmud Torah: "Learning of Torah" (Heb.). Here it refers to the Sunday and afternoon schools set up for children who attend public school.

Talmud: See *Gemara*.

Tanya: The fundamental text of Chabad* philosophy, written by the movement's founder, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, known as the Alter Rebbe*.

tefillin. Black leather boxes containing parchment scrolls worn by men on the arm and the head during weekday morning prayers in fulfillment of the command, "You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for you a reminder between your eyes" (Deuteronomy 6:8).

Tehillim: The book of Psalms.

tenaim. "Conditions" (Heb.). The

engagement contract, signed just before the wedding ceremony.

teshuvah. "Return" (Heb.). Often erroneously translated as "repentance," teshuvah requires the review of past misdeeds and the resolution to return to the correct path.

treif. "Torn" (Heb.). Meat that was not ritually slaughtered; more generally, all non-kosher* food.

tish. "Table" (Yid.). A gathering where a Chassidic* rebbe* speaks to his followers.

Tisha B'Av. The ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av, a solemn day of fasting and mourning marking the destruction of the first and the second Holy Temples.

Tishrei. The first month of the Jewish calendar, usually corresponding to September/October.

Tomchei Tmimim. The Chabad yeshivah* founded in the town of Lubavitch* in 1897 by the fifth Chabad Rebbe. Students are called *tmimim* (complete ones), indicating that they study the entire Torah*, both Jewish law and the mystical teachings of Chassidism.

Tosafos. The classical commentary on the Gemara*, printed on the outer margins.

Torah. The Bible (Five Books of Moses); a teaching; the Torah scroll; used loosely for the general corpus of Jewish teachings.

tzaddik; (pl. **tzaddikim**). A righteous person (Heb.).

tzedakah. Literally "righteousness" (Heb.), the mitzvah of tzedakah is to assist others financially or spiritually.

Tzemach Tzedek. The third Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel (1789-1866), known by the title of his famed series of response *seforim**.

tziyur. "Picture" (Heb.). Here, a living example of a true chassid*.

tznius. Modesty (Heb.), expressed in dress and action.

vacht nacht. "The night when one is awake" (Yid.). The night before the bris*, when the baby's father stays up studying Torah*.

vort. "Word" (Yid.). A short Torah* saying.

yahrtzeit. The anniversary of someone's passing.

yechidus. A private audience with a rebbe*.

Yerushalayim. Jerusalem.

yeshivah. Literally "to sit," the term was traditionally used for schools where Gemara was studied. Today, any Jewish day school or Torah* academy may be called a yeshi-

vah.

yichud. "To be alone (with someone)" (Heb.). It refers to the prohibition for a man and woman who are not married to each other to be secluded together.

Yid. A Jew (Yid.).

Yisroel. The additional name given to Yaakov after he wrestled with the angel, it is used to refer to the Jewish people as a whole, and to a person who is neither a Kohen* nor a Levi*.

yiras shamayim. The fear of Heaven (Heb.).

Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement. Celebrated on the tenth of Tishrei, Yom Kippur is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, when Jews fast and spend the entire day in prayer.

yom tov (pl. **yomim tovim**). A Jewish holiday.

Yomim Noraim. "Days of awe" (Heb.). The High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah* and Yom Kippur*.

zechus. Merit (Heb.).

zeman krias Shema. The time to read the Shema* as prescribed by Jewish law.

12 Tammuz; Yud Beis Tammuz. A special day on the Chabad calendar marking the anniversary of the birth of the sixth leader of Chabad, the Rebbe Rayatz* in 5640/1880. It is also the day he was released from a capital sentence and imprisonment in Soviet Russia (5687/1927).

19 Kislev; Yud Tes Kislev. Known as the Rosh Hashanah* of Chassidus, it celebrates the day that the founder of Chabad, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, known as the Alter Rebbe*, was liberated from the Czar's prison in 5559/1798.

Acknowledgements

Working on a book about Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik was a great privilege. I learned of the self-sacrifice that he and Rebbetzin Lea had on a multitude of levels. While I saw Rabbi Raichik from afar on my visits to my aunts and uncles in Los Angeles, perhaps I merited to work on this book because of my dear grandfather and mentor Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet, who spent his formative years with Rabbi Raichik. They were study partners in Otwock, and braved World War II together in Asia.

Like most people in the Chabad community, I knew several of the Raichik brothers: The rabbi devoted to his community (Rabbi Shimon); the shliach (Rabbi Sholom); the fundraisers (Rabbis Abi and Yossi); funding, building, and promoting mikvahs around the world (Rabbi Elozor); and the host of a warm, open home (Levi).

Working on this book, I realized that they each expressed one aspect of their father, who was all of these things and more.

Rabbi Shimon Raichik initiated this book and laid the foundation. In 5741 (1981) Rabbi Shimon and his wife, Chana Lieba, moved back to Los Angeles from New York to assist Rabbi Raichik. Father and son worked together for close to two decades, during which time Rabbi Shimon had ample opportunity to ob-



With Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet (left).

serve his father's extraordinary dedication and to benefit from his wisdom. After his father's passing in 5758 (1998), the community requested that Rabbi Shimon record his life story.

He began gathering historical information from the time Rabbi Raichik was in Poland and a refugee during World War II. He also collected numerous firsthand stories from friends, colleagues and members of the L.A. community whose lives his father had touched. Many of these accounts were published over the years in Chabad of Hancock Park's monthly *Chabad Chodesh*.

As he worked, the demand for a book about Rabbi Raichik grew, as did the number of people eager to share stories about him. Five years ago Rabbi Shimon approached me to work on the project. Over time the length and scope expanded beyond what he had ever imagined. Months became years, drafts were revised, and new material was added.

Many people participated in this process. First I would like to thank the more than 200 people who were interviewed. Most of their stories are in the book, some with names and others without (to protect their privacy). Many people provided background information, and although they're not mentioned by name, their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Several people were indispensable in assisting me with names of sources and contact information, chief among them Sarah Levin, who went out of her way to reach out to members of the Los Angeles community who have stories about Rabbi Raichik.

Having written biographies for many years, I've learned that it is sometimes difficult for families to open up to the public. Sure, they want the world to know about their parents or grandparents, but there is always a price for publicity. Stories are never as perfect on paper as they are in the mind. Often people worry how their beloved family member will be perceived by others. Will people fully understand the context in which each event transpired?

This concern was particularly acute for the Raichik family, who revered their parents as the lofty people they were. "When you entered the Raichik family," Moshe Wilhelm told me, "you felt that these children had a deep respect for their father beyond just the love and respect that one has for a parent."

I'm sure it was painful for the Raichiks to impart their parents life to my fast-moving fingers on a laptop in my cramped Brooklyn office. Without their full and generous cooperation, however, this book would have been impossible.

While their guidance is felt throughout the book, each contributed in their own unique way. Abi and Levi laid the groundwork for the opening of the book; Devora and Chani provided much of the information for the section about their mother; Suri, and her husband, Avrohom, and Yankee meticulously reviewed the entire book for factual and grammatical errors; Elozor for his keen advice and suggestions; and Sholom supported me throughout the long process.

To make it an easier read, the Raichik siblings and sons-in-law are referred to by their first names, without the proper honorific titles.

Rebbetzin Raichik's daughter-in-law and niece, Dinah Raichik (née Backenroth), contributed greatly to the section about the Rapaport family, including keeping the interview with Esther Stok safe and transferring it digitally. Avery Stok reviewed the Rapaport section, gave insightful comments, and shared the photos from the Rapaport family. Shoshana Goldfinger and Shraga Zalmanoff contributed to the account of the Rapaports' experience in Vittel.

Levi (son of Yankee) Raichik and Rabbi Shalom Dovber Levine provided

photos and documents from the Agudas Chasidei Chabad Library. Many additional photos in this book are from the files of Lubavitch Archives, the largest digital archive of Chabad-Lubavitch–related photos and documents.

Many hands were involved in making the text accurate and easy to read. My appreciation to Sarah Ogince for doing the final edit, and Rabbi Gershon Schusterman for doing a final review for accuracy. My thanks also go to Alexander Heppenheimer and Mimi Palace for copyediting the entire text. With gratitude to Bentzion Groner and Elana Rudnik for contributing to the design.

Through the many stages of this book, my wife, Chana Raizel, was always there to support me, and when necessary take over my home duties. I deeply appreciate her sacrifices in making this book a reality.

With profound gratitude to Hashem I present the fruits of our labor.

Dovid Zaklikowski

Dovid Zaklikowski began his writing career at the age of 16 while studying at the Rabbinical College of America. Since then he has written thousands of articles, with a focus on Jewish history. He is the author of thirteen books, including Footprints: Colorful Lives, Huge Impact, Kosher Investigator *and* Kaleidoscope: Uplifting Views on Daily Life. *Dovid lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Chana Raizel, and their five children, Motti, Meir, Shaina, Benny, and Mendel. Today, Dovid is a freelance journalist and can be reached at DovidZak@gmail.com.*

In loving memory of our dear parents

Chaim Tzvi *ben* **Avrohom Dov** and

Menucha *bas* **Arye Leib**

of blessed memory

Dedicated by

Alan (Avraham Aron Leib),

David and **Berel**

Goldstein

and **Family**

Rabbi Raichik was the backbone of our Yiddishkeit. When there was no Judaism in Los Angeles, he sent us to New York, then encouraged us to come home and settle down.

He gave us the strength to keep going. As he constantly reminded us, "Der Eibisther vet zicher helfin," Hashem will certainly help.

It is our honor to be part of this project to remember Rabbi Menachem Shmuel Dovid and Rebbetzin Lea Raichik.

Dedicated by

Zalman and **Esther Roth**

and **Family**

E.Z. Roth Plumbing

5747 Melrose Avenue

The Raichiks were our mentors.

They spiritually grounded us. With farbrengens in their home and early morning study sessions, they kept us and others connected to our Rebbe, who inspired us with a deep warmth towards Yiddishkeit.

Rabbi Raichik was a living example of how a chassid should bond to the Rebbe and his teachings.

It is our delight to be a part of this project to bring Rabbi Raichik's life to the next generation.

Dedicated by

A Friend of the Family

Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik opened their doors to our family when we emigrated from Iran and arrived in LA, where we knew no one.

We spent Shabbos, Yom Tov and many days in between at the Raichiks.

We cannot forget the Rebbetzin's homemade challah and gefilte fish, and the other wonderful Shabbos delicacies like cakes and kugel.

Most of all, we remember the warmth and the niggunim.

Dedicated by

Alan and **Lisa Stern**

and **Family**

The devotion of Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik, who were among the founders and pillars of the Los Angeles Jewish community, was boundless.

Rabbi Raichik instilled in us bitochon, that Hashem will surely help, and everything will work out well.

Rabbi Raichik was a true *eved* Hashem and throughout his life an inspiration to Klal Yisroel.

Dedicated by

Aaron Grunfeld

4 Iyar, 5778

I had the merit to know Rabbi Shmuel Dovid and Rebbetzin Lea Raichik since I was seven-years-old. Though Los Angeles was not welcoming to observant Jews then, they encouraged everyone they met to increase their connection to Torah and mitzvahs.

They were closely involved in our family's joyous occasions, our Jewish education, and in our times of challenge. Rabbi Raichik was there for my brother and me when we were studying at the Lubavitch Yeshivah at Bedford and Dean in Brooklyn. He was there during my father's lengthy illness and arranged the details of his burial in Jerusalem. I recall with particular affection his happy participation under our chupa when P'nina Chava and I were married twenty years ago. It was the last public simcha he attended.

Yiddishkeit in Los Angeles owes a foundational debt to the Raichiks, one that we should repay by spreading the Rebbe's teachings with the Ahavas Yisroel exemplified by Rabbi Shmuel Dovid and his Rebbetzin.

בס"ד

In loving memory of our parents

Mr. **Saul Levin**

ר' **שאול** בן **אליעזר** הלוי ע"ה

Mrs. **Gertrude Levin**

מרת **אטע גאלדא** בת **יהודה אריה** ע"ה

Mr. **Yehuda Kubie**

ר' **יהודה** בן **יחיאל** ע"ה

Mrs. **Esther Kubie**

מרת **אסתר** בת **דוד** ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

With much love and gratitude to the Rachik family for giving us this opportunity,

Chaim Aaron and **Sarah Levin**

Dedicated by

Rabbi **Sholom Ber** and
Mrs. **Chanie Levitin**

Reb **Yonah Mordechai** and
Mrs. **Hadassah Weiss**

Rabbi **Moshe Aron Tzvi** and
Mrs. **Ruthy Weiss**

and **Family**

For close to five decades, Rabbi and Rebbetzin Raichik
provided advice and spiritual support to our parents
Reb **Berel** and **Miriam Weiss**,
Holocaust survivors and many Los Angeles families,
as though they were their own dear family.

Our family's connection to our holy Rebbe
was realized and nurtured by Rabbi Raichik's
powerful dedication to the Rebbe.

In memory of the family of
Rabbi **Menachem Shmuel Dovid** Halevi
and Rebbetzin **Lea Raichik**
who perished during WWII and in the Holocaust

His father
Reb **Shimon** ben **Avraham Gershon** Halevi

His mother
Mrs. **Liba Devora** bas
Rabbi **Chaim Shemayahu** Halevi
passed away from her wounds on 20 Elul 5699 (1939)

His brothers
Yehudah Aryeh Halevi, **Chaim Shemayahu** Halevi
and **Yisroel Meir Fishel** Halevi

His sisters
Chaya Freida, Sarah Pessil, Rivkah and **Henya Feiga**
the yahrtzeit marked for most of the family is 11 Kislev

ה"י

Her father
Rabbi **Avraham Abele** ben **Yitzchok** Hakohen **Rapaport**
passed away on Nissan 3, 5700 (1940)

The many members of the
Rapaport Family

ה"י

In memory of her mother
Mrs. **Sima** bas **Avrohom**
who passed away on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, 5730 (1969)

Dedicated to

The Rebbe

of righteous memory

and his Shliach

Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raichik

of blessed memory

by **Rabbi Moshe Meir Lipszyc**

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida