

לעבן מיטן  
רבי'ן

פארהאט'ס



LIVING  
with the  
Rebbe

יום ההילולא של  
הרבנית הצדקנית נ"ע זי"ע  
"והחי יתן אל לבו"

# Histalkus of the Rebbetzin

## Early indications

On several occasions during the Sichos said in the month of Shevat 5748, the Rebbe spoke with great fervor that all Jews should halve long, healthy lives, continuing to live through the coming of Moshiach. The Rebbe's words were received in wonder, striking a bit strange, as the Rebbe continually spoke, with great emphasis, in this manner.

On the 13 Shevat, the Rebbe appeared in the large Shul downstairs in 770 to participate in a Siyum Sefer Torah celebration of a Sefer which had been commissioned in honor of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. When he entered the Shul, it was noticeable that his eyes were red, apparently from crying. In addition, when the Rebbe came to Shul to hold the Farbrengen in honor of Tu B'Shevat, it was again apparent that the Rebbe had recently been crying.

## The Rebbetzin takes ill

In the days preceding Chof Beis Shevat, the Rebbetzin did not feel well. On Tuesday evening, 22 Shevat, a team of doctors held a meeting at the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home, at the conclusion of which they resolved that the Rebbetzin must be hospitalized for about two weeks until she regained her complete health. The Rebbe was also present at the meeting and agreed with the doctors' decision to have the Rebbetzin go to the hospital. Before taking leave of her home, the Rebbetzin requested to be alone with the Rebbe for a bit and they remained together for close to half an hour. Meanwhile, Mrs. Esther Sternberg headed out to the hospital first, along with the doctors, to arrange the necessary preparations for the Rebbetzin's arrival.

Rabbi Krinsky was immediately summoned to drive the car. As the Rebbetzin left her home, the Rebbe accompanied her out of the house and walked with her until she entered the car. Upon their arrival at

the hospital, the Rebbetzin sat down on the wheelchair that had been prepared for her and began to speak with Reb Zalman Gurary for a while. One of the doctors approached and asked the Rebbetzin some questions, when suddenly the Rebbetzin requested a cup of water. Mrs. Sternberg brought a cup of water and handed it to Reb Sholom Gansburg to give to the Rebbetzin. The Rebbetzin then said a Shehakol and drank the water.

## Histalkus

A short while later, the doctor realized that the Rebbetzin had lost consciousness. The doctors immediately attempted to handle the situation to the best of their ability. Reb Sholom, who all the while kept in close and consistent contact with the Rebbe, called the Rebbe and notified of the circumstances. When he called, the Rebbe was in the middle of editing the sicha he had spoken on Tu B'Shevat. The Rebbe suggested a few methods of medication, which were subsequently given over to the doctors. At 12:45 a.m. one of the doctors came out of the room and notified all those present that "Everything is over..."

Words cannot describe our pain, but after we came back to ourselves, we had to convey the news to the Rebbe, however none of us wanted to do it. A call was immediately made to Rabbi Groner's house, and he was asked to be the one to convey the sad information to the Rebbe. Rabbi Groner thereupon called Rabbi Beryl Junik, and the two together decided to go to the Rebbe's house. When they arrived, they found Reb Sholom Gansburg waiting outside, and he explained to them that the Rebbe had requested that no one enter the house. Finally, Dr. Feldman called the Rebbe from his car-phone and told the Rebbe about what had happened. Upon hearing the news, the Rebbe asked to hand the line over to Rabbi Groner who was instructed by the Rebbe to bring over his Tallis and Tefillin

from his room in 770, and a few seforim that deal with the laws of mourning.

The rest of the story is recounted in a diary penned by one of the Bochorim in 770 at the time:

## The Shock

It is late at night, yet I am still overwhelmed by all the occurrences of this dreadful day. Perhaps writing things down will help lighten the heaviness that weighs on my heart. This is what happened:

Last night, at 1:25 am, a few of us were sitting in our room talking. We hadn't yet gone to sleep when suddenly, one of our friends entered. He appeared frightened and teary-eyed, and asked us to turn off the tape of Chassidic music. After we did so, he added in a sad voice, "Bad news. The Rebbetzin..."

It took a few seconds until we absorbed the words we had just heard. Without saying a word, we got dressed to go outside, and soundlessly left the building. Bochorim who had heard the news were also coming down the steps. We crossed the street, and headed towards 770. A few hundred people were already standing outside; all were silent. The only sound to be heard was some whispering every now and then. "When exactly did it happen? How did it take place? Where is the Rebbe now? What was the cause of the passing? Was it sudden or were there hints and indicators beforehand?" The questions filled the air, but no one had any answers.

Some tens of bochorim sat and recited Tehillim. We each took a Tehillim in hand, sat down quietly, and began reading. The small zal of 770 gradually filled with many more bochorim and married men who had all heard the news. Everyone sat and said Tehillim silently.

In the meantime, some pieces of information began circulating, shedding a bit of

light on the situation. It was related that the Rebbetzin had passed away at 12:45 a.m., and that the Rebbe was now at home. The Rebbetzin hadn't been feeling well during the past few days, and suddenly her condition worsened and became critical, so she had to be taken to the hospital. Apparently, her condition was quite serious and the doctors gave her strong medication for her heart. She passed away while being treated, may her merits shield us.

After receiving the instruction from the Rebbe, to bring over the Tallis and Tefillin, Rabbi Groner had gone to Dr. Feldman's office to assist him in arranging that the Rebbetzin be released from the hospital immediately. When he heard that the Rebbe had appeared at the entrance of his home a number of times to inquire as to

where Rabbi Groner had gone and why he had failed to bring over the items, he hurriedly went to 770 to get them. While there, he looked for Reb Dovid Raskin, but he was unable to locate him. He announced that a raffle should be made amongst the bochurim, to determine who would take part in the minyan for Tehillim near the Rebbetzin, which would rotate every hour. This took quite a long time to arrange, but we finally managed. A list of Bochurim was posted on the wall containing the names of those who would take part in the minyan during the first hour, the second, and so on. We heard that the Aron had not yet arrived at the house, but nevertheless, many bochurim went to President Street to await its arrival. When they reached the

house, they were met by a large crowd that had already gathered there.

The Mikva on Eastern Parkway was opened at 3:00 a.m. We were told that whoever wished to participate in the minyan and say Tehillim had to immerse in the mikva beforehand. It was said that the levayah would take place the next day at 12:00 p.m., and that the Tahara would take place at the house.

## Tahara

When the Aron arrived at 5:30 a.m., the Rebbe left the house to and began to walk slowly towards it. His head was slightly tilted and his holy eyes were open wide, and with a terrifying look on his face, he gazed at the Aron. The Rebbe followed the Aron into the house, and the members of the Chevra Kadisha followed behind. After lighting candles, the Rebbe went up to the second floor.

At first we followed the results of the raffle as best we could, although the time span for each group was reduced to only ten minutes each. But due to the accumulating crowd of people, who wished to enter the house and have a chance to recite Tehillim, a new arrangement was formed - groups consisting of a few dozen people would each enter the house for five minutes to recite Tehillim, and then exit through the back door, at which point a new group was to enter.

We passed through a small foyer to a larger room, and then into the living room. A general view of the room boasted simplicity. The lack of elegance and modernism was very evident. It was a simple home with uncarpeted floors and plain walls. We finally reached the kitchen, positioned at the end of the house. Preceding the kitchen was a flight of stairs, which lead to the next floor. On the right side of the small kitchen, laid the Rebbetzin, wrapped in a white sheet, with plant stalks beneath her. Her head was facing south, and there were two large wax candles nearby.

We stood in a line and said Tehillim, slowly moving towards the exit. Tears flowed





from my eyes. A few minutes later we left through the back door on the opposite end of the kitchen to a small porch with steps leading down to the backyard.

It was dawn, and thousands of people kept on coming. The line was very long, consisting of many people who had just been informed about what had happened earlier that night.

## Prepartions for the Levaya

Police cars closed off the entrances to President Street from New York Avenue up until Kingston. Ave. “No Parking Today” signs were also posted alongside the curb.

The plans for the levayah were that the Rebbe would accompany the Aron by foot from President St. until Kingston Ave. and then follow the Aron by car to the cemetery. Men would walk that way too, while women would walk down Brooklyn Ave., turning onto Eastern Parkway.

Signs were composed, notifying of the Rebbetzin’s passing and the time of the levayah, which were distributed in all the religious communities in New York City. I also heard that from early morning, the radio in N.Y. broadcasted the news every quarter of an hour. That was in addition to notices that appeared in the newspapers.

At daybreak, many people were still streaming towards 770. At 7:00 a.m. a double siren blasted throughout the neigh-

borhood, to inform of the sad news anyone who hadn’t yet heard. Throughout the night and into the morning, the phones in 770 rang continuously. There was one question, “Is it true?”

At 7:00 a.m., the members of the Kollel went to dig the kever next to Rebbetzin Shterna Sara a”h, wife of the Rebbe Rashab and grandmother of the Rebbetzin.

A minyan was arranged at the Rebbe’s house at 9:30 a.m., enabling the Rebbe to say Kaddish.

Chassidim came from all over the U.S. and Canada. We heard that a large group from Europe would be arriving on the Concorde, leaving there at 8:00 a.m. and arriving at 11:00 a.m. local time.

A meeting was called to discuss the necessary arrangements for the levayah, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in 770. Two men went up to the bima to start the talks. One began to speak but was immediately interrupted by his tears and was unable to continue. When the second one attempted to take charge in his stead, he too choked up with tears as he began to speak.

The agreed upon arrangement was roughly as follows: In addition to the police presence, who would oversee a general maintenance of order, 150 bochurim would be appointed by the Vaad Ha’mesader to ensure the smooth flow of the procession. The Rebbe was to be the first to walk directly behind the Aron, followed by the gabbaim members of the secretariat, Chassidic Rebbes, Rabbanim, and Gedolei HaTorah. The police, along with the team of bochurim would follow and ensure that a feasible empty space remains between the Rebbe and the entire crowd at all times.

The police closed off the entire route to traffic, as well as the adjacent streets. At approximately 11:00 a.m., both sides of President Street and all the adjoining streets were replete with people. And more were on their way.

Police barriers were erected on the edge of the pavement. The area near the house was clear, only policemen, members of the

Vaad Ha’mesader, and specific individuals were permitted to stand there. Dozens of motorcycles and police cars stood ready in pairs, in order to travel in front of the procession and to ensure that order was kept. There were hundreds of policemen, in addition to the 150 bochurim of the committee.

Chassidic Rebbes began to arrive, as well as Rabbanim, Roshei Yeshivos, and many public figures.

It was related that earlier that morning, the Rebbe had sent members of the Chevra Kadisha to the Ohel of the Frierdiker Rebbe to inform him of the passing.

Approximately ten minutes before the funeral, the Rebbe descended from his room to the first floor, and spent some time alone in the room where the Rebbetzin laid. Rabbi Fuchs of the Chevra Kadisha cut the Rebbe’s sirtuk, and then the Rebbe ripped it further by hand, leaving a lengthy tear, as is prescribed by Halacha.

## The Levaya

At exactly 12:00 p.m., absolute silence prevailed over the throngs of people. The procession left the house headed by those who carried the Aron, while the Rebbe followed closely behind. He walked with his head bent, occasionally glancing from side to side observing the procession and uttering words the entire time. The Rebbe looked pale and tired. Behind him were the gabbaim and members of the secretariat, followed by Chassidic Rebbes and distinguished Rabbanim. After them walked the police, and continuing behind them were the enormous crowds.

Order was maintained with much difficulty as the people in the crowd continuously pushed forward to be able to see the Rebbe. The Rebbe’s car traveled immediately behind him, so that upon his wish, he could enter it. Another row of 70 policemen encircled the car, preventing the crowds from pushing forward and blocking it. The Rebbe walked down Kingston Ave. when the procession reached Eastern Parkway, the pushing was so forceful that



the police and the members of the Vaad Ha'mesader were barely able to keep the situation under control. Then the Rebbe entered the car, and continued to the cemetery, while the secretaries, Rabbi Hodakov, Rabbi Groner, and Rabbi Klein sat in the back. Motorcycles led the way, clearing traffic and passing through all the traffic lights, thereby shortening the trip significantly. Dozens of buses headed towards the cemetery, as well as hundreds of private cars.

The large crowds were not permitted to enter the cemetery, so they remained standing outside, behind the fence. Only the secretaries, members of the Chevra Kadisha, and a group of 100 distinguished individuals went inside with the Rebbe.

The Rebbe stood facing the open grave. His head was bent and he continuously looked at the members of the Chevra Kadisha. The Rebbe asked Reb Beryl Lipsker of the Chevra Kadisha a number of questions privately. When they lowered the Aron into the grave, the Rebbe shuddered a bit and his head moved back slightly. It was a painful sight to behold... Before filling the grave, a bag was placed next to the Aron.

After covering the grave of the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe recited "Tziduk HaDin" followed by Kaddish. The Rebbe's voice choked with tears a few times while saying Kaddish.

## Nichum Aveilim

Two long rows of people stood alongside the exit way, and the Rebbe passed between these rows as people said, "Ha'makom yinachem eschem..." ("May Hashem comfort you...").

The Rebbe entered the car looking pained and moving with great difficulty. Then all of a sudden the Rebbe exited the car, plucked grass from the ground, and tossed it over his shoulder, as is customary according to Kabbalah. Again, the car was preceded by police escort.

Only then did the vast crowd of thousands enter the cemetery and approach the fresh grave of the Rebbetzin. There was tremendous pushing as each person said a chapter



of Tehillim. There were shovels placed on the side as each one attempted to add a bit of earth on top of the grave.

The main floor of the Rebbe's house was rapidly transformed into a makeshift shul, and at 3:15 p.m., the Rebbe Davened Mincha at the Amud in his home. Only a few dozen people were allowed to join the Rebbe, like Shluchim who had arrived from around the world and would be returning home later that day. After Mincha, the Rebbe surprisingly said a short sicha which lasted a few minutes, in which he mentioned that according to Halacha, the mourner must begin with some words of his own before

taking comfort from others. The Rebbe concluded by making mention of the verse "Vehachai yitein el libo..." (see explanation below) saying that this is especially applicable in our instance, where the first name of the deceased is Chaya, and with that, the Rebbe gave a slight smile. Although up until that point the Rebbe appeared to be quite broken-hearted, his smile made the Chassidim feel a bit better.

This was followed by Nichum Aveilim. The davening had taken place in the large room on the first floor. After davening, the Rebbe sat on a box covered with a thin black cover (generally used on Tisha B'Av) in

the south-eastern corner of the room, and people passed by the Rebbe quickly, exiting through the door at the southern wall. The Rebbe gazed deeply at each person. A very sad and heartrending scene...

For the remainder of the tefillos, beginning with Maariv at 6:00 p.m., it was decided that a lottery would determine who was to be allowed into the house to daven with the Rebbe's Minyan. The secretaries announced that on Motzaei Shabbos, the Rebbe would daven in the large Shul at 770, after which, all would have a chance to pass by and be menachem aveil.

After each Tefilla, many people passed by to be menachem aveil, even those who did not participate in the minyan. The tefillos were transmitted live to 770 enabling the vast majority of Chassidim, who were not privileged to be present while the Rebbe davened at home, to hear the Rebbe's davening. This made things a bit easier for us in this particularly difficult period...

That night, a group of Shluchim from around the world convened to discuss various projects that would be initiated

in the Rebbetzin's memory, including the establishment of funds that would bear her name. An extra emphasis was to be placed upon increasing the observance of the three Mitzvos associated particularly with the Jewish woman; Kasrus, Taharas Hamishpocha, and kindling Shabbos Candles.

All throughout the Shiva, many distinguished individuals continuously arrived at the Rebbe's home to be menachem aveil, including many American Senators, Israeli officials, Chassideshe Rebbes, Litveshe Gedolim, and so on. Each one passed by the Rebbe as he sat near the door following davening, at times stopping to share a few words.

## Shabbos

When Shabbos arrived, Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim, Mevorchim Adar, the Rebbe stayed at 770. Before Shabbos, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Y. Piekarski, Rosh Yeshivah of the central Tomchei Temimim, if it would be halachicly permissible to hold a Farbrengen, although it was still during the Shiva. Rabbi Piekarski told the Rebbe that

being that he is accustomed to farbrenging each month on Shabbos Mevorchim, not doing so would be an indication of mourning in public, which is forbidden on Shabbos.

Indeed, the Rebbe held a Farbrengen that week as he would every month. Chassidim observed that although the Rebbe was still in the midst of the Shiva, he did not show any signs of mourning. To the contrary, the Rebbe encouraged the singing immensely, paying specific attention to a small child present who was clapping in his direction.

An interesting point that the Rebbe made mention of, during one of his talks, was when speaking of the imminent arrival of Moshiach and the return of the souls of the departed to their bodies with Techiyas Hameisim, he added: Why must they suffer, what have the souls done wrong that they must wait for us to complete our task and bring Moshiach sooner. It is only due to our failure to carry out our own duties, that they find themselves awaiting that day for so long a time.





All those present could not help but apply the Rebbe's sorrowful words to the tragedy that had just befallen the Rebbe and his Chassidim, urging them to indeed do all in their ability to hasten the coming of Moshiach.

At the conclusion of Shabbos, the Rebbe davened Maariv at the Amud in 770 and afterwards he sat down to receive nichum aveilim, enabling the broader public who would not have a chance to perform it while the Rebbe was at home, to do it as well, as mentioned earlier.

## The end of the Shiva

On 27 Shevat, the writing of a Sefer Torah dedicated to the memory of the Rebbetzin began, organized by Neshei Chabad, and the ceremony was held at the Rebbe's home.

On 28 Shevat, the final day of the Shiva, the Rebbe sat after Shacharis for only twenty minutes. Then, the Rabbonim came into the room and told the Rebbe with tears in their eyes to stand up from mourning.

Words will not describe the emotions that overcame the members of the group as Reb Zalman Gurary blessed the Rebbe with many long years and success in all that he does. Rabbi Chaim Gutnick from Australia blessed the Rebbe with Birkas Kohanim, crying all the while.

Mincha was at 3:15, after which the Rebbe distributed dollars for more than three hours (the Rebbe had missed his regular distribution on the preceding Sunday).

## Farbrengen

Before Maariv, the Rebbe gave the Gabbaim one hundred dollars, and instructed them to hold a Farbrengen in memory of the Rebbetzin. After Maariv, the Gabbai announced that a Farbrengen would take place in 770 that night. The Rebbe turned to him and said that it would be more appropriate to hold the Farbrengen in the home where the departed soul resided during her lifetime. The Gabbai immediately revised his announcement, saying that the Farbrengen will take place here, in the

Rebbe's home, and will continue later in 770. The Rebbe went upstairs and within a few minutes, sent down a message that the entire Farbrengen should be in the house.

Indeed, crowds of Chassidim flocked to the Rebbe's home that night to participate in this very unique Farbrengen. It has been told that in the midst of the Farbrengen, the Rebbe approached the top of the stairway on the second floor and attempted to listen in to what was being said downstairs. At the conclusion of the evening, the Gabbai announced that the next day, an additional Farbrengen was to be held in 770.

On the night of 21 Adar, the Shloshim of the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe said a sicha after Maariv. The next day, the Rebbetzin's tombstone was erected, and the Rebbe went to the Ohel and spent the day there. That night, a Siyum Sefer Torah celebration and Seudas Mitzvah took place at 770, in memory of the Rebbetzin and L'zchus the Rebbe. The Sefer Torah was dedicated by all of the Rebbe's Shluchim from around the world.



## The Rebbetzin's Yahrtzeit

In the years that followed, the Rebbe always made mention of the Rebbetzin on Chof Beis Shevat. In 5749, Chof Beis Shevat fell out to be on a Shabbos. The Rebbe dedicated almost the entire Farbrengen speaking about the Yahrtzeit.

The next year, 5750, Chof Beis Shevat fell out on Shabbos again. The Rebbe connected every point spoken about throughout the Farbrengen to the Yahrtzeit.

In 5751, the first annual Kinus Hashluchos took place in Crown Heights on Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim, following Chof Beis Shevat. On Sunday, 26 Shevat, the Rebbe addressed the women who attended the Kinus.

In 5752, on the night of Chof Beis Shevat, the Rebbe davened Maariv at the Amud in 770, as he would every year. Following davening, the Rebbe ascended upon the bima and began to say a short sicha, speaking about the Rebbetzin and making special mention of the fact that she has merited to have so many children named after her. After the sicha, the Rebbe distributed a pamphlet to all of the Chassidim; men,



women, and children. The pink-colored booklet entitled "Kovetz Chof Beis Shevat" contained sichos and letters of the Rebbe regarding the role and unique qualities of the Jewish Woman, and was handed to

each one along with a five dollar bill and a piece of lekach. The Rebbe stood for many long hours until the entire crowd managed to pass by, handing out a total of close to fifteen thousand booklets!

## Changes in Conduct

### The Rebbe's home

Following the Shiva, the Rebbe continued to stay at his home and daven at the Amud there. As a matter of fact, for all practical purposes, the Rebbe relocated Lubavitch World Headquarters to 1304 President St. All the sichos that were said during the weekdays, the distribution of dollars on Sunday afternoons, and the frequent trips to the Ohel were all based out of the Rebbe's home.

Because the house is relatively small, only guests and individual Chassidim were allowed to be present. For the vast majority of Chassidim who wished to hear the

Rebbe's tefillos and sichos, a live hookup was always connected to 770, in the beginning only with audio connection, and later with video as well.

This continued all through the Year of Aveilus, except for the Shabbosim and Yomim Tovim, when the Rebbe would stay in his room at 770. Beginning from 24 of Elul 5748, through Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5749, the Rebbe stayed at 770 (for the festive month of Tishrei, remaining there through the Kinus Hashluchim).

After the year of mourning concluded, the Rebbe remained at his home until the passing of the Rashag, which occurred on 6

Adar I, 5749. From that period onward, the Rebbe generally stayed in 770 and returned home only periodically for short stays at a time (each for a few weeks). As the years went on, the Rebbe frequented his home less and less, until 5752, when the Rebbe did not go home at all.

For the first three Shabbosim following the Shabbos of the Shiva, the Rebbe did not leave the house. Only married people and Chassanim were permitted to join there, and the bochurim who remained in 770 were broken; 770 was left deserted... the Rebbe did not farbreng.



Finally, after Purim, on Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudai, the Rebbe stayed in his room at 770. It has been told that the Rebbe said to one of his secretaries that from now on, there will be a Farbrengen every Shabbos without exception “Ad bias goiel...” (“Until the coming of Moshiach”). From then on, the Rebbe stayed in 770 every Shabbos, and for the next four years the Rebbe would farbreng every week until Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel, 5752.

## Weekday Farbrengens

Another very drastic change which followed the passing of the Rebbetzin was that the suspension of weekday Farbrengens. The first time that this was noticeable was on Purim, for each year the Rebbe held a Farbrengen on Purim, but in 5748, Purim was during the Shloshim. The Rebbe instructed the Chassidim (by way of his secretaries), to hold a Farbrengen in 770 at 9:30 p.m., the exact time at which the Rebbe would usually begin his Farbrengen.

When the staff of Jewish Educational Media, the organization that took charge of televising the Rebbe’s major weekday Farbrengens, asked the Rebbe for the exact date of the Farbrengen of Yud Aleph Nissan, 5748, the Rebbe responded, “As it seems, things will be gone about as on Purim,” (meaning, that there would not be a Farbrengen at all).

Chassidim hoped that this was only due to the fact that the Rebbe was in a year of mourning. They entertained the notion that perhaps this is akin to the period following the passing of the Rebbe’s mother in 5725, when the Rebbe did not want to hold Farbrengens during the week either. But before Yud Tes Kislev, Reb Shmuel Levitin requested of the Rebbe on behalf of all the Chassidim that he reconsider and farbreng nonetheless. The Rebbe agreed, and continued to farbreng during the week, but was always sure to conduct a Siyum each time, to avoid any halachic issue.

Now as well, the Chassidim presumed that with the completion of the year of mourning, the Rebbe would once again hold Farbrengens during the week. To our great disappointment, the custom of farbrenging

during the week on special days was totally suspended (the last time that the Rebbe held a Farbrengen during the week, as of now, was on Tu B’Shevat, 5748).

On the other hand, the Rebbe began to daven with the minyan three times a day, every single day. Whereas up until the Rebbetzin’s passing, the Rebbe davened Mincha and Maariv with the minyan in the small zal each day, and Shacharis always alone (with few exceptions).

## Individual Guidance

During the Sichos prior to Chof Beis Shevat 5748, the Rebbe seemed to continually make mention of several unusual expressions and statements. It was apparent from the

without exception, are taken directly to the Ohel of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and therefore there is no reason each one to wait for a personal response, as the Brocha is given regardless.

Yud Shevat in 5748 fell out to be on a Friday, so the Farbrengen in commemoration of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Yahrzeit was held on Shabbos Parshas Beshalach, 11 Shevat. During the Farbrengen, the Rebbe again spoke about the above-mentioned topics, adding that the most efficient way of finding guidance is by studying the Torah of the (Frierdiker) Rebbe diligently and in-depth.

On Tu B’Shevat again, the Rebbe reiterated these words, prefacing that the (Frierdiker) Rebbe provided us with all the guidance



Rebbe’s words that he wished to minimize the reliance that the Chassidim had on the direct answers that they were accustomed to receive from him, and that they should each attempt to find the proper means to settle their doubts and difficulties when they arise, based on what the Torah teaches. Namely, one is to refer all medical issues and concerns of health to doctors, all Halachic matters to a Rav, concerns of spiritual growth to one’s (Asei l’cho) Rav, and so on. The Rebbe also mentioned that all requests for Brochos,

that we need throughout his lifetime, and he continues to do so even more today, after his passing. One can find answers to all difficulties by studying Chassidus, and when in doubt nevertheless, one should consult his Rav.

On 21 Shevat, the Rebbe held Yechidus Klolis for the guests who had arrived for Yud Shevat. During his talk then, the Rebbe spoke yet again about how to resolve the various issues that seem to arise.

# *the Rebbe's Peulos in memory of the Rebbetzin*



## **Keren Hachomesh**

Upon the return from the Rebbetzin's levaya on Chof Beis Shevat, 5748, after receiving those who had passed by to be menachem avel following Mincha, the Rebbe called Rabbi Krinsky into his room on the second floor of his home and told him that he wishes to establish a new fund called "Keren Hachomesh". The name of the fund spells out the initials of the Rebbetzin's name, Harabonis Chaya Mushkah Shneerson. Initially, the Rebbe had said that the money was intended to support causes associated with Jewish women, i.e. Hachnasas Kallah, Taharas Hamishpacha, and so on. In actuality however, the fund gave money to any Lubavitcher institution which applied to receive funds.

## **Campus Chomesh**

On 24 Adar 5748, a groundbreaking ceremony was held in Crown Heights for the new Beth Rivkah School Campus. The new facility was to be called "Campus Chomesh", in memory of the Rebbetzin. Suddenly, during the ceremony, the Rebbe's car appeared at the site. Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov approached the

car, and the Rebbe told him, "Tonight is the Rebbetzin's birthday. I'm now on my way to the Ohel, and I will also stop at her resting place. I would like to give you a donation on her behalf, along with mine. Enclosed is 470 dollars, the equivalence of the Gematriya of her name."

## **"Vehachai Yiten El Libo"**

After the passing of the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe began to mention in virtually every one of his sichos, the phrase "Vehachai yiten el libo". This is a quote from the book of Koheles, which means: After a tragedy or a sad occurrence, the ones who remain among the living must contemplate upon what happened and take it heart, thereby being aroused to do Teshuvah.

The Rebbe explained that this verse must be applied in our situation as well. Aside for awakening our souls by the mere occurrence of the passing of a loved one, we must be specifically aroused when thinking into the special qualities of the Rebbetzin, deriving lessons from them on how to act now, and to increase in Torah and Mitzvos. Doing so will help us increase in our happiness as well.

## **The Birthday Campaign**

Another very significant initiative that the Rebbe undertook in memory of the Rebbetzin was the Birthday campaign. It was on 25 Adar, the Birthday of the Rebbetzin, after the Rebbe had concluded davening Shacharis at his home. Many of those who were at the house had already left, when suddenly the Rebbe reappeared downstairs and began to say a sicha at the shtender. The hookup was promptly arranged to 770, which had already filled with Chassidim who managed to hear of the pleasant surprise.

The Rebbe began by speaking about the fact that it was the birthday of the Rebbetzin, and continued by suggesting that to honor her memory, everyone should increase in good conduct on their own birthdays. In the sichos during the weeks that followed, up until the final day of Pesach, the Rebbe continued to expound upon the specialty of one's birthday and the proper conduct which it mandates.

# Stories of the Rebbetzin

*The following story is recounted by Rabbi Boruch S. Kahn, one of the bochurim studying in 770 during the late 1950s:*

In the earlier years, the Rebbe walked home from 770 everyday. Each day, it was the duty of two bochurim to accompany the Rebbe, walking at a distance behind him.

One night, it was my turn to follow the Rebbe home along with a colleague of mine. After the Rebbe had finished receiving people for Yechidus, he made his way home. We followed behind from a distance, and when the Rebbe entered his house we

turned around and headed back to 770. Approximately half an hour later, the public phone in the main corridor at 770 rang. Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov picked up, and heard the Rebbetzin's voice on the other line; she asked him to find out where the Rebbe was, since Yechidus had finished a while ago. (We all knew that the Rebbetzin would not go to sleep until the Rebbe came home). He answered that the Rebbe had already gone home, and two bochurim had also accompanied him. She offered that most probably the Rebbe had returned to 770 afterwards.

All we could presume was, that the Rebbe had gone home earlier than he intended to, in order that the Rebbetzin would be able to go to sleep, to return immediately afterwards and continue his holy work. The Rebbetzin then asked that someone give over a message to the Rebbe to call her. The Merkos office was already closed for the night, and there was no way to call the Rebbe's room, so we resolved to write a note and slip it under the Rebbe's door. As the Rebbetzin did not call back again, we understood that the Rebbe had called her.

## Stories of the Rebbetzin as told by Reb Mendel Notik

### *Meshamesh Bakodesh in the Rebbe's home*

✿ On days when the Rebbe went to the Ohel, the Rebbetzin would rarely leave the house. If she did leave, she would come back early in order to be near the phone, to hear that the Rebbe had returned and was well. She would sit near the phone waiting for that call, and if someone would call in the interim, she would apologize quickly, saying that she could not talk since she was waiting to hear from the Rebbe, and that she would call him/her back later. (This was before call waiting!) She would sit, worried, the entire time. Only after she heard that he had returned safely to 770 would she breathe a sigh of relief and leave her post.

One summer evening, as I was watering the garden, the Rebbetzin came outside on the back porch to get some fresh air. While talking with me, she mentioned, "I noticed that Rabbi Klein was driving my husband home these past few days, and I want to know if everything is all right with Rabbi Krinsky." I told her that Rabbi Krinsky had gone to a family wedding in Chicago and that he was fine. "Are you sure?" she asked me. I assured her that he was absent for a

good reason, a simcha, and she was clearly relieved.

✿ In 5738, right after the heart Rebbe's attack, Dr. Ira Weiss, the Rebbe's heart specialist, would call the Rebbetzin every day from Chicago to report to her the opinions and discussions of the various doctors involved in the Rebbe's care. If Dr. Weiss was in town, he would meet with her in person, in the Frierdiker Rebbe's residence upstairs in 770, where the Rebbetzin sometimes stayed. If he was phoning from Chicago, the Rebbetzin would tell Dr. Weiss- every time- that she would call him back immediately so the phone call would not be at his expense. When she would speak to him, she would speak very briefly, thanking him repetitively for taking the time and making the effort to update her.

The Rebbetzin frequently praised Dr. Weiss, saying, "He is a Tzadik for everything he does for my husband." She was very deeply impressed with the sacrifices he made in order to be available to the Rebbe, and involved in his medical care, often arranging time-consuming conference calls with many doctors. He spent long periods of

time away from his family, and away from his medical practice.

One day, Dr. Weiss called and I answered the phone that was in the dinette, while the Rebbetzin was in the kitchen. I spoke with him for a few moments, and then I informed the Rebbetzin that Dr. Weiss was on the phone. She stood up quickly, and almost ran to the phone. When she got off the phone, she explained that she hadn't come to the phone right away when it rang because she had assumed it was Reb Mendel Gansburg (one of the people who assisted in the Rebbe's household). Surprised that she could have heard me talking to Dr. Weiss and thought it was Reb Mendel Gansburg, I said, "But to Gansburg I always speak in Yiddish...?" She replied very simply, and without any hesitation: "In my father's home I learnt that it is possible to be present, but not to hear anything."

✿ Because the Rebbetzin was not involved with the day to day goings-on in 770, she did not often witness the boundless love of the Chassidim for the Rebbe. On Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738, six weeks after the heart attack which had the Rebbe not leave his room in 770 (for six weeks),



rumors had been swirling that the Rebbe would leave 770 that night for the first time since Shemini Atzeres, when the heart attack took place.

The rumors turned out to be true. When the Rebbe was getting ready to leave 770 at about 9:00 p.m. people were gathered in front of 770, as the strong desire to see our king was then at fever pitch (since most of Anash had not seen the Rebbe since the events of Shemini Atzeres). The Rebbetzin was watching the joyous spectacle from inside the Frierdiker Rebbe's Yechidus room, upstairs in 770, with the lights turned off in order not to be seen (and perhaps to see better).

Another fellow and I had the Z'chus to be there with the Rebbetzin, watching. Suddenly, like a bolt of lightning, a happy Nigun burst from the mouths of the assembled throngs, and people were jumping in the air to get just one glimpse of their beloved Rebbe. It was absolutely electrifying – you could feel their love for the Rebbe with your hands. I burst into tears, and out of the corner of my eye, I glanced at the Rebbetzin and it seemed to me that her eyes also became teary. Then she said in Yiddish/Russian, "Ah Zelche Maladyet'n!" (Roughly translated: "What a great bunch!") She repeated this a few times, glowing with love.

When the Rebbe had left and the Rebbetzin was getting ready to leave, I asked her whether she wanted me to come to the house afterwards, in case she'd need something. (She planned to leave 770 after the Rebbe had already left, and the crowds had dispersed.) She did not accept, saying, "You need to rest. Everything will be okay." (Apparently she had seen how I had been so affected moments before.) "I will call you afterwards from the house to confirm with you that everything is okay, so you won't have to worry." At 11:00 that night the Rebbetzin called me to say, "Everything is fine with my husband. Now get some rest, and we'll speak tomorrow."

מוקדש  
לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע  
ולזכרון  
הרבנית הצדקנית מרת  
חי' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע  
בקשר עם יום ההילולא  
כ"ב שבט

✿ The Rebbetzin always tried to make me feel at ease in proximity of the Rebbe. In general, I did whatever I possibly could not to be in the house when the Rebbe was home, but there were times when it was unavoidable not to encounter the Rebbe face-to-face. One of those times occurred on Purim.

There was a constant flow of people bringing Mishloach Manos to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin through either of the two outside doors, plus the telephone was constantly ringing; I was needed to respond to the telephone and the doorbells. I would accept the Mishloach Manos and give the young ones some money that the Rebbetzin had prepared for that purpose.

When the Rebbe was ready to leave, I found myself "stuck," as it were, at the front door as the Rebbe headed out, and there was nowhere for me to escape in order to get out of the Rebbe's way. So I stood there, shaking in fear. As the Rebbe passed me, he turned to me with a wide smile, and wished me, "A Freilech'n Purim!"

The Rebbetzin, just behind the Rebbe, saw my situation and wanted to make me feel a little more at ease, so she commented to the Rebbe with a smile, "That Notik – every time he sees you, he gets all shaken up. I've told him many times that you don't bite!"

After I opened the door and held it for the Rebbe to leave, he turned around and said, "Yasher Koach!" The Rebbe said Yasher Koach to me several times. In general, the Rebbe would show a lot of gratitude and appreciation to anyone who helped the Rebbetzin in any way

✿ When the Rebbetzin would address somebody, even a youngster like me, she would not say "Dir," rather she would always say "Ir" – a more formal, respectful way of addressing someone, usually reserved for a parent or teacher. The Rebbetzin was very careful not to trouble anyone to help her, only if it was impossible to avoid would she ask for assistance.

One time, the Rebbetzin and I were talking, when in the middle she said to herself "Oh, I need to remember to hang up my husband's shirts to dry, so that when the house cleaner will come tomorrow, she can iron them." I said that I would be happy to do it. Right away the Rebbetzin said "No, no! That is not what I meant; I was just speaking to myself. I will do it later." I tried to tell her that if I am not doing it for her, I will do it for the Rebbe (which was something that I would tell the Rebbetzin some times when she would not allow me to do certain chores). But she said "No – I will do it later." A while later the Rebbetzin got a phone call, so I went downstairs and hung up the shirts to dry. Later that night the Rebbetzin actually took the time to call me and tell me that she was very upset with what I did, as she didn't want to have me do this.

✿ Once, the Rebbetzin described to me in vivid detail how when Jews were starving in Europe (probably during World War I), her father sent her and her sister sneaking through dark alleys, way past curfew, to deliver food and candles to the Navardoker Yeshiva (of the Mussar movement). The two girls literally risked their lives. Just a glimpse of the Ahavas Yisroel and Mesirus Nefesh, which the Frierdiker Rebbe imbued into his two beloved daughters to save fellow Yidden from starvation, and to enable them to continue learning.