

The Jewish Weekly

In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
 י"ח אייר תשע"ח
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

Early Memories of the Rebbe During the 1940s

By Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner

I'll never forget the day I first met the Rebbe. That day was also the day I became a student at Tomchei Temimim, the Chabad yeshivah, so I remember it very well. It was June 23, 1941, and all the yeshivah boys - thirty or forty of us - went to the pier to meet him as he arrived in the United States.

We went to the pier, together with a delegation which had been sent by the Previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, to greet him. I remember that the Rebbe came off the boat, wearing a light-colored suit, with a gray hat to match. He was accompanied by his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. He greeted all the dignitaries who had come out to meet him on the pier, and then he came over to us boys and greeted each one of us, one by one, with "Shalom Aleichem - Peace be with you."

The Rebbe always paid special attention to us boys, the young students. I remember him talking to us on the first night of Sukkot, as he was going home. At that time he and the Rebbetzin lived in a third-floor apartment, on the corner of President Street and New York Avenue. About a dozen of us students were standing around, and he came up to us, and motioning to us, said, "My father-in-law, the Rebbe, wants that you, and you, and you, and you, should be outstanding Talmudic scholars."

During Chol Hamoed Sukkot, most nights he'd come into the sukkah with a tray of food, and he'd even offer us a bit of wine. I remember that he said to me, "Yitzchok, have some wine." And I said, "I don't want." He said, "My father-in-law, the Rebbe, says that every day of Chol Hamoed, you have to drink a little bit of wine."

He'd then sit and talk with us in the sukkah, discussing the Talmudic texts we were learning in yeshivah at the time.

We used to get a Talmud to look up various passages. And we realized that he had a photographic memory - he had a picture of the Talmud in his head. He didn't have to search for Rashi's commentary; he just opened it right on the spot. We noticed that he did that with the writings of Maimonides, as well.

On Simchas Torah, because the Previous Rebbe was not well, the circuits with the Torah, the hakafot, took place upstairs in his study. As the room was small, very few people were admitted, and then the door was locked.

When the future Rebbe would go upstairs, a few of us used to follow him. He'd look at us, and after he'd open the door with his key, he'd walk in and leave the door unlocked; sometimes, he'd even leave it open a little bit. We used to sneak in, and hide ourselves in the room adjoining the Previous Rebbe's study, which



Reb Yitzchok Dovid Groner speaking with the Lubavitcher Rebbe

had at one time been his mother's room. From there we couldn't be seen, but we could observe what was happening.

I remember that in 1940, the Previous Rebbe was still well enough to walk around the table with a Torah scroll. But the next year he wasn't able to walk anymore. He sat during hakafot, holding the Torah scroll.

The future Rebbe always seemed to notice us, and to help us "skirt the rules", in order to have the chance to see the Previous Rebbe. One year, during hakafot, there were two of us there, peeking in from the Rebbe's mother's room - I remember it was me and Moshe Kazarnovsky - and the future Rebbe said to us, "Don't come in."

We got frightened. We said, "If you want, we'll go downstairs!"

"No," he replied.

Then at the seventh and final hakafah, I felt someone's hand on my back. It was the Rebbe. He pushed us into the room, so we could also participate.

In 1947 I finished yeshivah, and the Previous Rebbe sent me on a mission to Australia for about four and a half months, and to New Zealand for about a month and a half. After I was done, I came back home.

Several years after the Previous Rebbe passed away, and the Rebbe assumed leadership, the families in Australia petitioned him to bring me back. This was in 1954. It took me a while, but in the end I agreed, and I went to Australia in 1959.

On Simchas Torah of that year, before I was to depart, the Rebbe called me, together with Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, who was going to Milan, and, at the farbrengen, he asked us each to make a l'chaim on a glass of wine, and he said to me, "Kovesh zayn Australia - Influence Australia."

When it came time for me and Rabbi Garelik to go to the airport, he sent the whole yeshivah to see us off, and he himself came out to stand by the door, waving till our car pulled away.

Reprinted from my encounter with the Rebbe, www.myencounterblog.com.

Editor's Note: Yud Shevat (this year-Feb. 7th): Passing of the 6th Lubavitcher Rebbe in 5710 (1950); inauguration of the 7th Rebbe in 5711 (1951).

It Once Happened..

The Emperor, the Elder and the Fig Tree

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the Bnei Yisrael, that even though you will find the land full with all that is good, you should not say, "We will sit and NOT plant." Rather, you must be careful to plant, as it says, "When you shall come to the land and you shall plant any food tree." (Levit. 19:23) Just as when you entered the land, and found plants that others had planted, so too shall you plant for your descendants.

There is a story about Adriyonus Caesar, who was going to war, and marching with his soldiers, to fight against a rebel area. He found an old man, who was planting fig trees along the way. Adriyonus asked him, "You are an elderly man, so why are you standing and working and tiring yourself for others?"

He answered, "My master the king, I am planting now, and if I merit, I will eat from the fruits of my planting, but if not, then my children will eat."

Adriyonus was at war for 3 years, and when he returned, he found the same old man in the same place. What did the old man do? He took a basket, and filled it with the beautiful first-to-ripen figs, and gave it to Adriyonus, saying, "My master the king, please receive this from your servant. I am the old man whom you found on your way, three years ago, and you said to me, 'You are an old man, so why bother yourself and exhaust yourself working for others?' However, the Omnipresent One has permitted me to eat from the fruit of my plantings. These that are in the basket, are a present from me."

Right away, Adriyonus told his servants, to take the basket from him, remove the figs, and to refill it with gold coins. And so they did.

Thus we see, that one should never say that he is too old, how much longer will he live, and why should he get up and get tired for others, since he is soon to die. King Solomon said, "He made everything beautiful in its time. He also put the world into their heart." (Ecc. 3:11). The word for "the world," Ha'olam, is written without [the usual] Vav, spelling He'elam," meaning "the concealment." Why? For if the Holy One, Blessed be He, had not hidden from man's heart, the thought of his imminent death, he would never build nor plant, for he would say that tomorrow he would die, so why should he get up and get tired for others. Therefore the Holy One, Blessed be He, hid the day of his death from the heart of man, so that he would build and plant. If he merits he will gain the benefits, and if not, others will get the benefits.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

Editor's Note: Tu B'Shevat is this Monday coming, February 10 of this year



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Beshalach

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	4:43	5:57	6:36
Tel Aviv	4:57	5:58	
Haifa	4:47	5:57	
Be'er Sheva	5:01	6:00	

Ask Grandmother

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles.

Even at the tender age of five, the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (the "Rayatz"), had a fixed daily schedule. At eight o'clock in the morning, he jumped out of bed, and half an hour later, he was in the synagogue praying with the congregation. From 9:30 until 10:00 was breakfast. Then, for four hours he studied in yeshiva. Then came lunch for an hour, and another hour devoted to writing. From 4:00 until 8:00 there was yeshiva again, then supper, and some free time to spend in his room, before retiring to bed.

Shabbat, of course, was different. Most of the morning was spent praying in shul. In addition, he had a special treat, a visit to his grandmother, his father's mother, Rebbetzin Rikva. There he would find the elder members of the Chassidic community, white-bearded chassidim who came to pay their respects to the "Grand Old Rebbetzin." They would stay for a while, and relate stories about the lives of older chassidim, or even of the Rebbe Maharash, the Previous Rebbe's grandfather (Rebbetzin Rikva's husband).

When everybody went home, to eat the Shabbat meal, the boy would go back to the shul. All the worshippers, had long since finished their prayers, and gone home - all except his father, the Rebbe Rashab. He sat with his head near the Ark. He was still praying. Once, the boy approached his father quietly, in order to listen to his prayers. His father prayed very slowly, as if he were counting the words. Sometimes he paused, and then would slowly continue.

The Rebbe's son, wondered why it took his father so long with the prayers, which even he, a boy of five, knew so well, and could read so fluently. But his heart throbbed, as he listened to the soulful melody, which his father hummed now and again, and the singsong of the words.

He asked his uncle, Rabbi Zalman Aaron, his father's brother, "why does Father pray so slowly?"

His uncle smiled, as he answered with a twinkle in his eyes, "Your father finds it difficult to read the words from the siddur very quickly. He has to

say each word separately, and can't pray very fast. That's why it takes him so long."

The boy turned away without saying another word. But he felt a deep pain, and a burning shame, that his father couldn't pray more fluently.

The following Shabbat, he silently approached his father, and listened carefully. His father was saying the Shema. "Shema Yisrael..." His father said slowly, then he paused. The son was startled to hear his father sobbing. His father said another couple of words, and sobbed again, and when he said "Hashem Echad - G-d is One" the words seemed to burst from his heart, with a flood of tears.

The son couldn't listen any more. His heart was bursting with pity for his father. He went home, and with tears in his eyes, appealed to his mother, "Mother, Father is crying in the shul. Why does he pray so slowly, and why is he crying? Come, see for yourself, I can't bear it."

"There is nothing to be worried about," his mother consoled her little son. "Go to your grandmother, and tell her about it. She is a very wise lady, maybe she will be able to explain it to you."

The boy lost no time, and went to his grandmother, certain that the wise, old Rebbetzin would find a remedy to help his father learn to read the prayers more quickly, perhaps even as quickly as all the other Jews in the synagogue.

When he came to his grandmother, the child told her about his poor father's difficulty saying the prayers. "Mother said that you could do something about it," he concluded hopefully. Grandmother looked at him seriously and said, "Your father is a great chassid, and a righteous man. Before he reads any word from the prayerbook, he thinks about it carefully, what it means, and to Whom he is saying it. And when he thinks about the holy words of the prayers, his heart is filled with love for G-d, just as a son loves his dear father, who is near and yet far away. So your father longs to be closer to Him, and the tears just come. I cannot tell you more now, but when you grow older, you will understand this better, and you will know how it feels."

With his grandmother's explanation, the boy felt as if a tremendous weight came off his heart. So it wasn't that his father couldn't read the prayers quickly. It was because his father was such a great person, that he prayed differently. Yes, he realized that his father was different, in the way he spoke, the way he acted, the way he studied, and the way he prayed. That very day, the Rebbe Rayatz recounted, he resolved that, as the only child of such a great person, he too must act differently, to merit being his child.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

Editor's Note: Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (the Rayatz) zt"l's 70th Yahrzeit was Wednesday, 10th Shevat - February 7th of this year.

The Jewish Nation arrives at the Yam Suf, Egyptians behind them, mountains to the right and left, and in front of them, the Yam Suf. They cry out to Moshe, "What did you bring us here for? Was there no place to bury us in Egypt, so you had to bring us here to die?" Moshe tells the people, "G-d will get us out of here." G-d says to Moshe, "What are they crying for? Tell the nation to continue to go!"

Rav Yissochar Frand, in his famous speech at the 12th Siyum Hashas of Daf Yomi, at MetLife Stadium, told what became a famous story. A man in his seventies, once came to the Rosh Yeshiva, Harav Nosson Tzvi Finkel zt"l. The Rosh Yeshiva told him, he needed a plan to learn, so he came back and showed that he could finish Mesechet Shabbat, in a certain amount of time. The Rosh Yeshiva told him to go back, and make another plan, that this first one was not good enough. The man came back with a plan to finish Shas, and the Rosh Yeshiva said "now that is a plan!" The man said, "Rosh Yeshiva, by the time this plan is going to finish, I will be 130! How can this be a good plan? I can never do it." The Rosh Yeshiva looked at him, and picked up the tablecloth, to show future plans for expanding the Yeshiva, and said to him, "Do you think I could do what I am doing? Look at me! I'm sick, and have every excuse in the book to stop, but am I going to let a few circumstances get in the way of my plan? Nothing stands in the way of will power."

Friends, in life we find ourselves sometimes in impossible situations, and we say to ourselves, "How am I ever going to do this? How am I going to get out of this?" Is there something impossible for G-d? Who do you think put you in that situation in the first place?! G-d created every situation that you experience, specifically for you. Don't think that details can completely sideline you! G-d must expect more than that from you.

So let's all seize every opportunity and let's pray for peace and for our soldiers who go out to protect us, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, happy, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual and sweet Shabbat.

Yossi

בשלה

Sponsored
in loving memory of
our dear daughter and sister
Shoshana

☞ ☜

לעילוי נשמת בתנו ואחותנו
הכללה ליבא גילה אלני שושנה ע"ה
בת ר' משה דוד לובין יבדלחט"א

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 1
MITZVOT ASEH: 0
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 1

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 116
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1681
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 6423

HAFTORA:
Ashkenazim & Chabad: Shoftim 4:4-5:31
Sephardim: Shoftim 5:1-31

The Shabbat on which Parshat Beshalach is read, is called *Shabbat Shirah*, because it contains Az Yashir. (15:1-18).

בש"ו is Monday, Feb. 10, 2020.