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Chassidic Tales & Teachings
For Tammuz and Av

Chaim Davies

Tishrei 5787

שנת רַגְלֵ״י מְבַשֵּׂ״ר עה״ת לפ״ק

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For questions or comments,
contact: chaimdavies@gmail.com

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Dedicated with love to my wonderful children,
whose delight in a delicious mayseh keeps me ever
searching for the light of our tzaddikim.

Foreword

Tammuz and Av ask us to mourn a home we have never known. We have never stood in the courtyards of the Beis HaMikdash or heard the song of the Levi'im. Yet its absence runs through our tefillos. During these weeks, we remember what Yerushalayim once was and yearn for what she will yet become.

For the Chassidic masters, the Churban was a sorrow they carried into their daily lives. A word in davening could bring them to tears. A korban that could no longer be brought could trouble them as deeply as a loss within their own homes. Through their stories, we glimpse how closely a Yid's heart can remain bound to the Beis HaMikdash.

Alongside their grief lived a remarkable capacity for joy. Shabbos retained its delight, and a melody of rejoicing could be sung through tears. They could weep for the Shechinah in exile and rejoice in Hashem's presence beside them. They waited for Mashiach with the living expectation that he might arrive that very day, before the fast had ended.

The stories and teachings gathered here follow the journey through Tammuz and the Three Weeks, into Tisha B'Av, and onward to Shabbos Nachamu, Tu B'Av, and the approach of Elul. Their accounts of sorrow, kindness, and enduring hope bring the yearning of earlier generations closer to our own hearts. May they deepen our tefillos for Yerushalayim to be rebuilt. And may we soon merit to see the promise fulfilled, when the days we have kept in mourning become days of joy.

Tammuz

תַּמּוּז

Chodesh Tammuz

Faith Along the Way

1. The Tea He Never Brought

Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Epstein, the future Maor VaShemesh, asked Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk to let him serve him personally.

One day, Rabbi Elimelech asked him to bring tea. Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman prepared it and returned with the cup. As he approached, he saw an elderly man sitting with his Rebbe.

Fear seized him. He recoiled, the cup fell from his hand, and the tea spilled onto the ground. He left the house.

Later, Rabbi Elimelech asked why he had not brought the tea.

Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman explained that he had brought it, but had been so frightened by the elderly man sitting beside his Rebbe that he had dropped the cup.

"Oy vey," Rabbi Elimelech said. "Can a child not look upon his father's face? That elderly man was Avraham Avinu."

Source: Avraham Chaim Simcha Bunim Michelson, Ohel Elimelech (Lemberg, 5670), p. 95.

2. The Silver She Asked Him to Carry

Reb Noson reached Tiberias toward evening on Thursday, Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5582. The welcome was

warm, and he lodged in the home of Reb Dovid, the son of the rav of Chmielnik.

The following morning he went to the cemetery. He visited the graves of Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, Rabbi Avraham of Kalisk, the rav of Shepetovka, and other tzaddikim. From there he went to the cave identified as the resting place of Rav Kahana and his disciples, and then to the grave of Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes. These visits occupied him until several hours after midday. He also went to the hot springs and to the grave identified as that of Rabbi Yirmiyah, buried standing upright.

He spent Shabbos in Tiberias with joy. On Motzaei Shabbos he attended a wedding and joined in its rejoicing.

During the following week he continued from one holy place to another. On Monday he climbed to the site of Rabbi Akiva's grave and the resting places of his twenty-four thousand disciples. Opposite it was the cave identified as the grave of Rabbi Akiva's wife. He then visited the cave of Rabbi Chiya and his sons.

On Tuesday he went to the graves of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai and his disciples. Nearby were the sites identified with Rabbi Yochanan, Rav Ami, Rav Asi, and the Shelah. On Wednesday he went a little way outside the city to the burial ground associated with the righteous women of earlier generations. He listed Elisheva bas Aminadav; Tzipporah, the wife of Moshe; Yocheved, the mother of Moshe and Aharon; Chuldah the prophetess; Bilhah; Zilpah; and Avigayil. Some also named Esther HaMalkah. He acknowledged differences of opinion over some of these identifications, while recording the local agreement that many of these righteous women were buried there.

On Thursday he returned to the cave of Rav Kahana. On Friday he again visited the cemetery, including the grave of Rabbi Mendel of Premishlan, and continued to Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes and the hot springs. For the second Shabbos he ate with Rabbi Ze'ev of Tcherni-Ostrov.

But beneath the joy of these visits lay an urgent worry. His money had run out. He did not have the funds for his journey home. He had been directed to money belonging to Reb Shlomo that was in Reb Dovid's hands, but Reb Dovid would give him only fifty grush. The difficulty had kept him in Tiberias for that second Shabbos.

On Sunday of the week of Balak, a man made a morning meal in honor of the visitors. While Reb Noson was sitting there, a woman came in with an unexpected request. She wanted to send silver vessels with him. He was specifically the traveler she wished to entrust with them. He would have permission to sell them in Alexandria and deliver the money to her son outside Eretz Yisrael.

Reb Noson saw in her offer a remarkable act of hashgachah. Far from his own home, in a place where he had feared being left without help, Hashem had not abandoned him. He gave thanks.

On Monday he left Tiberias with an honoring escort. By Tuesday he was back in Tzfas. On Wednesday he visited the grave of Benayahu ben Yehoyada, and on Thursday he again went to the Arizal's grave. On Friday night he danced with Reb Abba the shochet and Reb Moshe Yonah; that Shabbos he ate with the rav of Skole.

On Monday of the week of Pinchas, they returned to the cave of Hoshea ben Be'eri. A boy opened the entrance for them, and they poured out their prayers with tears.

They were now ready to leave Tzfas and begin the journey home.

Source: Reb Noson Sternhartz, Yemei Moharnat, II, §§146–155.

3. The Zohar at the Moment of Departure

Before Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka set out for Eretz Yisrael a second time, he went with Rabbi Yosef of Kaminka to the Baal Shem Tov's grave. He returned from the cemetery filled with joy. The Baal Shem Tov, he said, had instructed him to make the journey.

Rabbi Yosef asked in astonishment whether the Baal Shem Tov had spoken to him.

Rabbi Nachman was himself surprised by the question. Had Rabbi Yosef not seen the Baal Shem Tov standing beside him and speaking with him?

On the journey, Rabbi Nachman spent Shabbos in Nemirov with the town's Maggid. The compiler of Shivchei HaBesht records that he was there too. At the table there was sharp conversation and laughter between Rabbi Nachman and the Maggid, and the Maggid took exception to something in their exchange.

The Maggid spoke of the difficulty of escaping a foreign thought in prayer. Even if a person had prayed without one, the thought that he was about to finish praying might enter his mind near the end. That, too, was a foreign thought, though an exceedingly subtle one. He went on to describe the accusing force created by a transgression, and how such a subtle thought could clothe itself in a talmid chacham who would cause a person distress.

The townspeople accompanied Rabbi Nachman out of the town. The compiler was among them, together with the rav and the Maggid. The Maggid considered accompanying him as far as Ladyzhin, but did not continue that far.

They stopped to daven Minchah in a field. The rav put on tefillin and led the prayer. Rabbi Nachman prayed without tallis and tefillin. The compiler did not see whether the Maggid prayed there; he thought the Maggid had returned to the town to daven.

Shivchei HaBesht then relates that Rabbi Nachman died the following year, in Tammuz, the same month in which he had passed through Nemirov.

Rabbi Mendel sat with him at night. Rabbi Nachman made Kiddush over wine, drank the required measure, and sat in his Shabbos clothes. Rabbi Mendel went to eat his own Shabbos meal. While he was eating the accompanying food, he was summoned back.

He returned and found Rabbi Nachman dying. At the departure of his soul, Rabbi Nachman was learning Zohar.

The source closes: he died at Minchah, "and went to rest."

Source: Shivchei HaBesht, 'The Death of Rabbi Nachman'.

4. So the Oath Would Not Be False

After Rabbi Avraham became the Maggid of Trisk, tension arose between his followers and the Sadigura chassidim who lived in the town.

One morning, a young Trisker chassid put on tallis and tefillin and stood to daven. A Sadigura chassid approached and began provoking him with talk of his own Rebbe's greatness. Unable to get rid of him, the young man placed his hand on his tefillin shel yad and swore that his Rebbe was as great as the Sadigura Rebbe.

The other man left him alone, and he finished davening.

Afterward, the enormity of what he had said struck him. Who was he to measure the spiritual stature of tzaddikim? What if he had sworn falsely, with his tefillin in his hand? He hurried to the Maggid and told him what had happened.

The Maggid reassured him concerning ahavas Hashem: he, too, possessed love of Hashem as the Sadigura Rebbe did. But perhaps the Sadigura Rebbe surpassed him in yirah. He had suffered persecution and imprisonment, through which he might have attained a greater measure of awe.

The Maggid sent the young man away in peace.

A short time later, informers accused the Maggid of intending to rebel against the government. They pointed to his practice of saying vikarév keitz meshichei in Kaddish, treating the added word keitz as evidence against him.

Officials searched his home and carried off the papers and manuscripts they found. They wanted to arrest him as well, but, after much pleading, agreed to leave him at home until Pesach was over.

After they left, the Maggid paced his room in distress, striking his hands together. Among the confiscated papers was a copy of the Baal Shem Tov's book of segulos. He feared that its extraordinary contents would be used to bring further accusations against him. He promised a share in Olam HaBa to whoever would help recover the writings.

One of his followers undertook the task and worked until he succeeded in retrieving them.

After Pesach, a government carriage arrived and took the Maggid away. The town was in an uproar; no one knew where he had been taken.

Rebbetzin Rikli wept until exhaustion overcame her. Her father, the rav of Kaliv, appeared to her in a dream. He told her not to fear or cry: her husband had been taken to Slavuta, and, with Hashem's help, would soon be freed.

She awoke and told the others. Chassidim went to Slavuta and found that the Maggid was indeed imprisoned there. They obtained permission for one of their number to stay with him and attend to his needs.

After investigation, the case was decided in his favor and he was released. The source notes that a Torah teaching from that time was preserved in his Magen Avraham.

When he returned, the Maggid explained the imprisonment to his followers. Through it, he had been given the opportunity to attain the dimension of yirah he had ascribed to the Sadigura Rebbe, so that the young man's oath would not be false.

He thanked Hashem for the kindness.

Source: Yisrael Bekmeister, Sippurei Niflaos MiGedolei Yisrael (Jerusalem, 5729), pp. 47–48.

5. A Pistol on the Table

In Tammuz 5680, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn was leading Shacharis in Rostov-on-Don. He was in the year of mourning for his father, the Rebbe Rashab. The congregation had reached the Monday supplication, Vehu Rachum, when three armed men entered the room.

They wore black-and-red uniforms, with ammunition belts, pistols, daggers, and metal headgear. They had come to take him to the Cheka.

Two belonged to the Yevsektsia, the Communist organization campaigning against Jewish religious life. The third was not Jewish. The two Jewish agents wanted him to remove his tallis and tefillin immediately. He replied that he would finish davening, learn the Mishnayos recited afterward, and then go with them.

Their response was a torrent of abuse. One of the men was a refugee from Shavli whom the Rebbe had helped several years earlier. He had found him work in the cigarette trade and later lent him money to establish his own business. Now the same man was shouting at him to stop davening. According to the Rebbe's account, only their non-Jewish companion prevented them from interrupting him by force.

After the last Kaddish, he removed his tallis and tefillin. With one armed guard on either side and a third behind him, he was escorted to the interrogation.

About fifteen men sat around a table. The Rebbe was seated at its foot, opposite the two men at its head. His guards took their places behind him. Besides the weapons the men wore, each had a pistol on the table.

One of the leaders explained, in Russian, that they constituted a committee for examining religions. They had already questioned Rabbi Berman and Rabbi Goldenberg. Now they wanted answers about Judaism, particularly Kabbalah and Chassidus.

The Rebbe answered in Yiddish. He reminded them that on two earlier occasions he had made his position plain: he would not abandon his principles. No man or demon could move him from them, even a little.

Before he finished, a man beside the chairman lifted his pistol. This little toy, he said, could remove principles. Its threat could make even a mute speak.

The Rebbe answered that such a toy impressed people who had one world and many gods, each desire becoming another master. Jews had one G-d and believed in two worlds. The pistol neither frightened nor impressed him.

The chairman said they had not summoned him simply to provoke him. What were these principles of his? Perhaps they could reach an understanding.

He would speak Yiddish, the Rebbe replied, even among non-Jews, and certainly among people born to the Jewish nation.

How did he know that they were Jews? one asked.

Perhaps he had been mistaken, the Rebbe answered. He recalled an encounter his grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash, had had in Kyiv. The Maharash had addressed a fashionably dressed young man in Yiddish to ask directions to a professor's home. The young man had angrily demanded to know how he had recognized him as a Jew. The Maharash had answered with a cutting joke: at his bris, the mohel had attached what he removed to his nose. The Rayatz added that he did not possess his grandfather's means of recognition, but thought he had not mistaken the men before him.

The questioning began. Did he observe the details of Jewish law out of settled conviction, they asked, or merely out of faith and habit?

Out of conviction, he answered.

Then let him bring them to the same conviction.

He was willing, he said, if they would make it possible. A man could not stop a student of astronomy in the street and demand to be shown the courses of the stars. He would have to accompany the student to the observatory. In the same way, they should come with him to shul, put on tefillin, eat kosher food, and keep Shabbos. Their minds and hearts would become more receptive, and he would guide them toward understanding.

They demanded the reverse order: first proof, then observance.

The Rebbe asked them to consider food. A person knew that eating sustained him, although the process by which food became blood and flesh required study. What would they say of someone who refused to eat or drink until he had mastered that process? First he had to eat and live; afterward he could study medicine and understand.

The Rebbe ended this account by recording that his words made an impression upon them.

Source: Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, Sefer HaSichos 5680–5687, Tammuz 5680, pp. 3–5; Igros Kodesh, vol. VIII, p. 66 ff.

6. The Train Could Wait

On the first day of Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5687, a Thursday, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn learned that he was to leave prison. He would still be a prisoner of the Soviet authorities, sentenced to three years of exile in Kostroma, but he could first spend six hours at home with his family. Afterward he was to report to the railway station.

The Rebbe asked when the train would reach Kostroma.

On Shabbos, they told him.

He refused to travel under those conditions.

The officials made their position clear. They would not allow him to remain outside prison until after Shabbos. If he would not leave on their terms, he would have to remain imprisoned for many more days.

He did not withdraw his refusal. However long he would have to remain there, he told them, he would not travel on Shabbos.

The journey was postponed. He remained in prison over Shabbos and left for Kostroma on Sunday, 3 Tammuz.

Source: Toras Menachem—Hisvaaduyos 5743, vol. IV, p. 1692.

7. The Souls They Could Not Exile

On 3 Tammuz 5687, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn was allowed to leave the prison in Leningrad. He was not yet a free man. His destination was Kostroma, where he had been sentenced to three years of exile.

At the railway station, before the train departed, people gathered to accompany him and receive his parting words. Standing in the carriage, the Rebbe addressed them.

He began with a tefillah: "May Hashem our G-d be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He neither leave us nor forsake us."

Their fathers, he said, had possessed actual mesirus nefesh for Torah and mitzvos. He recalled the declaration of one of his holy forebears when the government demanded changes in Jewish education and the rabbinate:

"We did not leave Eretz Yisrael of our own will, and we will not return to Eretz Yisrael through our own strength. Our Father, our King, sent us into exile. He will redeem us, gather our scattered people from the four corners of the earth, and lead us upright through Mashiach, our righteous redeemer, to our holy land, speedily in our days.

"But all the peoples of the earth must know: only our bodies were handed over to exile and the domination of governments. Our souls were not sent into exile and were not handed over to the domination of governments.

"We must declare openly that in everything concerning our faith—Torah, mitzvos, and the customs of Israel—no one has authority to dictate to us, and no coercive power may be used against us in these matters.

"We must say, with the greatest Jewish resolve and the mesirus nefesh of generations: 'Do not touch My anointed ones, and do not harm My prophets.'"

That, the Rebbe told the people on the platform, was how a Jew of mesirus nefesh had spoken. Yet they themselves lacked even the proper courage to expose openly what a few hundred Jewish opponents of religious

life were doing to Jews and Judaism. The law permitted Torah study and mitzvah observance, subject to certain restrictions; denunciations and false accusations were sending Jews to prison and hard labor.

The prayer "Do not leave us and do not forsake us" therefore meant asking Hashem for the strength not to be overwhelmed by physical suffering, and even to receive it with joy. Every punishment suffered for maintaining a cheder, teaching Torah, or observing mitzvos should strengthen the work of sustaining Jewish life.

"Prison and hard labor are only temporary," he said. "Torah, mitzvos, and the Jewish people are eternal."

He blessed those who had come to see him off with health and strength, materially and spiritually. He expressed the hope that his temporary punishment would give new strength to the enduring work of strengthening Judaism, and that all Jews would have light, spiritually and materially.

He then left for exile. On 12 Tammuz he learned that he was to be released; the document granting his freedom was issued on 13 Tammuz.

Source: Sefer HaSichos 5680–5687, 3 Tammuz 5687, pp. 169–170; chronology, p. xi.

8. The Third Meal on a Tuesday

Cholera had reached Galicia and Hungary. Day after day, terrible reports came to Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov from places where his followers and friends lived. The reports broke his heart.

His biographer relates that once, as he left the beis midrash wrapped in tallis and tefillin, he stood before the mezuzah, raised his hand toward Heaven, and prayed:

"Ribbono Shel Olam, let me be an atonement for all Israel. I give my life to atone for them, so that the plague should not rule over them."

On the Friday before his final illness, the Rav reached the words "Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh" in his commentary on

the Zohar. There his continuous commentary came to an end. He had begun putting it into order toward his later years, incorporating earlier marginal notes and separate writings into the work. Beyond those three words, only notes from his younger years remained.

The next day, Shabbos, he fell ill with cholera. He could not sit at seudah shelishis or give the Torah discourse his followers were accustomed to hearing from him.

On Tuesday, 10 Tammuz 5591, his condition eased a little.

He put on his white Shabbos clothes. At the time of Minchah he sat down to a meal, making up, in his own avodah, the seudah shelishis he had missed.

He began to speak with his accustomed fervor. His subject was the Midrash about Rabbi Abahu, who, as he approached death, was shown thirteen rivers of balsam in the next world.

"Whose are these?" Rabbi Abahu asked.

They told him that they were his. In astonishment, he recalled the verse, "And I had said: I have labored in vain; for emptiness and vanity I have spent my strength."

The Ziditchover continued his discourse as daylight faded. During that discourse, in the night that began 11 Tammuz, he passed away. He was sixty-eight.

His nephew, Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Yehudah Yechiel Safrin of Komarno, was there. In his own commentary on the Zohar, he recorded both the ending of his uncle's work and his final moments. He had stood beside him saying words of praise, he wrote. His uncle shone with a fiery radiance, and the house seemed filled with light and souls as he departed in the highest state of desire for Hashem.

The Komarno Rebbe associated what he saw with another experience beside his uncle, after Minchah on Rosh Hashanah. Then, he wrote, he had seen a radiance like the rainbow above and had fallen in awe. He reported seeing

such radiance again at the passing, and connected it with his own attainment in Torah.

The biography presents the Rav's death as the acceptance of his prayer on behalf of the community, and relates that the epidemic was stayed.

After the levayah, his son-in-law, Rabbi Yehudah Tzvi of Rozdol, sat weeping. He recalled his father-in-law's promise. Other tzaddikim had said that after leaving this world they would not rest until they hastened the redemption; once in the world above, however, they had forgotten the needs of those below.

"But I," the Ziditchover had said, "will not enter Gan Eden at all until they promise me that the complete redemption will come speedily."

His son-in-law continued with a lament of his own. The Rav had indeed refused to enter, he said. But when the gates opened and he was shown the good awaiting the tzaddikim, and his own portion among them, he had leapt inside despite himself, like a fish leaping into water.

"Now our Rebbe too is within, like all the tzaddikim," he cried. "There is no hope!"

He wept bitterly.

Source: Matityahu Yechezkel Guttman, Tzvi LaTzaddik (Vienna, 5691), chapter 14, pp. 66–69, especially §§1, 4–6.

9. The Way Out of the Forest

A Kaminka tradition tells that Rabbi Shalom of Kaminka was accustomed to visiting the resting place of his teacher, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov, each year on 11 Tammuz.

One year the date fell on a Friday. He forgot the occasion and set out instead for Belz, to visit the Rebbe to whom he had now become attached.

On the way, he lost himself in a forest. He could not find the road out. Daylight was waning, and Shabbos was approaching while he remained among the trees.

He began examining his deeds. Why had this happened to him?

Then he remembered the date. It was his former teacher's yahrtzeit. Instead of making his customary visit to Ziditchov, he was on his way to Belz.

He begged his teacher's forgiveness and undertook never again to forget to visit his resting place on that day.

Immediately afterward, his eyes were opened to the way out. He emerged from the forest and reached a town shortly before dark, without desecrating Shabbos.

Source: Matityahu Yechezkel Guttman, Tzvi LaTzaddik (Vienna, 5691), chapter 14, §9, p. 70.

10. The Question He Asked Them to Remember

On Friday night, 12 Tammuz 5570, Rebbi Nachman sat at the Shabbos table in Uman and spoke about the course his own life had taken.

Why, he asked, did he continually do things that seemed so strange to other people? Why was he always moving from one place to another? What had he lacked in Medvedevka, where he had lived in peace? Yet he had left it for Zlatipolia, where he encountered fierce opposition and suffering, and then moved to Breslov. That summer he had left Breslov for Uman.

Even after coming to Uman, he continued, he might have chosen to lodge with a person whose conduct was fitting. Instead, he had chosen the lodging in which they now found him. He wondered aloud at the strangeness of his own actions.

Reb Noson answered with a question: why had Moshe Rabbeinu married a daughter of Yisro? As he later explained, he meant that Hashem sometimes brings opposites together. Moshe's marriage to Yisro's daughter offered him a way to understand his Rebbe's dealings with people so different from himself.

Rebbi Nachman turned to the others. Had they heard what Reb Noson had asked? It was a very great question.

Then he spoke about taking them as witnesses, while also saying that they were not fit to be witnesses. Those present did not understand what testimony he meant. He asked them to remember the matter, saying that he would give an answer. They could not write it down on Shabbos, but he expected them to remember.

The following morning he returned to the conversation. Again he said that Reb Noson had asked a great question, and asked whether he knew its answer.

Reb Noson replied that, for him, there was no difficulty about Moshe Rabbeinu in the first place. The Rebbe observed that he had answered one question with another.

He then explained that Reb Noson had touched a matter that had occupied his own thoughts for a long time. He had prayed repeatedly for an answer, beyond the regular prayers of Shacharis, Minchah, and Maariv. At first he had asked to hear an answer spoken from Heaven. Later he had asked that it be sent through a messenger, and later still through animals or birds. He did not want the answer to come through an ordinary human response. It had not yet been given to him.

He told those around him that they were too small in spiritual stature to understand what he was speaking about. Yet even if they did not see, their mazal saw. Once more he began to speak of accepting witnesses, but left his words unfinished.

Reb Noson thought that the Rebbe had meant their souls. He recorded that understanding as his own impression. The conversation continued through Friday night and Shabbos day, but its meaning remained concealed. His account preserves the question without supplying an answer the Rebbe had not given.

Source: Reb Noson Sternhartz, Chayei Moharan, §204.

11. The Covenant at Fifteen

In the summer of *5655*, the Rebbe Rashab was staying outside Lubavitch. He would ordinarily travel into town on

Mondays to attend to his affairs and receive people in yechidus.

That week, he had already made the Monday journey. On Wednesday, 11 Tammuz, he called his son, Yosef Yitzchak, and told him to rise early the next morning and come to him. He did not explain why.

The following day would be the boy's fifteenth birthday.

By about four in the morning, the Rashab had immersed in the river. He told his son to immerse as well. Then they set out for Lubavitch.

During the journey, Yosef Yitzchak raised a concern. His grandmother knew that his father came on Mondays. If they suddenly appeared again only three days later, would she not be alarmed?

"She will not be alarmed," his father answered. "She knows."

They reached Lubavitch at about eight or half past eight. The Rashab went in to his mother while his son waited. When he emerged, she accompanied him with warm blessings and a radiant face.

Father and son then went to the ohel of the Maharash and the Tzemach Tzedek.

In the beis midrash before the ohel, the Rashab opened the aron kodesh.

"I am bringing my son today to the akeidah," he said. There was one who bound and one who was bound, he continued; he wished this dedication to be made properly, as Avraham had bound Yitzchak.

He studied the first half of the opening passage of *Iggeres HaKodesh*, on "Chagrah ve'oz mosneha"—she girds her loins with strength.

Then he placed his son before him and rested both hands upon him. In the presence of their holy forebears, he wished to make a covenant with him. He was entrusting him