

עוד אבינו חי

- ENGLISH EDITION -

ג' תמוז תשפ"ב

In the Beginning

This ליקוט, intended for חיזוק ההתקשרות, was first published in conjunction with the Rebbe's 20th Yom haHilulah, Gimmel Tammuz 5774, with a second edition in advance of 6 Tishrei 5775, 50th Yahrzeit of Rebbetzin Chanah, the Rebbe's mother, obm.

We received numerous requests to translate this קונטרס into English, to make it accessible to a wider audience. Much effort and care, to the best of our ability, was put into translating the Hebrew texts. We hope they represent the correct meaning of the Rebbe's sichos, letters, etc.

Please note that the commentary on the subjects discussed in this קונטרס – essential to every chossid – are the author's perspective on the issues, based on the quoted passages collected from the Rebbe's Torah. These quotes represent only a small portion of the vast wealth of the Rebbe's Torah on these subjects.

For the sake of brevity, to make the material as accessible as possible to the reader, many of the quoted passages appear in abbreviated form (with citation to the original sources). It is strongly recommended to consult the original sources to see the subject treated in full.

In preparing this edition, numerous facsimiles of the Rebbe's כ"ק have been added; also, additional explanatory notes have been added on some subjects, as well as stories to illustrate the points discussed.

It is our fervent hope that this קונטרס achieves its goal – to strengthen its author's and readers' hiskashrus to our Rebbe זי"ע נבג"מ.

Most importantly, may HaShem finally redeem us from this bitter golus, גאולה שלמה, when the Rebbe will lead us toward the שוכני עפר, במהרה בימינו ממש.

ג' תמוז תשפ"ב

Lubavitch of Wisconsin

Table of Contents

In the Beginning	3	Hiskashrus after Gimmel Tammuz..	86
Foreword	5	The Ohel	90
Introduction	8	Yechidus Today.....	101
A Note.....	11	ובא השמש וזרח השמש	108
The Phenomenon – The Rebbe	13	The Seventh Generation	114
ראש בני ישראל.....	20	The Darkness Before Dawn	121
Hiskashrus.....	28	Moshiach	124
The Road to Hiskashrus.....	35	The World Is Ready For Moshiach....	128
כמים הפנים לפנים	48	28 Nissan 5751	136
Gimmel Tammuz.....	57	27 Adar 5752	143
Histalkus.....	60	אין אתנו יודע עד מה, אבל	149
Yom HaHilluloh.....	65	חידושו של דור השביעי	152
הוא בחיים ויתיר מבחיוהי	69	להביא לימות המשיח	164



Foreword

More than two decades have elapsed since the histalkus of the Rebbe of sainted memory; the day *“the angels vanquished the mortals and the Holy Ark were taken captive”* (BT Ketubot 104a).

“The luminaries were taken.” No longer could we gaze at the Rebbe’s welcoming countenance, nor hear the voice whose every utterance was suffused with Divine beauty and breathtaking Torah revelations – the vital voice that spurred us to utilize all our gifts; motivating and inspiring each of us to elevate ourselves and maximize our potential; the voice that projected absolute clarity regarding the spiritual and material welfare, as well as the very existence of the Jewish people, and brightened the gloom of golus - לתקן עולם במלכות שדי.

And yet, the Rebbe remains present. His lessons and advice continue to energize a new generation – including those who “knew not Yosef” – to be מקושר to him. Young people continue to commit themselves, heart and soul, to learning his Torah insights, walking in his path, and fulfilling his directives with mesiras nefesh.

The Chabad community today includes those who have had the merit of seeing the Rebbe, of hearing his vigorous voice, of being designated his personal *shaliach mitzvah* for tzedakah as we received a dollar from his holy hand. Many more of us, however, were too young, or not yet born, to have had such opportunities, let alone personal memories of them.

We all share the deep yearning to cling to the “Tree of Life.” We all crave that visceral connection to the Rebbe.

Yet in our present situation, one can easily have doubts concerning the possibility of being מקושר to the Rebbe, or about the crucial importance of such a connection, as well as the ways and means to develop and achieve this.

On 15 Shevat 5711 (1951), merely five days after accepting the mantle of leadership, the Rebbe penned (an unfinished and unpublished) letter expressing a similar concern. The following is a free translation:

ב"ה, ט"ו בשבט ר"ה לאילן ה' תשי"א,
ברוקלין, נ.י.

שלום וברכה

נסתיימה שנת ההסתלקות של נשיאנו
כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ
זי"ע.

מתגברים הגעגועים באשר כלה קייץ
עובר חורף ואנחנו לא נושענו.

אבל מצד השני ההרגל עושה את שלו.
ויש מקום לחשש אשר יתיישן הדבר,
ואור וחום ההתקשרות לנשיאנו, לתור
רתו ולהוראותיו - אשר כולא חד - ילך
הלוך וחסור ח"ו...

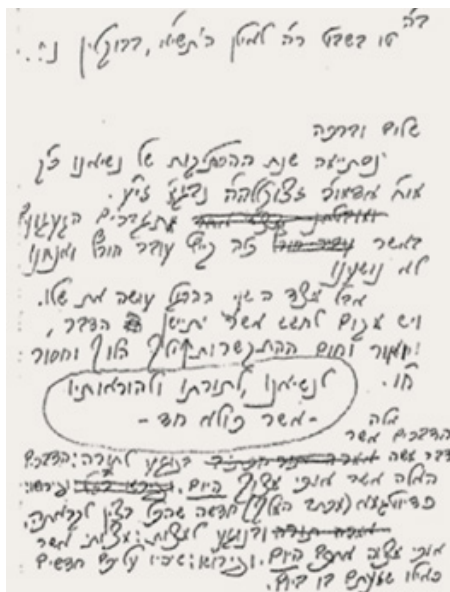
The year following the passing
of our Rebbe, my father-in law, of
sainted memory, has concluded.

The longing grows ever stronger, as "summer has passed, winter is almost gone and still we have not been redeemed."

However, habit has its effect. And it is of concern that it will fade, and the ohr v'chom hahiskasrus to our Nosi, his Torah and directives – which are all one – will recede, ח"ו....

If the Rebbe expressed such a concern at a time when he was constantly speaking about and inspiring Chassidim to strengthen their hiskashrus to the Frieddikker Rebbe, how much more so in our case, when we have not merited to see the Rebbe or hear his holy voice for twenty-eight years, this concern is all the more urgent.

However, we can take solace in the fact that for our time and forever, the Rebbe clarified, broadened and deepened the תורת ההתקשרות, empowering us to bask in its glow and to tread on the path he paved for our benefit.



I hope this modest publication will help refresh and reinvigorate our אור אנ"ש; express the thoughts and feelings of many of us, and address these issues through the teachings of the Rebbei'im, and our Rebbe's teachings in particular.

It is our fervent hope and prayer that this slender volume fulfills its mission in aiding whoever seeks to fortify their connection to the Rebbe and finding their way to internalize *"the light and warmth of our connection to our Nosi, his Torah and his הוראות."*



Introduction

Gimmel Tammuz is a code word for the day our Rebbe was taken from our midst. Even today we find it difficult to utter the word הסתלקות. Hence, we refer to it as Gimmel Tammuz.

This is not without precedent, as described in Tractate *Ketubot* (104a): regarding the passing of Rabbi Yehudah Hanosi, (aka) רבי זס רבינו הקדוש:

“The day רבי’s soul went to its rest, the Rabbis decreed a fast, and pleaded for mercy, declaring that: ‘Anyone who says that רבי’s soul has gone to its rest shall be stabbed with a sword.’ ...The Rabbis ordered Bar Kappara to ‘Go and investigate.’ He discovered that רבי’s soul had (indeed) gone to its rest ... He began his response, ‘The angels and the mortals have seized the Holy Ark. Angels vanquished the mortals and the Holy Ark has been captured.’ They asked him, ‘Has he gone to his rest?’ He replied, ‘You said it – not I.’”

Rabbi Yonason Eybeschutz, in Drush 12 of his magnum opus *Yaaros Devash* expands on this:

“The statement ‘Anyone who says that Rebbe’s soul has gone to its rest shall be stabbed with a sword,’ requires some clarification. After all, is there any mortal who lives forever without encountering death?

It has been said that the soul of a Tzaddik is bound up with the soul of his generation, which the Al-mighty merits on the Tzaddik’s account as the two are bonded together. Hence, even after the Tzaddik passes on, his soul remains bound to his earthly body as it is connected to the living souls of his generation. Thus, it is stated: in *Ketubot* 103a: “Every Erev Shabbos (Rebbei) would return to his house,” as his soul dwelled in his earthly body, and he was pleased to come home....

Likewise, Yaakov Avinu remains perpetually with his generation, his soul never dislodging from his body, a bonding that heals and protects. Which

is why our Sages said in Taanit 5b: “Yaakov Avinu did not die, for just as his offspring are alive so, too, Yaakov lives on” – to remain connected with them.

This clarifies our Sages’ words, “Anyone who says that Rebbi’s soul has gone to its rest shall be stabbed with a sword,” for they knew that Rebbe dwelled with the people of his generation; so much so that they were certain that his soul did not completely depart but rather continues to dwell within his body, as explained earlier.”

Similarly, the Chasam Sofer (Droshos II, p. 384b) writes:

“... It is perplexing that our Sages would assert ... that no person should say that Rebbi’s soul went to its rest. Would he live forever? Would this remain an eternal mystery? ... And what was the point of Bar Kappara’s evasive reply? Surely there is some explanation....

The idea of a soul at rest implies that the Tzaddik’s soul is at ease. Yet our Sages (end of tractate Berachot) declare that ‘Torah Scholars enjoy no rest, be it in this world or in the next’. He has no rest in the next world because his disciples and the contemporaries to whom he imparted Torah, knowledge and wisdom, and who he guided along the straight path, all of their acts and learning in this world – theirs and those of their progeny until the end of time – are all on account of him. Thus, everything they do in this world causes “his lips to move” and every dimension of his precious soul to be aroused. This is what is meant by [they] ‘have no rest in the world-to-come...’.

Rebbi had redacted the Mishnah, with his disciples committing themselves to its uninterrupted study – without rest... Hence anyone who says that ‘Rebbe’s soul came to its rest’ provides Satan with an opening, G-d forbid, as if we would not merit to reach Rebbi in the world above. For this reason, he ‘shall be stabbed with a sword,’ because we [would] have lost out by his giving an opening to Satan. [Therefore] Bar Kappara cleverly said ‘That the angels had triumphed by capturing the Holy Ark,’ specifically the Ark but not the Tablets.

The declaration of Rebbi’s disciples against stating that ‘his soul went to its rest’ was not merely a reluctance to state what had occurred. Rather, the implication was that Rebbi’s soul was, indeed, not resting, as “he lived on in the hearts and souls of his generation.” Hence only the “Holy

Ark,” (i.e., his body) with its physical limitations, was vanquished, but the 'Tablets' (i.e., his soul) lived on”.

This may also be the meaning of the statement in Midrash Shemos Rabbah, Parshas Ki Tisa 44:7:

“Remember Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yisroel.” Why did Moshe mention the three Patriarchs here? R. Avin said: G-d told Moshe, “Just as I requested of Avraham to come up with ten righteous Sodomites, I ask you to come up with ten righteous men so that I will not destroy (the Jewish people).” Said Moshe: “Master of the universe! I will show them to you: I, and Aaron and Elazar, Itamar and Pinchas, and Yehoshua and Caleb.” The Divine Judge then said, “This makes [only] seven. Where are the [other] three?” ... Said Moshe “Master of the universe, are the dead alive?” And He answered, “Yes.” To which Moshe said, “If the dead live, ‘remember Avraham, Yitzchak and Yisroel’, which makes ten.”

On the simplest level it appears that Moshe’s question “Do the dead live on?” means that the ongoing connection and actions of those Tzaddikim who have passed on are so immanent that they can still be counted among those living in this world. To this, G-d replies, “Yes,” this is so: for the great merit of the Patriarchs is not only that they are the progenitors of all of Israel. Rather, it is that they continue to live on, actively impacting this world. This is the meaning “חיים הם, they are alive.”

So, too with regard to the Rebbe, we abstain from verbalizing the הסתלקות – because as the truth is that “his soul remains connected to his body, because it is connected to the living people of his generation.” And because he is alive, we find it difficult to verbalize the Rebbe’s הסתלקות.

Rashi explains Yaakov Avinu's inability to accept consolation after Yosef Hatzaddik's disappearance because "it was decreed the dead should be forgotten - not the living." This explains why we will never be consoled from Gimmel Tammuz - because the Rebbe continues to truly live.

OD AVINU CHAI!



A Note

Beginning immediately after the Previous Rebbe's *הסתלקות* on Yud Shevat 5710, whenever our Rebbe would mention him – whether in writing or in print – he would always affix the *ברכת החיים* to his name. For example, in the first *קונטרס* published immediately following the *הסתלקות* – and in every subsequent reprinting – the Previous Rebbe's name is printed this way both on the title page and in the *דבר* (פתח דבר.)

There was one time, however, that the Rebbe expressed publicly his deep feelings that, for him, his Rebbe is still alive. These were his words on Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5710:

"קבלתי מכתב מא' החסידים שבו כותב אודות כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר אדמו"ר הכ"מ: "דער רבי זאָל געזונט זיין". באמת נהניתי מהתבטאות זו. והאמת כן, כי, בריאותו לא היתה מענינים גשמיים, אלא מענינים רוחניים [וכמ"ש באגה"ק ש"חיי הצדיק אינם חיים בשריים כי אם חיים רוחניים, שהם אמונה ויראה ואהבה", ובנדו"ד חיי צדיק שהוא רועה ישראל, הם גם מבשורות טובות מהפעולות בחיזוק היהדות, אהבת השם אהבת התורה ואהבת ישראל] ובבריאות כזו לא שייך הפסק [ואדרבה: לאחר ה*הסתלקות* ה"ז ביתר שאת, כיון שבטלים ההגבלות דהגוף הגשמי כמבואר באגה"ק הנ"ל], ובמילא שייך לומר "דער רבי זאָל געזונט זיין". אלא שישנם כאלה שמתביישים לומר כן, ואותו חסיד הסיר את הבושה ("האט זיך אָפגעשעמט") וכתב כפי האמת".

Subsequently, on Shabbos Parshas Sh'lach the Rebbe said:

"בשמח"ת תרצ"א, אמר כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר: "איך זאָג ניט אויף דעם טאַטן "נשמתו עדן", ווייל איך בין ניט קיין אַדרעסין שרייבער, און ווידער פאַר מיר איז דער טאַטע ניט נסתלק געוואָרן וכו'" (אינני אומר על אבי "נשמתו עדן", כי אינני נותן "כתובות", וגם, בשבילי אבי לא נסתלק).

ועד"ז בנוגע לכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר - שאין לומר עליו "נשמתו עדן", כי: (א) מי הוא זה שיכול ליתן "כתובת", להגביל את מקומו ל"גן עדן", ג"ע התחתון או ג"ע העליון, או

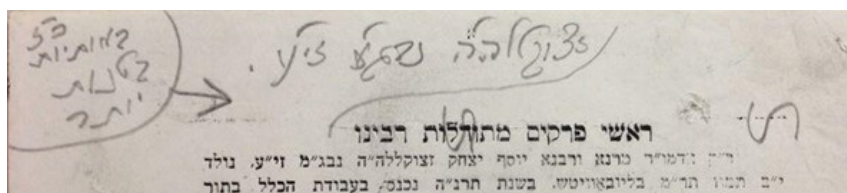
למעלה מזה עד אין שיעור, (ב) למה לנו לשלחו מאתנו?! הוא בודאי אינו רוצה להיפרד מאתנו, ונמצא אתנו!"

Similarly, in a letter from the Previous Rebbe to his daughter Sheina we find this sentiment:

... אינני יכול לכתוב עליו (אביו, הרבי הרש"ב נ"ע) כמו שמקובל לכתוב על מי שאינם חיים בגופם בעולם הזה. הוא חי בליבי ובמחשבתי. זה הדבר היחיד שנושא אותי בחיי (אף שבכל מכתביו ורשימותיו, הגה מזכירו בברכת החיים)....

אג"ק שלו ח"ב עמ' רג

One of many examples where the Rebbe made a point to add the ברכת החיים after the Previous Rebbe's name:



is unique and different, yet they all reflect the Rebbe's personal touch and sensitivity.

The Rebbe personally read the millions of letters he received. Of these, he responded – in brief or at length – to hundreds of thousands of queries covering the total scope and spectrum of human and worldly issues. Many hundreds of these replies were Torah responses, replete with sources and citations. To date, only a fraction of these have been published in the 33 volumes of the Igros Kodesh series.

The Rebbe's farbrengens were an opportunity to share thousands of hours of שיחות and מאמרים that dealt with a mind-boggling array of topics. Prior to their publication, the Rebbe edited and refined these discourses, adding thousands of sources, citations and references from scholars both renowned and obscure, from the earliest *Rishonim* to the most recent *Achronim*.

It strains credulity, yet the evidence is there: in print, recordings, videos and the personal testimony of countless individuals from every conceivable walk of life.

"...and it is known that for the Baal Shem Tov, time and space did not limit or obscure his vision: he saw in the present what will happen in the future, and so, too, he saw physically distant happenings exactly as he would see it right before him ... a prophet literally sees distant things with space being no barrier for him... It is a revelation of a dimension beyond time and space ... and the Baal Shem Tov, of blessed memory, was on this level."

Sefer Hama'amorim, 5666, p. 227

...והדיוק להבין כל הענינים דוקא ע"פ שכל וטו"ד הוא ג"כ דרך חדש במנהגי החסידים, שמאז הי' הסדר דבראשית שמעו (האט מען געפאל' גט) ואח"כ השתדלו להבין עד כמה עס לאזט זיך, ואם לא הבינו איז מען אויך געשלאפן רוהיק (כמובן אם לא הי' זה חסרון בהבנה בתורה בכלל ובתורת החסידות בפרט, שזה הי' מצער ומדאיג בהקיץ ולפעמים גם בשניה).

מכתב ב' שבט תשי"ב

Yet it was not just the sheer quantity, but rather the quality – each issue, each response, each piece of advice unique in its clarity and depth. As was once noted, "The only thing one can expect from the Rebbe is the unexpected."

The more aware we become of the Rebbe's greatness, his Torah scholarship and achievements, the more we

are awed by his magnitude, and the greater our comprehension of the gaping chasm that sets him apart from even the great among us.

Nevertheless, it stands to reason that by familiarizing ourselves with the Rebbe's methods and teachings, and by becoming acquainted with aspects of his teachings, style, and methodology, we would assume to have acquired some sense, some inkling, of his persona.

Such is human nature in general and especially today, when we take for granted that everyone is on an equal plane; and despite our amazement and our awe of all the aforementioned details, not to mention the overall picture we have of the Rebbe's colossal character, we still presume that even overarching greatness is merely relative.

The Mashpia R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman recounted what he heard from the previous Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz, after the passing of his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "When people lavish praise on my father, it is not my father that they are describing; rather, they portray themselves in a magnified form. They describe Father being ten, or a hundred, or two hundred times greater than themselves. The truth is, however, Father is 'something else' altogether."

The truth, however, is that all of the Rebbe's greatness, as reflected in his teachings and accomplishments, does not properly define the Rebbe's actual personality.

The following story illustrates this point. The Rebbe Maharash and his future father-in-law through his first marriage, R' Chaim Schneur Zalman, were both sons of the Tzemach Tzedek. At the Rebbe Maharash's wedding celebration, the renowned chossid R' Hillel of Paritch turned to the bride's father, "You have made a shidduch with a מחותן (the Tzemach Tzedek, the father of the chosson) whom you do not even know." Overhearing R' Hillel's comment, the Tzemach Tzedek said, "Nor does he know the chosson i.e., his brother, the Rebbe Maharash."

Now, one would assume R' Chaim Schneur Zalman must have known his father very well. Yet, despite being the son of the Tzemach Tzedek, and despite his own personal greatness, he barely knew him at all. The Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash were on entirely different planes.

Hence, we should understand that everything we have described thus far can only help us grasp the fact that the personality of the Rebbe is fundamentally different from ours; and it is impossible for any of us to comprehend it. What he shared with us through his teachings and his leadership only reveals a part of him. The Rebbe himself, his holy neshomo, is something beyond all this, about which we have no concept whatsoever.

An illustration of a “casual expression:”

It happened at a private farbrengen at the home of the Rebbe Rayatz, on 19 Kislev, 5673, during the lifetime of his father the Rebbe Rashab, where only select bochurim from the yeshiva were invited. During the farbrengen, the Rebbe Rayatz asked the bochurim to say over a maamar, a sicha or some vort they had heard from his father, the Rebbe. Not wanting to speak in the presence of the Rebbe Rayatz, they each refused, saying they couldn't recall anything.

One of the bochurim, having had a little *לחיים* and wanting to break the silence, said, “Yes, I remember something. The Rebbe told me *לחיים*!”

Displeased at the bochur's flippancy, the Rebbe Rayatz responded, “You should know that when Father says ‘*l'chayim*!’ to a Jew, it is nefesh speaking to nefesh, ruach to ruach, neshomo to neshomo, chayah to chayah, yechidah to yechidah.”

To explain: When a father or teacher guides a child regarding a seemingly small matter, there is the immediate simple benefit, as well as the potential for greater future benefit in the child's life. From the father or teacher's point of view, this instruction may have far-reaching effects that will impact the child on many different levels later on.

Similarly, in a seemingly casual “*l'chayim*” statement or a bit of advice, referred to here as nefesh, i.e. the soul on its simplest/practical level, the Rebbe in fact offers far more than just a simple “*l'chaim*” or light comment. (As illustrated previously, many were blessed with children, health, etc., through a seemingly light response from the Rebbe.) The Rebbe's investment of his heart, mind and the depth of his soul is referred to in this story as ruach, neshomo, chayah and yechidah (as explained in Chassidus, their different definitions and expressions).

A Different Plane

Consider the following scenario: You come before the Rebbe and request a blessing for health, marriage, children or parnasa. Perhaps you describe your difficulty. The Rebbe on his part responds with a gentle, “ברכה והצלחה” or “בשורות טובות,” or offers an extra dollar for your child and the like. Often, the Rebbe would advise to check your tefillin or mezuzahs, or to add a name, etc. You follow the Rebbe’s instruction and, sure enough, your problem is solved. You find improvement in your health or a total change in business, or you are gifted with a child – something neither medical care nor your constant prayers have accomplished.

All this is happening as the Rebbe speaks to you in a gentle, seemingly casual conversation. However, clearly his blessings are altogether on a different plane; his advice from a higher plane, and the dollar (for tzedakah) he hands to you is infused with holiness. His blessing is a channel of sublime energy to change the natural order.



In other terms: a quick moment of the Rebbe’s blessings outweighs a thousand hours of effort and prayer from a thousand people! This gives us a glimpse of the meaning that the Rebbe is *ingantzen andersh* – “something different altogether.”

A Casual Remark

Lag B'Omer was always known in Lubavitch as an opportune time to receive brochos from the Rebbe, especially with regard to children. Each year, couples who needed a brocho for children gathered outside the Rebbe's home on the morning of Lag B'Omer to have the opportunity to request these brochos as the Rebbe walked from his home to the car on the way to 770. Due to the expected crowd several members of the Kotel were on hand to maintain order.

In 5744 I was learning in Kotel and merited to be on hand Lag B'Omer morning outside the Rebbe's home. I was given the task of holding the car door open and closing it as soon as the Rebbe was seated inside. There was a large diverse crowd gathered that morning, including many non-Lubavitchers.

The Rebbe came out at 10:00 am and it took twenty minutes for the Rebbe to reach his car.

As I was closing the car door after the Rebbe was seated inside, a Satmar Chossid stuck his head into the car and exclaimed that he is married for a number of years and has no children; he then stated his name and wife's name to the Rebbe. Due to the crush of the crowd I worked with all my might to hold the door open so that he wouldn't get crushed.

The Rebbe blessed him and before the man withdrew looked directly at him and said, "The child will need to have someone to play with."

That fellow did not understand what the Rebbe was trying to say. So the Rebbe said to him, "Say Omain!" He finally realized what the Rebbe was saying and shouted: "Omain!" and moved away from the vehicle. Fifteen years later on the 24th of Menachem Av 5759 I was at the Ohel at 5:00 am when I noticed a Satmar chosid enter with two Bar Mitzvah boys. After they recited the *Maaneh Loshon*, the father turned to his sons and said, "take out the maamar."

Each boy took out a printed copy of the maamar, traditionally recited by Chabad boys at their Bar Mitzvah, and read the entire maamar. After leaving the Ohel, I saw them again in the reception area. My curiosity got the better of me and I asked the father why he was at the Ohel with his sons so early in the morning.

"These are the Rebbe's children," he said. "They were born as a result of the Rebbe's blessing." He proceeded to describe how when he asked the

Rebbe for a brocho for a child, the Rebbe added "the child would need someone to play with."

The story sounded very familiar. So I asked him "When exactly did this happen? Was it perhaps on Lag b'Omer 5744 outside the Rebbe's house?" The man was astounded that I made the connection and I explained to him that I was standing right next to him, holding the car door open with all my strength as this happened.

"Now you are witnessing the rest of the story," the man said. "These twins were born two years and three months after Lag b'Omer in the merit of the Rebbe's brocho. Today is their Bar Mitzvah. They are the Rebbe's children!"

Told by Rabbi Alter Buket, Lexington, Massachusetts

The Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Yehudah Krinsky שיחי, relates that on one of his travels with the Rebbe to Manhattan, Rabbi Krinsky pointed out the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center – then the world's tallest buildings – to which the Rebbe commented, "They don't seem to be so tall..."

