

770 OF Kfar CHABAD: A TWIN POWER

Like the original, the replica of 770 in Kfar Chabad also attracts thousands of Jews every year, who come in order to feel the kedusha and tahara of the original.

** Kibbutzniks, chareidim, groups from day camps, public officials – all come to visit and hear about the Rebbe MH”M.*

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

An interesting directive the Rebbe MH”M writes in the famous letter of Yud Shvat 5711 is that on this *yom ha'hilula*, each person should read a *pa'n*. Those who had *yechidus* with the Rebbe Rayatz, or who had at least seen the Rebbe Rayatz, should picture themselves while reading the *pa'n* as though standing before the Rebbe.

In 770 in Kfar Chabad, a *chassid* goes inside, and after the proper preparations, he stands facing the door of *Gan Eden HaElyon*, pictures entering for *yechidus*, and then reads a *pa'n*. Sometimes this is done with heartbreaking tears.

What is the secret of the power and *segula* of 770 in Kfar Chabad?

It's an ordinary weekday at Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad - 770 in Kfar Chabad. Directors Rabbi Meir Friedman and Rabbi Gershom Ohana begin their day interacting with visitors.

A family from Antwerp appears in the doorway of the “secretariat's room.” (This is the room of R' Gershom, program coordinator.) It was a Gerrer family with five children.

“We came to see the Rebbe's house,” said the head of the family, and

R' Gershom jumped up from behind his large desk and went over to shake hands. At once he became a professional tour guide, clearly and eloquently explaining all he had to say about 770 and the Rebbe.

The secretaries' room contains an impressive display of Chabad productions in many languages, and *pushkas* galore. On the table rest four beautifully bound volumes of *Seifer HaShluchim*. A map on the wall of the entire globe displays Chabad's range of activities from one end of the world to the other. No clutter, no mess in this office.

The family sits and eats a snack while R' Gershom begins his discussion about the Rebbe, his teachings, and his far-reaching work. One of the first questions: Why was a building identical to 770 built here? R' Gershom explains that this was a directive from the Rebbe. He also explains the differences in the two buildings.

One of the children flipped through *Seifer HaShluchim* and found the pictures of *shluchim* in Belgium. The family crowded around to see the *shluchim* they knew. They may even

have been neighbors... The father asked to see the video documenting the Gerrer Rebbe's visit to the Lubavitcher Rebbe. We could soon see the Gerrer Rebbe, R' Yaakov Alter, in the entrance to *Gan Eden HaTachtan*. Afterwards, they searched in the building for the precise spot the Gerrer stood in the video. Towards the end, Gershom turned on the little lights on the map of Chabad around the world. Hundreds of points of light show where the *shluchim* live. “There's a *shliach* in China, too? And even in Siberia?” Amazing...

I joined the tour. We went to the spot where the Rebbe gave out dollars for *tz'daka* and *brachos* to tens of thousands of Jews, near the elevator close to the entrance to *Gan Eden HaTachtan*. There was a brief explanation about the dollar distribution and some miracle stories, too. Sometimes, one of the visitors tells his own story of receiving a dollar from the Rebbe, which Gershom files away.

Unconsciously, Gershom straightens his hat as he approaches *Gan Eden HaElyon*. The *Kodesh HaKadoshim* is closed to visitors. Gershom explains the concept of *yechidus* and how tens of thousands of Jews were received by the Rebbe in that room, and were given *brachos* and advice.

During the tour, the visitors were impressed by a display of Chabad literature, new and old, and of pictures of the Chabad Rebbeim.

At the end of the tour, the father wrote heartfelt words of thanks in the guest book before leaving.

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The work here began six years ago, after Rabbi Shlomo Maidanchik, director of Agudas Chassidei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, asked Meir Friedman – an old-time professional when it comes to visitors to Kfar Chabad – to organize visits at the 770 building. “Individuals and groups come to visit

Kfar Chabad, so why shouldn't they visit 770 and hear about its holiness?” asked R' Shlomo, and R' Meir took on the job.

He got Gershom Ohana to help him, and together the project began. Here and there, people would enter, wondering what the red brick building (a most unusual sight in Eretz Yisroel!) was for. They didn't know the deep significance of the building. Sometimes visitors gawked from a distance. They were invited in and shown three rooms on the first floor: the secretaries' room, the communications room, and Rabbi Chadakov's room.

Over the years, Meir and Gershom developed a special program. Thanks to donations, they transformed the rooms into something really worth seeing. “The secretaries' room” serves as a reception room in which each tour begins with a brief talk about the

“Many thanks for inviting me to visit Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad, the house where the holy and great Rebbe of our generation lives.”

--Former Prime Minister Yitzchok Shamir

Rebbe, after which the visitors watch a video of the Rebbe.

Then Gershom points out the spot where the Rebbe distributed dollars on Sundays. Bringing the visitors to the threshold of the Rebbe's room, he explains about the great light that

emanates from this room (in the original 770, of course) and lights up the world. It is at this point that he explains about the imminent revelation of the Rebbe MH”M.

The tour continues down the long corridor to the “communications room,” which displays Chabad *s'farim*, tapes of *niggunim*, pictures of the Rebbeim, etc. The tour ends in Rabbi Chadakov's room, which in this building is a library, where people can sit and relax, examine the large display of Chabad books, and make a purchase if they wish.

Those who have time are invited to go up to the second floor to the offices of the Internet site *Otzar770.com*, where they are impressed by the immense body of the teachings of the Rebbe, which is displayed with the click of a button.

For most people, the tour ends by putting on *t'fillin*. The tour concludes



with a message about the prophecy of the *Geula*, and how every person must do whatever they can to hasten the Redemption.

Who visits 770 in Kfar Chabad?

Gershom: All sorts of people, from all backgrounds and countries. We get people from *kibbutzim*, *chareidim*, children in day camps, and public figures. Organized tours include children from nurseries and camps, retirement clubs, schools that are visiting Kfar Chabad for *Chumash* parties, and other study groups.

Some Lubavitchers work in the tourist industry, and they refer groups of tourists to us. We've also had visits from Talmud Torahs of Amshinov and Nadvorna, and Gerrer girls from Boro Park attending camp here in Eretz Yisroel.

Organized groups who come here through the Vaad Kfar Chabad or through Tzach are referred to us, and we greet them graciously. We've had a group of regional heads of ministries, as well as the command staff of the Nitzanim Brigade Army Base. Just this morning we hosted a group of people from the education ministry, who were very impressed and decided they would recommend that teachers bring their classes.

At first we had only sporadic guests, but today we're constantly busy, and most groups arrange their tour in advance.

How did word get out?

Word of mouth. We recently had a pilot come here. He was impressed, and two days later he came back with two officers. They were extremely impressed, and they want to arrange a visit of hundreds of soldiers from their base.

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Rabbi Shlomo Maidanchik makes sure that any public figure who visits Kfar Chabad is given a tour of 770. That's how former Prime Minister Yitzchok Shamir got a tour. This is what Shamir wrote in the guest book

EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT, FARBRENGING THROUGH THE NIGHT

Meir Friedman is in 770 all the time, completely devoted to his work. Meir sits at the end of the hallway, ready to graciously greet guests. He offers cold or hot drinks, as well as other refreshments. He points out "the members of my *hanhala*, Rabbi Yona Lebenhertz and Rabbi Berke Mendelson, who do all they can to develop this important work."



Meir: Every Thursday night we have a special class for a group of people who come here, and following the class we *farbrenge* with a *mashpia*. This is organized by Nimrod Chafetz. Many people come long before the class. They learn, talk with me about their personal matters, write to the Rebbe, etc. There is also a *Tanya* class given by Rabbi Yitzchok Krichili every Thursday night.

Somebody once came here who wanted to know about *chassidus*. No matter what I said, I could see he wasn't satisfied. I asked him about putting on *t'fillin*, and he said, 'For now, I learn *Tanya*, and I learned that

in Chabad it goes according to *seichel*. When I understand what *t'fillin* are, I'll start putting them on every day.'

A few weeks later he began putting on *t'fillin*, and he even took an interest in a group that studied the laws of *taharas ha'mishpacha*. A few months ago he began wearing a *kippa* and *tzitzis*, and he began *davening* three times a day with a *minyana*.

Last Thursday he asked me about a problem with the *eiruv* in his city. When he asked me, I remembered his answer of a few months before, and couldn't help being very moved.



before leaving: "Many thanks for inviting me to visit Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad, the house where the holy and great Rebbe of our generation lives."

Minister Eli Yishai also visited, as well as Minister Yitzchok Levy, Uri Luvrani, the former coordinator of IDF activities in Lebanon. Who else has been here? Rabbi Mordechai Yitzhari, deputy mayor of the council in Tel Aviv; supervisors from the education ministry; Tzvi Yaakovson, secretary of the Shas party in the Knesset; the director of Shimon Peres' office together with office staffers; and many others.

"Many visitors come by chance," says Gershom, "like the family who surprised us this morning. *Shluchim* here and around the world send us many visitors. Students come here to do research on Chabad, the Rebbe, and Kfar Chabad. We had a German television crew coming here a year ago to do a documentary. And the referrals also work in the other direction: we give addresses of *shluchim* around the world to our visitors."

Meir Friedman: One day last summer, a *shliach* came here with a group of distinguished people from his city. He introduced them to me and said they were friends of Chabad in his city in the C.I.S. None of them were Jewish, but he wanted them to see what Chabad looks like, so he brought them to 770. I explained to them in Russian about the Rebbe and Chabad, and they were very impressed.

Tell us about the people who come from kibbutzim?

Gershom: Our biggest project with the *kibbutzim* is a seminar, which is organized by Seminars for Kibbutzim, based in Tel Aviv. Groups of high school students numbering in the hundreds come a few times a year, most of them from *kibbutzim*, plus children of the more well-to-do, whose views of religion is sometimes not so positive.

After the tour, the boys in the group learn in pairs with men in the *kollel*, which is also on the first floor of the building. The girls hear a lecture from Mrs. Bracha Tavredovitz, or Mrs. Rochel Noam and Mrs. Yaffa Kadosh. These visits are always successful. The students' reactions are positive, and many of them say that their opinions about religion in general and *chareidim* in particular are changed for the better.

I always find working with people from the *kibbutzim* exciting, since these kids "don't believe in anything," as they put it. When they're here, the outer *klippa* melts away, they put on *kippos*, they learn Torah, many agree to



put on *t'fillin* and to say some chapters of *T'hilim*, and some even write to the Rebbe. Multiply this by a few hundred a year and you see how this is *Yemos HaMoshiach!*

Meir Friedman: We once had Russian-speaking people from *kibbutzim* come here. I sang Jewish songs in Russian with them, and to my surprise one of them asked for the floor and announced, "I want to sing a song I learned in Russia in a Chabad school" – and he began singing "Yechi!" He even explained what it means.

Do Lubavitchers visit?

Gershom: Of course! Many of

them come to relive their moving experiences in 770. I sometimes see someone come and write a *pa'n* and then stand near *Gan Eden HaElyon* and read the *pa'n* with awe and trepidation. *Shluchim* from around the world who come to Eretz Yisroel visit us, and they are just as moved. We've had *shluchim* from Australia, Honolulu, France, Germany, Hong Kong – all over.

Meir: We have many stories to tell, and *baruch Hashem*, in the *z'chus* of this place, many Jews have come closer to *Yiddishkeit*. Gershom and I keep in touch with them.

It's interesting when Jews who

come here remember their visits to the original 770. Meir Friedman says that the place definitely arouses strong emotions in many Jews. We had Jews come here who didn't look like they had any connections to tradition or religion. They came over to me and excitedly took out of their wallets a dollar they got from the Rebbe. Then they began arguing about where the Rebbe gave out the dollars. It turned out that some of them got a dollar on Sunday near the Rebbe's room, while others got a dollar after *Mincha* in the big *zal*.

Gershom nodded his head in

THE GUEST BOOK

“Our brothers, Chabad chassidim, who welcomed us with open arms and smiling faces”

Summer 5756
Menachem Av 5756 22.7.96

I came to Kfar Chabad doing my job, accompanying Arab convoys from Gaza to load chicken fertilizer, and merited to load up some crumbs from the spiritual world of our brothers, Chabad *chassidim*, who welcomed us with open arms and smiling faces. They opened a window to their world, in microcosm, a brief but edifying encounter. Thanks and *l'hitraot*.

Chanan Ofir
Ein HaBesor

“During my visit to the Rebbe’s house in Kfar Chabad, my entire childhood came to mind”

As a student in Tomchei T'mimim from among the first students in the Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim for Russians and Yemenites, each visit to educational institutions suffused with the teachings of *Chassidus Chabad* fill my storehouses anew, storehouses of *kochos ha'neshama*.

In my visit to Beis Rebbi in Kfar Chabad, my entire childhood came to mind. All the teachers and *mashgichim* I learned from said one thing: Chabad in Torah, *limud* and action. And they all, as one, came from the Rebbe's *ko'ach*, *kochos* that are beyond nature, *kochos* that are not tied to time and place, and what could be better than receiving those *kochos* and being equipped with them for the road? Another merit: *dibbuk chaverim*, welcoming guests, as practiced by Avrohom Avinu. As the *Midrash* says on the words, “And he called there *Hashem Keil Olam*,” Avrohom made Hashem's name known in the world. This is the way of Chabad – to be *mekarev ha'briyos*, bringing the children to their Father in Heaven in a way of *ahava*, *achva*, and *rei'us*.

Yasher ko'ach to everyone involved, to all who do and for all you do. May Hashem give you the *ko'ach* and *t'vuna* to go in this way. This is what the Rebbe wants – to be *mekarev* the children to their Father in Heaven.

B'birkas ha'Torah,
Yitzhari Mordechai
Deputy Mayor, Tel Aviv City Council, 26 Av 5756

“The tremendous impact it made on the participants”

30 Menachem Av 5759

We are campers from the Chabad camp in Sderot for new immigrants from the C.I.S. We came today to visit this amazing place – 770. The tremendous impact it made on the participants, children and parents, is indescribable. Meir Friedman told us briefly about his unusual past in the Soviet Union, about the *mesirus nefesh* for Torah and *mitzvos*, and taught the visitors *chassidishe niggunim* in Russian.

Changing opinions ...

8 Adar I 5760

We, Yigal Gueta and Dudu Arviv, greatly enjoyed the visit, and our views have begun to change a little.

D. Arviv

“A feeling of: Moshiach is already here”

BS”D summer 5758

A feeling of: purity mixed with renewal,

A feeling of: *chassidus*, a spirit of optimism, holiness,

A feeling of: calm, Torah, *hachnasas orchim* and warmth,

A feeling of: Moshiach is already here,

A feeling of: a quiet house, hopes, a blend of emotions, a mix of inspirations, an amalgam of sensations that this house gives me – for all of these, a collection of words to express them.

Hoping for the speedy coming of Moshiach, *amen*.

L.M. Brooks

“The warm concern and ... the drawing close of hearts”

Sivan 5758

I was impressed by the Rebbe's house and by the blessed work done there and in its environs. I am sure that the warm concern and *ahavas Yisroel* will contribute to the drawing close of hearts, and ensure the peace of the Jewish people.

With blessings and appreciation,
Asher Begun, Beit Zera (kibbutz)

agreement and added that quite a few people were moved by miracles they experienced with the Rebbe in this holy place.

“One day a guy came in with wild, long hair. I thought he had come to the wrong place. He seemed very moved and I asked him what he was looking for. He could barely talk. He took out a picture of a little girl from his pocket and said, ‘This is the Rebbe's little girl. I came to thank him. She

was born a few years ago and weighed only 600 grams. The doctors were pessimistic, and I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha*. The baby survived and today she is fine. It's all in the merit of the Rebbe's *bracha*.’

“People ask to write to the Rebbe, and Gershom guides them. Those who want can put their letter in a volume of the *Igros Kodesh*, and many want to *daven* near the Rebbe's room.

“Many were helped thanks to these prayers,” says Gershom. “A woman once came here in tears. She asked me to bless her husband and son who were jailed abroad in two different

whom were planning to marry non-Jews. She told me, ‘I don't sleep at night because I have no rest by day or night.’

“She wrote a letter to the Rebbe and *davened* near the Rebbe's room. A few weeks went by, and she called me to happily relate the good news that both her son and daughter had decided, for different reasons, against marrying their gentile partner.”

A Lubavitcher who spends much time in the 770 building relates that many Jews are drawn there. “The holiness of 770 is so great that even the twin building in Eretz Yisroel moves people. Take, for example, the group

GERSHOM'S RECORD OF RECENT ACTIVITIES:

A family from Cholon

A group of soldiers - received an explanation and put on *t'fillin*

Visitors from France, Chaifa and Netanya, Cholon and Tel Aviv

A couple from the U.S. and a couple from Hod HaSharon

A convention of principals of Chabad schools

A woman from Kibbutz Dan

50 Russian immigrants through Ehrentrau from Kiryat Gat

50 Chernobyl children, explanation and video

Visitors from Tel Aviv

A N'shei Chabad convention, through Mrs. Schmerling

A graduate of a Chabad school in Yaffo

A woman visiting from Cholon

40 women through Mrs. Gerlitzky

A group of daughters of war heroes
Visitors from France and Crown Heights

50 retirees from Ramat Gan

A Russian couple

A journalist

A group of *bachurim* from Bnei Brak

4 visitors on dune buggies from Neve Savyon

A couple from Canada and a family from the U.S.



places. While she was standing near the Rebbe's room, I contacted the *shluchim* in the locations where her husband and son were imprisoned. About a week later she came back and gratefully said, ‘The *shluchim* located my husband and my son, encouraged them, brought them kosher food, and put *t'fillin* on with them. Thank you.’

“A woman came here with her five-year-old son. They had come for the *Chumash* party, and the woman, who was wearing sunglasses, said it was so people wouldn't see that she was crying the entire time. She began telling me about her son and daughter, both of

of soldiers from a special unit serving in the area, who come every week. When they visit, they listen to a *sicha* from Gershom, put on *t'fillin* and say some *T'hilim*, give a few coins to *tz'daka*, and go back to their base.”

Meir: There are different types of visitors, and we can't always identify them. We often see Jews who put a *kippa* on as they walk in, go to the library, say some *T'hilim*, give *tz'daka* and write a letter to the Rebbe which they put in the *Igros Kodesh*. I watch them open the volume, read it two or three times, and smile. Then they go on their way without saying a word.