

ב"ה

תשורה



שמחת נישואין של
שלום ישראל וחי' מושקא בלאק
זאת חנוכה, ב' טבת ה'תשע"ח



(L-R) Rabbi Shmuel Lew, Dr. Jack Hanoka and Dr. Yitzchok Block at a Pegisha in the 70s



Mrs. Laya Block (middle) and Mrs. Bina Hanoka (right) on a trip to Eretz Yisroel in 1958

INTRODUCTION

The 1950's and early 60's were a heady time in Lubavitch. The Rebbe had spent a decade articulating his vision for the reinvigoration of American, and world, Jewry. But, as the Rebbe himself expressed occasionally, the chassidic community was slow to join the bandwagon. Many were ambivalent about the Rebbe's insistence that authentic Judaism and chassidus could infiltrate and influence the contemporary culture.

The emergence of the first Baalei Teshuva in these early years went a long way in illustrating the potency and legitimacy of the Rebbe's approach. It is not an exaggeration to say that Dr. Yitzchok Block (1930-2017) and Dr. Yaakov Hanoka (1936-2011) were the poster-children of that generation--breathing evidence that the Rebbe's vision was possible.

Dr. Hanoka and Dr. Block followed remarkably similar trajectories throughout their lives.

Both men were born to secular families in quintessentially American towns: Irving Block in Nashville, Tennessee and Jack Hanoka in Highland Park, New Jersey. Both were educated in iconic American universities. And both were introduced to chassidus and the Rebbe in their formative years by newly created Shluchim. It runs deeper. Both desired to abandon their academic pursuits to study in Yeshiva. Yet the Rebbe insisted that both of them complete their doctorates and influence Jews from within their areas of professional interest: Dr. Block in philosophy (he held a Phd in Aristotelian philosophy) and Dr. Hanoka in science (he held a Phd in solid state physics).

The Rebbe understood that Jewish youth needed to see that a life committed to Judaism was compatible with the highest strata of academia. He consciously curated these personalities to be walking advertisements for Torah and Yidishkeit.

They fulfilled this expectation through their private lives and relationships, and famously through the weekend encounter with Chabad, the Pegisha. Dr. Hanoka pioneered these immersive weekend retreats with an eye toward sharing the intellectual and emotional beauty of Torah and mitzvoth with college students. Quickly, Dr. Block became a staple of these retreats. Together, Drs. Hanoka and Block shaped the tone of outreach in Chabad, and showed thousands of young chassidim how to convey Torah and Judaism with passion and intelligence.

Their legacies continue to intertwine, as their grandchildren, **Sholom Block** and **Chaya Friedman**, begin their life together on this day.

May they be a source of nachas to their entire families, to their pioneering grandfathers, and to the Rebbe who gave them their life's calling.

The Block and Friedman Families
Zos Chanukah, 2 Teves 5778

DR. YITZCHOK BLOCK

I grew up in Nashville, Tennessee, in the middle of the Great Depression, in a Jewish environment that was predominantly Reform. But, when my father passed away in 1943, right after my Bar Mitzvah, I began to attend the local Orthodox synagogue in order to say Kaddish for him. Then, after the year of mourning ended, I continued to participate in the minyan. As well, I started keeping Shabbat – which was a challenge when I had to miss playing with my team in a basketball tournament, but I persevered.

In 1949, Rabbi Zalman Posner, a Chabad emissary, came to town and ignited within me an interest to seriously study Torah texts. At that time I was attending Vanderbilt University, where I was also seriously studying philosophy.

And that is where my story begins.

Through the intercession of my mentor at Vanderbilt, Professor Arthur Smallion, I was accepted to Harvard University for graduate studies in philosophy. But I wasn't sure that I should go there – a university in Edinburgh, Scotland, had also accepted me and that exotic location appealed more to me. Meanwhile, I decided to spend my summer vacation of 1952 at the Chabad yeshivah in New York.

While there, I had my first audience with the Rebbe.

I remember talking with him about Plato, whose philosophy was a major interest of mine at the time. But the Rebbe called him "Platon" which is the way Greek scholars refer to him, and it struck me that the Rebbe must have a deep knowledge of the subject.

He went on to say that the philosophy of Plato was very cruel. I had never heard anybody say that about Plato before and I was shocked. I assumed that he was referring to Plato's belief that you had to take children away from their parents and train them to be subservient to the state which, I had to admit is cruel. Later I abandoned the study of Plato and become a student of Aristotle instead.

At the end of the summer at the Chabad yeshivah, it was time to leave. But where should I go from here? I wrote to the Rebbe asking if I should go to Harvard or Edinburgh. The Rebbe responded that it should be Harvard, and he underlined the word for emphasis [see similarly Letter 1]. So that is what I did.

Learning at Harvard was difficult. I went in thinking I knew philosophy, but I immediately saw that I didn't know anything. At Harvard there were graduate students who knew more than my professors at Vanderbilt, and this is no exaggeration. I was studying ten hours a day, and I was feeling totally out of their league.

I began to yearn to return to yeshivah, and one day I got on the bus and returned to Chabad Headquarters. My yeshivah buddies were all very happy to see me, and I felt great about it. That is, until I saw the Rebbe.

I told him, "I've decided to return to yeshivah."

He responded, "I think you will come to regret that you gave up your profession."

He must have seen the fallen expression on my face, because he smiled and said, "You have to have courage."

I walked out stunned, but I got back on the bus and returned to Harvard. It was very hard, I was



depressed at times, but I got a Master's Degree, although I failed the exams for a Ph.D.

I wrote to the Rebbe, again telling him that I wanted to return to yeshivah because I failed my exams, but the Rebbe would not agree to that. He responded, "Take them again. You are smart, and there is no reason you shouldn't pass." And sure enough, I passed the second time and went on to write my dissertation on Aristotle. But this too was difficult for me and I might not have finished it were it not for the Rebbe nudging me all the while, "Finish ... finish your dissertation [see Letters 2,3, and 4]."

So, finally, I did – in 1958 [see Letter 5]. It was called "Aristotle's Theory of Perception," and it proved quite an original dissertation in many ways. In fact, it was so original that it went against the accepted thinking of Aristotelian philosophers of the day and no academic journal would publish it. I confided my problem to the Rebbe who made a novel suggestion: "Ask one of your Harvard professors to intervene."

I would never have thought to do that in my wildest imagination, because I knew that I had written a controversial dissertation and it was absurd to think that any professor would stick his neck out for me. But because the Rebbe advised it, I asked. As a result, my article was published in the Journal of Greek Theology, and it got a lot of attention. Indeed, I became famous because of it and I was able to publish many more papers. This was all because of the Rebbe's foresight. I was a nobody, and the Rebbe turned me into a well-respected scholar. But it was not until later that I found out why he did it.

Having finished my Ph.D. I returned to yeshivah with the aim of receiving rabbinic ordination. The Rebbe allowed me to stay for a time, but he didn't let me get my rabbinic ordination. When I told him of my plan, he responded, "Lo mit an aleph! – Under no circumstances whatsoever!" He did not want me to have the title "Rabbi," he wanted me to have the title "Professor."

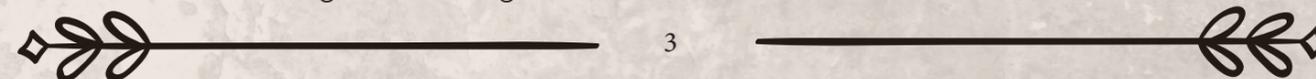
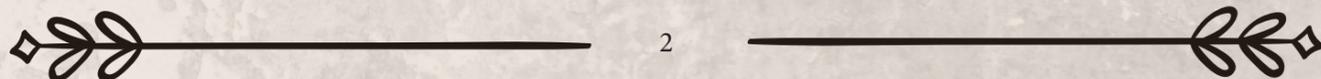
I only began to grasp his reasoning when I started teaching. When my students saw me wearing a yarmulke, many of them came to me to discuss doubts about religion that were troubling them. I was the right address for their questions of faith because I had obtained a Ph.D. from Harvard, yet I had remained Torah observant.

And now I finally understood what the Rebbe knew all along – that with my degree and my reputation as an Aristotelian scholar, I was in a position to have a major influence on other Jews [see Letters 6 and 7]. In fact, I didn't even have to open my mouth – just being who I was, a respected philosopher who was religious, spoke volumes.

The Rebbe knew that this was how it would be. He wanted me to become as important in the world of philosophy as I could possibly become because the more important I was, the more influence I could have on my students. That's what he had in mind all along. And that is why he constantly encouraged me to give papers in philosophy, to attend conferences and to give guest lectures. Without his prodding, I would not have done it, so it is clear to me that he is entirely responsible for my career.

From the very moment that I stepped foot in Lubavitch, the Rebbe was working overtime that I should not become a rabbi, that I should become a famous professor. And he pulled it off against my will, so to speak. How he did it, I am not sure. But here I stand as proof. And, because he pulled it off, hundreds of people who have looked to me as a model are Torah-observant today – some fully, and some in some level of observance. Just as the Rebbe envisioned.

This story was taken from Here's My Story and is presented with permission from JEM's My Encounter with the Rebbe oral history project, which is dedicated to recording first-person testimonies documenting the life and guidance of the Rebbe.



RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
2 Cheshvan, 5713
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

Mr. Irving Block
77 Kirkland Street
Cambridge, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I have duly received your letter of 5 Tishrei, 5713. I was pleased to see you at our Chassidic celebration on Simchath Torah. I trust that the inspiration which you derived from it will be lasting throughout the year and will add vitality to all you do, especially in regard to the study of the Torah and the observance of the Mitzvoth.

With regard to your personal question whether my opinion of ^{Edinburgh} ~~Edinburgh~~ applies also to the other Universities in England, I want to tell you that the reason I discouraged you from going to ~~Edinburgh~~ is on account of the religious Jewish environment which is lacking there, which would present problems of Kashruth, etc. As far as Oxford or Glasgow are concerned, or for that matter any other University in England, I would suggest that you write to Mr. Barry Mindel, 69 Staverton Road, London, N.W. 2, who will no doubt be glad to furnish you with information regarding Jewish environment, etc. in any particular University town, in England. You may mention that you are writing to him at my suggestion.

With all good wishes,

Cordially yours,

M. Schneerson

P. S. I trust you have regular appointed times for the study of the Torah, either in the original or in English translation. It would be a good idea if you would increase same, in accordance with the message you have heard on Simchath Torah.

Letter #1

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
29th of Tammuz, 5713
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Irving Block
3801 Harding Road
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Mr. Block:

I have received your letter of June 17, in which you furnish additional information concerning your status at Harvard in connection with your studies, and request my advice.

As I told you when you visited me, it is my opinion that if in the course of a year you can cover all the required credits for the Ph.D, and then write your thesis wherever you will be, this would be the more logical course, inasmuch as you have already begun your studies. For to interrupt your studies at this stage, would make a resumption more difficult later. As for your anxiety with regard to examinations, you will surely pass them with the necessary effort on your part.

Since you write that you hope to be in New York in the latter part of July or early August, there will be an opportunity to discuss your problem again should there be any changes.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

Letter #2

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
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HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
3rd of Sivan, 5716
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Yitzchok Leib Block
64 Bradshaw Street
Dorchester, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to receive your letter with the news of your having passed your oral examination. I trust you will be equally successful with your other examinations. I was also pleased to read about the subject matter of your conversation with your uncle, which reflects their good sentiments toward you.

As you do not mention your mother, I assume that everything is well with her, and I hope to hear good news also about your sister Menucha Leah.

With prayerful wishes for your success and wishing you also a happy and inspiring Festival of the Receiving of Our Torah with inner and lasting joy,

With blessing,

By *Pinas Middel*

Mazzaltov on the occasion of the birth of a girl to your sister, and may the parents bring her up to a life of Torah, Chuppah and Maasim Toivim.

Letter #3

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
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HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
16th of Tammuz, 5716
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Yitzchok Leib Block
64 Bradshaw Street
Dorchester, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of June 9th.

With reference to the Greek examination you mention in your letter, surely the requirements in your case are no different from those expected of other students. I do not understand, therefore, why you think that you could not pass it. At any rate, you should consult your professors and find out what is required of you in Greek.

As for a transfer to a Yeshivah here, which you think necessary for your deferment, etc. this you should take up with the Yeshivah administration. But generally I doubt whether it is advisable to make a change at the end of the Zeman (term).

I was pleased to see you at the gathering of 12th of Tammuz and I trust your experience will have good practical results.

With prayerful wishes for your success,
and with blessing,

By

Pinas Middel

Letter #4

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
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770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
12th of Iyar, 5717
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Yitzchok Leib Block
64 Bradshaw Street
Dorchester 21, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of May 6th and the preceding one.

In reply to your question concerning a deferment, insofar as I know, it is normal to receive a further deferment in the place where deferment had been granted before, and that this is easire too. On the other hand, a change of domicile might make it more difficult. However, if it should turn out that in your present place of registration there is no possibility of obtaining a further deferment, you should then proceed in another place.

It is also possible, in view of the fact that the formal approval of your dissertation will take place only next year, that it would favorably impress your faculty if you remained in contact with Harvard, at least part of the time, and not terminate your registration there, which would no doubt come to their attention.

I was pleased to read in your letter about the appointed times that you have for the study of the Torah, although they are not adequate. However, inasmuch as you will be through with your examinations next week, which I hope will be successful with the help of G-d, I trust that you will then have time for more extensive periods of study, both for yourself and others. May G-d help you to be able to have good news to report.

With Blessing,

By *Pinas Muddel*

Letter #5

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
16th of Adar, 5717
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Irving Block
64 Bradshaw Street
Dorchester, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received both your letters, with the enclosure of the plan of your proposed dissertation.

I was gratified to read in your letter, that you have regular study periods for Torah, including Chassiduth, and that the work of your dissertation is progressing. May G-d help that you have much success in all above, and that you eventually *settle* down in a way that is best for you, materially and spiritually, with peace of mind and contentment.

You do not mention about any association with friends at Harvard,, but I trust that you utilize all such associations in a way that is helpful, both spiritually and religiously.

Nor do you mention anything about your mother, or the other members of your family, from which I assume that everything is in order.

If you can find a discreet way in which to help the student Verter from the Bronx, who is also at Harvard, that is, to give him spiritual support, and especially that he should not be bashful about conducting himself according to the true Jewish Way, you would render a real good service. Of course, he should not know that the initiative came from me.

Your donation was turned over to the Keren HaTorah, and may it stand you in good stead.

Hoping to hear good news from you always.

With blessing,

By *Pinas Muddel*

Enc.

Letter #6

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
16th of Kislev, 5718
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Yitzchok Leib Block
64 Bradshaw Street
Dorchester, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter, in which you write about your conversation with your professors. Nevertheless, I hope that you have occasion to meet ^{them} from time to time, which may improve their general attitude towards you.

No doubt, as usual, you will be here for the Yud Tess Kislev, if this does not entail any unusual hardship. At any rate, it would be well if you could arrange in your place to have some get-together, in immediate proximity to Yud Tess Kislev, either before or after, of the students who have an interest in, and some affinity to Chassidism and the Chassidic way of life, at which you could personally participate.

The enclosed brochure on Yud Tess Kislev may be of help to you.

With blessing,

By N. Minkell

Letter #7

DR. YAAKOV HANOKA

Born in 1936 in central New Jersey, Jack Hanoka grew up in a non-religious but traditional Sefardic family from Salonika, Greece. His parents were among the early members of "Congregation Es Ahaim Sefaredith" (today, Congregation Etz Ahaim) in Highland Park, at that time the only Sefardic synagogue in New Jersey.

As a graduate student at Penn State in 1962, Jack was searching for some meaning (he almost joined the Peace Corps) when he met some Chabad Yeshiva students who came to the campus for a Shabbos with the students. He was attracted to their sincerity, their Jewish pride and pure joy of Judaism. He soon followed them to New York where he met the Rebbe for the first time.

When he decided to join the Yeshiva, the administration balked at accepting a student who could barely make out the Hebrew letters. The Rebbe recommended that they take him in, saying, "He will be the first of thousands . . ."

The Rebbe advised Jack – now Yaakov – to understand that the beginning will be tough. (See letter #1). The Rebbe suggested that Yaakov not ask himself, "What am I doing here?" for the first three months of his stay in Yeshiva.

And stay he did. While in 770, Yaakov was asked to go to Penn State campus for a Shabbos to meet with some of the Jewish students. He was told that he could inspire others to take another look at their own Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe reminded him that, "Every Jew is a role model whether he wants to be or not."

When he was asked to arrange a program for Jewish college students over school break, Yaakov suggested that the students would not want to give up their whole vacation, but instead should be invited to spend a week in New York. This came to be called "Pegisha Im Chabad" – "Encounter With Chabad", or simply, Pegisha.

When Yaakov suggested that he might want to become a Rabbi and work on campus, the Rebbe urged him to go back to school to complete his PhD. "You will do more for Judaism with three letters after your name!"

Yaakov returned to Penn State, but the Rebbe stayed closely in touch with him, encouraging him to be actively involved in reaching out to other Jewish students. (See letter #2). Yaakov married Bina Hertzberg in 5725 (1964) in Brooklyn. They lived in Pennsylvania while Yaakov finished his studies.

Even while living in State College, PA, the Pegisha program continued (See Letter #3). One of the regular features of each Pegisha was a lively and warm "Farbrengen" with Dr Yitzchok Block of London Ontario. These often lasted all night and on into the morning, as Yaakov reported back to the Rebbe (See typed report).

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, one of the Rebbe's primary secretaries, remembers that the Rebbe hardly ever found the need to edit or comment on Dr Hanoka's reports on the Pegisha. The most common editorial note was something like, "You failed to report your own contribution to the weekend."

As can be seen in the report, Dr Hanoka was not shy about offering suggestions. At one point, he wrote some suggestions about how to improve the setting of the Rebbe's farbrengens. Says Rabbi Shmuel Lew, "The Rebbe took that letter which was two or three pages typed, and . . . said that every one of these recommendations should be implemented."

The Pegisha continues to attract students from around the world to this day, even as Dr Hanoka and Dr Block look down from heaven. Dr Hanoka passed away in 2011, and Dr Block returned his soul to his maker earlier this year.

And now, their grandchildren are getting married. Mazel tov!

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ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
Chanukah, 5722
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Jacob Hanoka

Greeting and Blessing:

To save myself repetition, I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I trust you will find of personal interest.

I would like to add that in your case, in view of your efforts to use your good influence with your colleagues, you will surely have added assistance from On High. According to my information, you are in a position to exercise considerable influence on your friends, who would follow your good example, and you thus have the opportunity to save so many individuals. If it has been said, "He who saves one person saves a whole world," you have the Zechus to save many worlds.

From my own impressions of you, I know you are not a person to be discouraged by obstacles. It is only that "all beginnings are difficult," and it is necessary to make the first leap in order to land on the path of the truth, and then the going becomes much easier with every step.

Wishing you a happy and inspiring Chanukah,

With blessing,
By *Avraham Shindler*

Letter #1

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
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ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 5724
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Yaakov Hanoka
619 S. Pugh St.
Apt. 18
State College, Pa.

Greeting and Blessing:

After not hearing from you for a long time, I was pleased to receive your letter of the 15th of Sivan, and subsequently to see you at the Farbrengen. I was particularly gratified to note in your letter about the Shidduch, and may G-d grant that it materializes in a satisfactory way in every aspect.

Needless to say, I read with interest about your activities at college. I do not know what the procedure is at State College, Pa., but no doubt it also has summer courses. If so, there may be a good opportunity to do some good work among the summer students through a suitable summer program, especially as the students may not be as busy as during wintertime.

Inasmuch as we will soon observe the auspicious days of 12th-13th of Tammuz, the anniversary of the liberation of my father-in-law of saintly memory, may G-d grant that the inspiration should be with each and every one of us, in the midst of all our people.

As you do not mention anything about your parents and sister, and as you told me once that your sister has come closer to Yiddishkeit, I trust that she has made considerable headway, and that you are using your good influence with her in a pleasant manner.

Hoping to hear good news from you, and with the blessing of Chag HaGeulo

M. Schwartzorn

Letter #2

770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

איסטערן פארקוויי 7
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
28th of Teves, 5727
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Yaakov Hanoka
204 E. Hamilton
State College, Pa. 16801

Greeting and Blessing:

I duly received the request (Pidyon) in behalf of your father, which will be read at the holy resting place of my father-in-law of saintly memory at a propitious time.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you about your impressions of the Encounter. I understand that your suggestion as to the visitors' limited participation in the Farbrengen was not accepted for some reason, and they stayed on for the duration of it. I am interested to know how they reacted to this experience.

I would also like to know if you had occasion to speak with your sister along the lines which we discussed.

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in all the above.

As we are approaching the auspicious month of Shevat, I send you my prayerful wishes for an inspiring and fruitful month.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

Letter #3

Typed Report about the Encounter Program

PEGISHA - 5737

General Observations:

Overall, I think this was one of our best Pegishas. The response from students was very favorable, as far as I could see. The program was not too bad from the point of view of organization, and as far as covering the passages, we accomplished this. Further, because we were able to provide a rough translation of the sicha from 12 Tammus which dealt with these 12 passages, the follow up on the theme was better than ever before; students were able to take home material which was an excellent follow up to that which they heard in the talks. The spirit at this yegisha was very high - especially by the time of Motzoei Shabbos.

Specifics:

1. Before Shabbos - Y. Block - the time element was tight here but this still was a good introduction to Shabbos.
2. After the seudah, E. Posner - An excellent session, all around. The speaker was very good, the response enthusiastic and the theme topic - Ahavas Yisroel was well covered.
3. Shabbos morning - Y. Block - We started late on this session but the topic was covered. A considerable amount of discussion was on "proving" that G-d exists.
4. Seudah Shlishis - Dr. Landes - He was excellent. A combination of a dynamic speaker, good jokes, some very salient remarks on the state of Judaism in America and the contribution of Lubavitch to this, and what it means to be a frum practicing psychologist. His directness and bluntness in dealing with questions impressed everyone. He should definitely be more involved in this sort of thing.
5. Havdola - Shmuel Lew - Shmuel spoke on the meaning of Havdola and tied this in very nicely with the Shma - one of the 12 passages. He also told a story from Mendel Futerafass to show Masiras Nefesh

Continued on page 18

for Yiddishkeit.

6. Motzoei Shabbos - Professor Twersky - He began with a brief introduction to the concept of Torah shel Baal Peh and then went into directly learning a piece of Mishna and Gemora. I think his overall talk was shorter than it needed to be - he was anxious to go back home but the students certainly received a flavor of what learning Gemora is about.

7. Motzoei Shabbos - Dr. Weinbaum - He spoke briefly, following some nigunim and nikudim which followed Professor Twersky's talk. He explained his involvement in preparing the step booklet. The students were quite interested.

8. Motzoei Shabbos - Midnight Farbrang - Dr. Block - This lasted quite late until after 5:00 A.M. But apparently for those who heard it, it was very effective. Yitschok first spoke about the ideas behind the tenth of Teves and then we passed around a pushka and everyone gave Tzedaka. Following this, he went into his theme based on one of the 12 passages and more or less dwelt on this the rest of the farbrang.

9. Sunday afternoon - E. Posner - A good learning session on two of the 12 passages.

10. Sunday evening - E. Posner - Final session Again very well presented and a good way to finish.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. A question which came up frequently and which I did not feel was answered in full is that of dealing with parents when their own child decides to become frum and they are not sympathetic to his or her decision. I would strongly recommend a short booklet be written on this question - both from the point of view of clearly explaining what the Shulchan Aruch says and also some practical advice for both

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parents and children involved in this. It should be the kind of booklet which both parents and children would benefit from by reading it. I have some very specific ideas of what should be in each booklet. In one, if the Rebbe Shlita thinks it is a good idea, I would like to write up a suggested outline. As far as authorship is concerned, I would suggest a collaboration between Zalman Posner and Dr. Landes from California. The need for such a booklet was, to me, painfully obvious from the emotion laden questions on this subject during the Pegisha.

2. Many of the participants came because of their connection with Chabad House. Our efforts to reach students in places where there is no Chabad House should be investigated further and improved. Our publicity is still inadequate, I think.

