



# *The* REBBE

AN ALBERTA PERSPECTIVE

In honor of 11 Nisan 5782 — April 12th 2022  
Celebrating the Rebbe's 120th Birthday

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED  
IN THE CALGARY JEWISH FREE PRESS



# JEWISH freepress

June 27, 2014 / 29 Sivan 5774

Vol 23 No 17 Subscriptions: \$18/year

## THE REBBE—KINDLING THE JEWISH SOUL IN CALGARY

BY SHAEL GELFAND, THE JEWISH FREE PRESS

More than sixty years ago, the Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson was inspired to send Shluchim (emissaries) around the world to be lamplighters, for as he often quoted from our sages; 'one person's candle is a light for many.' The Rebbe send out his emissaries to help spread the light of Yiddishkeit to every Jew, no matter where they lived and to offer the opportunity to do mitzvot. Dr. Jonathan Sacks, former United Kingdom Chief Rabbi said, "The Lubavitcher Rebbe undertook the most daring spiritual initiative ever... to search out every Jew in love, as they were once hunted down in hate."

The Rebbe's very first Shluchim were the parents of our own Rabbi Menachem Matusof of Calgary. In 1951 Rabbi Shlomo and Rebetzen Pessia OBM were sent to Morocco. Despite their initial lack of French and limited knowledge of the local culture, the Matusofs were intent on building a Jewish education system and to support and strengthen Morocco's Sephardic Jewish community.

During the early 1950's, Rabbi Matusof established a network of 70 institutions throughout Morocco. With few paved roads, he would travel by donkey to the various yeshivas making sure that Jewish children got a proper

education. Among the thousands of his grateful and successful students is Rabbi Shlomo Amar, Former Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel.



The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, in conversation.  
This 1991 photo is courtesy of Lubavitch Archives.

The Matusofs were the first of what has become thousands of lamplighters. Calgarians reached out to the Rebbe more than 60 years ago. In 1952, Yale Shapiro OBM was corresponding with the Rebbe on matters of faith, Torah and understanding. They are included in the Rebbe's published letters.

In 1960 Calgarian Mayer Blitt OBM corresponded with the Rebbe on

business important to him. Based on the Rebbe's counsel, Blitt decided to stay and prosper in Calgary.

Fast forward to the early 1990s. From a donkey in Africa to a menorah-mobile in the Americas. Calgarian Harvey Cohen remembers, "My then fiancé, Linda Kitchin and I didn't know which Rabbi we wanted to perform our wedding ceremony. I remembered seeing a picture in the newspaper of a car with a Menorah on top. A Menorahmobile! And I figured anybody that rode around with a Menorah on the top of their car that was the Rabbi I wanted."

Newly stationed in Calgary, Shliach Rabbi Matusof had been inspired by the Rebbe to proclaim his Yiddishkeit and he had attached an electric Menorah to the roof of his car.

Harvey and Linda were under the Chuppah with Rabbi Matusof performing the ceremony. It was a kosher wedding held in their home. Once again, a spark from the Rebbe lit a light, that lit a light and the loving offer to do Mitzvot was accepted with gratitude.

'Keep bright the light of Yiddishkeit. Make it approachable' Whether one is orthodox, conservative, reform...a Jew is a Jew and the message of the Rebbe was to reach out and light a spark and

make available the opportunity to do Mitzvot. It was not just a message, the Rebbe himself would rejoice in the Mitzvot. These Mitzvot were opportunities for us, further in the darkness than we might have known, to come closer to the light. Closer to the light of Yiddishkeit.

Rather than live in darkness, the Rebbe instructed us to proclaim ourselves and our Yiddishkeit.

In 1989, Rabbi Menachem and Rebezen Rochel Matusof were determined to host a Community Menorah Lighting Ceremony. They were inspired by successful ceremonies all around the world. The Rebbe had made Community Menorah Lighting a priority in reaching out to the greater community because the Chanukah message of freedom has such a universal theme.

"It was just five weeks before Chanukah and we had no contacts or experience with City Hall," says Rabbi Matusof. "Still, we somehow managed to cut through six departments of red tape, construct and power our large Menorah near Heritage Park, and plan a community celebration."

Many friends of Chabad joined in the Mitzvah of making it all come together, especially former Mayor Al Duerr." Just hours before Calgary's first Community Menorah Lighting Ceremony a chinook wind blew in ending almost two weeks of bone chilling Arctic weather. Rabbi Matusof and Community Menorah Lighting co-founder Harold Finkleman both credit the Rebbe.

The giant Menorah at Heritage Park has become a landmark of Jewish pride in southwest Calgary even though the Community Menorah Lighting Ceremony moved indoors to the Municipal Building many years ago. In the past 25 plus years, hundreds of Jewish students have performed, many citizens have been honoured, dozens of politicians from prime ministers to premiers to mayors have danced with the Rabbi and thousands of people have enjoyed kosher latkes, each one hand made in the Chabad House kitchen.

Our proclamation of Yiddishkeit has become a staple of the broader community, and through today's technology our community expression has been seen all over the world.

Calgarian Markham Silver remembers vividly the Rebbe's ability to communicate. As a teen-ager in the

ago when she and her husband Daniel and toddler son Nissan moved to Toronto from Rimouski Quebec. Being new to the area they didn't have any kind of support network. They didn't know anyone.

One day, following what she thought would be a routine doctor's appoint-



The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, presides over a Hassidic gathering at Lubavitch World Headquarters, 1972. Photo: Lubavitch Archives.

mid 1970s, he attended a Rebbe's Farbrengen at Chabad World Headquarters in Brooklyn New York. "He was a very engaging man and even though I didn't speak much Yiddish and he only spoke in Yiddish, it wasn't the words he was speaking, it was the ideas he was communicating to me and everyone else in the room. He touched all of us, personally."

Alex Stein, the former Cantor at Beth Tzedec and now living in Toronto says the Rebbe was a critical to his Jewish upbringing. "Both my wife Shoshanna and I grew up in Sydney Australia and Chabad was the only Jewish outreach in our community. I don't know what I would have done without Chabad. Thank G-d they were there for us."

While studying in New York City, Cantor Stein visited the Rebbe on six different occasions to receive a dollar to give to charity. On one visit the Rebbe gave him six dollars and when asked why, the Rebbe said it's for his family in the future. "Shoshanna and I have four beautiful children, so indeed the Rebbe was right and we are a family of six," says Cantor Stein.

Tova Andrews remembers 25 years

ment, Tova found herself unexpectedly at the hospital with complications during her second pregnancy. The hospital told her she must go home, and needed immediate bed rest. Tova was stranded. She had no car, no money and couldn't reach her husband. She remembered that although she barely knew Chabad Rabbi Avrom Yakov Glukowsky OBM, he told her that if she ever needed anything to call him. So she did.

"He thanked me for the opportunity to do a Mitzvah," says Tova and recalls how he drove all the way downtown, picked up her son at the doctor's office, picked her up at the hospital and took them home. "Then he said I'm going to send my wife over, but you should think about letting me call the Rebbe and asking for a brocha (blessing)." Tova was Baal Teshuva (newly Orthodox). She wasn't part of Chabad. "I didn't know anything about asking Rebbes for brochas."

The Glukowskys arranged for people to come over with kosher food and provide childcare so Tova could rest and "the Rebetzen also said, 'Let me have my husband call the Rebbe

for a brocha.' This time, Tova accepted. "Rabbi Glukowsky phoned the Rebbe for a brocha and the Rebbe gave a brocha and an amazing thing happened." Just by accepting the offer a light was lit inside her. The problem was resolved and Tova had a healthy baby boy.

Tova wrote the Rebbe telling him the good news and thanking him for the blessing. His reply and brocha for her son Tzvi was one of the Rebbe's last letters.

At the time, Tova had no idea who this man was or how busy he was or how precious his time was. She only knew this man had cared for her family and had lit a light inside her. It was only later that she learned and realized how significant the Rebbe was and continues to be.

"I think the Rebbe did an amazing thing by reaching out to people who had no knowledge of their Jewishness, who knew nothing about being Jewish and awakened the Jewish spirit in them and when you talk about lighting a candle I think he was lighting the Yiddishe Neshama in so many people who didn't even know they had one. And I think that's his greatest gift."

The Rebbe also believed firmly in proper Jewish education. We are lucky enough in Calgary to have two Chabad Rabbis. Not only that, each of our Rabbis have lineage close to the source. Rabbi Matusof's parents were the Rebbe's first Shluchim and Rabbi Mordechai Groner's zaide, Rabbi Label Groner, was the Rebbe's Secretary. Our Chabad Rabbis have known the Rebbe since they were born.

Our Rabbi Groner follows the path of educator like his father, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Groner who is the dean at a yeshiva in Giryat Gat, Israel.

As Director of the Calgary Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), and inspired by the Rebbe's directive to make Jewish education accessible to any Jew, regardless of their knowledge or affiliation, Rabbi Groner has lectured and presented more than 20 amazing six-week

courses since 2007. These thought and discussion-provoking series address the most significant issues of our day, from biomedical testing to online privacy and from understanding the Holocaust to contemporary Israel.

The Rebbe has four Schluchim families in Calgary; Rabbi Menachem and Rochel Matusof, Rabbi Mordechai and Esty Groner, Daniel and Adina Shimonov and Avriel and Rivkah Gafney. In Edmonton there are three Schluchim families; Rabbi Ari and Rifkie Drelich, Rabbi Dovid and Devorah Pinson and Rabbi Mendy and Chaiya Blachman. Together they work to spread the Rebbe's message of goodness and kindness and doing Mitzvot, to every part of the province.

Chabad has also opened four new centres in the region in the past eight years. This includes two in Montana where Rabbi and Mrs. Bruk live in Boseman and a Missoula mission lead by Rabbi and Mrs. Nash. There is a Chabad of Regina with Rabbi and Mrs. Simmonds and just one month ago a Chabad of Saskatoon with Rabbi and Mrs. Katz.

Certainly Rabbi Matusof's two eldest sons, Rabbi Yossi and soon-to-be Rabbi Levi know about celebrating Yiddishkeit. They were the Rebbe's Roving Rabbis, traveling the highways and byways every summer, reaching out to Jews in small town Alberta, doing Mitzvot together and kindling a Yiddisher Neshama, even if for just a moment. Today Rabbi Yossi and his family serve as Directors of the Chabad House at Claremont Colleges in California.

It was important to the Rebbe that his Shluchim be leaders in their communities and inspire others in their community to be leaders. Our Rabbis are dynamic individuals who just like the Rebbe, are not hesitant to ask more of themselves and more of others. The Rebbe helped inspire two local Jews in particular to become leaders.

Rabbi Daniel Faber, who grew up in SW Calgary and with the help of the Matusofs became Baal Teshuva. He is

the first Calgary born Jew to become an ordained Orthodox Rabbi and is now the Principal at N'emot Moshe, a yeshiva in Bet Shemesh Israel for Baal Teshuva students.

Arnie and Maline Glogauer first met Rabbi Matusof at the University of Calgary where he was hosting a Purim party for the students. A short time later, Rabbi Matusof visited Arnie in the hospital and brought him a handmade Shmurah Matzoh for Passover. This simple gesture touched Arnie greatly and both Arnie's and Maline's interest in Yiddishkeit exploded. They became frum (observant Jews) and today, now named Rabbi Notech Glogauer, is the Principal at a Chabad elementary day school in Sydney Australia with 500 students and his wife Maline, now Dr. Chaya Glogauer is a child psychologist.

Just shortly after arriving in Calgary, Rabbi Matusof traveled to New York. The Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Groner said the Rebbe wanted to know about how things were going for the family in Edmonton. Rabbi Matusof didn't know what to say. He didn't know who Rabbi Groner was talking about. He soon learned however that a distraught Jewish woman in Edmonton had written to the Rebbe for help. She was a divorced mother of a young son, and had left an abusive relationship with no money and few opportunities. She had married a non-Jew and abandoned her family in Montreal.

Upon return, Rabbi Matusof immediately went to Edmonton to help the woman and her son with both their physical and spiritual needs. A short time later, in an Edmonton hotel suite, the boy celebrated his first Shabbos with challah and a festive meal prepared by the Matusof before leaving Calgary. In the following weeks, the Matusofs helped her reconnect with her family and always kept the Rebbe informed.

The son was turning Bar Mitzvah age but his non-Jewish father would not allow him to be circumcised. The




family wrote to the Rebbe and he counseled to go ahead with the Bar Mitzvah and the Rebbe promised that it will be done. Five years later, when the boy turned 18 and an adult, he made the decision to have a Brit Milah. Today the entire family celebrates their Yiddishkeit on a daily basis.

That story, from more than 20 years

ago, continues to inspire Rabbi Matusof who witnessed first-hand the Rebbe's compassion for a fellow Jew living thousands of miles away and with no connection to Chabad.

The Rebbe spoke often of lighting a candle and many of us think of the candle he lit in us personally, but what the Rebbe did was plant a seed and that

seed has grown into an orchard. It has been twenty years and the Rebbe influence on Jews everywhere is greater now than it has ever been.

In speaking on behalf of the Rebbe, Rabbi Matusof concludes by reminding us that one act of goodness and kindness will indeed change the world and make the Moshiach a reality. 

## DANIEL SHIMONOV'S LONG JOURNEY

BY RICHARD BRONSTEIN, THE JEWISH FREE PRESS

Danny Shimonov is one of only several Bukharan Jews in Calgary. He grew up in the Central Asian city of Tashkent until the age of 18.

Up to that point in life he held only several certainties. He knew he was Jewish, part of a fairly large community in the capital of Uzbekistan. He was in love with a girl named Adina. And beyond all doubt he knew there was no future for a young man in Tashkent.

"Where I grew up there wasn't much difference between politicians, police or criminals. Everyone was a crook," he says. "Nothing could get done without money changing hands. Everything was corrupt."

Shimonov says Jews were not menaced, but were kind of expected to stay in the background. He remembers one day a teacher spotted him entering a neighbourhood synagogue. The next day in school the teacher publicly humiliated Danny Shimonov in front of his classmates by degrading Judaism.

"As a kid probably 99 per cent of my friends were Jewish. We were tolerated

but not really accepted in wider society. So we huddled together as Jews," he says.

A common feeling in the community was that "Judaism gives us nothing but pain and hardship. There could be only two answers—assimilate or hide that you were Jewish.



Traditional Jewish wedding ceremony of Daniel and Adina Shimonov officiated by Rabbi David Lichtman of the House of Jacob. Daniel's parents, Nina and Ilya Shimonov, are on either side of the couple.

In 1989 his girlfriend's family moved to Israel. In 1990 Danny left Tashkent for Calgary because he had an uncle here who helped sponsor him. Although he was temporarily cut off from Adina, the wish to marry still burned strong so Danny made a trip to Israel in 1991 to get permission from her parents to bring her to Calgary to get married.

"I worked several jobs, sometimes 20 hours a day to get enough money for a plane ticket to Israel. Adina and her parents agreed to my marriage proposal and I had to borrow money to bring her to Calgary."

It was around this time too that Danny met Rabbi Menachem Matusof and was first introduced to Chabad Lubavitch.

"I knew absolutely nothing about Chabad. But I was invited to the Matusof home for Shabbos and we would have discussions that I really enjoyed. Later when Adina arrived in Calgary it was Rabbi Matusof and Rochel who helped prepare us for marriage. The first time I put on teffilin was with Rabbi Matusof."

Another family that was important was Herb and his late wife Eva Rosenberg, who were connected to Danny by Jewish Family Service Calgary.

"They were incredibly kind to us. They did so many things to help us, to show us the ropes. Our first Pesach in Calgary was with Herb and Eva.

"I asked Herb once how such a busy man like him could take so much time

to help us and I remember Herb saying: ‘Danny, one day you’ll do it for someone else.’”

After their marriage ceremony, Danny had one very clear goal in mind – to work hard, make a lot of money, and look after his family.

“I thought that was the way to go . . . business all the way all the time. I just didn’t know how to stop. The only thing I stopped was going to shul.”

But as the none-stop pressure of business built up, Danny felt he was losing focus as a husband and as a father. He saw other people going through painful divorce. That’s when he wrote a letter to the Rebbe and the response turned on a light inside Danny.

He slowly turned baal tshuva and got more and more immersed. For a time he thought of moving to a larger Jewish community, such as New York or Israel where he could immerse himself in the frum world. He even took a trip to Montreal to see if that might make a suitable home. Part of the concern was also his young family. Danny did not really have the kind of Jewish upbringing he could pass on to his children, so perhaps living in a larger Jewish community would help that.

In the meantime Rabbi Matusof and Rebbetzin Rochel were urging him not to rush things, to stay in Calgary and find a role in the community here. Then on a visit to Israel to meet with Adina’s parents, they recommended that he go see a special rabbi in Jerusalem and ask his advice what to do.

“When I finally got to meet this rabbi I told him I was baal tshuva and

wanted to live in a religious community and should I move to Israel or to New York. The rabbi considered and said ‘stay with Chabad and take things step by step and do it with your partner.’”



Adina and Daniel Shimonov and family at Chabad House during last year’s Bar Mitzvah for Emanuel (far right). The other children are Shoshana, Rochel, Menachem Mendel, Osnat, Shneur Zalman, Yosef Yitzchok, and Chaya Mushka. The new baby Chana is not in the picture.

On a visit to Montreal he met with the famous Rabbi Motchkin and posed similar questions. The answer was similar, stay in Calgary and become a shaliach.

The series of dots slowly started to connect in Danny Shimonov’s life that the key questions are not what you should be doing for yourself, but what should you be doing for others.

Danny remembers watching a video of the Rebbe during a massive Lag B’Omer parade in New York in 1983. There were thousands of people in attendance and the Rebbe was crying over the fate of the Jews of Russia.

“This touched me inside. The Rebbe

knew these people were starving for Judaism. He’s crying for them, he’s crying for G-d. And it’s not for the Rebbe he’s doing it, it’s for all the lost Jews in the world.

“At that point I understood that this is a person I wanted to follow. It is not his own well being he is concerned about, the Rebbe is saying that the well being of the Jewish people is the only thing that matters.”

Later Danny had an opportunity to visit New York, where he attended the Ohel, the shrine for the Rebbe and pledged to devote himself to Calgary and to take on the role of schluhim.

Today he serves on the board of Chevra Kadisha, arranges minyans at Chabad House, promotes Bikkur Holim and does weekly chaplaincy duties at city hospitals. He and his wife undertake various outreach activities such as organizing social events and hosting people in their home. Adina takes many women to the community Mikveh. They have nine thriving children ranging in age from 21 years to one-and-a-half months.

In a way, Danny Shimonov answered the three main questions that he started life with: He is an important part of the Jewish community, he married his high school sweetheart, and he has a future as a leader to improve Jewish life.

“The Rebbe made me realize that every Jew is connected to G-d all the time. So we don’t really bring people to G-d, but maybe we can wake up that spirit, kindle the light and help them realize what they already have inside.” 🔥

---

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE REBBE

---

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson was born 1902 and passed away 1994. He was known as the Lubavitcher Rebbe, or just the Rebbe.

In January 1951, a year after the

death of his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Shneerson, he assumed leadership of the Lubavitch movement, becoming the seventh and last Rebbe (Hasidic leader) of the movement.

Born in the town of Nikolaev his father was Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, a renowned Talmudic scholar and authority on Kabbalah and Jewish law. His mother was Rebbetzin



Chana Schneerson (nee Yanovski.)

Tutored privately the young Schneerson was considered an Illui, a genius who mastered the entire Talmud by the age of 17. Although he did not attend secular school, he wrote and passed all Soviet education exams as an external student. While continuing his Talmudic studies, Schneerson worked in his father's office as an administrator and interlocutor with the Jewish community and Russian authorities.

In 1923 he visited Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson where he met Schneerson's middle Daughter, Chaya Mushka. They became engaged in Riga in 1923 and were married five years later in 1928.

Supported by his father-in-law Schneerson studied math, science and philosophy for five semesters at the University of Berlin. In 1933 Rabbi Schneerson moved to Paris, where in

addition to his studies in Judaism and writing commentaries, he qualified as an electrical engineer. In 1937 he studied mathematics at the Sorbonne until World War II broke out.

In 1941 Rabbi Schneerson escaped from Europe and joined his father-in-law in Crown Heights, Brooklyn where he was appointed head of several Chabad organizations. He also worked in the Brooklyn Navy Yard designing wiring for the battleship USS Missouri and other classified military tasks.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson died in 1950, leaving behind two sons-in-law, Rabbi Shemaryahu and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Chassidism rallied to Rabbi Schneerson as successor and he accepted in 1951.

His leadership of the Chabad Lubavitch movement was marked by a strong emphasis on education infused by godliness as the basis for a true moral society.

Within two years, the Rebbe established a Lubavitch women's organization and believed that Torah study by women was one of the more important innovations of modern Judaism.

Strongly committed to kiruv, drawing Jews closer to their religion, the Rebbe used his tremendous organizational skills to propel a massive program of outreach across America and around the world. Thousands of young Chabad rabbis and their wives were trained



A photo of Rabbi Menachem Matusof's mother, Pessy who founded the first high school for Jewish girls in Morocco in accordance with the Rebbe's firm belief in the education and Torah study for women. Her and Rabbi Shlomo Matusof were the first shalichs appointed by the Rebbe.

and sent as emissaries to promote Jewish observance. He guided the building of schools, community centres, youth camps and Chabad Houses and instituted mitzvah campaigns to encourage Orthodox Jewish practice.

Rabbi Schneerson took great interest in world affairs, particularly the state of Israel. He had a great influence on many political leaders in Israel, America and around the world, who would often seek him out for advice. He was also one of the most forceful advocates on behalf of Jews living behind the Iron Curtain during the Cold War.

Despite his busy schedule he maintained his commitment to scholarship and wrote numerous texts and commentaries.

He also found time to receive visitors, usually twice a week on Sundays and Thursdays, and such meetings would go on from 8:00 in the evening to 5:00 am in the morning. The Rebbe received thousands and thousands of letters seeking advice and blessings. None were ever unanswered.

In February 1988 Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson died. In 1992 Rabbi Schneerson suffered a serious stroke. He died in 1994 and was buried at the Ohel next to his father-in-law



In 1991 at the age of 11 Chabad Alberta Rabbi Mordecai Groner receives a dollar from the Rebbe. On the left is his grandfather, Rabbi Laibl Groner, who served as secretary to the Rebbe.



Rabbi Menachem Matusof and his son Yossi receiving blessings and a dollar from the Rebbe. Yossi, now Rabbi Yossi, and his family have opened up and serve as directors of a Chabad House in Claremont Colleges in California.

Rabbi Yosef Schneerson at Montefiore Cemetery in Queens, NY.

Throughout his years of leadership the Rebbe explained his goal was to “make the world a better place.” In a letter to one of Israel’s presidents, he

wrote, “From the time that I was a child attending cheder, and even before, the vision of the future Redemption began to take form in my imagination – the Redemption of the Jewish People from their final Exile, a redemption of such

magnitude and grandeur through which the purpose of the suffering, the harsh decrees and annihilation of Exile will be understood . . . .”

Published in the Jewish Free Press,

Vol 23 No 17, June 27, 2014 / 29 Sivan 5774

---

## MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON— THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

---

BY JOE SPIER, THE JEWISH FREE PRESS

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 26, 2012 • 10 CHESHVAN, 5773

Hasidism had its beginnings in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century, a philosophy that moved away from the primacy of Torah study, but without veering from a commitment to Torah, creating a way of Jewish life that emphasized the ability of Jews to move closer to G-d via everything that we do, say and think. In this way, the average observant Jew could feel equal to the scholarly elite. The approach was one of inclusion, not exclusion. Over time, a number of branches of Hasidism were established, each branch centered upon the teachings of a particular Rebbe (leader) and usually named after the Rebbe’s town. One such movement is Chabad-Lubavitch. Lubavitch is the name of the Russian town in which the movement grew in its infancy and Chabad is a Hebrew acronym, translated into English as “Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge.”

By the end of the Second World War, the Holocaust had decimated the ranks of Chabad and not many new Jews were drawn to their way of life. The situation was bleak. And then appeared Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Mendel was born in 1902 in Nikolaev, Russia, the son of a renowned Chabad Rabbi, Talmudic and Kabbalistic scholar. During his youth, he received mostly a private Jewish

education. By the time of his Bar Mitzvah, Mendel was considered a Torah prodigy. During his teenage years, he immersed himself and conquered the intricacies of Torah study.

In 1928, Mendel married Chaya Mushka, the middle daughter of Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, a distant cousin, the revered sixth Rebbe of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. After their marriage, the couple moved to Berlin where Mendel took courses in mathematics and physics. Escaping the rise of Nazism, the couple left Germany for Paris in 1933. There Mendel became certified as an electrical engineer and then studied mathematics at the Sorbonne all the while neither neglecting prayer nor religious study. Engagement in both the religious and secular worlds would play a large part in shaping the thinking of the man who would later become the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe.

On June 11, 1940, three days before the Nazis entered Paris, the Schneersons fled to the unoccupied zone in the south of France. They were safe for a while until the Vichy government began carrying out the same anti-Semitic policies as the Nazis. After months of attempting to obtain visas to emigrate to the United States, they were able in 1941, with a little behind

the scenes help from certain members of the U.S. State Department, to embark for America from Lisbon on one of the last ships to cross the Atlantic before the German U-boat blockade began.

A year earlier Mendel’s father-in-law, Yosef Yitzchak, the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, his wife, mother, eldest daughter, and her husband living in Warsaw, had been rescued from the murderous brutality of the Nazis and sailed for New York. There, in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe set up the new world headquarters of Chabad-Lubavitch.

Mendel joined the sixth Rebbe in Crown Heights where he became head of Chabad’s educational arm, social service organization, and publishing network. Mendel would remain in Crown Heights for the rest of his life.

Yosef Yitzchak died on January 28, 1950. He had no sons nor did he leave a will appointing a successor. There were two contenders to assume the mantle of leadership—the older son-in-law, Shemaryahu Gurary, and the younger son-in-law Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Mendel increasingly appeared to be the better candidate. One year after the death of the sixth Rebbe, Mendel became the seventh Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch. To his followers, he was simply and reverently “the Rebbe”.



It was a difficult time for Chabad. Their numbers were numerically small. Hasidic Jews were marginalized, believed to be relics of the past who would fade away. The world was different from that of the Rebbe's predecessors in which Jews, hounded and discriminated against, ghettoized themselves, to one in which a free society was open to Jews, who, so comfortable in their environment, would assimilate. The Rebbe would retrieve these Jews one mitzvah at a time.

To comprehend this, one must understand that at the core of Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidism is the messianic vision of the coming of the Moshiach (the Messiah) ushering in the era of redemption, the task of Chabad being to prepare the ground for his imminent arrival by making the world a more godly place. The Rebbe believed that the coming of the Moshiach could only be hastened by the doing of mitzvot (good deeds).

The mission the Rebbe put in place was to send shluchim (emissaries) to every corner of the world wherever Jews could be found, reaching out to minister to the religiously observant and to rehabilitate the non-observant by kindling spiritual consciousness. To engage Jews, urging them to perform one of the Torah mitzvot as simple as donning tefillin, affixing a mezuzah, lighting the Shabbat candles, or kindness to others. The doing of just one good deed can usher in the era of the Moshiach. This was the teaching of the Rebbe. It was for the ultra-Orthodox, radical thinking. While other sects were inward-looking, shunning the outside, Chabad under the leadership of the Rebbe, would reach out to the modern world to unite it with the teachings of religious Judaism. So the Rebbe dispatched his shluchim, their number growing over time. They were couples, the men in their trademark

snap-brim fedoras and unkempt beards and their modestly dressed wives, having shunned the kerchief to cover their hair, wearing instead attractive wigs that could pass for their own tresses. While elsewhere in the Hasidic world, women take a back seat, not so with Chabad. Women are full-fledged emissaries, communal activists working in concert with their husbands, fortifying each other. The couples went out into the world to make new lives for themselves and to light the lamp of Judaism wherever Jews might be, the towns and the cities, students at uni-



versities, businesspeople in Shanghai, vacationers in the Virgin Islands, trekkers in Katmandu.

Of great concern to the Rebbe were the Jews locked behind the Communist Soviet Union. He tirelessly fought to keep Judaism alive in that atheistic nation. The Rebbe maintained a covert group of emissaries inside the country, sending them in the guise of tourists and business people. He delivered prayer books, tefillin and Passover matzo. After the fall of Communism and the disintegration of the

Soviet Union, Chabad shluchim spread throughout the Eastern bloc, in most places being the only Jewish religious presence. One became chief Rabbi of Russia. In Moscow's Red Square, where once paraded the forces of the evil empire, now is lit the massive distinctive Y-shaped Lubavitch Chanukah menorah.

The Y-shaped Chanukah menorah has become a symbol of Chabad-Lubavitch. In thousands of cities all over the globe, to celebrate the holiday and publicize the Chanukah miracle, Chabad, on the direction of the Rebbe, illuminates giant Y-shaped menorahs during Chanukah in an annual public ceremony attended by dignitaries who are honoured with the actual lighting. Thus, the message of G-d's miracles and the manifestation of religious liberty are brought into the public sphere.

The Rebbe, though decrying secular Zionism advocating a more religious Zionism, was always pro-Israel. From Kfar Chabad (Chabad Village) in central Israel, shluchim go forth all over Israel to increase Torah awareness. Chabad schools operate throughout the country. The Rebbe has expressed overwhelming support for the Jewish State's military endeavors and condemned consideration of transfers of land as part of any peace process. Scores of Chabadniks live in Israel where they vote and serve in the military. During many Chabad services throughout the world, a prayer for the safety of Israel is recited.

The Rebbe oversaw the building of schools, community centers (Chabad Houses), and youth camps, unthinkable before his leadership. There are 2,181 Chabad institutions in 79 countries around the world and growing. There are more than 200,000 adherents to the movement and many more supporters. Up to a million Jews attend

a Chabad service at least once a year. The Rebbe would posthumously be awarded the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal for his “outstanding and enduring contributions toward world education, morality and acts of charity.” As his movement expanded and the Rebbe’s fame, and influence throughout the world grew, leaders in politics, business, and religion turned to him for advice. Heads of State, including many of Israel’s political leaders, would seek him out on matters of national and international importance, attending the Rebbe at his headquarters in Crown Heights where he rarely left. Starting in 1986, at the age of 84, every Sunday the Rebbe would stand in front of his study for hours where indefatigably he would greet thousands of his followers; offer each a brief blessing and a crisp one-dollar bill to be donated to charity, a simple lesson in one’s obligation to give tzedakah. Chaya Mushka, the Rebbe’s wife passed away in 1988. The couple was childless. Following a stroke in 1992, the Rebbe’s health

deteriorated. He was left incapable of speech, only able to respond to questions through head and hand motions. The Rebbe died on June 12, 1994, at the age of 92, and was buried next to the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe at the “Ohel,” the religious shrine in Queens to which today tens of thousands of Jews visit annually, leaving prayers believing that the souls of the two Rebbes maintain a palpable presence there. During his lifetime, the Rebbe would often visit the Ohel seeking inspiration from his predecessor.

Even before the death of the Rebbe, numerous within the Chabad community began to believe that he is the Moshiach. It was said that the Moshiach would come within the seventh generation, that of the Rebbe. The fact that the Rebbe had no heir was evidence that one was not needed. The worldwide influence of Chabad-Lubavitch and the renown of the Rebbe all pointed to his messianic status. Within the movement, there are still many, some more vocal than others, who continue to

believe that the Rebbe is the Moshiach, will be resurrected, or is in “hiding”.

In any event, some eighteen years after the death of the Rebbe, no successor, no eighth Lubavitcher Rebbe has been anointed. Yet Chabad-Lubavitch is not leaderless. They are led and inspired by the “Ruach” (spirit) and the teachings of the Rebbe.

The greatness of the Rebbe is that by matchless vigor, boundless optimism, and love for all people, he brought, and through his teachings continues to bring, the light of Judaism into places it never shone before. His lasting legacy is the countless number of Jews that are touched by Chabad programs and outreach. A narrative goes that a businessman once returned from a trip in which he traveled to many places around the world. When asked about his trip he replied, “Wherever I went, I saw two things; Coca Cola and Chabad-Lubavitch.” 🔥

This publication is dedicated to the Rebbe whose teachings and examples are never-ending sources of life for all mankind. May we continue in his paths and complete the mission which he charges us: to make the world conscious of the imminent Redemption and to prepare an environment where this ideal can be realized.

YECHI HAMELECH!



CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF ALBERTA  
134 FORGE ROAD SE, CALGARY, ALBERTA T2H 0S8  
403-281-3770  
INFO@CHABADALBERTA.ORG  
WWW.CHABADALBERTA.ORG





# 32<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL PASSOVER

COMMUNITY SEDER

...one you will never forget!

Friday Evening, April 15th 2022 (1st Seder)

Program begins at 6:30 PM

Register online at [www.ChabadAlberta.org/Seder](http://www.ChabadAlberta.org/Seder) • 403-281-3770



## ALL ARE WELCOME!

Delicious Passover meal served on  
real China and Silverware,  
handmade Shmurah Matzah,  
the four cups of wine & more!

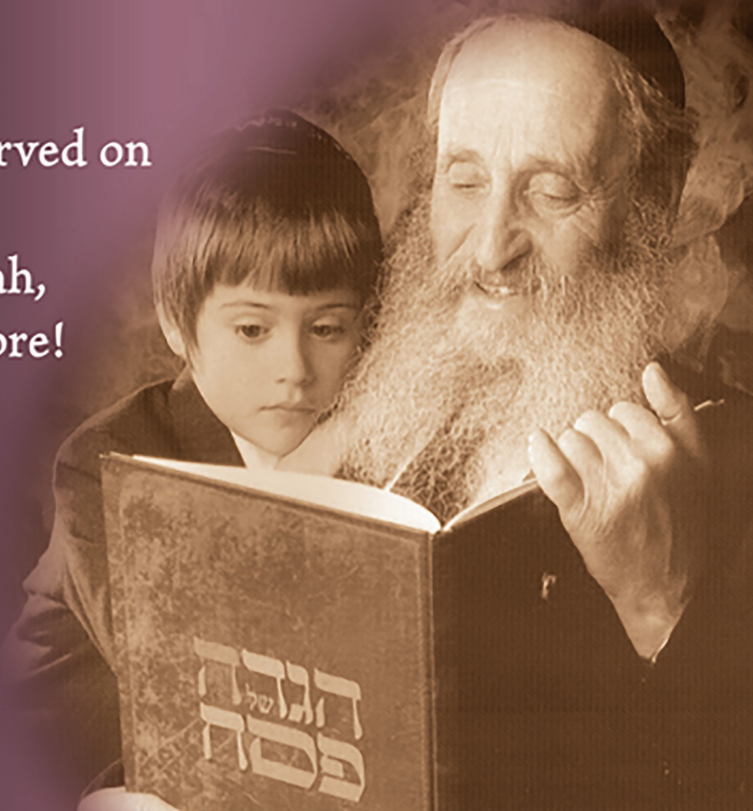
### SEDER COST:

\$75 Per Adult

\$32 Per Child (Ages 2-11)

Family of 4 or more - 10% off

Can't afford? Be our guest!







BS"D

## Certificate Authorizing the Sale of Chometz (5782 - 2022)

*Please print neatly or type:*

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_ hereby authorise Rabbi Menachem M. Matusof to dispose of all chometz that may be in my (our) possession wherever it may be; at home, at my (our) place of business, or elsewhere, in accordance with the requirements of Jewish law as incorporated in the special contract for the sale of chometz.

### Residence Address:

(Street Address) \_\_\_\_\_ (City, Province)  
Apt: \_\_\_\_\_

### Business Address:

(Street Address) \_\_\_\_\_ (City, Province)  
Apt: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Return this form early, since it must reach us no later than April 12, 2022.  
Responsibility cannot be accepted for authorizations received later.*

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF ALBERTA  
Tel: (403) 281-3770 | Fax: (403) 281-0338 | Email: info@chabadalberta.org

B"H



Over 500 families will get a hand made Shmurah Matzah in a beautifully designed box to enhance their seder table.

## A **KASHRUS** LEADER **TOP GRADE QUALITY**

PRODUCER OF THE FINEST  
KOSHER POULTRY, MARINATED  
& DELI PRODUCTS.

Sivan Marketing | 718.673.5381



514.321.8376  
1.800.361.1140



**Wishing the entire Jewish community a Happy Passover**

A complementary Shmurah Matzah  
for you!

Contact us to reserve

403-281-3770 or email: ylevi@chabadalberta.org