

# HERE'S *my* STORY

## "MY PERSONAL EMISSARY"

**RABBI MORDECHAI EINBINDER**



**T**he Rebbe was part of my life for as long as I remember. Perhaps my earliest memory of him dates to when I was three years old, when I had my *Upshernish*, the ceremony that takes place when a *chasidic* boy's hair is cut for the first time.

At that time, my whole family had an audience with the Rebbe. They were in his office, discussing serious things, and I was doing what a little kid does — I was running around the floor, playing. The Rebbe beckoned me over and took out of his drawer a gold apple which today I know was a "Golden Delicious." I've never seen an apple like that. My mouth began to water and the Rebbe smiled at me and gave me the apple, saying, "Make a blessing."

The proper blessing for an apple is *Borei pri ha'etz* — "Blessed be G-d... Who creates the fruit of the tree." But I got mixed up and instead said *Shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro* — "Everything comes into existence with G-d's word."

My father, a staunch *chasid* who was a man of immense humility and kindness and goodness, must

have been mortified. I could see the sweat coming off his forehead. His little kid just made the wrong blessing in front of the Lubavitcher Rebbe — my G-d, what could be worse?

But the Rebbe immediately diffused the situation. He said, "This is no problem at all because the *Shehakol* blessing consolidates all the obligational blessings. It's not a problem." And everything was good and fine because the Rebbe said so. Of course that's the Torah law, if you mistakenly replace the *Ha'etz* with *Shehakol*, it's okay.

Sometime around my Bar Mitzvah, my family had another audience with the Rebbe, and this one — above all — I will never forget. After speaking with my father, the Rebbe turned to me and addressed me in a manner of a general speaking to a soldier. He said me, "When you grow older, you will become my personal emissary." These words touched me very, very deeply, even at that young age. And they set forth my purpose in life and became my guiding light. From that moment on, I felt a great connection to the Rebbe, something which has given me strength in the difficult times and stood by me in the good times too.

In 1980, I became the Rebbe's emissary in California, in the area north of Los Angeles known as the Valley. And here I would like to relate a story about the Rebbe's influence on the people of my community.

Chabad of the Valley had a special supporter who made a lot of money through stocks, bonds and commodities. Then, he decided to invest heavily in real estate, and not only didn't it go well, he was in danger of losing all his money. He was depressed beyond description, and I wrote to the Rebbe immediately.

*continued on reverse*

MY ENCOUNTER  
with the **REBBE**

An oral history project dedicated to documenting the life of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory. The story is one of thousands recorded in the 900 videotaped interviews conducted to date. Please share your comments and suggestions. [mystory@jemedi.org](mailto:mystory@jemedi.org)

continued from reverse

The Rebbe answered, "Check his *tefillin* and check his *mezuzahs*, and I will think of him in prayer."

We took his *mezuzahs* down, and we checked them. It was a palatial home and there were a lot of *mezuzahs*, so we had our work cut out for us. We checked his *tefillin* as well. The *mezuzahs* were fine, but there were a couple of little problems with the *tefillin* — nothing major — which we corrected. Still, his financial issues did not improve. In fact, things went from bad to worse. The situation was untenable, and I wrote to the Rebbe again.



This time the Rebbe's answer was only "Check the *mezuzahs*." He did not mention the *tefillin* again. We

checked all the *mezuzahs* again, and we found nothing wrong. Meanwhile, the man's financial situation continued to spiral downward, and he was at his wits' end.

I wrote to the Rebbe for the third time, and he gave the same exact answer, "Check the *mezuzahs*."

Now we know that a *mezuzah* has an amazing ability to protect a person. It galvanizes G-d's hovering protectiveness. So we did not take the Rebbe's advice lightly, especially since he was telling us to do this for the third time.

I called in an expert in the law of *mezuzahs*, Rabbi Aaron Abend of North Hollywood. He came to a meeting with the man and his family, and we all sat together and pondered, trying to figure out what we were doing wrong here.

Suddenly, the wife said, "Remember that door to the alley that we nailed shut? It's still a door, but we never use it anymore. There's a lot of foliage that has grown around it, so I don't think we checked the *mezuzah* over there."

As fast as we could, we ran out there, worked our way through all of the shrubbery and, lo and behold, we found a door that had been nailed shut with a small *mezuzah* on the doorpost. When we examined this *mezuzah*, we saw that it had one problem — in the last phrase, *kiymeh hashamayim al haartez*, the words *al haaretz* were missing. Note that *al haaretz*, means "on the earth" and this clearly relates to real estate.

That *mezuzah* was corrected, and the man's financial situation turned around!

Can you imagine — the Rebbe was in Brooklyn, New York, and yet he knew that there was a *mezuzah* in California, across the whole continent, that had a problem. He told us to check it not once, not twice, but three times, until we found what was wrong. It was just amazing.

*Rabbi Mordechai Einbinder, a Chabad emissary in the Los Angeles area, is Associate Director of Chabad of the Valley. He was interviewed in Sherman Oaks, California in September of 2011.*

לע"נ ר' ישראל יעקב וזוגתו מרת קריינא ע"ה לאקשין  
ע"י בניהם ר' נחמן ור' אברהם ומשפחתם שיחיו

## This week in...

- > **5683 — 1923**, in the city of Kislovodsk, Russia, the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin met for the first time.<sup>1</sup> *Early Tammuz*
- > **5710 — 1950**, to the joy of *chasidim* worldwide, the Rebbe's first public address was edited by the Rebbe and published.<sup>2</sup> *7 Tammuz*
- > **5745— 1985**, the Rebbe went public with the affair of the *seforim* — the holy books and manuscripts that had been stolen from the library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, beginning a difficult and painful period for the Rebbe and *chasidim*. Following a lengthy court battle and subsequent appeals, the *seforim* were finally returned three years later, on 2 Kislev, 5748-1988. *12 Tammuz*

1. *Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz Vol. 15, p. 30* 2. *Yimei Breishis, p. 187*

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