

PESACH WITH THE REBBE

Many of the following descriptions of the Rebbe's hanhaga during the Seder were taken from Hamelech B'misibo, Otzer Minhagei Chabad, and Haggadah shel Pesach, printed by Heichel Menachem, or were told to me by people who were present at the Rebbe's Seder, including my brother Avrohom Aba Raichik who was a waiter/guest at the Rebbe's Seder many times. The purpose of this article is to describe the Rebbe's Seder, not to give people new customs. The complete description of Chabad minhagim are in the Haggadah and therefore we did not repeat these customs.

Matzos were baked twice for the Rebbe, once on Beis Nisan and again on Erev Pesach. If Beis Nisan fell on a Sunday the matzos would be baked on Monday, Gimmel Nisan to ensure that the mayin shelanu (the water for the matzah baking) would be drawn the day before the baking, before sunset. The Beis Nisan matzos were generally sent to Eretz Yisroel. In later years these matzos were also sent to Shluchim in other cities. From the Beis Nissan baking, matzah was also taken upstairs to be used by the Rebbetzin Nechama Dina A'H, and by all those who ate in the Friediker Rebbe's home which was on the second floor of 770. The Erev Pesach matzos were given out by the Rebbe. The Rebbe himself ate only from the first batch of the first baking of the Erev Pesach Matzos.

The night of Bedikas Chametz the Rebbe would sell his chometz with an Orev Kablan (a guarantor) to one of the Rabbonim, in the early years to Rabbi Shmuel Levitan, then later to Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dworkin and in later years to Rabbi Yisroel Piekarsky. The Rebbe would sell the Yeshivah in Melbourne, Australia, as well as other places, to the Rav. In 5749 (1989) a home was bought for the Rebbe in Lubavitch, Russia. The Rebbe asked for the address in order to be able to sell the house with the rest of his Chometz to the Rav.

Those who were invited to the Rebbe's Seder or who worked as waiters at the Seder would go into the Rebbe's room before the Seder. The matzos were on a chair behind which the Rebbe stood and the Rebbe told each person to take a matzah. Reb Hendel Lieberman would not take his Matzah by himself; he would ask the Rebbe to give him a matzah. Once when a person took a matzah which was a little broken, the Rebbe told him to take a whole one. The Rebbe's guests and the waiters would take their other two matzos from the Beis Nisan matzos upstairs.

More than a Minyan of men would participate at the Rebbe's Seder.

When everything was ready upstairs, someone would knock on the Rebbe's door to let him know that all was

ready. This was done for each meal. The Rebbe would have this person take the special wine, matzoh and becher upstairs for him. The Rebbe would bring up the to the Seder his Haggadah and the Siddur HaArizal. During the Seder the Rebbe would consult the Siddur HaArizal. Meals would start approximately an hour to an hour and a half after davening.

The Rashag, Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary, A”H, the Rebbe’s brother-in-law, used to ask many questions of the Rebbe during the meal. After the meal someone would come down and repeat chidushim that were said at the meal. Many times the Rebbe, in his Sichos, would discuss at length questions that had been brought up at the meal.

The first night of Pesach the Seder would start after 9:00. The Rebbe would first go to the Yeshivah dining hall to see each bochur and inspect his Seder plate. He would give them a brochah. In later years he would also go to Hadar HaTorah, Machon Chana, and to several other Sedorim before he began his own Seder.

The Rebbe used cloth napkins for the Matzos. On top of the cloth napkins (not on a plate) the symbolic foods were placed. Under the Matzoh, the Rebbe would use a silver plate (but only the Rebbe had one. See the Haggadah) Everyone else would follow suit. For maror the Rebbe would squeeze the liquid out of it and then put it together with the romaine lettuce. He would also use the kepel (the top) of the horseradish, which was not grated. For karpas the Rebbe would use a small onion. The charoses was not mixed with wine until later in the evening. Before eating the maror, the Rebbe would take some of the charoses and put it on the plate from under his becher and mix it with the wine that was on the plate. The rest of the Charoses he would leave dry for Korech.

At the Friediker Rebbe’s place there was a silver tray (from the Rebbe Rashab) with Matzoh.

The Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka would be in a room off of the dining room with her mother, Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, and the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana, and other women. After the Seder the Rebbe would walk his mother home.

Reb Yaakov Katz would say the Haggadah out loud and the Rebbe would say the Haggadah to himself. At times those sitting near him were able to hear some of what he was saying. Sometimes the Rebbe would correct something that had been said. Reb Yaakov Katz’s son would say the Mah Nishtanah. Though questions were not asked during the reciting of the Haggadah, discussions about the Haggadah and the Seder often took place during the meal. The Rebbe was the only one who ate while reclining. The

others did not recline because they were at the Rebbe’s Seder.

After making the Kaira, the Rebbe would quietly say all the Simanei Haseder beginning with the words, “Simanei Seder Shel Pesach.” In addition it was observed that when the Rebbe would come to each Siman he would say it quietly with it’s explanation. For Kiddush, red wine was used for Pesach, as well as for the entire year. The becher was always a silver cup without a stem and it was always placed on the right side of the Kairah. The Rebbe would always stand for Kiddush both at night and day. The Rebbe would fill up the becher so that it would pour over onto the plate underneath. (See Sicha Shabbos Acharai 5746 (1986), pg. 181) He would pick it up with the right hand, put it in the left hand, and then place it in the palm of his hand with his fingers touching the becher. At any time during the Seder that the Rebbe would pick up and hold the becher, he would do so in this fashion.

Urchatz; the Rebbe would say it and read the explanation, and at the same time say karpas and its explanation without pausing (making a hefsek) between the two. Before Rachtzah the Rebbe would quietly recite all the Simanei Seder with all the halachas till after Korech in order not to make a hefsek before Korech. For washing his hands the Rebbe would go to a small sink in the hallway off the kitchen, no water was brought to the table. For the karpas the Rebbe would cut part of the onion and eat the piece but would not put the rest back on the Kairah (as the Rebbe has written in the Haggadah.) The Rebbe would add some salt to the salt water before dipping the karpas and then dip three times.

For Yachatz, the Rebbe writes in the Rishimos #5, pgs. 19-21, that the Friediker Rebbe would take the Afikomen from his sons-in-law and put it together with his own. This has been the custom of the Rebbeim since the Maggid’s time.

The Rebbe would uncover some of all of the three matzos at the beginning of Maggid. When they came to the Ma Nishtana, the Rebbe would move the Kairah a little to the side and cover the matzos. After the Ma Nishtana was said, it was the custom of the Friediker Rebbe to say the Ma Nishtana over to himself quietly with the introduction to the four questions and the explanation just as the children say it (the Rebbe’s Haggadah). This was surely the hanhaga of all the previous Rebbeim. This was told to us to be used as guidelines by everyone. (Sichos Yud-Alef Nisan, 5743 (1983) p. 126). The custom

by Yidden is that the youngest child asks first. (Hisvaadus 5740 (1980) p. 698).

For the Makos the Rebbe would pour from the becher into an old, cracked dish which was on the floor. After finishing, the Rebbe would add wine to the becher which would again overflow onto the becher's plate.

At the part of Rabban Gamliel when he would say Pesach, Matzoh and Maror, the Rebbe would look at the matzoh and the maror on the Kairah (some remember that he would touch the matzoh and the maror).

The custom in the Rebbe's house was to hold the second and third matzos with the cloth while saying Matzoh Zu. During Maror Ze, the Rebbe would put his right hand on the maror and his left hand on the chazeres.

During the meal, the Rebbe would put some salt on the napkin with the matzoh, then take some matzo and dip it into the salt three times.

Between eating the fish and the meat, the Rebbe would wash his hands with water (some recall that he would do this at all the other Yom Tov meals besides the Seder) and drink a little wine. With the meal the Rebbe would drink wine but not say L'chaim so as not to give importance to any wine other than the four cups.

The Rebbe would not eat until all the waiters were sitting at their places at the table. After the soup was served, everyone took three spoonfuls of soup from the silver soup terrine of the Alter Rebbe. The terrine would then be set in front of the Rebbe and the Rashag would get up and take the hot lid off. When the Rebbe would finish, the Rashag would again rise to take the terrine from him.

The napkins that the Rebbe used for the wine he would leave on the table. The napkins he used to wipe his mouth from the Matzos he would put on the small serving table near him.

In the Haggadah it is noted that the Rebbeim would pour Eliyahu's cup themselves. The Rebbe would pour the cup for Eliyahu before benching. The Rebbe would have someone rinse out his becher and then he would wipe the becher with a napkin before pouring the wine.

The benching for the Seder was always led by Reb Yaakov Katz. The Rebbe and everyone else held their cup of wine during the benching. When the doors were opened for Eliyahu Hanavi, the street doors downstairs at 770 would be opened. A candlestick was used when it wasn't Shabbos. The Rebbe would wait until everyone returned from

downstairs; only then would they continue with the Haggadah. After the passing of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, for the first time, the Rebbe himself, would come down with a candle for the opening of the door for Eliyahu and saying Sh'foch Chamaschah. The Rebbe had a special way of pouring back the wine from Kos Eliyahu into the wine bottle, by first pouring the wine into his becher. When they poured back the wine from Eliyahu Hanavi's Kos, Keli Ata was sung, except for one year when the Rebbe started singing Prozos Teshev Yerushalayim before singing Keli Ata.

From after opening the door for Eliyahu until the end of the Haggadah the Rebbe would say the Haggadah louder (but not out loud). At times one could see tears coming from the Rebbe's eyes.

In 5729 (1969) the Rebbe said the pasuk "V'ose ni-flaos g'dolos levado ki le-olam chasdo," three times just loud enough so that the people near him were able to hear.

The second night of Pesach the Rebbe would come down to the Shul after the Seder with a Haggadah and explain the Haggadah for a few hours.

People were allowed to go up to the second floor until 5729 (1969) when it became so crowded that the Rebbe said that the bochurim should not come up.

That year, the first group of bochurim/Shluchim came back from Australia, after two years. They had the special privilege of going to participate in the end of the Rebbe's Seder. At the first night's Seder, they came having already eaten the afikomen. The Rebbe asked them if they had eaten the afikomen. The bochurim answered yes. They realized that they should have waited for the afikomen until after they went into the Rebbe's Seder. On the second night they made sure not to eat the afikomen before coming. When asked by the Rebbe, they said they had not eaten it yet. The Rebbe said that chairs, cups, and Haggadah's should be brought for them. The Rebbe gave the shluchim from his own afikomen with some other matzo, covered with a napkin. The next day, the Rashag asked the Rebbe why he had given the afikomen to the Shluchim, since it says that afikomen should be given only to one's family. The Rebbe answered, "These are the children of my household, and therefore I gave them from my afikomen."

ACHARON SHEL PESACH IN 5666 (1906)

Following is an excerpt from a Farbrengen the Friediker Rebbe gave on Acharon Shel Pesach, 5700, 1940.

On Acharon Shel Pesach in 5666 (1906), the Rebbe Rashab was eating the meal of Acharon Shel Pesach with the Bochorim of the Yeshiva.

During the farbrengen he asked his brother, R. Zalman Aharon (the Raza), "Do you remember what our grandfather, the Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, said to us, on his last Acharon Shel Pesach? [in 5625/ 1865]"

R. Zalman Aharon said that at that moment he didn't remember, were he to envision what occurred at that time, he might be able to remember. The Rebbe RaShaB told over, "We - the family - were sitting at the Yom Tov table of our father [the Rebbe Maharash]. He said, 'Today is Acharon Shel Pesach, the final day of Pesach.' I asked my father, 'Why is the last day of Pesach a Yom Tov?' Our father said, 'Zalman Aharon, maybe you can answer this question?' You said you couldn't."

Our sister, Devorah Leah, sitting next to our mother, got up and said she knew. Our father said, "If you know why - say." Devorah Leah said, "When Jews keep seven days of Pesach as the law requires, and are careful not to eat any Chametz, we make the last day of Pesach a Yom Tov. All Jews are happy that they could go through Pesach without violating the prohibition of Chametz."

R. Zalman Aharon now recalled the event. "When our sister said this, our father was very happy and said, 'Devorah Leah, you have a good head.'"

"When we went to our grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, to serve him his meal, our father told him the whole story. Our grandfather said that Devorah Leah's answer was a very good, logical answer.

The Tzemach Tzedek called all three of us close and said, "The last day of Pesach is called Acharon Shel Pesach. This means it's the completion of what began the first night of Pesach.

The first night of Pesach is the holiday on which HaShem redeemed us from Mitzrayim, the first redemption through Moshe Rabbeinu - the first redeemer. Acharon Shel Pesach is our Yom Tov for the last redemption, when HaShem will redeem us from the final exile through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, he Moshiach is the final redeemer."

The first day of Pesach is Moshe Rabbeinu's day of rejoicing, and the last day of Pesach is Moshich's day of rejoicing.

Today [Acharon Shel Pesach, 5666]", the Rebbe RaShaB said to his son [the Rebbe Rayatz], "I went into the study (the room for Yechidus) and heard in the next room a heated debate between your daughters, Chana and [Chaya] Mushka (then about six or seven years old). I was very interested to hear what the issue was.

I went closer and heard Chana say that Acharon Shel Pesach is a Yom Tov like any other, and Mushka said Acharon Shel Pesach isn't like any other. Her proof was that when we light candles we don't say the Brachah of Shehechyanu. At that moment I remembered the things which happened on Acharon Shel Pesach 5625 (1865.)

My uncle, the Raza (R. Zalman Aaron) then recalled other details from that Acharon Shel Pesach 5625;

1. The Zeyde (the Tzemach Tzedek) had his glasses on his forehead and he bentched in a siddur which you (the Rebbe RaShaB) brought him.

2. That Pesach we both Davened entirely in the Zeyde's room.

3: Zeyde was wrapped in a tallis and laying in bed.

4. After Shemoneh Esrei two people picked up the Tzemach Tzedek, put him on a chair and brought him to the table with our father (the Maharash) and our Uncle - Rabash (R. Boruch Sholom - the oldest son .) Two sifrei Torah were taken out to layn from, and they were brought to the Tzemach Tzedek for him to kiss (before laying).

5. Our Uncle R. Boruch Sholom and our father, the Maharash had Shlishi and Chamishi, the Tzemach Tzedek had Maftir which he said seated.

When Uncle R. Zalman Aaron told this to my father - it brought tears to his eyes, and two tears ran from his cheeks when he heard the end of this recollection.

A few minutes later my father turned to his brother, the Raza, and asked him do you remember the Birchas Kohanim of that year, and kissing the Zeyde's Tzitzis?

The Raza said he remembers how R. Yosef Mordechai took both of us to a side room during Yizkor and also remembers how his father, the Maharash explained to them the meaning of Yizkor.

"Right after grandfather finished Maftir, our father gave a wink to Yosef Mordechai to take us into a side room, and later we were brought back in. We were standing next to our father for Birchas Kohanim. Our grandfather made a sign with his hand that we should approach him. Our father noticed and brought us to where our Zeyde was sitting. And you (the RaShaB) stood next to our Zeyde's right hand and put me (R. Zalman Aharon) on the left and covered us both with the Zeyde's tallis. The Tzemach T z e d e k pointed to each word in the siddur as it was recited and answered all three omains loudly.

After davening he called me over to kiss the tzitzis of his tallis and then he called you over for the same thing.

In the afternoon our father came into our room, and I asked "What is Yizkor?" The Maharash explained that the neshomas of our great grandparents are *millitz yoshor* (pleading the case) for their descendants and therefore we mention their neshomas and [pledge to] give Tzedakah.

Great Tzaddikim like Zeyde (the Tzemach Tzedek) see the neshomas of their parents, and our father said that today Zeyde saw the neshoma of his mother (Rebbetzin Devorah Leah) and the neshoma of his father-in-law, the Mittler Rebbe, and of his Zeyde , the Alter Rebbe.

R. Zalman Aharon began to sing what his uncle, Reb Boruch Sholom, the son of the Tzemach Tzedek, sang on that Acharon Shel Pesach while the Tzemach Tzedek ate Seudas Moshiach.

My father said he had heard from the Rebbe Maharash that the Baal Shem Tov gave the name Moshiach Seudah to the meal of Acharon Shel Pesach.

Then R. Zalman Aharon mentioned how the Zeyde, the Tzemach Tzedek said to his son, R. Boruch Sholom, when you will sing the songs of Moshiach's Seudah as the Alter Rebbe sang them you should awaken your memory and remember the holy vision of the Zeyde (the Alter Rebbe) and my father-in-law (the Mittler Rebbe.)

When R. Boruch Sholom began to sing, our father, the Rebbe Maharash, began to sing along with him, and our Zeyde, the Tzemach Tzedek sang very quietly. With his left hand he held his head and covered his eyes, and with his right hand he kept time on the table and great tears ran over his cheeks.

Now my father (the RaShaB) said, "I don't ask why today, in particular, have I reminisced about that Acharon shel Pesach, for everything happens by Hashgacho Protis (Divine Providence). But for what purpose and reason did I remember? This I do ask.

ACHARON SHEL PESACH IN 5666 (1906)...Continued

The Rebbe repeated this entire story on Achron Shel Pesach 5763 –1963 and went into many details of this story and of the answers of why Achron Shel Pesach is such a day of great Simcha.

See Likutei Sichas [volume 37, page 19] about saying shehechyanu on Acharon shel pesach. The inner reason why we don't make shechyanu is that Achron Shel Pesach is connected with Moshiach and since we are still in Golus and we are still in pain of being in Golus we cannot say shechyanu. Also see note 43 how the Rebbe connects this story to that concept.

PESACH BY THE REBBEIM

In the year of 1904-5 the Rebbe RaShaB was involved in sending matzos and other necessities for Pesach to the front lines of the Russo-Japanese war, to Shanghai, Harbin, etc. At the time the RaShaB was in Paris and Baron Ginsberg was also. The Baron had contacts with the government, so the Rebbe asked the Baron to become involved and obtain permission to send things for Pesach to the soldiers. "We have a solution, there is Pesach Sheini," said the Baron (so as not to have to get involved). The Rebbe RaShaB said that at the front there are no barons, the soldiers there are simple Jews and they don't know any tricks - they need matzo for Pesach. With the help of the French press (Ecco d'Paris and Figaro), pressure was put on Russia until the government in Petersburg gave permission and the government itself helped by providing a location in which to bake, etc. In the middle of the Seder the Rebbe RaShaB received a telegram from Petersburg, that Mr. Horowitz had gone with the trainload of matzo. He telegraphed Petersburg and from there they telegraphed Lubavitch that everything went through. My father stood up and thanked HaShem. (Sefer Hasichos, 5702, Pesach, p. 89)

R. Aisik Homiler was a Chassid of the Alter Rebbe. Since he was a firstborn, he would make a Siyum on Erev Pesach on the entire Talmud. Kerem Chabad, Vol II, p. 44)

Once Rebbetzin Sterna Sarah asked R. Yaakov Landau to do Bedikas Chametz in the room where Pesach foods would be stored. It was the night of Rosh Chodesh Nisan. He asked the Rebbe RaShaB, "Why am I searching now?"

The Rebbe answered, "Generally a room is cleaned for Pesach. When we search (on the night before Pesach) it isn't a true Bedikah. Many things are laying around. Therefore do it now when it's cleaned out before putting everything back in the room. (Kerem Chabad, Vol. II, p. 39)

Once before Bedikas Chametz the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe told this: In 5525 (1765), when the Alter Rebbe came back from the Mezeritcher Maggid for the first time, he didn't eat on Nisan 13. He didn't fast; he just didn't eat. He wanted to bring all the intentions he'd learned in Mezeritch into actual practice. Bedikas Chametz took him all night, though he lived in one room. (Sefer Hasichos 5698, p. 265)

In connection with bedikas Chometz here is vort from the chossid R Leib Shainin. R. Leib Shainin once said in his Shabbos Hagadol Drashah: "On the night of the fourteenth we search for leaven by the light of a candle. Any place where we do not bring in leaven does not require searching." (Pesachim 1:1) The night before Pesach, we must also examine our spirituality and remove any Chametz (bad character traits, evil inclination, etc.). One must examine oneself to find his Chametz and eradicate it. But a place where you didn't bring Chametz -- someone else's character -- you do not search." (R. Leib Sheinin, a chassid of the Rebbe RaShaB and Rebbe RaYaTz, was the Rav of Dukshitz and was considered a 'Beinoni' of the Tanya). (Heard from R. Shimon Goldman, from his father-in-law R. Yochanan Gordon, once the Shochet in Dukshitz.)

When the Rebbe RaShaB was brought to Cheder and candies were thrown, as is the custom, the Tzemach Tzedek told him that Malach Michoel is throwing this candy. (The Rebbe explains that the father happens to be the shaliach of Malach Michoel.)

This concept was accepted by the child very seriously - the candies were so precious to him that he did not want to eat them. Erev Pesach the custom is to check all of the pockets of even the small children for Chometz and the Tzemach Tzedek called in his grandson and made him eat the candies. (Sefer Hasichos 5701, p.30)

Likutei Sichos, Volume 16, page 129 where the Rebbe discusses why the Rebbe Rashab was told to eat the candies instead of selling it in the chometz.

In Lubavitch they were very strict about searching for Chametz. On the morning of Erev Pesach the Rebbe RaShaB would go to the yard and shake out his pockets. ("What kind of Chametz could have been in my father's pockets...?", commented the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe.) Mendel, the servant, stood ready with a brush.

Once the Rebbe RaShaB asked Mendel whether the chicken coop and stable had been thoroughly cleaned. Mendel said yes, he'd done it himself. The Rebbe said, "Know that you are responsible for it with your Neshamah." R. Mendel fainted. (Sefer Hasichos 5702, p. 90)

In Lubavitch the Rebbe RaShaB, at the first Seder was very particular to eat the Afikomin before midnight and they would finish the Haggadah one and a half hours after midnight. On the second night the Rebbe RaShaB would explain the Haggadah and they ate the Afikomin after midnight. (Sefer Hasichos, 5701 (1941) pg. 93-94)

In 5583 (1823) R. Hillel Paritcher was in Lubavitch for four months to clarify a question in Halachah. The Mitteler Rebbe told him to speak to his son-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, and he became very close with him.

Before Yom Tov, R. Hillel was very concerned about where he would be eating. In the Mitteler Rebbe's house only a Minyan of the family ate; There were no guests at all. The Tzemach Tzedek invited R. Hillel to spend Pesach with his family. In the middle of the Haggadah, the Tzemach Tzedek fell from his chair in a faint. R. Hillel became very emotional -- he didn't notice that the Tzemach Tzedek's wife, Rebbetzin Chayah Mushka, calmly went to her father, the Mitteler Rebbe, and told him the Tzemach Tzedek had fainted.

R. Hillel realized the Tzemach Tzedek's children weren't alarmed. R. Zalman, the Mittler Rebbe's servant, came with a handkerchief and put it on the Tzemach Tzedek's face. He awoke and continued with the Seder. (Sefer Hasichos, 5696 (1936), p. 231)

The Rebbe RaShaB related that when he was a small child, in 5525 (1865), his father, the Rebbe MaHaRaSh, took him and his brother to the Tzemach Tzedek, on Shevii Shel Pesach. Sitting on a sofa, his head bent forward, he told them, "Kinderlach, today all the heavens open and HaShem makes Himself revealed." At that moment it started to thunder and lightning. The Rebbe said the impression it made on him was as if all the heavens were opening... (Sefer Hasichos 5698, p. 27) ***

R. Hillel was with the Tzemach Tzedek for Shevii Shel Pesach. The Tzemach Tzedek asked, "What is Kriyas Yam Suf?" and explained that every Jew must split his own Yam. He repeated for R. Hillel the Maamar, "Veheinif" he heard from the Alter Rebbe (printed in Likutei Torah). The Tzemach Tzedek said everyone must split the ocean of his thoughts and get rid of all thoughts which are not for HaShem and go on dry land. The Tzemach Tzedek was on a very high level of Dveikus... (Sefer Hasichos, 5696 (1936), p. 231)

(The Rebbe said in 5748 "splitting one's own Yam" means annulling anything that covers and conceals.)

Among the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim were three doctors. One lived in Riga. After Pesach he was sent leftovers from the Alter Rebbe's third Matzah, as well as the Maror and Karpas. He would grind it all into medicine.

Once there was a person so ill the doctors gave up hope. The Chassid administered his medicine and the patient became well. A specialist asked the Chassid how he did this. The Chassid explained what the medicine was and where he got it. Time passed and the specialist was asked to testify when the Alter Rebbe was imprisoned. His positive testimony had great impact. (Sefer Hasichos 5702, p. 92)