

ב"ה

קונטרס

הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת עַמּוֹךְ

The Story of a Niggun

לעילוי נשמת הו"ח אי"א נו"נ בנש"ק וכו'
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יוצא לאור תוך ימי השבעה

שבט ה'תשפ"א

Forward

In connection with the passing of Rabbi Dr. Avraham Yehoshua Heshel Twerski, I've compiled an overview on the Niggun "הושיעה את עמך" collected from many Sichos, Yomanim and Zichronos heard from Chassidim. I would like to offer a special thank you to Rabbi Seligson for his daily Zichronos of the Rebbe - audio clips, from which many interesting facts regarding this Niggun were gleaned.

This beautiful and world renowned Niggun, which the Rebbe loved dearly, was in fact Rabbi Twerski's own composition. This fact was unknown by many until his recent passing. Rabbi Twerski requested that no eulogies be spoken at his funeral. His only request was that they sing "הושיעה את עמך" - the famous song he composed more than 60 years ago. He said that since the song made many Jews happy, he was taking that with him to the world of truth.

Amongst Anash in Pittsburgh, Rabbi Twerski was fondly called by the name Shieh - "שיעה" (a popular nickname for his second name Yehoshua) which means salvation, and to thousands he was indeed the messenger of Hashem to save them. Interestingly, his Niggun begins with the word "הושיעה" which has the same meaning.

On a personal note, the words of this Niggun carry an important significance to me as it's a part of my own Kapitel Tehillim this year.

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כ"ב שבט ה'תשפ"א

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הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת עַמְּךָ וּבָרֵךְ אֶת נַחֲלָתְךָ וְרַעִם וְנִשְׂאֵם עַד הָעוֹלָם (תהלים כ"ח, ט)

Grant salvation to Your people and bless Your heritage; tend them
and exult them forever,

The birth of a Niggun

At the 4th annual Jewish Recovery Center Retreat and Shabbaton that took place in 5775 (2015), Rabbi Twerski related (transcript from the video):

"In 1960, in the week before my younger brother [Aaron] was getting married, I was Davening, and I can still remember the spot that I was standing in Shul. I came to the phrase "הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת עַמְּךָ" in which we ask Hashem "help Your people and bless Your inheritance and elevate them to eternity". As I was saying this, I started singing to myself "Hoshiah..."

The week after that, my brother got married and I sang it at his wedding and it caught on. Some people at the wedding went to Israel and brought it there and a short time later 'a new tune came from Israel'... At first, I heard it was a Breslaver Niggun and then that it was a Chabad Niggun, but what do I care? I can't copyright it anyways..."

The Niggun arrives in 770

In the early years of the Rebbe's *Nesi'us*, he would ask the guests who had come from Eretz Yisroel to sing "מזמרת הארץ". The

* הביטוי "מזמרת הארץ" נאמר במקור על ידי יעקב אבינו לבניו בשעת ירידתם למצרים: "קחו מזמרת הארץ" (בראשית מג, יא), ומשמעותו על פי הפשט היא: פרות הארץ המשובחים (רש"י, שם).

וראה ליקוטי מוהר"ן תניינא ס"ג וז"ל: "דע, כי יעקב אבינו כששלח את בניו - עשרת השבטים - ליוסף, שלח עמם ניגון של ארץ ישראל, וזה סוד: "קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם" - בחינת זמר וניגון ששלח על ידם ליוסף... דע לך, שכל רועה ורועה יש לו ניגון מיוחד, לפי העשבים ולפי המקום שהוא רועה שם... וזה בחינת "מכנף הארץ - זמירות שמענו" (ישעיה כ"ד, טז), היינו - שזמירות וניגונים יוצאים מכנף הארץ על ידי העשבים הגדלים בארץ ועל ידי הרועה שיודע הניגון... ועל כן יעקב אבינו, אף שלא היה יודע אז שהוא יוסף, רק כפי מה שספרו לו השבטים הנהגותיו של יוסף, שלח לו ניגון השייך לשר כמותו. כי יעקב רצה לפעול אצלו על ידי הניגון, מה שהיה צריך, על כן שלח לו אותו הניגון של ארץ ישראל. וזהו שאמר לבניו: "קחו לכם מזמרת הארץ בכליכם - והורידו לאיש מנחה, מעט צרי ומעט דבש, נכאת ולט בטינים ושקדים..." כי הניגון נעשה מגידולי הארץ האלה".

simple meaning of these words is “from the choicest fruit of the land”, but can be also understood as “from the song of the land”.

At the Farbrengen on the night of Simchas Torah 5722 (1961), the Rebbe asked of the guests who had come from Eretz Yisroel to sing “מזמרת הארץ”.

Rabbi Avrohom Lieder of Kfar Chabad sang “הושיעה את עמך” which had become quite popular in Eretz Yisroel, and the Rebbe encouraged the Niggun.

It seems like the Rebbe wanted Rabbi Lieder to teach another Niggun from Eretz Yisroel, since at the Tzesches Leshalom Farbrengen for the guests on 29 Tishrei, the Rebbe said (<https://ashreinu.page.link/VZyb>): “דא איז דא לידער מסתמא, גערעדט וועגן א נײַעם נײַגון, האסטו עפעס אויסגעלערנט? נו איז קלייב צוזאמען די תלמידים און “Lieder is probably here, we spoke about a new Niggun, did you teach anything? If so, gather the Talmidim and sing with them...”

Rabbi Lieder sang the Niggun “כד יתבין ישראל” but the Rebbe didn’t show any visible signs of satisfaction from the Niggun and instead asked to sing the Niggun that he had already taught - “הושיעה את עמך”. The Niggun “כד יתבין ישראל” was never sung by the Rebbe again.

A few years earlier, Chassidim from Eretz Yisroel brought the Niggun “אימתי קאתי מר” - which was an old Yerushalmi tune put to the words of the Baal Shem Tov. But other than this Niggun, the Rebbe had not accepted any other Niggun brought from “Zimras Ha’aretz” other than “הושיעה את עמך”. Interestingly, the Rebbe told Reb Shmuel Zalmanov regarding “אימתי קאתי מר” that he should give it a change in name that does not revert to its original state - שינוי השם שאינו חוזר לברייתו and put it in Sefer Hanigunim, thereby making it a Lubavitcher Niggun.

It's also notable, that after accepting the Niggun “הושיעה את עמך” we don't find during the next few years that the Rebbe asked for a **new** Niggun from “Zimras Ha'arets” as he had done most Tishrei's in the previous years when the guests came from Eretz Yisroel. Perhaps this was the Niggun from Eretz Yisroel the Rebbe was waiting for...

“Imported from Eretz Yisroel”

The following Tishrei, 5723 (1962), many guests came to the Rebbe again and a special Farbrengen in their honor took place on Leil Erev Rosh Hashanah. The Rebbe asked the guests to sing the “Eretz Yisroel'dikeh Niggun, Hoshiah”, using the expression in English: “אימפארטעד פון דארט” - Imported - regarding the Niggun.



Rabbi Twerski in 1959, around the time that he composed the Niggun

The Rebbe then said, that the Gemara says חד מינייהו עדיף כתרי מינן. אמר רבא: וחד מינן כי סליק להתם, עדיף כתרי

חד מינייהו - One from those in Eretz Yisroel is better than two of ours (from Bavel). Said Rava: one of ours that goes to Eretz Yisroel is better than two of theirs.

Therefore, the Rebbe concluded, we have here Yidden that came from “Chutz L'aretz” [probably in reference that they originally came from Russia] and then ascended to Eretz Yisroel - to Kfar Chabad - thus they have the power to accomplish a double Bracha.

On 13 Tishrei 5736 (1975), the Rebbe asked that a Niggun from Russia, France and finally Eretz Yisroel be sung. For Eretz Yisroel it should be a Niggun on behalf of the Chassidim from Kfar Chabad, connected with Eretz Yisroel which is “הושיעה את עמך”.

On 12 Tammuz 5749 (1989), the Rebbe thanked the guests from Eretz Yisroel for coming and asked them to sing a Niggun from Eretz Yisroel, they sang “הושיעה את עמך” of course.

So, to sum it all up, the Niggun ‘coming from Eretz Yisroel’ was no coincidence - it was channeled through Eretz Yisroel bringing with it the necessary Brachos. Rabbi Twerski would often joke how the Niggun supposedly “came from Eretz Yisroel”, but after looking at the Rebbe’s Sichos, it’s evident that there is a heavenly connection.

A “Lubavitcher” Niggun!

Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz relates that one year, after the Seder on Pesach, (he believes it was in 5723 (1963)), the Rebbe said: זאגט הושיעה את עמך! די וועלט מיינט אז עס איז ניט א ליובאוויטשער ניגון – עס איז Sing Hoshiah Es Amecha! People think that it’s not a Lubavitcher Niggun, it is a Lubavitcher Niggun!

In the years after it was first brought, it was sung at almost every farbrengen and the Rebbe would often start it himself on his way out from a farbrengen after Maariv, or after Kos Shel Bracha.

The third volume of Nichoach came out during this period and on the back of the album (which the Rebbe edited) the following is written regarding this niggun:

“A spirited dance in two sections. Although not of Chabad origin, Lubavitcher disciples have adopted this melody and it is often sung at the gatherings, "Farbrengens," of the Rebbe. The melody

was introduced in "Lubavitch" by one of the group of disciples, who came to the Rebbe from Israel for the High Holy Days, 1961 (5722). This prayer expresses the hope that the Almighty will sustain and bless his people and elevate them forever”.

A “Yeshuah” for the Yidden of Russia

It seems likely that the “Double Bracha” that the Rebbe was referring to when he asked the guests from Eretz Yisroel to sing the Niggun, was for a “Yeshuah” of Russian Jewry.



The Farbrengen of Lag B’omer 5722, during which the Rebbe began singing “Hoshiah” on his own

During the very first Farbrengen after the Niggun was introduced to the Rebbe, on the day of Simchas Torah 5722 (1961), the Rebbe spoke about the plight of the Yidden in Russia saying that their yearning for Elokus is so powerful; if only **we** would have such a yearning. The Rebbe then sang “צמאה”
 “לך נפשי” - which expresses that idea,

and afterwards, asked to sing the brand new Niggun of “הושיעה את עמך”.

Then the Rebbe rose up from his place and spoke passionately how all present at the Farbrengen should “Pasken” (issue a ruling), that the Yidden in Russia should imminently – even before

the coming of Moshiach – be released from their suffering behind the iron curtain.

The Chassidim present, many of which had relatives still stuck in Russia, sensed the specialty of the moment that it was an “Eis Ratzon” and one by one came over to the Rebbe to ask for Brachos for relatives. The Rebbe was seated and gave everyone a little bit from his cup and said L'chaim together with each individual. When the Rebbe saw Reb Berke Chein, who displayed great Mesirus Nefesh and was just recently released from Russia, the Rebbe rose from his place and started singing with great emotion the Niggun “הושיעה את עמך” together with Reb Berke. The Rebbe then said L'chaim with him as he remained standing, something highly unusual.

For over an hour and a half, the Rebbe said L'chaim with tens of Chassidim on numerous cups of Mashke. The historic Farbrengen finished with “Kos Shel Bracha” – with just enough time to Daven Maariv before morning. It was the longest Farbrengen the Rebbe ever made, over nine and a half hours long!

Even on Rosh Hashanah

Although the Rosh Hashanah Farbrengens were limited in time and content, and the only Niggunim sung were that of the Rabbeim, on Rosh Hashanah 5726 (1965) and 5729 (1968), the Rebbe began singing the Niggun of “הושיעה את עמך” himself. Chassidim understood the Rebbe was accomplishing heavenly matters on this holy and crucial day for the entire year. There were other Rosh Hashanah Farbrengen's when the Rebbe instructed to sing it.

Only a child can sing it

The connection with the Niggun “הושיעה את עמך” and the specific

“salvation” that Yidden of Russia so needed, was brought out during those years on several other occasions.

At the Farbrengen of Shavuot 5724 (1964), something truly remarkable occurred with the Niggun “הושיעה את עמך” and the Yidden of Russia. This is what’s written in a diary from one of the Bachurim at the time:

The Rebbe spoke a Sicha regarding the Yidden of Russia and then said L’chayim over a full cup of Mashke, he then began looking around and saying “Nu, Nu...”. Those present didn’t understand quite what the Rebbe wanted. The Rebbe made a dismissive motion with his hand and said: “If we would have been dealing with one’s brother or relative, you would not wait until I say [to ask a Bracha for them] yet here when I’m speaking about a large group of Yidden it doesn’t bother anyone...”

By this point, Chassidim began to understand that the Rebbe, who had just brought up the plight of the Yidden in Russia, was disappointed that no one was utilizing the Eis Ratzon. Many started saying L’chaim to the Rebbe but the Rebbe didn’t even look at them... Some present began singing “הושיעה את עמך” but the Rebbe made the same dismissive motion with his hand, threw down his napkin, and began singing עסען עסט זיך, שלאפן שלאפט “...זיך - meaning that the Chassidim were too preoccupied with their physical needs to even care.

The Rebbe then said: “Tomorrow, all will come asking Brachos for their relatives in Russia. Now when there is an Hisorerurus, we could, through saying a true L’chaim and a Gutte Vort, help all Yidden leave Russia in only a moment! Yet it doesn’t matter to them! The fact that two and a half million Yidden struggle over there doesn’t matter to them, they think they can help them with עצהיהם כסף וזהב (money). You simply don’t want to listen! It’s a

Rachmanus on me and you. The Rachmanus on you is that you don't have who to listen to, the Rachmanus on me is that I have to sit in this seat... "שלח נא ביד תשלח" - Let whoever it may be, come and tell you when to say L'chaim and you will listen to him..."

After saying these painful words, the Rebbe asked if a child under Bar Mitzvah was present and when one (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Pevzner) came forward, the Rebbe said: "to the children we can't have any complaints". The Rebbe then asked him to sing "הושיעה" "את עמך" and the Rebbe sang with him together with great Dveikus and a frightening expression on his holy face.



The Farbrengen of Purim 5724, during which the Rebbe sang "Hoshiah... V'Rachem"

Interestingly, a few months prior to this, at the conclusion of the Farbrengen of Purim 5724 (1964), the Rebbe sang himself the entire niggun "Hoshiah", but said "ורחם" instead of "וברך" (<https://ashreinu.page.link/XJCq>). Chassidim pointed out that a short time after this, the Russian government began loosening up restrictions, and the trickle of Yidden being released, turned into a multitude.

That same year, Rabbi Binyomin Katz traveled on a covert mission to the Chassidim in Russia and taught them this Niggun.

A “Yeshua” for Eretz Yisroel

The second part of the Pasuk, “וּבִרְךְ אֶת נַחֲלֹתֶךָ”, refers to the land of Eretz Yisroel in particular. In the end of the 5730’s, the Rebbe spoke increasingly about Shleimus Haaretz and peace in Eretz Yisroel. At countless Farbrengens and at many of the children’s rallies in those years the Rebbe would ask to sing this Niggun (alongside “עוצו עצה”).

During Aseres Yemei Teshuva of 5737 (1976), a terror attack took place in Chevron by the Me’aras Ha’Machpela. A few days later, at the Farbrengen of 13 Tishrei, the Rebbe asked to sing the niggun “הושיעה את עמך” three times. A few days later on Chol Ha’moed Sukkos, the Rebbe held a farbrengen with the children of “Release Time” in the Sukka. Before this historic event, the Rebbe wrote a detailed schedule for the program, saying which Niggunim to sing after which Sicha. It’s really incredible the amount of detail the Rebbe went into in writing up the program. The Rebbe wrote that after the third Sicha they should sing “עוצו עצה” and that “הושיעה את עמך” be sung three times. (It is not clear if the song was actually sung at that specific time, as it doesn’t appear in the recording).

A few days later, by Hakafos on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe instructed that all those in the Israeli army participate in a Hakafa and sing “הושיעה את עמך”.

In the year 5739 by Hakafos of Leil Simchas Torah, members of the Israeli consul at the United Nations, were honored with a Hakafa and they sang “הושיעה את עמך”. The Rebbe looked at them intently and encouraged the Niggun for close to half an hour!

Hearing it from the Rebbe

Here is a list of times when the Rebbe himself began singing the Niggun:

י"ט כסלו תשכ"ב, פורים תשכ"ב, ל"ג בעומר תשכ"ב, פורים תשכ"ד, י"ב תמוז תשכ"ד, פורים תשכ"ה, כוס של ברכה מוצאי שבועות תשכ"ה, ראש השנה תשכ"ו, י"ט כסלו תשכ"ו, שבועות תשכ"ו, פורים תשכ"ז, ו' תשרי תשכ"ח, י"ב תמוז תשכ"ח, שבת פרשת צו תש"ל, י"ב תמוז תש"ל, שבת פרשת וילך תשל"ב, שבת פרשת האזינו תשל"ב, ו' תשרי תשל"ג, שבת בראשית תשל"ג, אחרון של פסח תשל"ד, כוס של ברכה מוצאי ראש השנה תשל"ו, י"ג תשרי תשל"ו, י"ב תמוז תשל"ח, ל"ג בעומר תשמ"מ, י"ט תשרי תשמ"א, ד' סיון תשמ"ט.

It happened that the Rebbe sang the entire Niggun completely on his own, sometimes even standing up and dancing to the Niggun (such as on Shavuot 5726 (1966) and Purim 5727 (1967)). The Rebbe also instructed the niggun to be sung countless times.

There were times the Rebbe sang it in a unique manner almost as if harmonizing with the Niggun.

At a rally with children on Chanukah 5739 (1978), the Rebbe explained the words of the Niggun in great detail. The Sicha, which the Rebbe edited is printed further on in its original Yiddish.

Ending off a Sicha with the Niggun

On 19 Tishrei 5741 (1980), the Rebbe concluded the nightly Sukkos Sicha with starting this Niggun.

The Passuk “הושיעה את עמך” is said each month on the fourth day of the month during the daily Tehilim. On Leil 4 Sivan 5749 (1989), the Rebbe referenced the Passuk and ended off the Sicha saying that we will proceed together with Moshiach to Eretz Yisroel, singing happily... and the Rebbe sang the Niggun “הושיעה את עמך” in its entirety!

This was the last time the Rebbe sang the Niggun on his own.

It was very rare for the Rebbe to end off a Sich'a with a Niggun, especially in the later years and it seems that this was also the last time that the Rebbe sang a full niggun at a Sich'a or Farbrengen.



At the conclusion of the Rally on Chanukah 5739, the Rebbe exits the Shul as the children sing "Hoshiah"

מתורת רבינו על הפסוק והניגון

המנהג למנות מנין בפסוק "הושיעה.."

כאשר רוצים לדעת אם יש "מנין" (עשרה יהודים) כדי לומר דבר שבקדושה – לא מונים האנשים עצמם, אלא עושים זאת באופנים שונים: או שאומרים "לא אחד", לא שנים, וכן הלאה, או על ידי אמירת פסוק שיש בו עשרה תיבות – תיבה אחת לכל יהודי.

ולכאורה הרי מפורש בספר הפרדס לרש"י שמונין בפסוק "ואני ברוב חסדיך גו'", וכמובן בפשטות טעם הדבר (שמונין בפסוק זה דוקא) - מכיון ש"אבוא ביתך" קאי על בית הכנסת, כמו שכתוב "כי ביתי בית תפילה" ... ועל פי זה, צריך עיון מהו המקור למנהג למנות בפסוק "הושיעה את עמך" (שהובא בקיצור שולחן ערוך)...

...מצד תוכן הענין דבית הכנסת, מתאים יותר למנות בפסוק "ואני ברוב חסדיך", אבל אף על פי כן, בדורות האחרונים דעקבתא דמשיחא, חושך כפול ומכופל דזמן הגלות, לאחר שכבר מזמן "כלו כל הקיצין" – אזי כאשר עשרה מישראל מתאספים יחדיו - שאז מודגש הענין דהשראת השכינה, הנה לכל לראש מבקשים הם: "הושיעה את עמך וברך את נחלתך, ורעם ונשאם עד העולם!"

(קטעים מתוך שיחת שבת פרשת ויק"פ תשמ"ג - תורת מנחם תשמ"ג ע' 1138 ואילך)

ביאור הניגון לילדים

אזוי ווי מיר געפינען זיך נאך אין גלות - וועט מען זאגן און זינגען דעם ניגון אויפ'ן פסוק "הושיעה את עמך":

מען בעט דעם אויבעשטערן - און גאר אינכיגן וועט דער אויבערשטער באווייזן און וועט עס טאן בפועל - העלפן זיין פאלק, וואס דאס איז דער אידעשער פאלק, און העלפן יעדער אידן פון דעם אידישן פאלק.

"וברך את נחלתך" - ער וועט בענטשן זיין נחלה - די היילעקע לאנד, ארץ ישראל. וואס איר נאמען באווייזט אז זי געהערט צו יעדער אידן און צום גאנצן אידישע פאלק, און אין אן אופן פון שלימות הארץ - אז **גאנץ** ארץ ישראל לגבולותי' געהערט צו יעדער אידן און צו אלע אידן אלס "נחלת עולם".

און דאס וועט זיין אין אן אופן פון "ורעם ונשאם עד העולם" - אז דער אויבערשטער וועט געבן יעדער אידן און אלע אידן זייער גאנצע הצטרכות, אליין וואס זיי דארפן האבן, אזוי ווי א "רועה" וואס באזארגט זיינע שעפסעלאך...

(זאת חנוכה תשל"ט, מוגה - לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 494)

נשיר אותו עם משיח צדקנו

ואדרבה — כבסיום השיעור: "ה' עוז למו ומעוז ישועות משיחו הוא, הושיעה את עמך וברך את נחלתך ורעם ונשאם עד העולם" — וואָס דאָס גייט אויף די גאולה האמיתית והשלימה (וואָס מעין זה איז געווען באַ מ"ת), ווען עס וועט זיין "ה' ימלוך לעולם ועד", און "הושיעה את עמך גו' ורעם ונשאם עד העולם" — שלימות הענין פון "נשא את ראש" (בפרשתנו).

וואָס דעמולט וועט מען גיין בשמחה לארצנו הקדושה, און זינגען דעם ניגון [וניגן כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א]: "הושיעה את עמך וברך את נחלתך ורעם ונשאם עד העולם".

(ליל ד' סיון תשמ"ט, מוגה - לקו"ש חל"ג ע' 229)

Appendix I

A Letter from the Rebbe to Rabbi Twerski

ב"ה, ראש חודש שבט, ה'תשל"ח

ברוקלין, נ.י.

הו"ח אי"א נו"נ בנש"ק וכו'

הרב אברהם יהושע העשל שי' המכונה ד"ר טברסקי

שלום וברכה!

מצו"ב רשימה (מעמאָראַנדום) שתוכנה לא צריך תוספת ביאור.

ולהבהיר מפני מה באה הרשימה בצורה זו, בלי חתימה ובאופן חשאי וכו', טעמי ונימוקי הוא שחוששני שיהיו רבים שיבקשו למצוא בתוכן הרשימה האמורה אסמכתא, ועכ"פ התנצלות -- אשר עד שהתכנית תתגשם בפועל ממש, אין בכוחם לעמוד בנסיון, היות שלדעתם הטיפול האמור הכרחי להם, ובפרט שיעשו בזה בלי תערובת הע"ז, בבחינת תוכו אכל וקליפתו זרק.

והיסוד לחשש זה הוא בשתיים: א) ההכרה שהטיפול האמור יש בו תועלת רפואית, ב) שענין הע"ז בתנועות המזרח האמורות הוא טפל ולא עיקר בהנוגע לטיפול עצמו. ובכן יש מקום לומר שהתוצאות המידיות מהתכנית המוצעת תהיינה הפוכות מהמטרה המכוונת, כלומר לחזק ח"ו ידיהם של רבים הפונים, או עומדים לפנות, לתנועות המזרח האמורות, תחת לנתקם מהסתבכות בע"ז ואביזריהו האמורה ר"ל.

ולזאת, ביחד עם פניתי למר ולאחרים מתי מספר שחושבני שיוכלו לעשות בענין האמור, בקשתי ותקותי חזקה שיעשו בזה בחכמה ובזהירות הדרושה, הן בנוגע למקור ההצעה והן בנוגע לניצולה בכלל, וק"ל.

אבל מוכרחני להדגיש בכל תוקף שלדעתי הבעי' האמורה התפשטה בממדים כה

רציניים שיפה שעה אחת קודם לעשות בזה במרץ המתאים, כי בנוגע לכו"כ כל רגע שאפשר להקדים פתרון בעי' זו על ידי אפשריות טיפול האמור בהיתר, הוא ענין של הצלת נפשות ממש.

ובידעי ע"ד מעמדו ומצבו וקשריו והשפעתו וכו' בשטח האמור, תקותי חזקה שבודאי יש לו צנורות לפעול בהאמור, וזכות הרבים מסייעת.

ואצפה לתגובתו והערותיו בכל האמור, ות"ח מראש.

בכבוד ובברכה.

Appendix II

Conversation with the Rebbe

10 Sivan 5750 - Sunday Dollars

הריל"ג הציג את הרב ד"ר אברהם יהושע שי' טוורסקי מפיטסבורג, ואמר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א: "הצלחה רבה. איך האב געהערט א לאנגע צייט וועגן אייך, 'טורא בטורא לא פגע, איניש באיניש פגע'. זאל זיין גוטע בשורות".

הנ"ל אמר שנוסע לאוסטרלי בשבוע הבא, ואמר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א: "איין אסטראליא? איר זאלט אפגעבן דארטן א געריס מסתמא אלע גוטע פריינט,

און אייערע
גוטע פריינט
אויכעט. זאל
זיין בשורות
טובות".



Rabbi Twerski receiving a dollar from the Rebbe on 29 Teves 5752

הנ"ל הציג את
נכדו, ואמר
כ"ק אדמו"ר
שליט"א:
"האבן פון
אים אסאך
חסידישע
נחת".

הנ"ל הציג את נכדתו, ואמר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א: "זיי זאלן ניט דארפן אנקומען צו אייערע רפואות!".

אחרי שהנ"ל הלך, קרא לו כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א ואמר: "איר האט דאך מסתמא ספרים וואס ס'שוין געדרוקט".

הנ"ל השיב בחיוב, ואמר כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א: "אייגענע ספרים, ניט פון אנדערע נאר פון אייגענע. זאל זיין בשורות טובות".

Appendix III

A Biography of Rabbi Twerski

Reprinted from Chabad.org

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski, a Chassidic rabbi, psychiatrist, prolific author of more than 60 popular books on Jewish spirituality and recovery from substance abuse, and founder and long-time head of the Gateway Rehabilitation Center in Pittsburgh, Pa., one of America's leading facilities for addiction treatment, passed away on Jan. 31 in Jerusalem from complications from coronavirus. He was 90 years old.

Avraham Yehoshua Heschel Twerski was born in 1930 in Milwaukee to Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael and Devorah Twerski. His father was a scion of the Hornesteipel Chassidic dynasty, which traces its way back to the Rebbes of Chernobyl. In his autobiographical work, *Generation to Generation*, he wrote how his father moved to Wisconsin in 1927 and began with a nucleus of Ukrainian Jewish landsleit (countrymen), but gradually achieved a following among all segments of the community, serving as a counselor to countless individuals and families.

"When I was a child," Rabbi Twerski wrote, "I could not help but overhear many of the proceedings in his study. In addition, our Shabbos table was always graced by many guests, some of whom were itinerant rabbis, and I would hear father in his Torah discussions with them, or perhaps relating a parable or Chassidic story."

"My father had a large library, and I read everything I could get my hands on," Rabbi Twerski recalled in an interview with the *Pittsburgh Quarterly*. "I went to high school in Milwaukee but was specially promoted twice, and graduated at 16, then went off to yeshivah and trained to be a rabbi, like my dad. He was a natural therapist and people flocked to him, Jewish and non-Jewish alike.

In 1951, he married his first wife, Golda, who predeceased him. He was ordained at 21, and joined his father as assistant rabbi of

his congregation. In the years following World War II, psychiatry and psychology had a meteoric rise. “After being a rabbi for several years, I noticed that people weren’t flocking to me for counseling the way they had to my father. They were not going to rabbis for that; they were seeing professionals. I decided that if I wanted to be the kind of rabbi my father was, I had to become a professional. So, I went for broke, going to medical school to become a psychiatrist.”

In 1953, Rabbi Twerski enrolled at Milwaukee’s Marquette University and subsequently graduated from its medical school in 1960. He then moved with his family to Pittsburgh, Pa., where he founded the Gateway Rehabilitation Center and served as medical director emeritus until his passing. He was clinical director of the



Department of Psychiatry at St. Francis Hospital in Pittsburgh, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Medicine and founder of the Shaar Hatikvah (“Gateway to Hope”) rehabilitation center for prisoners in Israel.

Upon moving to Pittsburgh, the Twerski family established themselves in the Chabad-Lubavitch community, with Rabbi Twerski teaching classes in Tanya, the seminal work of Chabad Chassidic thought, and Talmud to both beginners and advanced students. He served for decades as president of the Lubavitch Center of Pitts-

burgh and the community synagogue, and would frequently travel to New York to seek the blessings and advice of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory on his many professional and communal responsibilities.

“I recall one time passing before the Rebbe and requested a dollar for ‘Dr. Twerski,’” recalls Rabbi Yisroel Rosenfeld, who, together with his wife Blumi, directs Chabad of Western Pennsylvania, serves as rabbi of the Lubavitch Center of Pittsburgh, and is a longtime friend to the Twerski family. “The Rebbe looked at me and corrected me, ‘Rabbi Dr. Twerski,’ and handed me another dollar—apparently one for the ‘rabbi’ and another for the ‘Dr.’”

Rosenfeld recalls how Twerski considered the Lubavitch Center as “his” synagogue and would do everything in his power to help support it. In addition to serving as its president, he would refer the many, diverse people with whom he dealt to lend their financial support to the center, spreading its name far and wide to the many places he would travel.

“Whenever Rabbi Dr. Twerski would travel somewhere on a speaking engagement, he would let me know so that I could contact the local Chabad representative there to see if there’s any way he could be of help,” said Rosenfeld. “He was happy to speak anywhere, and there are countless beautiful stories of his interactions with so many people he met and helped at Chabad Houses around the world.”

A Gift for Music

While his clinical, communal and literary works speak for themselves, another element of Rabbi Twerski’s prolific output is less known. Following the tradition of his family, the Rebbes of Hornesteipel, he had a keen ear for music, a way with words, and a broad grasp of Chassidic and rabbinic literature.

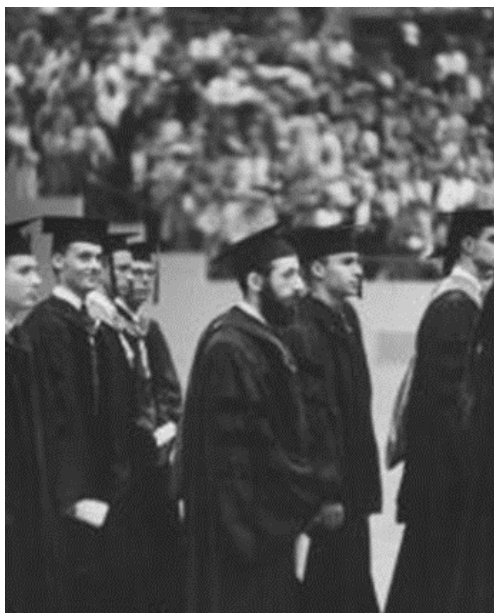
Thus, he composed a number of impressive grammen--traditional Yiddish musical rhymes, packed with traditional references and hidden meaning—which he sung at weddings and other festive affairs.

Listening to the recorded grammen he developed for the various members of the Posner/Deren family, who have led Chabad in Pittsburgh since the early 1940s, one detects a deep reverence and

love he had for the Rebbe and his Chassidim.

A particularly striking example was the work he performed at the wedding of Rabbi Levi Garelik, who grew up as a Chabad emissary in Milan, Italy. Speaking of the Rebbe as his own Rebbe, he lauds the life of the emissaries. The refrain is: In merit of the mitzvah of spreading [Judaism] dispatched by our Rebbe / From distant to bring near / With mitzvot and good deeds / It's worth living / As an emissary of the Rebbe.

On the lighter side, he also performed a comical 15-stanza composition lamenting his “exile within Chabad,” where he is



Rabbi Twerski at his graduation

“forced” to forgo many of the liturgical texts and other customs he grew up with. Beginning as an imaginary conversation with his ancestor, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad, he lists the prayers he misses and questions whether perhaps the contemporary Chassidim have lost their way. He concluded by envisioning the arrival of Moshiach, when, as Moses himself watches on, he will summon the temerity to lead the prayers, adding in the parts he missed as a congregant at Chabad.

‘Just Call Me Abe’

But more than anything else, he was a counselor and friend to the thousands of alcoholics and addicts with whom he worked and befriended professionally and personally throughout his life, many of whom by his own insistence called him “Abe.” Not rabbi, not doctor—“Just call me Abe,” he would say.

“I was lucky enough to join him once for a weekend of Jewish men and women in various stages of recovery,” said Rabbi

Shimon Posner, co-director of Chabad of Rancho Mirage, Calif. “He was the star of the show and did he ever shine. His talks were engaging, breathtaking really. He smiled exuberantly and hugged tightly the teenager whom others would see as a “case”. And when a newbie was tongue-tied, he grabbed his hand in his, “Tell it like it was, and tell it like it is, baby!”

Rabbi Shais Taub, scholar-in-residence at Chabad of the Five Towns in Cedarhurst, N.Y., and author *G-d of Our Understanding: Jewish Spirituality and Recovery from Addiction*, had a deep relationship with Rabbi Twerski due to his work with recovery. “He was very supportive of me, and I owe a great deal to him,” he said.

“Of course people are aware of Rabbi Twerski’s powerful intellect and his masterful ability to communicate both in the spoken and written word,” said Taub. “But I hope what people also realize about him is how much courage he had. He was way ahead of his time championing causes and people that society once ignored or overlooked. Precisely because of the progress that he made, I think it may be hard for us today to understand how much of a trailblazer he was.”

Yudy Weiner, a psychologist and counselor from Long Island and now Jerusalem, knew Rabbi Twerski for almost 35 years. “He was so instrumental in bringing thousands of neshamas (‘souls’) back from hopelessness and despair, I was fortunate enough to be ‘one of his many diamonds.’ May we all be worthy to continue his most precious work in saving one life, one day at a time.”

‘I Get Questions from All Over, and I Try to Respond’

After many years of treating alcoholics and addicts, Rabbi Twerski decided to take some of the principles he had learned from his work with them and transmit those insights to the public at large.

His first title was on self-esteem, *Like Yourself and Others Will, Too*. “The idea of writing appealed to me, so I wrote another book called *Caution: Kindness Can Be Dangerous to the Alcoholic*. After that, I started writing on Jewish themes. Then something wonderful happened. I had always been impressed by the insights of Charles Schulz, the man who created the ‘Peanuts’ comic strip. I used to clip out meaningful strips and put them on the bulletin

board for our residents to see. Then I stumbled upon what I thought was a good book idea. I called Mr. Schulz's publishers and told them about it. Schulz thought it was a good idea, so I wrote the first book with his 'Peanuts' insights titled, *When Do the Good Things Start?* That was followed by *Waking Up Just In Time*. Next came *It's Not a Fault, It's a Character Trait*, which was followed by *I Didn't Ask to Be in This Family*. These books were popular in the United States, but they sold like wildfire in Japan, where they're crazy about Charlie Brown and Snoopy."

"I've kept writing. You could call it an addiction. I have an advice column in one of the Jewish papers, which resulted in two books called *Dear Rabbi* and *Dear Doctor*. I'm now working on three other books that will one day be published—numbers 56, 57 and 58," he said a few years ago. "And because my email address is pretty well known, I get questions from all over, and I try to respond. I receive three or four email messages, and three or four phone calls, every day about all kinds of problems. I'm a free consultant. And my days are still pretty long. But I'm really just doing what my father did."

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski is survived by his wife, Gail Bessler-Twerski; as well as children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his brothers, Rabbi Michel Twerski of Milwaukee and Rabbi Aaron Twerski of Brooklyn, N.Y.

He was laid to rest in Jerusalem a few hours after his passing.

As is the custom of many, he asked that no eulogies be given at his funeral. Instead, he requested that those who would gather should sing a now-famous melody he had composed sixty years before in honor of his brother's wedding.

Appendix IV

Here's My Story

Reprinted from My Encounter by JEM

My name is Abraham J. Twerski. I come from *Chasidic dynasties on both my father's side and my mother's side. My father's side was from Chernobyl and my mother's side was from Sanz. Also, my father's great- great-grandfather was a son-in-law to the Mittler Rebbe of Lubavitch, so we're descendants of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Lubavitch.*

I myself have been ordained and practiced as a rabbi for a number of years in Milwaukee, before becoming a psychiatrist and moving on to Pittsburgh.

After I had practiced as a rabbi for a number of years, I felt I was not fulfilled in my work and – after consultation with the Steipler Gaon – I went to medical school to become a psychiatrist. In 1960, when I had just started psychiatric training, I had my first personal contact with the Rebbe of Lubavitch.

When I went into the audience with the Rebbe, he asked what I was doing. I told him, and he said “When you finish your psychiatric training, move to New York. There are many people here whom I would like to send to a psychiatrist because they need psychiatric help, but I can't send them to a psychiatrist who is going to say that religion is a neurosis and will tell them that they have to drop their religion.”

At that time, it was not like today – there were no religious psychiatrists in New York. And as a youngster just graduating psychiatry, I did not want to become overwhelmed. So I said to the Rebbe, “If I do that, if I become the only frum psychiatrist in New York, which has such a huge religious population, I will not be able to carry that load. I'll need to work day and night seven days a week. There will be no opportunity for me to learn even a little bit of Torah. I won't have a chance to ever open a Jewish text again.”

But the Rebbe said, “Where there’s a mitzvah that no one else can do and you’re the only one who can do it, that mitzvah takes priority over learning Torah.”

I said, “That would mean that I’d totally have to give up learning. And I couldn’t do that unless G-d Himself told me to do so.” To which the Rebbe responded, “What do you expect – an angel with two wings to come and tell you?”

I said, “A rabbi who resembles an angel would be good enough.” I know it was chutzpa for me to say that, but the Rebbe didn’t get offended – he just smiled.

And then he asked me whether I had read the works of Viktor Frankl, the psychiatrist who survived the concentration camps and became the founder of a school of psychology known as logotherapy, which is compatible with Judaism.

At that time, I had not read Frankl, and he suggested that I do. He also suggested that meditation could be very therapeutic, but that we needed to develop meditation in accordance with Judaism, not based on Oriental religions.

I told the Rebbe that it was early in my psychiatric training, and I was not familiar with meditation but would look into it when I had the opportunity. And later, I received a three-page letter from the Rebbe on meditation.

So that was my first audience with the Rebbe. And I must say that the Rebbe was very impressive. When he listened to me, I knew he was really listening and taking in every word that I said, and thinking before responding.

After that first meeting, my encounters with the Rebbe were very brief – I stood in line with the crowds to receive a dollar from him and a blessing from him – and yet I felt that I had a special connection to him.

This feeling was reinforced by what happened one Hoshana Rabbah. At that time, I was acquainted with a Chabad chasid in Pittsburgh, Rav Shalom Posner, who regularly visited the Rebbe. I

asked him, when he went, to please get for me a piece of lekah, the honey cake that the Rebbe would give out before the High Holidays. So he did – he told the Rebbe that he wanted a piece of cake for Doctor Twerski and the Rebbe gave it to him. But then the Rebbe called him back and gave him another piece, saying, “And this piece is for Rabbi Twerski.”

That was an indication to me where I stood with the Rebbe.

Also, the Rebbe sent patients to me. That is, he used to tell people to go to a *rofeh yedid* – *a doctor who is a friend of the patient* – and I was designated as the *rofeh yedid*, or as one of the *rofeh yedid*.

As well, I would send patients to the Rebbe, because I saw the psychological impact that he had on people. Whether he had specifically studied psychology, I don’t know, but the Chazon Ish never studied medicine, yet he would give instructions to surgeons how to operate – he had gotten all his knowledge out of the Torah. So, too, with the Rebbe. He had knowledge in this area and perhaps he got all of it from the Torah, which is the ultimate source.



Rabbi Twerski with his family in 1959

My gut feeling was that he had a way of making people feel special because he treated them as special.

This reminds me of a story about my little granddaughter, who wrote to the Rebbe when she was about nine years old. All the girls in her class were lighting Shabbos candles, but it was the tradition in our family that a girl should not begin lighting until

she was twelve, after her Bas Mitzvah.

So she went ahead on her own and she wrote a letter to the Rebbe: “Dear Rebbe, all the girls in my class light one candle before Shabbos but my Zeide says that in our family we don’t do it until Bas Mitzvah. What should I do?”

Now, you know how many questions the Rebbe was bombarded with day and night! And yet, two days later a letter came from him: “Do what your Zeide says to do.”

She came to me, and I saw how much she wanted to do it, so I agreed. But I was so impressed that the Rebbe took the time out to answer a question of a nine-year-old child, when he had the whole world beseeching him with questions on major issues.

It goes to show how special everyone was to him, and it also goes to show that he understood the psychological impact very well – what it would mean for a child to get a personal response from the Rebbe.

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski, was a psychiatrist and author, and the founder of Gateway Rehabilitation Center, based in Pittsburgh. He was interviewed in Teaneck, New Jersey in January, 2012.

לעילוי נשמת

הו"ח אי"א נו"נ בנש"ק וכו'

הרב אברהם יהושע העשל בן הרב יעקב ישראל ע"ה

המכונה ד"ר טברסקי

נפטר

ח"י שבט ה'תשפ"א

נדפס ע"י

ישראל בן שטערנא שרה