

The Jewish Weekly

You Are Not Forgotten

By Mrs. Sori Krinsky

The home that I grew up in was, geographically speaking, quite distant from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, but he played a constant and central role in our daily life. In 1958, my parents had been sent off to Milan, Italy, to serve as the Rebbe's emissaries, and their lives revolved around the Rebbe.

My father, Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, used to come to Crown Heights to visit the Rebbe whenever he could, as would my mother, Rebbetzin Bassie Garelik – although not quite as often. My father was elated to be in the Rebbe's presence; sometimes he would come just to see him at a farbrengen, and that was enough. When my mother was visiting Crown Heights, on the other hand, she enjoyed having a more personal interaction. She would visit 770 every day to see the Rebbe, and he would nod, or smile, or exchange a few words with her.

After my marriage, once I had settled in Crown Heights myself, there were times that she would come to my house from 770 and say, "I don't think the Rebbe recognized me today." The Rebbe hadn't acknowledged her, and so she wondered whether, with the growth of the community and the increasing numbers of people coming to see the Rebbe, he really knew who she was.

"Come on Ma," I'd counter, "of course he did. The Rebbe knows exactly who you are."

Occasionally, though, I would voice my own doubts: When I go with my father, the Rebbe knows that I'm Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik's daughter. When I go with my husband, he knows that I'm Rabbi Hillel Dovid Krinsky's wife: It was the Rebbe's own guidance, after all, that led my husband to establish Jewish Educational Media (JEM), to produce live broadcasts of the Rebbe's farbrengens – and his father was also one of the Rebbe's secretaries. "But when I'm there myself," I wondered aloud, "I'm not so sure he really knows who I am."

In 1988, the Rebbe's wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, passed away. As a result, the Rebbe moved most of his regular activities – such as leading the daily prayers and distributing dollars for people to give to charity – from 770 to the private residence he had shared with the Rebbetzin. When my mother came to New York, we went to the Rebbe's house together, to receive dollars from the Rebbe. My mother stood ahead of me in the line, and I was right behind her, holding my son Meir, who was just a few months old at the time.

The Rebbe gave my mother a dollar, and she went on. Then he handed one to me. "It looks like your mother thinks that I didn't recognize her today," the Rebbe said.

I froze. I knew that if I told my mother about this later, she wouldn't even believe me. And so I just stood there, without moving on. "Ma... Ma..." I called out in an undertone.

Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, summoned her back: "Rebbetzin Garelik, your daughter is calling you."

My mother came back in front of the Rebbe, and as she did, the Rebbe gave her a big smile and said, "I was just telling your daughter that it looks like you think I didn't recognize you today."

And that was it. We both walked out flabbergasted – it was just an unbelievable moment.

"So Ma," I said with a smile, "do you think the Rebbe recognized you today?"

Even today, when I watch videos of the Rebbe giving dollars to people, I'm in awe at the way the Rebbe gives his full attention to every single person. My father would say that when the Rebbe looked at a person, he saw straight through them. My mother and I both wondered whether the Rebbe recognized us, and on that occasion, he not only saw that we needed that acknowledgement, but he let us know that he recognized both of us, in the way that we needed to hear.

Years earlier, before I had even turned Bat Mitzvah, the Rebbe had shown me that kind of attention. My twin sister Soshe and I had left home to attend the Chabad school in Pittsburgh, which was run by our grandfather, Rabbi Sholom Posner. Our birthday was going to be on the day after Rosh Hashanah, and about a month beforehand, our father came for a visit from Milan.

"Let's sit down and write a letter to the Rebbe," he told us, when we met in New York. We knew that when you write to him, the Rebbe sends back a letter with a blessing, so this was very exciting. We each took a piece of paper, and our father began explaining what to write in a letter to the Rebbe, and how to write it: At first, you use a pencil, in case there are mistakes, and then you rewrite the letter with a pen, once, and then twice, until there are no mistakes—

But then, he stopped. "I think it would be a good idea if, instead of writing two separate letters to the Rebbe, you only write one joint letter." As he explained, the Rebbe is the leader

It Once Happened...

of world Jewry, whose every second of the day is accounted for, and we don't want to take up too much of his time by having him read an extra letter.

Who should write the letter? Obviously my sister, who was born exactly ten minutes before me, and is definitely my older sister. So it was decided that she would write the letter – and we would both sign our names on the bottom.

Was I pleased with this idea? Not exactly. I thought that my handwriting was nicer, and besides, I wanted to write my own letter. But I trusted my father and surely if he thought two letters would take up too much of the Rebbe's time, he was right. I didn't express a word of disappointment. My sister wrote the letter, I signed my name – that was the extent of my participation in the letter – and afterwards we went back to Pittsburgh.

A few weeks later, our grandfather told us that an envelope had arrived from the Rebbe addressed to both of us. Our father explained how to prepare ourselves for opening up a letter from the Rebbe, including that we should put on our Shabbat clothes, which we did before going over to our grandparents' house to get the letter.

When we opened the envelope and pulled out the letter, we noticed that there was something else inside – to our amazement, we pulled out a second letter. There were two individual letters, each with Rebbe's blessings on the occasion of our Bat Mitzvah: One addressed to my sister, and one addressed to me.

How did the Rebbe know? I marveled. How did he know that I would want my own letter? He knew because he is a Rebbe, and a Rebbe relates to every single individual, regardless of age or life circumstances. He understood the mindset of a twelve-year-old girl perfectly.

Today, I'm especially grateful that we each have our own letter because I get to share my letter with my granddaughters, as well as with many other Bat Mitzvah girls who have asked me to see it; I'm always happy to share it with them, and I never tire of telling the story.

My sister was even generous enough to let me keep the envelope.

Reprinted from Reprinted from Here's My Story, www.myencounterblog.com.

Editor's Note: Mrs. Sori Krinsky is a mother and grandmother who lives in Crown Heights. She was interviewed in December 2025.

Shabbat Times – Parshat Matot-Massei			
	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	7:12	8:29	9:05
Tel Aviv	7:27	8:32	9:02
Haifa	7:20	8:33	9:06
Be'er Sheva	7:28	8:30	9:03



YF GRAPHICS

The Soul in Charge

By Rabbi Yitzchak Shlomo Unger

The rumor was extraordinary: for the first time there was a real threat to the rights of the Moscovitz family to be in charge of the centralization of the alcoholic beverages business in Hungary.

Once every three years the government put the rights up for bidding. The rich family Moscovitz had always been the only contestant, and submitted a reasonable price, that enabled them to enjoy a handsome profit. Now a group of gentiles decided to take the rights away from the Jews and to submit a higher bid.

The family was very concerned. Their rivals were determined to expropriate the rights from them, at whatever price would be necessary.

Distressed, the family decided to turn to the Tzadik Rabbi Mordechai of Nadvorna, even though they were not Chasidim and were not in the habit of visiting the Tzadikim. Because of this they preferred to send a messenger to the Tzadik with their request for a blessing.

They chose the chasid Reb Avremeleh Birnbaum as their messenger. He was an innkeeper whom the Moscovitz family supplied with the alcohol he sold. Over the years he accumulated a debt to the family, but they were kind to him and didn't pressure him. He was glad to now have an opportunity to do them a favor and to represent the family to the Rebbe.

Rebbe Mordechai scrutinized the kvitel (note with a request for a blessing) for a long moment and asked: "Where does the family Moscovitz live?"

"In the city of Potik", replied Reb Avremeleh.

"Potik?" The Rebbe frowned. "Where is Potik?"

Reb Avremeleh was surprised. He knew that the Rebbe used to travel every year through the country and he certainly must know the towns and villages in the surroundings.

"Maybe you can tell me the name of the city close to Potik?" the Rebbe asked.

"Serentz," replied the chasid.

"Mordechai doesn't know where Serentz is", said Rebbe Mordechai. "Maybe Kerestir is close by?" he asked.

"Indeed", Avremeleh said, pleased.

The face of the Tzadik lit up. "That's why I didn't know," he said joyfully. "What I need to know, I know" As explanation he described the house of Avremeleh in all its details even though he had never been there. "But I do not know the city of Potik because it falls under the 'ownership' of the Tzadik Rebbe Yeshaya of Kerestir."

The Rebbe took his watch out of his pocket, looked at it and said: "Go, you will still be in time to reach Rebbe

Shayaleh and receive his blessing before the auction begins."

When Reb Avremeleh left the Rebbe he was quite upset. He knew Rebbe Shayaleh very well. They had both been the attendants of Rebbe Hirshele of Liska. Not only that, but Reb Avremeleh was the main attendant and Rebbe Shayaleh was his assistant... Now he felt embarrassed, how would he present himself to Rebbe Shayaleh as a chasid coming to his Rebbe?

Rebbe Shayaleh sensed his visitor's discomfort. He served him coffee and wished him success with the rest of his trip. Reb Avremeleh didn't know what to do, he had to carry out his mission but he was incapable of doing so.

With a heavy heart he climbed into the carriage to continue his journey. A moment before he could do so the Tzadik told him: "Go in peace and health, everything will be well with the Moscovitz Family!"

Avremeleh was tremendously relieved. The Tzadik with his Divine Inspiration had understood the reason for his visit and with great sensitivity had given his blessing without embarrassing Reb Avremeleh.

The day of the auction arrived. Mr. Moscovitz considered which tactic to adopt. He knew that his rivals would offer higher prices than his. He saw no chance of his winning the bid in a natural way. "If the blessing of the Tzadik will help, I will win even with a low price," he thought.

The Jew presented himself before the governor and suggested a sum lower than the sum of previous years. The governor was stunned. He decided not to call out the sum loudly out of fear that the rival group would also lower the sum they were going to offer.

It was the turn of the spokesman of that group to offer an amount. He walked over brimming with self-confidence, cleared his throat and then... strange sounds started coming out of his mouth. The bewildered man tried again and again to speak but was only able to make incomprehensible sounds.

Questions posed him by the governor were met with grunts and croaks. The governor became furious. He regarded this behavior as extremely disrespectful. He immediately announced that the Moscovitz family had won the bid.

The group's spokesman returned to his allies pale and confused. "I don't know what happened to me", he mumbled. "A slender Jew with a white beard appeared before me, caught me by the throat and every time I tried to speak he choked me! I couldn't get even one word out!"

This story was told by Rebbe Yeshaya from Kerestir himself to the chasid Reb Shlomo Engel and concluded: "I was obligated to help the Moscovitz family. They were the ones who bought me my first pair of boots when I was a child and they paid the tuition money for my melamed (teacher of small children.)

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



In Parshat Chukat, details are provided of the sad passing of Aharon HaCohen – Aharon the High Priest. But unusually, there is no date given for his death. In this week's Parsha - Massei - reference is again made to his passing and this time we are told that Aharon died "בחדש החמישי באחד לחודש" – on the first day of the fifth month". Now, since Nissan is the first month of the year, the first day of the fifth month, is Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, which is Wednesday, 15th July.

We know from here therefore, that every year we read about the Yahrzeit of Aharon on the Shabbat which is closest to that date – and I cannot think of a better time in the year to contemplate on the life of Aharon and his teachings. He died on Rosh Chodesh Av, the commencement of the saddest month of the year. As Chazal teach us in Mesechet Ta'anit "שמשכנס אב – ממעטין בשמחה" – with the commencement of the month of Av, our joy decreases". This is on account of the fact that so many tragedies befell our people at this time, including the destruction of both of our temples.

Our second temple fell in the year 70 because of the sin of Sinat Chinam - causeless hatred. And when you think about it, the example that Aharon set provided the antidote to Sinat Chinam. Hillel, in Pirkei Avot, teaches us אהרן - הוי מתלמידיו של אהרן - we should strive to be like the disciples of Aharon, אהב שולם ורודף שולם - like him we should 'love peace and pursue it', אהב את אהבה - and like him, we should 'love all other people and bring them close to Torah'

Aharon taught through his personal example that we should love peace, but that actually is not good enough. We need to ensure that there will be a peaceful environment wherever we are. We should love all other people and through our love for them, share with them the beauty of a life of Torah.

Tragically, שנאת חנם – causeless hatred is still very much in our midst. As we commemorate the Yahrzeit of Aharon we must transform שנאת חנם into אהבת חנם – causeless love.

So as we head toward Tisha B'Av, let's try to love every individual for who they are and let's pray for those suffering from the current situation here in Israel, as well as for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, for peace and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet Shabbat and Chodesh Tov.

Yessi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

Parshat Matot	Parshat Massei
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 2	NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 6
MITZVOT ASEH: 1	MITZVOT ASEH: 2
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 1	MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 4
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 112	NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 143
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1484	NUMBER OF WORDS: 1461
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5652	NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5773

HAFTORA:
Ashkenazim: Yirmiyahu 2:4 - 28 and 3:4
Chabad & Sephardim: Yirmiyahu 2:4 - 28 and 4:1-2
(The three Haftorot of the three weeks preceding the Ninth of Av, are called the "Three (Haftorot) of Punishment").

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh Menachem Av,
Rosh Chodesh - Wednesday, July 15, 2026.

This week we study Chapter 2 of Pirkei Avot

מסעות - מסעי

If you would like to help keep
The Jewish Weekly being published,
or to subscribe or dedicate an issue please
email
editor@thejweekly.org
to help continue our weekly publication.

To subscribe to THE JEWISH WEEKLY or to dedicate a single issue, please contact us by email: editor@thejweekly.org or www.thejweekly.org