

**The Shul**  
at the Lubavitch Center  
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April 23, 2016

Pesach

15 Nisan, 5776

### **My Visit to the Rebbe's Ohel**

*By Yaakov Mordechai ben Chana v' Rav Zev Yehudah*

On Tuesday March 1, 2016, I was informed that I had been diagnosed with a very serious illness. That night several friends came by for our regular weekly meeting spanning over 42 years, among them Allan G., a gabbai at the Shul at Lubavitch, who told Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan at Wednesday morning minyan of my situation. Rabbi Kaplan was also informed that on the upcoming Friday, my wife and I along with our two older sons would be meeting with Doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital to discuss a plan of treatment for me. He also knew that we planned to head for New York for Shabbat to be with family after the meeting at Hopkins.

Later that day, on Wednesday, Rabbi Kaplan called me to encourage me and assure me that the Shul congregants would be saying tefillos for a Refuah Sheleyma on my behalf. Rabbi Kaplan then said "Yaakov, since you are going to New York for Shabbat, I want you to go to visit the Rebbe's Ohel."

Frankly, I was a bit reluctant because I am not a Lubavitcher Chasid, nor is 90 - 95 percent of our Shul membership. One might say that we are "Chasidim" of Lubavitch since we maintain membership and regularly daven in a Lubavitcher Shul. I responded to the Rav's statement with, I'll try to visit the Ohel. The Rabbi's retort was "don't try, GO!" I then said OK, I will go, which in my mind elevated my response to somewhat of a Neder.

On Sunday morning before we were to head back to Baltimore, I googled Rebbe's Ohel and google's response was, closed Sundays. Well I tried; it wasn't my fault that the Ohel is closed on Sundays. Feeling that I was off the hook, I called Rabbi Kaplan with my regrets and said that google said the Ohel is closed. Undaunted and with a chuckle, Rabbi Kaplan said "Yaakov it is always open, ignore google and go to the Ohel".

It was about 45 minutes after we left New Rochelle that we arrived in front of the Bais Hakvoros in Queens. There is a house on the perimeter of the cemetery through which one may enter. Once inside, you are struck by the various activities ongoing at the same time. Some are saying tehillim, others are davening, there are groups being administered to by young shluchim. As you go further in, there are people having coffee, tea, and other light snacks in a fairly large open hall. There are literally hundreds of people in the building at any given time.

We asked a young man to point us towards the Ohel, and he directed us toward a door at the far end of the building through which one enters the cemetery. Upon entering the Bais Hakvoros, we were struck by the small groups being escorted by young shluchim and how diverse the groups were. There were chilonim, daatiyim, women with shaytlach and others wearing jeans, it was indeed a sight to behold.

Just these initial experiences made my wife and me realize and appreciate what we believe are the essence and raison d'etre of Lubavitch. That is to rekindle or fuel the flame of the pintele yid which resides in every single Jewish soul in this world; to instill a sense of dignity, of "stoltzkeit" knowing that each yid is a chelek of an Am Goy Kadosh. This visit made us realize that the young shluchim who stand on street corners asking young men to put on tefillin, or to bentsch lulav and esrog or to make a bracha in the sukkah mobile are selfless. They do this for the benefit of the soul of the Yid. The young couples and their families who live in remote areas of the USA and indeed the world are there for the sake of every single Yid in order to accomplish the goal of the Rebbe; bring home every Yid! Looking out over the cemetery and the immaculate condition in which it is kept tells us also that the dignity of the Yid extends beyond the living to those who are in the Olam Ha'emes as well. All of this unraveled for us even before we entered the Rebbe's Ohel.

Entering the Ohel, you are in a short hallway; on the immediate right there is a door where the men enter to the kevarim, women continue on where they may light a ner, and a few feet further is the door for the women to enter the area of the kevarim.

I entered the area of the kevarim, while my wife went through the womens' door. There are two kevarim in the Ohel. The first is that of The Rebbe, ZTL and the one on the right is the Rebbe's Father in Law, the previous Rebbe. The kevarim are surrounded by a knee high partition on which Sifrei Tehillim and siddurim are available for tefillah. There are thousands of kvitlach (hand written notes requesting help) on top of both kevarim. One cannot help but be in awe and reverence of the place.

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People of all levels of observance chilonim, daatuyim, chasidim, chareydim are pouring their hearts out and asking for these Tzadikim to intercede with the Ribono Shel Olam on their behalf. The experience was emotionally charged and spiritually uplifting at the same time. We spent some time there in prayer.

Each of us has baggage, a pekel, my wife and I suggest that you visit the Rebbe's Ohel and share in the experience. I suspect that once you do, you will return.

After our visit, we found out that our youngest son made a point of visiting the Rebbe's Ohel every week. I also learned that our son-in-law's grandparents are buried in the Lubavitch cemetery in Queens.

Upon our return to Baltimore I called Rabbi Kaplan to thank him for his insistence that I visit the Rebbe's Ohel, a trip that I want to make again very soon BE"H.



**Mr. Lawrence and Mrs. Helen London**

are sponsoring the flower displays on the Bima during Pesach  
in honor of their **daughter-in-law, Michelle London,**  
becoming a United States citizen.

**Yahrzeits This Week:**

Maggie Silver	17 Nisan - Sunday night/Monday	for mother	Rina bas Yehudah Aryeh
Eugene Fischer	18 Nisan - Monday night/Tuesday	for father	Horav Zev Yehuda ben Moshe

**SHUL DIRECTORY**

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**Davening and Shiurim Schedule**

**Friday, 4/22 — Erev Pesach — 14 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.  
Last Eating Chometz — 10:48 a.m.  
Last Sell and Burn Chometz — 11:56 a.m.  
Candles — 7:33 p.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:30 p.m.

**Shabbat, 4/23 — Pesach— 15 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 9:30 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:39 a.m.  
Minchah — 7:30 p.m.  
Candles — 8:35 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 8:35 p.m.  
**Start Counting Omer**

**Sunday, 4/24 — Pesach — 16 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 9:30 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:38 a.m.  
Minchah — 7:35 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 8:36 p.m.

**Monday, 4/25 — Chol HaMoed — 17 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

**Tuesday, 4/26 — Chol HaMoed — 18 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

**Wednesday, 4/27 — Chol HaMoed — 19 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

**Thursday, 4/28 — Chol HaMoed — 20 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.  
Eruv Tavshilin  
Candles — 7:39 p.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.

**Friday, 4/29— Pesach — 21 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 8:40 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:35 a.m.  
Mincha — 7:40 p.m.  
Candles — 7:40 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 8:40 p.m.

**Shabbat, 4/30 — Pesach — 22 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 8:40 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:34 a.m.  
Yiskor — approximately 10:45 a.m.  
Mincha — 6:20 p.m.  
Seudat HaMoshiach — 6:40 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 8:42 p.m.

**Sunday, 5/1 — 23 Nisan**  
Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.  
Shulchan Aruch Shiur — 8:45 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.