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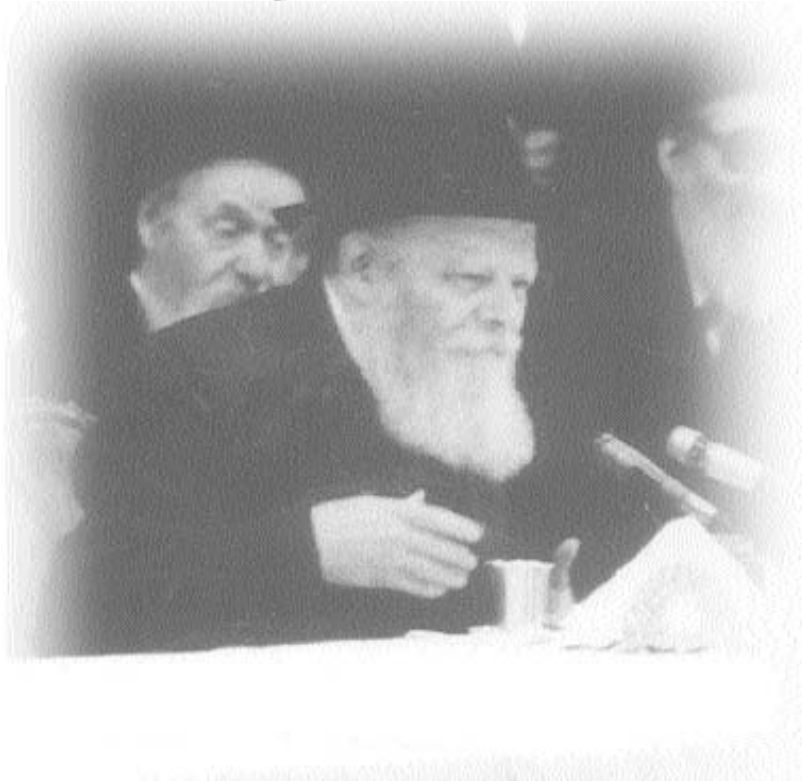
ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur

Beis Moshiach (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly except Jewish holidays for \$100.00 in Crown Heights, \$130.00 in the USA & Canada, all others for \$140.00 per year, by Beis Moshiach, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiach 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409.

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DVAR MALCHUS



REJOICING IN UNITY

SICHOS IN ENGLISH

LAG B'OMER, 18TH DAY OF IYAR, 5750

Unity in Diversity

Lag B'Omer is a day of rejoicing when Jews celebrate their unity by gathering Jewish children together. Significantly, it is the *yahrtzeit* of the great Talmudic sage, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, whose teachings highlighted the concept of unity by drawing attention to the verse, "How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to sit together."

Unity stems from shared roots, as with brothers who are bound together because they share the same father. Although they lead separate and sometimes very

divergent existences, their fundamental common identity remains.

This concept is reflected in the vision of the prophet Zacharia, in which the *menora* symbolizes the Jewish people. The candelabra, which has seven branches, symbolizes seven different paths of Divine service. Yet it was made of a single piece of gold, indicating that the Jewish people remain one unified entity despite their different qualities.

Difference need not lead to division. On the contrary, true unity comes from a synthesis of different — and even opposite — paths. The Patriarchs, Avrohom,

Yitzchok, and Yaakov, represent different approaches to Divine service. Avrohom represented the love of G-d; Yitzchok, the awe of G-d; and Yaakov, the harmony between these opposites. Yet together, they establish the one and unique spiritual heritage of our people.

This unity has a broader scope, encompassing all of mankind — both Jews as well as non-Jews. It extends beyond the human realm to include all of existence, since we all are G-d's creations.

Brotherly Outreach

Our awareness of this fundamental oneness affects our relationships with our fellow men and the world at large. Differences between people are overshadowed by what is common to all of us. Therefore, a person need not feel threatened by the difference between him and others. Instead, he should reach out to others with love and seek to help them. Should he see an undesirable quality, rather than reject his colleague, responding with negative feelings, his feelings of compassion should be aroused. He should try to help the other correct his fault, thereby allowing the oneness between them to be complete.

This is one of the meanings of *tzedaka*. *Tzedaka* does not mean merely giving a charitable donation to a needy person, but rather, offering others all necessary assistance, be it material or spiritual. Doing so cancels the factors disrupting the unity between individuals or between nations.

Harmony in the World

This approach is the key to peace and unity in the world at large. G-d has provided ample and abundant blessings in the world He created "with kindness, love, and mercy." He has called on mankind to emulate these qualities by sharing G-d-given benefits with others, helping them materially and spiritually.

Recognizing the abundance of G-d's blessings and man's role in their preservation and in their appropriate use will remove the basis for strife and division among nations. Once mankind realizes that G-d has provided abundance for everyone, there will be no motivation for war or even strife.

Indeed, adopting this approach adds to the blessings G-d grants in the world at large and averts the "need" for Him to use temporary measures — earthquakes and the like — to remind us of His constant presence and His control.

This approach will refine the world and hasten the coming of the era which will express its ultimate state of perfection when "One nation will not lift up a sword against another, nor will they learn war any more." This unity will be extended even beyond the human realm, spreading into the animal kingdom, as it is written, "A wolf will dwell with a lamb and a leopard with a kid." It will encompass every aspect of existence.

The Family as a Chain

The goodness and blessing G-d grants will be reflected in the personal world of each individual, particularly in what is most important to each man, his home and his family, so that he will derive genuine *nachas* from his children and grandchildren.

Judaism has always emphasized the importance of the continuity of tradition, denying the justification for a gap between generations. Rather, every family, Jewish or non-Jewish, should be an integral entity, communicating and passing down true values from generation to generation.

We are beginning to notice a restoration of communication between generations, a realization of the great resource we have in our parents and grandparents. This awareness enables the present generation to transmit the knowledge, experience, and values of the past to the future.

Change of Regimes

The process of communication is the essence of education. It has been the positive force shaping the progress of civilization throughout history. The desire for an environment conducive to education is at the core of the turn of events we have witnessed in the past months and which are characteristic of this unique year, 5750, a "Year of Miracles." Regimes based on an educational system that employed force and fear to transmit their values have given way to a system that supports an environment conducive to the natural motivation for development possessed by every child.

*Once mankind
realizes that G-d has
provided abundance
for everyone, there
will be no motivation
for war or strife.*

Through the establishment of an environment of warmth, love, joy, and disciplined freedom, we will enable all children to develop their G-d-given potential, without intimidation or hindrance by fear, and inspire them to dedicate themselves to a life of positive activity, spreading good throughout the world.

The Meaning of a Parade

The essential aspect of a parade is the expression of pride in one's beliefs and values. A parade provides an opportunity to demonstrate this pride to others. In a parade, one does not stand still, indicating the need to continually proceed further in positive activities. The main participants

in this parade are children, who reflect the concepts of progress and growth more noticeably than adults. Each year, and even each season of the year, their bodies grow. This physical growth should be accompanied by spiritual growth, which, in turn, should be reflected in changes of behavior, and an increase of good deeds.

Joining this parade are representatives of the city, state, and national government, indicating that they share the desire to spread love, brotherhood, and peace. This is further emphasized by their manner of participation — including arranging for bands to play music — for music spreads happiness and encourages communication and peace. The latter ideals will be accomplished by encouraging education — in particular, by promoting the observance of the seven universal laws commanded to Noah and his descendants, and by spreading the practice of *tzedaka*, righteous and charitable conduct.

Elevating Materiality

To inspire these activities, a special silver coin has been minted for this occasion, to be distributed to all the participants. In the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and in its service, silver and other material goods were used to create a dwelling for G-d. In a larger sense, all of our involvement in the material world should be dedicated to this purpose. The coin will serve as a memento of this occasion and inspire us to use money and all material objects for good purposes, particularly for *tzedaka*.

* * *

May all these activities lead to the revelation of the ultimate good within the world, the realization that "everything was created for His glory." This will herald the coming of the age when "G-d will reign forever and ever" with the coming of Moshiach, who will bring the complete and ultimate Redemption. May it be imminently, *amen*.

WHY SHOULD WE LOSE OUT?!

BY RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK GINSBERG

The following story took place when Reb Mendel Futerfas, *a'h*, was fundraising for the Tomchei Tmimim *yeshivos* of the Soviet Union. The expenses at that time were great and continually increasing. To make matters worse, the government's persecution of religious activity worsened daily, with all religious functionaries primary targets. Even so, the Tmimim learning underground in the various branches of the *yeshiva* had to be financially supported. They were constantly on guard lest the secret police discover their location, and they were periodically forced to flee.

In addition to the never ending *mesirus nefesh* required of the *roshei yeshiva*, *mashpiim*, and *talmidim*, there was a dire need for a substantial sum of money. They needed to buy food, even if it was only bread. They needed to pay those endangering their own lives by sheltering the boys in their homes (or the *shul* or basement). In many instances, money was needed for bribes in order to thwart the work of the Yevsektzia, which did all it could to fight the "Schneersohns."

R' Yona Cohen (may Hashem avenge his blood) was in charge of running Tomchei Tmimim in Russia. He appointed R' Mendel as the *yeshiva's* fundraiser. In addition to raising money from other people, which R' Mendel did with *mesirus nefesh* and great success (relative to the conditions prevailing at the time), he also dealt in the black market, donating most of his profits to the *yeshiva*. He let *Anash* know that he gave more than he could afford so he could exhort them to do the same.

R' Mendel lived near his friend R' Abba Pliskin, *a'h*. The friendship lasted their entire lives and did not wane even when R' Abba moved to Melbourne or when he took ill.

The two would meet a few times each day to learn as well as to formulate plans for their public responsibilities. R' Abba was especially talented in reaching out to Jews who were unaffiliated. He inspired them with the truth of Torah and motivated them to send their children to learn Torah.

Once, very early in the morning, R' Abba knocked at R' Mendel's door. R' Mendel and his entire household were asleep. R' Mendel arose quickly, recognizing the knock as R' Abba's, and realized that something serious was afoot. He rushed to the door and ushered R' Abba in.

R' Abba began: "In our city, there are twins learning in the *yeshiva* who are orphaned from their father. There is no one to support their family, and their mother wants them to leave *yeshiva* and go to work. We have to stop this from happening!

"We know the spiritual danger these boys would be in if they stop learning and go to the streets to look for work. They would be pulled away from *Yiddishkeit*, *ch'v!* I am asking – begging you – give this family a monthly stipend. If you give them what they would get if the boys went to work, they could continue learning at the *yeshiva* and remain strong spiritually."

Despite his already tremendous financial burden, R' Mendel immediately obligated himself to support the family. He had only one question:

"I don't understand. Why did you come in the middle of the night? This is serious, but we could have discussed it yesterday when we met. Nothing would have happened if you would have waited until the next time we met, in a few hours."

"You're right," replied R' Abba. "I could have

mentioned it yesterday or later today, but then it would be just another item on your list. I didn't know if you would have given it the attention it deserves, whether you would have agreed to take on the additional burden. You could have justifiably told me that the needs of the many come before the needs of individuals.

"That's why I came now. I wanted to let you know how urgent this is. I thought that this way you would take care of it properly. And indeed, I was right, as you did agree to take it on. Now the two Tmimim will be able to continue learning. I am sure that in the end, the *klal* will benefit from it."

"I could have mentioned it yesterday or later today, but then it would be just another item on our list. I didn't know if you would have given it the attention it deserves."

R' Abba was not mistaken. R' Mendel said that after a few years, he could see how his support of the family benefited the *klal*, too. Those boys grew up and became strong supporters of *Yiddishkeit* in Soviet Russia. One of them left Russia and worked secretly from the outside for the Jews who remained there. He did this according to the Rebbe's instructions. The brother remaining in Russia fought on the front lines in the battle to guard the spark of Judaism, and was one of the leaders of the Jewish and Chassidic underground until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party.

* * *

When "the people who were impure because of contact with the dead" came to Moshe Rabbeinu, they demanded, "Why should we lose out, not being able to offer the sacrifice to Hashem in its appointed time?" The Rebbe explains that they didn't ask casually or indifferently. Not at all! They cried out from the depths of their hearts, showing to what extent their situation bothered them: "How is it possible?! Why should we lose out? We cannot consent to being excluded. We cannot accept being prevented from offering sacrifices with everybody else!"

It was a cry signaling that they did not feel that this issue was equal to other situations and should not be treated as such by others. It was an unceasing demand. They simply could not make peace with the situation, and this brought about a commandment from Hashem, the *mitzva* of Pesach Sheini. It teaches us the great principle that nothing ever is lost. We can always correct it. Even if one was impure, or far away, even when the circumstances were "*lachem*," done willingly

and purposely, the situation can still be corrected.

The Rebbe adds that, in truth, the circumstances prohibiting the men from sacrificing the *korban Pesach* were orchestrated by Hashem only in order to cause them to cry out and demand to be included. Hashem wanted this *mitzva* to come about through man, not as a command initiated from Above.

At that time, the complaint "Why should we lose out?" applied to only a few people and to only one sacrifice for that year only. But the Rebbe explains that this demand applies even more now, after nearly two thousand years have passed since we were able to bring this *korban*. Not only have individual Jews been prevented from bringing it, but the entire Jewish people were exiled and have been unable to bring any sacrifices in the *Beis HaMikdash*!

After everything we have been through over the years, especially in this last generation, especially when we have been informed that everything has been completed – all is ready, there are no obstacles — and we just have to open our eyes to see the truth, yet we still don't see it, how much *more* so must we cry, "Why should we lose out?!"

This question has no answer, so it cannot give us any peace. This truly incredulous situation is simply illogical and unacceptable. The only acceptable answer is the revelation of the Rebbe MH"M with the true and complete Redemption, which will enable us to bring the *korbanos* in the third *Beis HaMikdash*.

This abnormal situation exists only to arouse us to ask, "Why should we lose out?" It has to come from us, not from Above as a commandment. It has to be a heartfelt "*ad masai*?" and "*Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach*!" Our present situation cannot be equal in our eyes to any other matter.

In these days before Lag B'Omer, when many of us are working on organizing parades under the slogan, "Together, all Jewish children!" we must do all we can to convey the message of "Why should we lose out?" "*Ad masai*!" and "*Yechi*."

This cry from the depth of our being – "Why should we lose out?" – gives us the internal impetus to increase our work of publicizing the *besuras ha'Geula*, especially on Lag B'Omer. At a time like this, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and all the *tzaddikim* and *nesiim* led by the Rebbe MH"M *shlita* join us! Certainly this is a most auspicious time to publicize the *besuras ha'Geula* with the cry of "Why should we lose out?" "*Ad masai*!" "*Moshiach Now*!" and "*Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach*!"

YECHI ADONEINU MOREINU V'RABBEINU MELECH HA'MOSHIACH L'OLAM VA'ED!

AN OPEN MIRACLE

BY MENACHEM HAYITZCHAKI

The daily walk was the highlight of the children's day. Each morning they got up and eagerly waited for their beloved assistant teacher to pass by, pick them up and escort them to school. The usual routine was the familiar knock at the door and a kiss on the cheek from their mother, and they were on their way.

The children's mothers stood in their doorways seeing them off lovingly. They all whispered the same prayer, that Hashem help their children in their studies so that they would grow up to G-d-fearing Jews. The children sang "*Modeh Ani*," and their song joined the paean of thanks of the entire world for the new and glorious day.

It was all to the credit of the new assistant teacher, said the townspeople amongst themselves. Since he had come, the children loved going to school. They were so attached to R' Yisroel, and he, in his unique manner, succeeded in instilling within them fine character traits and fear of Heaven. He did this primarily through song and stories of faith in *tzaddikim*.

He related to the children as a father. If a child was sick, *ch'y*, R' Yisroel went to his home immediately and fed him. At the same time, he bolstered the child's faith and trust in the Healer of the sick, our Father in Heaven. No wonder the parents relied on him implicitly and entrusted the spiritual and physical lives of their children in his hands.

The nearby forest was one of R'

Yisroel's favorite places. Every so often he would take the children there, and, surrounded by nature's wonders, he would explain to them the greatness of the Creator. He told them of Jews who loved the *mitzvos*, of *tzaddikim* who gave their lives *al kiddush Hashem*, and implanted a deep love for Hashem and His Torah within their hearts.

R' Yisroel was a *tzaddik nistar*; none of the townspeople were aware of his profound holiness. Even the town know-it-all, Getzel the Milkman, remained unsuspecting of R' Yisroel's secret. But one day, R' Yisroel, who later came to be

*The Baal Shem Tov
wailed over the exile
of the Shechina and
cried out to Hashem
to annul the decree
threatening the town.*

known as the Baal Shem Tov, was forced to reveal a little of his greatness. This is what happened:

Getzel the Milkman had the unpleasant task of having to relate the horrifying news about a band of Cossacks who were approaching the area and were planning to attack their town. The Jews quickly stockpiled food and began preparing their hiding places, relying on

cellars, attics, and even holes in the ground as temporary shelters. As far as the loss of property, they had already made peace with that misfortune. The main thing now was their lives, for they knew that an encounter with a Cossack would be fatal, *ch'y*. Reports they had heard from the survivors of nearby towns that had already been visited by the Cossacks was terrifying.

Jews hid themselves in the forest and fearfully waited the arrival of the Cossacks. A group of Jews was in charge of watching over the food supply and dealing with any problem that might arise.

R' Yisroel sat in the *beis midrash* consumed with worry. It wasn't that he was afraid, for his father had told him to fear nothing but G-d Himself. It was simply that his compassionate heart was broken with worry over the townspeople, especially for the innocent children, his students, who were lying in trenches and moaning in sorrow. They were so young, yet they were destined to suffer the lot of their fathers and grandfathers throughout the generations. R' Yisroel wailed over the exile of the *Shechina* and cried out to Hashem to annul the decree threatening the town.

One day passed and then another. For an entire week, no one heard the sound of children singing in the morning. The town was deserted, with no signs of life. Who even remembered that tomorrow would be Lag B'Omer, the *hilula* of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai? This was the day that

children traditionally went out to the fields and forests to play with bows and arrows in memory of the rainbow, which did not appear in the lifetime of the holy *tanna*. Only one person remembered the date, and that was R' Yisroel. He remembered and resolved that this year would be no different. But what would the children's mothers say?

Night fell and word got around that the Cossacks were camping at the edge of the forest. R' Yisroel didn't sleep that night. He prayed that the holiness of the day and the merit of the *tzaddik* would stand by the townspeople and save them.

Day broke and R' Yisroel went to carry out his plan. Laden with bows and arrows, he visited the various hiding places, and invited his charges out to the forest to play. The mothers looked at him as though he must be joking. They

couldn't bear the thought of parting with their little ones for even a moment, and to the forest of all places!

Now the children's ties to their teacher came to the fore. They, who had imbibed so much from him about *emuna* and *bitachon*, begged their mothers to allow them to accompany him. The mothers were taken aback by the unnatural behavior of their children, but R' Yisroel's shining face encouraged them to accede to their children's wishes.

The deserted streets were now witness to a most peculiar procession. With R' Yisroel in the lead, the children burst into song and sang *p'sukim* and *mizmorim*. They completely forgot the reason they had been hiding in the first place. The children went out to the field, took the bows from their teacher and shot the arrows in memory of R' Shimon.

The Cossacks could hear the sounds of rejoicing, which only served to enflame their anger. Who dared to irritate them this early in the morning? They guided their horses in the direction of the noise, resolving to wipe out those insolent Jews. The hoof beats shook the town, and the children were nearly trampled, when suddenly something amazing happened. As soon as the Cossacks saw the glowing face of the children's leader, fear filled their hearts. They simply turned their horses around and left, never to return.

It was a miracle *b'reish galei* (an open miracle), *b'reish* standing for both R' Yisroel ben Sara and R' Shimon bar Yochai. The merit of the two *tzaddikim* had brought about the great miracle!

(Adapted from Kol Sippurei HaBaal Shem Tov)



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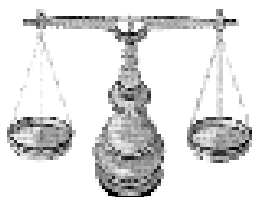
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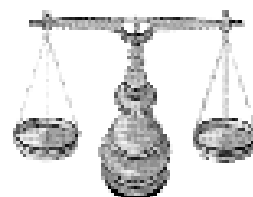
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THE WELLSPRING

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE VAAD L'HAFOTZAS SICHOS PART 5

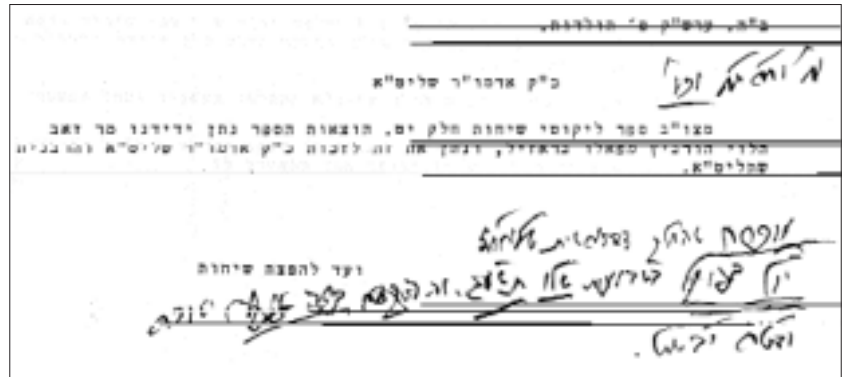
BY RABBI SHALOM YAAKOV CHAZAN

It all began on a wintry Friday in Kislev of 5743 (1982), Erev Shabbos Parshas Toldos. The latest volume of *Likkutei Sichos* – Volume 19 on *Seifer Devarim* – had just been published, and the members of the Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos had submitted a copy for the Rebbe's approval. A few hours later they received the Rebbe's answer:

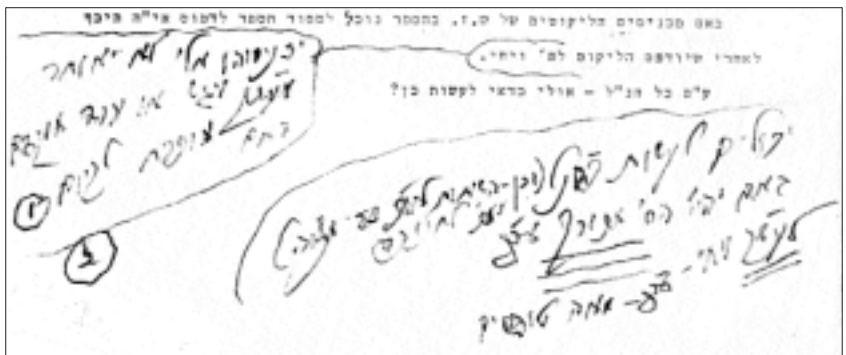
On top of the page, the Rebbe had written his usual acknowledgment and thank you, but at the bottom of the margin was an unexpected surprise (see facsimile #1). There the Rebbe had written: "It is imperative that the section on *Bereishis* be published in time for the corresponding weeks of 5743, and the sooner the better. Surely you will have good news to report about this."

The members of the Vaad were stunned. They looked at the Rebbe's response and wondered how they would ever be able to fulfill the Rebbe's directive. Only six weeks remained until the end of *Bereishis*, and from past experience they knew that under usual circumstances, it would be impossible to finish a book in such a short time. Even today, in the age of the computer, publishing a book of hundreds of pages in a few weeks is an extraordinary undertaking. But in those days it wasn't just difficult, it was beyond the realm of possibility. Plus, it would not be the only project the Vaad would be working on. It was still in charge of the weekly *Likkut*, which took dozens of hours to prepare.

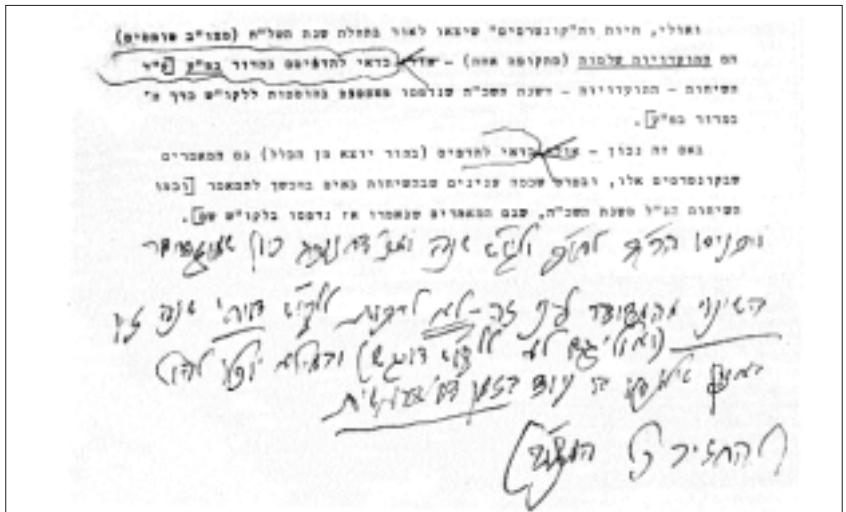
In addition to the technical difficulties, the Vaad faced another problem. In accordance with one of the Rebbe's previous directives to include as many *sichos* as possible, the last few volumes of *Likkutei Sichos* had contained five *sichos* on every *parsha*. These were taken from the



Facsimile #1



Facsimile #2



Facsimile #3



The fire was so intense that the printing presses melted, but only the edges of the pages were singed...

weekly *Likkut* that had been published during the last five years, between 5735 and 5740. If the next volume of *Seifer Bereishis* would be published at this point, it would contain only two *sichos* on each *parsha*.

The members of the Vaad decided to write to the Rebbe for further instructions, and asked if they might postpone the new volume until the Rebbe had edited the *sichos* on *Parshas VaYechi*. That would allow them to include three *sichos* for every *parsha*. They also wrote that if they printed the book with only two, the resulting volume would have only half as many pages as the previous ones, approximately 300 instead of 600. The Vaad listed which particular *sichos* were ready, which had been typed and needed editing, and which

On one press that had actually started to melt from the heat were thousands of copies of the weekly Likkut – virtually untouched by the flames!

ones they had not yet begun to prepare. They also listed the topics to be included in the addendum.

According to plan, the addendum to Volume 20 would be a major part of the book, containing many of the Rebbe's letters relating to the various *sichos*. When the Rebbe edited the introduction to Volume 15, he had appealed to everyone who had such letters to give them to the Vaad for publication, citing "the merit of the many."

The Rebbe's answer wasn't long in coming (see facsimile #2). As far as postponing the project was concerned, the Rebbe wrote that they should "Submit it to me no later than Erev Shabbos Kodesh VaYigash or even earlier if necessary." Concerning the list of topics submitted for the addendum, the Rebbe wrote: "You may use these, and also include the *sichos* for *chasan* and *kalla* and *bar mitzva* [which the

Rebbe said at the group *yeichidus* after Yud-Tes Kislev], and letters about Chanuka. At least 100 copies [of the *s'farim*] should be bound and printed before Shabbos Parshas VaYechi."

* * *

The Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos embarked on the new project at a frenzied pace, working day and night to fulfill the Rebbe's wishes. During those few weeks, the members of the Vaad barely saw their families. From Motzaei Shabbos to Friday afternoon they remained in their editorial offices, emerging only to *daven*, go to the *mikva*, or to catch a few hours of much needed sleep. Food was provided by their *nashim tzidkaniyos*, who brought it to their husbands at 788 Eastern Parkway.

But the members of the Vaad were only human beings, and at a certain point they despaired of ever completing the task in time. In response to another letter they submitted, the Rebbe indicated that they should *not* wait for the *sichos* on Parshas VaYechi or even VaYigash (see facsimile #3). However, it was still of the utmost importance that the book be published before Bereishis was completed.

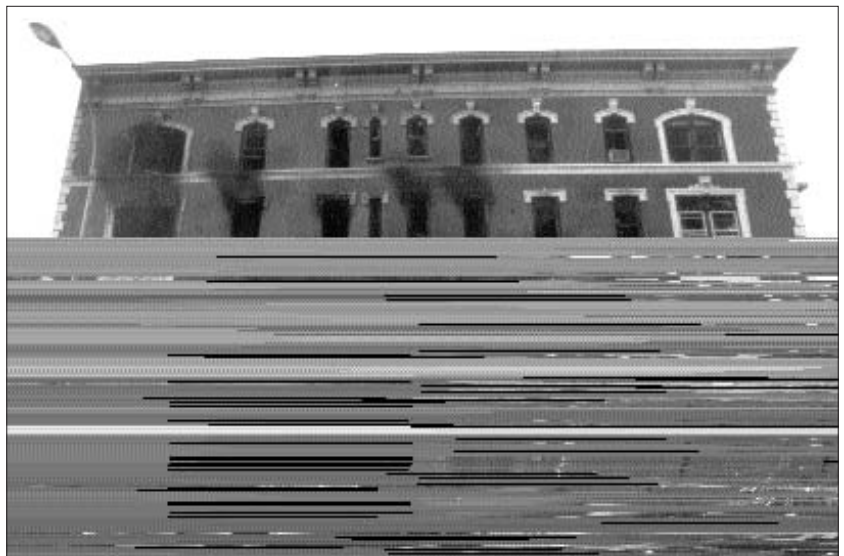
[Incidentally, at this point the Rebbe gave his approval for the Vaad to include in the addendum the *sichos* and *maamarim* that had been said from the Rebbe's room during his convalescence from his heart attack in 5738. These *sichos*, said on Motzaei Shabbos, had been broadcast to the *beis midrash* downstairs in 770, and later edited by the Rebbe. The Vaad had previously requested to print them as a separate volume, but the Rebbe had negated the idea. The Vaad saw the Rebbe's permission to include them in Volume 20 as an indication that he considered them an integral part of his usual *sichos* and *maamarim*, no different from those that were said at Shabbos *farbrengens*.]

The work progressed in a miraculous manner. When the Vaad submitted the galleys on Parshas VaYigash, the Rebbe responded (see facsimile #4): "Fast! And if you hurry up with Parshas VaYechi, everything can be included in the volume."



Facsimile #4

The members of the Vaad worked faster, pushing themselves beyond human endurance. A short time later, even VaYechi was ready for the Rebbe's approval. Returned only a few hours after it was submitted, the galleys were immediately



Front view of 788 Eastern Parkway the day after the fire



Downstairs zal of 770 as the firemen combat the blaze upstairs. The benches are covered with plastic sheeting to prevent water damage



Rabbis Shalom Jacobson, Zalman Chanin and Moshe Shagalow estimate the damage after the blaze

sent off to the printing presses, with instructions that all other work be interrupted. Every piece of machinery was to be used only for publishing the new volume – 100 copies before Shabbos VaYigash.

The manager of the printing press, who was not a Chabad Chassid, considered it a great merit to print the Rebbe's works, and stayed up the entire night to supervise. Interestingly, when his wife brought him some sandwiches in the middle of the night, he refused to eat them, saying that he didn't think it was right to eat something that wasn't completely kosher while he was working on the Rebbe's books! His wife went back to Manhattan, where she found a kosher restaurant and bought him supper. But her husband wouldn't eat it until he saw the words "Glatt kosher" on the wrapping...

* * *

By the next morning, the unbelievable had happened. The 20th volume of *Likkutei*

"This blaze was also miraculous in origin: there is no natural explanation of how it started. But this too is insufficient to make an impression."

Sichos was in print – before Shabbos Parshas VaYigash!

The public was astounded by the speed at which the Rebbe's works were being published. Even the pages of Volume 20 were of the finest quality, and the binding was particularly impressive. But the most important thing was that the book contained the *sichos* on Parshas VaYechi – the first time a volume of *Likkutei Sichos* contained a weekly *Likkut* that had not yet

been printed as an individual *Likkut*!

Why had it been so important to the Rebbe for the project to be finished before the end of *Bereishis*? It was the only question on everyone's mind throughout the weeks of frantic activity.

In the past, the Rebbe had sometimes indicated that a book be printed before a certain date, but never with the same sense of urgency. Usually these were books about the Chabad Rebbeim, whose publication the Rebbe wanted to coincide with their *yahrtzeit* or another significant day.

In fact, the Rebbe's insistence in this case was unprecedented for two reasons: 1) the Rebbe had never before rushed the publication of any of his works, and 2) the date of completion was not known to be particularly significant. But the Rebbe had repeatedly stated that he wanted these *sichos* to be learned at the same time the *parsha* was being read in *shul*. The members of the Vaad realized that there must be a spiritual reason behind the

deadline, but it was simply beyond their capacity to understand it.

On Wednesday night of the week of Parshas Sh'mos, a fire broke out in the printing room of the Vaad, on the third floor of 788 Eastern Parkway. A passerby noticed the flames sometime after midnight, and dozens of fire trucks responded to the alarm. Huge quantities of water were sprayed into the building, but the fire wasn't brought under control until every single printing press of the *Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos* had been reduced to ash.

Even before the smoke dissipated, the members of the Vaad ran to see what they could salvage, and breathed a collective sigh of relief when they saw that the fire had stopped directly in front of their offices. The hundreds of volumes of the new *Likkutei Sichos* had been spared, together with their priceless archives.

But the biggest surprise was waiting in the middle of the printing room. On one press that had actually started to melt from the heat were thousands of copies of the weekly *Likkut* – virtually untouched by the flames! Only the margins of the pages had been slightly charred (see photo). The Rebbe's holy *sichos* had withstood the test of fire.

The next morning, the members of the Vaad, Rabbis Shalom Jacobson, Schneur Zalman Chanan, Nachman Schapiro, and Leibel Altein, informed the Rebbe about the incident and asked for a *bracha* to recover from the damage. The Rebbe responded (see facsimile #5): "May it be G-d's will that the famous saying of our holy Sages be fulfilled [that after a fire one becomes wealthy]. May you have revealed good to report, and particular success in disseminating the wellsprings outward. I will mention it at the *tziyun* affirmatively."

A few days before the fire, a small blaze



Facsimile #5

had broken out under the *bima* in 770, in the exact place where the Rebbe sat at *farbrengens*. A few *bachurim* extinguished it before it could spread, G-d forbid. No one could figure out how it had started, and it remained a mystery.

But at the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Sh'mos, the Rebbe explained what was really going on...

A few years before, in 5740, a group of community activists had begun building a new *mikva* for the women of Crown Heights. Unfortunately, in their eagerness to complete the project, one of the directors on the board decided to raze the old building even before the new one was completed. Because of this hasty and premature step, a fully renovated *mikva* would not be available for another two years, the time it took to complete the new *mikva*. In the meantime, the women who used the *mikva* had to navigate an open construction site, and several were badly injured in accidents.

On Erev Shabbos Kodesh 12 MarCheshvan 5743, the Rebbe wrote a sharply worded letter to the people in charge of the project:

"...The event that took place was frightful, and it is even more appalling that no one is paying attention to this at all! The only women's mikva in the neighborhood of Lubavitch, visited by Chabad women from around the world, was destroyed two years ago with public money and in [inappropriate] haste.

"As they are apparently 'unaware' of what happened, I would like to inform them: 1) There is still no *mikva* here; 2) according to the *Shulchan Aruch* regarding a synagogue, even when other synagogues exist, it requires serious investigation as to how it can be destroyed in the first place; 3) In a case

where it is permissible to destroy one (which was not at all the case here), 'the new one must be built very quickly, working night and day,' according to the *Shulchan Aruch*.

"With my own eyes I have seen how days go by without any work being done by day or by night. May G-d have mercy on us all, together with the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. May this be concluded in a good manner."

On Erev Shabbos Kodesh Parshas VaYechi the Rebbe wrote an even sharper letter:

"The ruling that it is permissible and laudable to sell a synagogue for the purpose of building a *mikva* is well known. I was promised that the *mikva* would be completed by mid-summer, then informed that it would take until Rosh Hashanah, then Succos, then another two or three weeks.

"On 14 Teives I visited the building. It will not be completed within two or three weeks.

"If you are really concerned about the well-being of the *beis ha'midrash*, let it be sold, and the money given to someone who is not a Lubavitcher. Give him ten thousand dollars as compensation for his

ensure that I wouldn't mention it at a *farbrengen*.

"But I have mentioned it at *farbrengens*, and the contents of *farbrengens* are written down, and people are aware of what must be done. Yet no one thinks that my words are directed to him – only to the next person...

"After all this was to no avail, a dreadful incident occurred to one woman, and even this seems to have had no effect!

"Then another incident occurred to a second woman, and this was also ignored, as was a third incident involving another woman!

"Then a small fire broke out very suddenly. No one knew how it started, and there is no natural explanation for it. But even this did not have any effect.

"Then a big fire broke out, may G-d protect us, and the whole neighborhood is

talking about it. This blaze was also miraculous in origin: there is no natural explanation of how it started. But this too is insufficient to make an impression.

"I see that I have no other option. The building must be saved, and I have sold it..."

The Rebbe continued: "They do me a favor and record my words in print, and describe it as [the *menora*'s] 'knobs and flowers,' but when it comes to actually doing something, my words have no effect. What good are all these words if they do not result in actual deed? People talk, they ask each other questions, they offer explanations – but nothing is brought down to the level of 'below ten handbreadths.'"

Needless to say, the public was shocked beyond words by the Rebbe's comments.

That Friday, the sale of the *beis midrash* of 770 was conducted in absolute secrecy. That morning, the Rebbe issued a full-page directive to his secretariat that the sale be concluded that very day. Many of the details have never come out publicly.

The Rebbe instructed that the legal transfer be conducted by Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dworkin, the late *rav* of Lubavitch. The transaction was completed so quickly that when the buyer claimed that there was no time to assemble cash, the Rebbe instructed his secretariat to provide him with it!

The buyer, as per the Rebbe's instructions, was not a member of *Anash*, and the Rebbe told the *gabbaim* that any proposed change in the building would henceforth have to receive the new owner's permission. As the new owner's identity was a secret, the Rebbe said this meant that no changes could be made.

(To be continued.)

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MERKAZ SHIUREI TORAH – CHABAD

(Free Translations)

14 IYAR – DEMANDING REDEMPTION

This is the lesson of Pesach Sheini: ...The essence of the *mitzva* came about solely through the Jewish people demanding and insisting, “Why should we lose out?” As a result, the new *mitzva* of Pesach Sheini was commanded. In fact, this *mitzva* made all the *mitzvos* complete, for with the addition of Pesach Sheini the number of *mitzvos* totals 613...

So too concerning the Jewish people's demanding the Redemption. Not only is demanding and insisting *not* opposed to Torah, *ch'v*, but on the contrary, the Torah commands us to conduct ourselves this way. The Men of the Great Assembly established that when a Jew asks Hashem for his needs while *davening*, he should say: “Quickly bring forth the scion of Dovid Your servant...for we hope for Your salvation all the day...May our eyes behold Your return to Tziyon.”

It is not enough that we ask and demand this once in our prayers, but we repeat this request and demand in every single prayer, three times a day! ...Through the Jewish people asking and crying out for the Redemption, they make the Redemption come more quickly than it would without this request and demand.

(Hisvaaduos 5744, Vol. 3, p. 1,684)

15 IYAR: AHAVAS YISROEL TAKES PRIORITY OVER THE BEIS HAMIKDASH

The Zohar establishes that the building of the *Beis HaMikdash* precedes the ingathering of the exiles (which is also the ruling of the Rambam, as he writes, “and he builds the *Mikdash* in its place and gathers the dispersed of the Jewish people). This order of events underscores the greatness of the Jewish people, for in order for the ingathering of the Jewish people from exile to be one of utter perfection (through the light and revelation of the holiness of the third *Beis HaMikdash*), they forego the elevation and perfection that would be inherent in the building of the *Beis HaMikdash* were it to be built after the ingathering of the exiles when all Jews would be living in Eretz Yisroel. This sacrifice illustrates the greatness of the Jewish people, as it applies even when it comes to building the *Beis HaMikdash*!

This is the lesson in man's *avoda* that is learned from the fact that the *Beis HaMikdash* will be built before the ingathering of the exiles: Since the Jewish people are so great that they forego the perfection of the *Beis HaMikdash* for the sake of the wholeness of the Jewish people, we see from this how great and important is *ahavas Yisroel*!

May we go from speaking about the importance and necessity of *ahavas Yisroel* to actually acting with *ahavas Yisroel*, for “action is the main thing.”

(Sicha - Chayei Sara 5743; unedited)

16 IYAR: ALL SHOULD CRY OUT “AD MASAI”

All Jews must cry out “*ad masai*,” to the extent that not even one Jew remains who has not cried out “*ad masai*.” Then certainly Hashem will fulfill the prayer and request of the Jewish people, “for Hashem is great, and He will not reject [their prayers],” in a manner of “immediately they are redeemed.”

[The Rebbe began to cry out “*ad masai*” and everyone joined in, and then the Rebbe said that in order to negate any sadness they should cry out “*ad masai*” with a *niggun* (and they sang “*ad masai*”).]

(Sicha VaYeira 5748 ; unedited)

17 IYAR: A JEW HAS UNLIMITED ABILITIES

The answer to [one who complains that he has no strength to fight the exile] is that he should realize that he actually has unlimited abilities — “Havaye stands above him.” ...

When a Jew realizes and contemplates his potential, he approaches the *avoda* he has left to do in the brief moment of exile and does it with a new vitality – “and Yaakov lifted his feet.” It is for this reason that we are joyful in the brief last moment of exile. Through serving Hashem with joy, one negates all concealment.

(Sicha Simchas Beis HaShoeiva 5716; unedited)

18 IYAR: THE REDEMPTION OF LAG B’OMER

We must add that the emphasis of Redemption on Lag B’Omer also relates to the entire world. We learn in the Gemara that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said, “I can absolve the entire world from judgment from the day I was created until now, though if Elazar, my son...were with me — *from the day the world was created until now*.” First and foremost, may we be absolved of the judgment of exile, so that the Redemption will come immediately.

This is alluded to in the name Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. Sometimes “(ben) Yochai” is spelled with an *Alef* and other times it is not. The *Alef* of Yochai alludes to drawing down and revealing the *Alufo Shel Olam* (Master of the world) in the *gola* (exile)...for thereby the *gola* becomes Redemption, *Geula* (*gola* with the addition of an *Alef*).

(Sicha leil Lag B’Omer 5751; unedited)

19 IYAR: OUR GENERATION, THE GENERATION THAT COMPLETES THE DIVINE SERVICE OF EXILE?

How can we say that our generation is more connected to the future Redemption when the Sages say, “If the earlier ones are like angels, etc.” ...

The explanation is based on a parable of the Sages that is discussed in *sifrei musar* about the midget standing on the giant’s back. Although he is a midget, by standing on the back of the giant, he can see much farther than the giant himself.

The earlier generations are analogous to a giant – “the earlier ones are like angels” — whereas our generation is compared to a midget. Since the sum total of the *avoda* of our generation comes after the *avoda* of the earlier generations, it is specifically through the *avoda* of our generation that we merit the future Redemption. Regarding this, the Sages say, “A task is ascribed only to the one who completes it.”

(Sicha Motzaei Shabbos Tzav 5743; unedited)

20 IYAR: MESIRUS NEFESH TO BRING MOSHIACH

To those who complain about the excited and extensive talk about the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, there is a letter by the Munkatzer Rebbe that was recently reprinted. He writes explicitly and unambiguously, so that it cannot be understood any other way, that we need *mesirus nefesh* in order to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu, similar to the *mesirus nefesh* that is needed for the three circumstances about which it says “be killed and do not transgress

(Sicha Mikeitz 5744; unedited)

ENCYCLOPEDIA CHABAD

BY RABBI CHAIM MILLER

Depression

(Continued from last week.)

d.) Method of alleviating depression caused by religious matters

i.) Depression caused by awareness of sins of the past

Naturally, remorse for sins or misdeeds of the past is a crucial element of a relationship with G-d. But there must be some limitations to remorse, to ensure that a person is not in a constant state of misery and depression. Thus, the Alter Rebbe recommends (*Tanya* Chap. 26) that one set aside specific times to reflect on personal insufficiencies, and at all other times such thoughts should be blocked out of the mind:

Whether the depression settles upon him during his service of G-d in Torah study or prayer, or when he is not engaged in them [but in his material affairs], this is what he should think: “Now is not the proper time for genuine sadness, nor even for worry over grave sins, G-d forbid.” For this, one must set aside appropriate times when the mind is calm to reflect on the greatness of G-d, against whom he has sinned, so that thereby his heart will truly be rent with genuine bitterness.

[For details of how to apply this advice properly, **see entry:** *Cheshbon HaNefesh*.]

ii.) Depression caused by fear that one’s repentance has not been accepted

In a personal letter, the Rebbe *shlita* summarizes the attitude that a person should take towards a previous lack of Jewish observance, which has since been corrected:

You write the highlights of your past and conclude that you feel depressed thinking of your past conduct which was not in compliance with the Torah and *mitzvos*, etc.

No doubt it is unnecessary for me to expand upon the matter of the *teshuva*, which is one of the fundamental principles of our Torah, *Toras Chaim*. It is a precept that we have to observe daily, as we say three times in our daily prayers, “Return us, Hashem, to Thee,” and “Forgive us, our Father.” I suggest that you study the *Igeres HaTeshuva* by the Alter Rebbe, author of the *Tanya* and *Shulchan Aruch*, where it is explained at some length what *teshuva* is and how everyone can attain it, provided there is a will and determination. Sincere *teshuva* is always accepted, and G-d is truly good and

forgiving. It will then become clearer to you that a feeling of depression and anxiety is not helpful to true *teshuva*. Rather, on the contrary — since true, sincere *teshuva* is followed by a feeling of happiness and closeness to G-d, and by sincere determination to observe the Torah and *mitzvos* and serve G-d with joy and gladness of heart.

iii.) Depression caused by sinful thoughts constantly entering a person’s head

A person who is constantly troubled by lewd thoughts, or the desire to sin, may well become depressed, feeling that he is only on a very low level of personal refinement. In Chapter 27 of *Tanya*, the Alter Rebbe explains that this is a normal state of affairs for virtually everyone, and therefore no cause for depression. On the contrary, the occurrence of a stray thought actually provides a person with the opportunity to perform a *mitzva* — namely, the active elimination of the thought from his head. As with any *mitzva*, this process should be carried out with joy:

If, however, his sadness does not stem from anxiety over sins that he has committed, but from the fact that sinful thoughts and desires enter his mind, if these thoughts occur to him not during his service of G-d, but while he is occupied with his own affairs, with mundane matters, etc., he should, on the contrary, be happy with his lot. Although these sinful thoughts enter his mind, he averts his attention from them...fulfilling the command (*Bamidbar* 15:39), “You shall not follow after your heart and after your eyes, by which you go astray.”

...Our Sages said (*Kiddushin* 39b):

“When one passively abstains from sin, he is rewarded as though he had actively performed a *mitzva*.” Consequently, he should rejoice in his compliance with the injunction just as he does when performing an actual positive precept.

Although these thoughts and desires signify a considerable degree of evil within the person, this should also not be cause for concern. The vast majority of people are faced with the challenge of becoming a *beinoni*,* one who does not transgress any detail of Jewish law whatsoever. Even at the level of *beinoni*, there is residual evil within the person, though it is never granted actual expression. It is precisely when the level of *beinoni* has been achieved that a person can aim to reach the status of *tzaddik*, where even the residual evil is eliminated.

Thus, a person who has not achieved perfection in his

practical observance of Judaism (i.e., a *rasha*) need not be concerned with the occurrence of stray thoughts and desires, for his task is to first become a *beinoni* before being concerned about being a *tzaddik*:

On the contrary, such sadness is due to conceit. For he does not know his place, and that is why he is distressed — because he has not attained the level of a *tzaddik*, to whom such foolish thoughts surely do not occur.

For were he to recognize his station, [he would realize] that he is very far from the rank of *tzaddik*. If only he would be a *beinoni* and not a *rasha* for even a single moment throughout his life!"

In fact, the Alter Rebbe explains, most individuals were created with the intent that they should struggle for their entire life to become a *beinoni*, since the constant *suppression* of evil gives G-d tremendous pleasure. *Tzaddikim* give G-d pleasure in a different manner — by means of the *elimination* of evil. (See *Tanya*, *ibid.*, where the Alter Rebbe compares these two approaches to the distinction between spicy and sweet food.)

[See entries: *Beinoni*, *Iskafya* / *Ishapcha*]

In Chapter 28, the Alter Rebbe explains that if lewd thoughts and desires occur during times of prayer or Torah study, they should not be construed at all as a sign that there is any shortcoming with the person's Divine service. Since a person is a combination of two souls, a G-dly soul and an animal soul, the souls will continually be at odds with each other:

This refutes a common error. When a foreign thought occurs to some people during prayer, they mistakenly conclude that their prayer is worthless, for if one prayed properly and correctly, no foreign thought would arise in his mind.

They would be correct if there would be only one soul within a person, the same soul that prays being also the one that thinks and ponders the foreign thoughts. But in fact there are two souls, each waging war against the other in the person's mind. Each of them wishes and desires to rule and pervade the mind exclusively. All

thoughts of Torah and the fear of G-d come from the G-dly soul, while all thoughts of worldly matters derive from the animal soul.

In fact, the occurrence of a stray thought during prayer is actually a positive sign:

It is the way of combatants and wrestlers that when one is gaining the upper hand, the other likewise exerts himself with all the resources of his strength in order to prevail.

Therefore, [in the battle between the Divine soul and the animal soul], when the Divine soul exerts itself and musters all its strength in prayer [to be victorious against the animal soul], the *k'lipa* [of the animal soul] too, gathers strength to counter it, aiming to confuse and topple the Divine soul by means of a foreign thought of its own.

Thus, the occurrence of foreign thoughts is actually an indication that the person is praying well.

e) The distinction between *atzvus* and *merirus* (bitterness)

The predominating mood permeating one's Divine service should be that of *simcha** (joy). Only at specific, appointed times is it permissible to have negative thoughts about oneself at all (see part c), and even then the proper mood is not one of depression (*atzvus*), but bitterness (*merirus*).

The differences between these two conditions include:

- Depression is a result of an exaggerated sense of self and ego — how *I* have not reached a desired state; bitterness focuses a person on G-d, and how one is far from Him.
- Depression causes a person to lament about the past; bitterness causes a person to make positive resolutions for the future.
- Depression drains a person's energy and makes him inactive; bitterness energizes a person into action.
- Depression brings about hopelessness, which can lead a person to transgression; bitterness leads a person to joy and increased Divine service.

(See *Likkutei Perushim* l'*Tanya*, pp. 604-6)

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THE HEART CONDITION THAT BROUGHT SALVATION

RABBI DOVID DOV MISHULOVIN CONTINUES HIS ACCOUNT OF THE LUBAVITCHER COMMUNITY OF SAMARKAND IN THE YEARS AFTER WWII. * CHAPTER 11:
MORE PROBLEMS WITH THE RUSSIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Another incident occurred during the period when our daughter's school principal kept insisting that we change her day of rest, which at first we thought was just another *tzara* descending on our heads. As it turned out, however, it was precisely this event that brought our salvation.

One morning I was rushing to leave the house for our clandestine *minyán* when I reminded myself that I had forgotten to take out the garbage. In the far corner of the yard were four heavy trashcans that I periodically put out on the street to be emptied. I quickly grabbed two pails in each hand and walked out the gate.

When I returned to the yard with the empty pails I suddenly felt a sharp pain in my chest. It was excruciating and totally unexpected. I was terrified. Could I be suffering a heart attack?

I went back to the house and climbed into bed. I tried to calm down and told myself that it was nothing, but the pain wouldn't go away. I woke up my wife, and she brought me a hot water bottle to put on my chest and some pills. But I still didn't feel any better.

My wife summoned the local doctor, an old woman who wasn't a heart specialist, but at least she assured us that I wasn't having a heart attack. The doctor ordered me to stay in bed for three days.

The next day the pain was better but I was still feeling weak. My mind was racing. What would happen to me now? What kind of work would I be able to do if I were disabled? For an observant Jew

What kind of work would I be able to do if I were disabled? For an observant Jew there were very few options.

there were very few options. It was hard enough finding a job that provided an excuse not to work on Shabbos and holidays.

A lot of Jews in my situation had opted to work in freelance professions such as sign lettering. It wasn't entirely independent, as the workers were organized into departments, and department supervisors conducted inspections every now and then. But whenever an inspector arrived on Shabbos, a Jew could claim that he was just letting his ink dry... But was I really well enough to continue working?

I was still in bed pondering my fate when I reminded myself of my poor daughters in Public School 32, and our

problems with the principal, who was always sticking her nose into our business. At that moment an idea occurred to me: My illness might be the solution! I picked up a pen and paper and composed a letter to the school administration.

Just having a plan in mind made me feel better. In my letter I asked the principal to postpone any decision until after I recovered from my "heart ailment," and requested that she not subject me to any additional stress. In my precarious condition, I wrote, too much excitement could be very dangerous... I promised to come down to school to meet with her as soon as I was feeling up to it.

I hoped that this would postpone the moment of truth until the summer. The school year had just recently commenced, but I prayed that as the weeks passed and the girls never showed up on Saturdays, everyone would become used to their schedule and eventually forget about it.

As it turned out the plan worked, but only for two and a half months. The principal kept inquiring about my health, and it was obvious that she was eager for a confrontation. I had no other choice but to meet with her.

On the day of the meeting I dressed in my finest clothes, and presented myself in the principal's office at a time when I was sure that she would be alone. The last

thing I wanted was an audience.

I began by making it very clear that in our family, education was of paramount importance. I told her that I was an upstanding Soviet citizen who was a graduate of the Russian educational system, and as far removed from fanaticism as one could get. The only problem was that our oldest daughter was already showing signs of heart disease, which unfortunately ran in our family.

To make my argument even more convincing I told her about my non-existent brother, who had shown signs of heart disease as a child and suffered greatly as an adult because it hadn't been treated. That is why my wife and I, as responsible parents, were so insistent that our daughter should have at least one day a week vacation. The reason we had chosen Saturday was that it was also my day off from work, and the whole family could be together.

Taking the principal into my confidence I explained that our daughter Fanya (Feige) was very embarrassed by the fact that heart disease ran in our family, and was terribly concerned that the other children shouldn't learn of it. Psychologically speaking, it was best not to remind her of our problem or draw attention to her repeated absences, as by nature she was somewhat of a worrywart.

The principal was caught off guard, and started to apologize for her past behavior. She "hadn't known" and "never imagined" what was going on behind the scenes. She was truly convinced that we were genuine and no longer worthy of suspicion, and I returned home with a light heart.

Everything was fine until I realized that I still needed to find an excuse for Riva (Rivka), our younger daughter. I decided to send her to school on Shabbos for the last class of the day, without her briefcase. If anyone asked her why she was late, she could always say that she

had been to the infirmary earlier in the day and had forgotten her school supplies. Showing up an hour or two late didn't require a doctor's note, and I hoped that if the principal saw her in class it would alleviate any suspicion.

I'll never forget how Rivka would cry every Shabbos before leaving to engage in this elaborate charade. In the classroom she would sit and listen attentively, but not take any notes. I was well aware of how hard it was for her, as the whole thing went against her nature, which was very truthful and honest. But she realized what was at stake, and played her role flawlessly week after week.

Rivka's teacher was sick, and the principal would be filling in for her until she came back! How was she supposed to explain why she wasn't writing on Shabbos?

One day Rivka came home with an announcement: Her teacher was sick, and the principal would be filling in for her until she came back! How was she supposed to explain why she wasn't writing on Shabbos?

We came up with a solution: That Friday we bandaged up her hand, liberally applying bright red iodine to make it look more realistic. It wasn't really my invention; several other people I knew resorted to the same thing whenever a test was scheduled for Shabbos. But the ruse worked, and that week the principal said nothing.

In a million years, Rivka's teacher could never imagine how much we were all praying for her recovery.

At a certain point I realized that the fact that both our daughters were attending the same school was problematic. The best course of action would be to transfer one of the girls to a different school.

There were many public schools in our area of Samarkand, but each one involved a different problem. If the principal was a Jew, we worried that he would go out of his way to prove his impartiality. In other schools, there were already several children who kept Shabbos, and we didn't want to endanger them.

Eventually we located a school for Feige at the other end of town, but it was far away from the Jewish section and she would be the only Jewish student there. Also, transferring to another school meant presenting all our paperwork to an entirely new authority, and the additional scrutiny wasn't exactly welcome. What would happen if the two principals decided to consult with each other?

At that point, one of our friends came to the rescue. She went to the school secretary and told her that the principal had authorized her to take our daughter's files to the new school. It was a very big risk, but the secretary handed them over without a word. We then wrote down that as our family had recently grown, Feige was going to live with relatives elsewhere in the city.

Once again our problems were solved, at least temporarily. Feige, who was a very bright girl, did well in her new school, and for a while no one questioned her health-mandated day of rest.

(To be continued.)

MIRACLE



NO NEED TO WORRY

A while back he was considered one of the biggest contractors in Nahariya, but things took a turn for the worse and Moshe Segev found himself in financial trouble. He was unable to collect payment from a number of clients for work he had performed, and soon his business was threatened with bankruptcy. When the situation grew worse, his property was held in lien while his creditors were pounding on his door. The only encouragement he got was from the local Lubavitchers whom he had met only recently.

Since he began getting closer to Chabad, he learned Chitas, Rambam, wore a “*Yechi*” *yarmulka* and studied Chassidus every day. He asked the Rebbe for a *bracha*, and upon opening the *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe told him to remove his worries from his heart!

The miracles soon began to unfold. The serious claims made against him were dropped. Life was looking up again, except for one

thing, which was still a great cause for worry. One of the creditors had pressed charges with the police for assault.

Moshe denied the charges, but the policemen involved in the case persisted. When he turned up for questioning they handcuffed him and he was brought to a magistrate to rule on investigative detention. On the way to court, the policemen informed him of the number of his cell and where the bed, where he would be spending the next fifteen days, was located.

Moshe’s apprehensions grew when he saw how the judge acceded to the prosecutor’s every request for detainment. When the prosecutor finished speaking, Moshe was asked to respond. He looked up at the judge, and that is when a most amazing thing happened. The figure of the judge sort of disappeared, and in its place he saw the Rebbe MH”M smiling at him. The vision shocked him for a few seconds, and then he

suddenly felt enormously self-assured. It was with this new-found confidence that he faced the judge.

Moshe attacked the suit and the police for the manner of the investigation and its one-sidedness. Now Moshe’s response went against everything his lawyer had advised him to do, but at that moment he just didn’t think of anything else. Everybody in the court, particularly the judge and the plaintiff, were dumbfounded by the force of his attack, and silence reigned in the courthouse.

The judge bent over the documents that Moshe had presented. Suddenly the judge raised his head and asked the plaintiff a question. “Are you afraid of the accused?”

“No, I am not afraid of him and the truth of the matter is, I don’t think he should be locked up.”

At this point, the judge turned a scowling look towards the police representative and adjured him for the police department’s lack of professionalism during the investigation. The judge added somewhat uncharacteristically, to close the door on any appeals, “As far as I am concerned, the case is closed.”

On the way back, the policeman who had interrogated Moshe raised his hands with fingers spread wide and hissed, “For twenty years nobody has managed to slip between my fingers until you came along.”

Moshe looked at him sharply and said, “Yes, but in twenty years you never dealt with a Chassid of Melech HaMoshiach. How about joining me in saying, ‘*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach l’olam va’ed*?’”

Relating miracle stories involving the *Igros Kodesh* has become an inseparable part of *farbrengens* nowadays. We heard the following story at a Melaveh Malka in the home of Rabbi Reuven Shaer of Bnei Brak, from Shlomo Veknin of Ramat Gan.

“For various reasons we decided to move to a larger apartment. The problem was that we first had to find somebody who would buy our apartment. When things didn’t seem to be moving along, I decided to write the Rebbe a letter and ask for his *bracha*. At *farbrengens* in the Chabad shul on Uziel St. in Ramat Gan, I had heard a lot about the *Igros Kodesh*.

“I asked my friend Eliezer Prigan for help, and went to his home to put my letter in a volume of the *Igros Kodesh*. In addition to asking for a *bracha* for myself, I asked for a *bracha* for my sister who hadn’t had a child for many years after the birth of her first son. I put in the request for an apartment first, said “*Yechi*,” and opened the volume to read, “a *bracha* on the birth of Yosef Yitzchok.”

“When I put in the second request, for my sister, the answer said, “*besuros tovot*” (good news). I just couldn’t understand it, for the Rebbe had responded with a *bracha* for the birth of

a son to my request for an apartment! It took me some months to understand the answers, for nine months later our son, Yosef Yitzchok, was born! In addition, my sister was expecting a child, but what about an apartment?

“Some weeks went by and I decided to consult with an agent who is a friend of mine. He had suggested a number of apartments but we didn’t like any of them. Then he suggested an apartment on the edge of Ramat Gan and Bnei Brak which we liked very much. The only problem was that it cost far more than we wanted to spend.


“I went to Rabbi Yisroel Lipschitz and wrote another letter and put it in the Igros Kodesh, asking for a bracha to be able to buy this apartment. This time the answer spoke directly about an apartment!”

“I went to Rabbi Yisroel Lipschitz and wrote another letter and put it in the *Igros Kodesh*, asking for a *bracha* to be able to buy this apartment. This time the answer spoke directly about an apartment! I relaxed, even though there was a significant difference between the amount we had offered and what the owner wanted. I gave the owner our telephone number and went home.

“Well, before very long the owner agreed to come down in price to the number we had offered, and we bought the apartment. The amazing thing was that much higher offers than ours had been made to the owner over the two years prior to our purchasing the apartment, but he had refused to compromise. Then surprisingly, he agreed to our offer.”

Rabbi Avrohom ben Shimon of Bnei Brak, who was also at the *farbrengen*, interjected, “I know that apartment and I can personally testify that I offered the owner a much higher price, which he turned down.”

“Since our move to the new apartment,” concluded Shlomo, “we started a weekly *Tanya* class with Rabbi Lipschitz and a *farbrengen*. We await the great *farbrengen* with the Rebbe MH”M in the near future.”



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UNFOLDING BEFORE OUR EYES

YAAKOV NOVIK HAS BEEN WORKING FEVERISHLY FOR THE MASS DEMONSTRATION OPPOSING THE DIVISION OF YERUSHALAYIM * WE HAVE ASKED EVERYONE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEMONSTRATION (MAY 15)* THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX WILL BE MOST AFFECTED BY BARAK'S PLAN TO DIVIDE YERUSHALAYIM BECAUSE ORIENT HOUSE IS ONLY 200 METERS AWAY FROM THE SHITBLECH OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF BEIS YISROEL * THE INTERVIEW WAS GIVEN BEFORE THE PROTEST TOOK PLACE THIS PAST MONDAY

BY SHAI GEFEN

"For the enemy and foe has come to the gates of Yerushalayim" are the words of Lamentations, and these words are unfortunately being fulfilled today. Prime Minister Ehud Barak is preparing to give terrorists the villages around Yerushalayim, which are just meters away from the Temple Mount.

As this column is being written, Israeli representatives are sitting with Palestinians in Eilat in order to formulate the text that will make it easiest to give terrorists the villages of Abu Dis and Ezriya, referred to by the Palestinians as an "advance." Palestinian representatives at the negotiating table said they were unwilling to continue talks with Israel until Israel gives them those villages.

Protest groups from the Right, which were nearly silent up until now, have gone to battle in an uncompromising stance in order to save Yerushalayim and to prevent the destruction of the settlements.

Preparations are being completed for the mass demonstration under the banner "Dai L'Nesigos Chinam" (Enough With Withdrawals For Nothing In Return), in the course of which demonstrators will demand of Barak: "Cease withdrawals for nothing. Do not divide Yerushalayim, and do not surround it with the Palestinian ring of strangulation."

The demonstration will take place in Zion Square in Yerushalayim. Tens of thousands of people are expected to appear and to protest Barak handing over

land surrounding Yerushalayim to enemies, endangering the lives of the people of Yerushalayim who would now live a gunshot away, r'l, from the neighborhoods given to terrorists.

I must point out that everything the Lubavitcher Rebbe envisioned regarding Eretz Yisroel is unfolding before our very eyes today.

Those organizing the large demonstration are the members of Match Maamatz, headed by Mr. Yaakov Novik, the man who for years was behind the Right's stormy demonstrations. These demonstrations on more than one occasion changed public opinion in Eretz Yisroel to that of protesting the government's policy of withdrawals.

At Match Maamatz they are promising an uncompromising battle, and they note that this is only the beginning of a long war of wills, which will include all segments of Yerushalayim, beginning with the ultra-Orthodox, whose thousands of members will be exposed to Palestinian terror, and concluding with the unaffiliated members of the public.

A SIEGE ON YERUSHALAYIM

Mr. Novik, how are the preparations going for the big demonstration?

We are working around the clock to be properly prepared for the demonstration. We advertised around the country and have turned to all members of the public, including the religious and the ultra-Orthodox, to come and participate. We are sure that a large religious contingent will show up, for if anyone is going to be affected by Barak's plan to divide Yerushalayim, it will be the religious sector. As you know, there are a number of religious neighborhoods that border the areas Barak is planning to give away to the Palestinians.

The Right is returning to the streets after a long period of silence. They say that this is the first demonstration in Zion Square after Rabin's murder. Does this show a reawakening on the part of the Right?

I don't make comparisons. We are setting out on an uncompromising battle, and I hope that we will succeed, G-d willing.

Do you feel that the public is beginning to understand the problems with the course Barak is taking?

The problem is not with the public. The public is highly intelligent and understands exactly what is going on. There has been a serious problem within

the political realm since the time the Likkud formulated the Wye Accords, and today it is hard to see a political solution to the problem.

The situation today is such that we are reaching the bottom of the barrel and the public is beginning to understand that it doesn't have a choice; it understands that Yerushalayim will be under siege and the entire country will be put into a very critical situation – perhaps even worse than our situation during the period of the War of Independence.

A siege? That's reminiscent of days gone by. Aren't you exaggerating?

Barak is placing Yerushalayim under siege, with everything that implies. His plans are extremely dangerous for the future existence of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel, not just in Yerushalayim. The signals the Arabs receive from Barak have their effect on every front throughout Eretz Yisroel.

If he gives them these villages, and then other villages, in a state of all-out war, G-d forbid, they can undermine all the army's plans and cause chaos on the roadways. They will be able to cut off Yerushalayim from all the peripheral neighborhoods, and then it will be terrible.

Do you think that those groups who did not identify with the topic of Eretz Yisroel shleima understand the severity of Barak's course of action?

Today the problem is not that of Eretz Yisroel shleima. Unfortunately, that is no longer a relevant battle. Today we are fighting *for our house*, for our physical existence as Jews who live in Eretz Yisroel. I don't think it is necessary to discuss this sorry state of affairs at length. The country is going further and further into a state of siege within an autonomous and hostile Arab area. Today people don't talk of peace. Everyone knows that we are no longer talking about peace, but about how not to anger

them. Despite this, there will be constant friction with them. They don't want peace. They want to get what we are willing to give them, and then they will besiege the country until they can take everything, while we will be at our weakest point.

The situation is so absurd that the Palestinians are not prepared to talk with us until we give them Abu Dis, and they demand this as a prerequisite. Tomorrow they will demand another prerequisite in order not to halt the process, and each time we will say, "Will we disrupt the peace process for some little village which we don't occupy anyway?" There's no end to this. We have nothing else in reserve to give. Whatever we give them today has a direct bearing on the security of the lives of Jews.

After giving them all the territories, returning refugees, and arming their terrorists, our situation will be critical indeed.

The battle is not about some ideological point or another. It is about the very existence of the Jews in Eretz Yisroel. Danger is approaching imminently. Each day there is an additional weakening of the existence of the state and its ability to survive.

I must point out that everything the Lubavitcher Rebbe envisioned regarding Eretz Yisroel is unfolding before our very eyes today, day by day and moment by moment. This is a battle for Jewish existence. The Jewish nation is presently in one of its most difficult moments, with an extremely weak leadership.

THE ENTIRE COUNTRY IS A BORDER

You speak about a war around the house. It's no secret that Israeli Arabs within the Green Line have actually begun fighting Eretz Yisroel, a war referred to by Mr. Alek Ron, the representative of the northern district of the police.

Indeed, there is a quiet Arab takeover in the Negev and the Galil. They do what they want: build, plant fields, expand, and nobody says a word. When I speak of a siege, I am not referring only to Yerushalayim, Yehuda and Shomron. I am talking about a general problem that has expanded to the entire country. What Alek Ron said was just the tip of the iceberg.

Where do you think they get their nerve?

The Israeli Arabs and their leaders in the Knesset are closely associated with Arafat. The Arabs take advantage of the Left, who are in power thanks, in part, to their votes. The Left relies on Arab support, and the Israeli Arabs do as they please.

In Kiryat Shemone, too?

Naturally, the Arabs on the northern border have the same agenda. The problem on the border with Lebanon is a war on the house, on the peaceful civilians in the northern cities. It is a grave mistake to think that trying to appease the Arabs with gifts will result in winning their friendship.

The war today is difficult and bitter on all fronts, not just around Yerushalayim. We are talking about Arab sovereignty in the Negev and the Galil, the battle of the Arab students which should be a red light for the leadership of the state.

Let's talk about the current problem with Yerushalayim. What is Barak planning to do with Yerushalayim?

Today they are talking about giving away Abu Dis and Ezariya as an "advance payment," as the Israelis put it. The Arabs are demanding all of East Jerusalem. If

we're talking about an advance payment, this means that the neighborhood of Tzor-Bachar and the other neighborhoods of East Jerusalem will be returned next. But that won't be enough. They will always raise points of contention, with the goal of leaving the option of an all-out war when they have the military strength. At that point, after giving them all the territories, returning refugees, and arming their terrorists, our situation will be critical indeed.

Are you hinting at something?

Giving away the villages near Yerushalayim will cut off the city from Maaleh Adumim, Yericho, and the Jordan Valley.

Are you saying that in such a situation nobody will be able to say, "It doesn't affect me?"

Everyone suffers from terrorist activity, even Dizengoff Center. Arab terror doesn't differentiate between Jews on the Right and Jews on the Left.

Which segment of the population is more exposed to attack?

I'll surprise you by saying that it's not those who live past the Green Line. It's those who live in the cities, the ones who feel most secure. Today in Yesha every settlement has a security plan, and every settlement is surrounded by fences. They have ammunition, so it's harder to attack them, except for the roads.

After they give away the villages near Yerushalayim, terrorists could enter unprotected houses on the outskirts of Ramat Shlomo, and in the near future, in the neighborhood of Beis Yisroel in the heart of Yerushalayim, where people are unprotected. The infiltrations will come as a surprise. You must remember that the religious neighborhoods border on the villages the Palestinians want. Orient House is merely 200 meters away from the *shtiblech* of Beis Yisroel.

That's what happened when Dovid Kotoraza (may Hashem avenge his blood), a resident of Ramat Shlomo, was

MATEH MAAMATZ

Matteh Maamatz has been working this past decade in organizing the Right against the government. The Matteh was established by Mr. Yehuda Chazani, who was killed in the Judean desert. After his death, Mr. Yaakov Novick was appointed leader of the Matteh. He is the man who consolidates all the protest activities against the withdrawals, whether through explanations or by organizing demonstrations.

The work of Matteh Maamatz has halted the Israeli government's plans on more than one occasion, and its protests have had a huge impact. Yaakov Novick has been accused by the Left and the media for agitation and incitement against the Rabin-Peres government, but he prefers not to respond to these accusations. He sees it as his holy mission to unify the protest activities of those who are loyal to Eretz Yisroel.

On Monday, May 15th, Matteh Maamatz, along with all the parties on the Right, will once again join in demonstrating in Zion Square. The organizers anticipate thousands of participants who will express their objection to Barak's withdrawals

murdered on his way to daven vasikin...

There are many examples, but I want

Barak's only barometer is: how much will the Israeli public allow him to give away?

to speak in general terms rather than focus on one incident or another. We are creating a security problem in that we are exposing a huge segment of the population to Arafat's terror, and he'll do what he wants with the residents of Eretz Yisroel like a potter with his clay. Perhaps today it's not worth his while to attack, but tomorrow it will be worth his while. Can we forego our security based on Arafat's internal concerns?

Barak said that for 2,000 years we did not pray towards Abu Dis.

Barak himself hasn't prayed for 2,000 years, not in Yerushalayim either. Seriously speaking, it's true that Yerushalayim is more holy than the rest of Eretz Yisroel, but the entire country is more holy than other lands. When we prayed towards Eretz Yisroel, it included

the area of Abu Dis. In earlier times, Jews bought land in the area of Abu Dis and in additional areas which Barak is ready to hand over to the Palestinians. Jews who returned to Yerushalayim gazed out over Abu Dis, Eastern Jerusalem, and all the areas near the Old City. Until today, we have the Turkish deeds and documents of that land listed as Jewish land.

Do you think that Barak is planning on dividing Yerushalayim?

The Arabs haven't conceded a single point and they will not concede a thing in the future either. Barak would give the Kinneret away too, if he knew it would pass a referendum. The same thing with Yerushalayim. In my estimation he would be willing to return Yerushalayim to the state it was in before the Six-Day War, but he realizes the people won't accept that.

Obviously, Barak cannot give the Arabs everything they want, because you can't give them everything they want and still survive! So it isn't clear how far Barak will go. He doesn't have a clear plan. Barak's limit will not satisfy Arafat, so ultimately he will decide according to the opposition he will get from the public. That is Barak's only barometer: how much will the Israeli public allow him to give away?

Is that the purpose of the mass

demonstration you are organizing?

Demonstrations were always and will always be tremendously effective. Remember the mass demonstration against withdrawing from the Golan that took place a few months ago in Tel Aviv. After that, Barak realized he could not give the Golan away. That demonstration had a profound effect. If the demonstration had not taken place, Barak would have been sure he could give the Golan away up to the Kinneret.

We have to learn from the Left. Every week, there are public appearances by the Women in Black or the Four Mothers, both very effective organizations. Just look how far they've gotten. Every demonstration is extremely influential.

What will happen after this upcoming demonstration?

I think that as the process progresses, the people will protest more vocally. Dangerous withdrawals such as these cannot take place quietly.

Our real problem is the complicated political machinations. But the people are not fools. They are aware of what is going on and are not quiet at all. As the process proceeds, people will see where Barak is heading and what the Arabs are planning to do. If we do not express public outrage

in the streets, we will find ourselves in the same place as those people who were transported to the ovens in Auschwitz. These are tough words, but it's the truth.

We must fight and demonstrate. We must rise up. These actions will definitely influence the government. The problem today is that we must influence our own people too. The main reason for our demonstrations is to strengthen our own camp. If we are strong, then, with G-d's help, we will overcome our enemies.

WE MUSTN'T SLEEP ON THE JOB

As far as the construction going on in the territories, is Barak better than Netanyahu, as the people from Meretz and Shalom Achshav claim?

After they give away the villages near Yerushalayim, terrorists could enter unprotected houses on the outskirts of Ramat Shlomo.

He is not better than Netanyahu, but he is better than the Rabin-Peres government, which shut down all construction. Barak's government is giving the minimum in order to keep things politically quiet with the Mafdal, Yisroel B'Aliya, and Shas parties. By the way, Shas is also somewhat in favor of the settlers. They got nearly 10% of the votes in Yesha.

Do you believe Shas would sell Abu Dis in exchange for fifty million shekel for their Reshet HaMaayan HaTorani?

I don't think it's a problem of fifty million shekel. The point is that without Shas, there is no government. As soon as they threaten Barak with the dissolution of his government, they have the money tomorrow, even without conceding Abu Dis. I think that Rabbi Ovadia Yosef is also aware of the danger involved in giving Abu Dis to the Palestinians, and he also expressed his opinion, saying that Abu Dis is part of Yerushalayim. It's hard for me to believe that observant Jews would endanger the lives of Jews.

In the meantime, Barak said he has postponed giving away Abu Dis.

He postponed it because he is having difficulty getting it past his coalition, but we mustn't sleep on the job. We can get up one fine morning to find ourselves in a shrunken Jerusalem with all of East Jerusalem under Arafat's rule, with all that it implies.

What are you asking people to do now?

We must fight with all our strength. We must be a huge presence. If we are stubborn, we will succeed. It all depends on our determination, how much we are willing to put out, and how far we are willing to go to demonstrate against giving away Yerushalayim. If we are unified, we will succeed in directing public opinion against these dangerous talks, and then the immediate danger, at least over here, will be removed.

BARAK FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO PROGRESS IN HIS PLANS FOR ABU DIS

Thanks to Arafat's refusal, Barak's initiative to meet with the head of the Palestinian Authority failed this past Sunday. Barak tried to convince Arafat to accept Abu Dis, El Azarya, and Savchara, but Hashem made the murderer refuse to accept these yishuvim. It seems, however, that regardless, there will still be a meeting between Barak and Arafat. In the meantime, negotiations continue between the Israeli team and the Palestinians.

The prime minister was unable to bring his plan to hand Abu Dis over to the P.L.O. to a vote because he cannot convince Shas to support this action. Barak faces difficulties convincing the ministers that Eretz Yisroel will receive anything of value in exchange for giving away the villages around Yerushalayim.

The experts estimate that the possibility for a breakthrough in the talks is unlikely. In Hoberman's opinion, Eretz Yisroel wants to create the appearance of progress, but in reality there is no progress when it comes to difficult issues like Yerushalayim, the right of return, and the like.

NEWS

LIVING WITH MOSHIACH AROUND THE WORLD

NINE YEARS SINCE CHAF-CHES NISSAN 5751

THE GATHERING IN 770

The International Campaign to Bring Moshiah, directed by Rabbi Shmuel Butman, organizes a yearly event as a reminder of the Rebbe's message of Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751. Signs saying "Tut altz vos ir kent" (Do all that you can)! were hung up in the *shuls* and streets of Crown Heights, calling upon everyone to come Tuesday night, the night of Chaf-Ches Nissan.

Hundreds of *Anash* and *Tmimim* came to encourage one another and to suggest ideas for projects and personal commitments. Rabbi Butman began the program by emphasizing the need to put even more effort into bringing the Redemption. "This directive is the daily fare of every Lubavitcher Chassid in his *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe," he said.

Rabbi Shalom Dovber Gutnick of Australia spoke about the necessity of publicizing the *besuras ha'Geula* without fearing those who scoff. He was followed by Rabbi Leibel Groner, who repeated what

the Rebbe had told him after the *sicha* nine years ago. The Rebbe said there was no need to break one's head to figure out what he meant, for it was simply to increase in learning, both in quality and in quantity, in *tefilla*, in *tzedaka*, and in *mitvaim*.

Tamim Yehoshafat Oliver reminded everyone about the importance of the *Sheva*

Mitzvos Bnei Noach campaign. He quoted from the Rebbe's *sichos*, showing how important this is and how it is directly linked with bringing the Redemption.

The program ended with the suggestion that everyone learn a concept about Redemption with his family at least once a week at the Shabbos table. This was



Rabbi Leibel Groner (speaking), Rabbi Shmuel Butman (right), and Rabbi Shalom Dovber Gutnick (left)



The crowd in Kfar Chabad



The dais from right to left: Rabbi Zalman Notick, Rabbi Pinchas Leibush Hertz, Rabbi M.M. Gluckowsky, Rabbi B. Yurkowitz, Rabbi L.Y. Ginsberg

followed by a *farbrengen* with Rabbi Pinchas Korf.

THE MAIN GATHERING IN ERETZ YISROEL

Nearly a thousand people came from all over the country for the gathering marking Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751 in Beis Menachem in Kfar Chabad. *Mashpia* Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg began the program by saying that everyone wants to know what to do to strengthen his connection to the Rebbe and to bring Moshiach. Rabbi Ginsberg focused on the “straight path” the Rebbe taught us: learning *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*, particularly the weekly *Dvar Malchus*. Learning leads to action, publicizing the fact that “Behold, Moshiach is coming.”

Rabbi Pinchas Leibush Hertz spoke about how the Rebbe made Moshiach a topic of conversation everywhere in the world. Rabbi Zalman Notick, *mashpia* in Toras Emes in Yerushalayim, spoke of his impressions the night the *sicha* was said. After the *sicha*, groups of people began to *farbreng* and he, as a Tamim, circulated among the *farbrengens*. He was surprised at the discrepancy he found. At one *farbrengen*, the people reacted to the Rebbe’s *sicha* with *bitachon* and *simcha* that a new era was beginning in the revelation of Moshiach, while at a nearby *farbrengen*, people were brokenhearted over the Rebbe’s harsh words.

“The Rebbe said he was crazy about Moshiach, and we Chassidim must take the Rebbe’s lead. If we open our eyes, we will

see how the world is ready for redemption and is ready to accept the *besuras ha’Geula*. We have the job of bringing this message to the world.”

Rabbi M.M. Gluckowsky spoke about why the Rebbe wanted to shake up the Chassidim. He made a comparison to the reply of the Rebbe Rashab to a man who had approached the Rebbe for a *bracha* and advice. He was told that the Rebbe couldn’t help him. But it was not said for a negative reason. Only after the Chassid left, brokenhearted, did he become a “vessel” for the *brachos*. “Likewise, with us. The Rebbe shook us up in order to make us vessels to prepare the world for Moshiach.”

“One way of doing this is by connecting as many Jews as possible to the Rebbe, especially through the *Igros Kodesh*, where we see so many miracles.”

Tankist Rabbi Elozor Kenig of Natzeret Ilit spoke about the *simcha* we must feel, which results from realizing how the Rebbe has thousands of *akshanim* (stubborn Chassidim) who are devoted to *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*.

S. DENIS, PARIS

Over 150 people gathered at the Chabad House in S. Denis, near Paris, to mark Chaf-Ches Nissan. The program was organized by Beis Moshiach of Paris, and began with the study of the *sicha* of 5751, led by Rabbi Reuven Matusof, who analyzed the *sicha* in depth. Following this, Rabbi Mendel Belinov, director of the Chabad House, said the Rebbe’s new *perek*, ending with the heartfelt proclamation of “*Yechi*” three times.

Other speakers included Rabbi Yoel Eidelman, *shaliach* and *maggid shiur* at the *yeshiva* in Brunoy, and Rabbi Eliyahu Dahan, *shaliach* and chief rabbi of the city of Lille. The evening included a raffle for a ticket to travel to the Rebbe, won by Rabbi Eliyahu Braun; a showing of different video clips of the Rebbe, including the *sicha* of Chaf-Ches Nissan; and a late-night *farbrengen*.

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER - YUD ALEF NISSAN FARBRENGEN BROADCAST LIVE TO THE ENTIRE WORLD

THOUSANDS OF CHASSIDIM, SHLUCHIM AND TMIMIM CELEBRATED THE REBBE'S 98TH BIRTHDAY IN 770 * THE FARBRENGEN WAS BROADCAST LIVE OVER THE INTERNET

On Motzaei Shabbos, the night of Yud-Alef Nissan, *Anash* and Tmimim participated in a *farbrengen* organized by the *gabbaim* of 770, the International Campaign to Bring Moshiach, and Merkaz Chabad HaOlami L'Kabalas Pnei Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

The emcee was *gabbai* Rabbi Menachem Gerlitzky, who called upon R' Moshe Teleshevsky to recite the Rebbe's new *perek Tehillim*. Rabbi Avrohom Osdoba, member of the Crown Heights *Beis Din* and the first speaker, spoke about the power of the birthday of the *nasi ha'dor*.

Rabbi Levi Garelik spoke about the significance of the Shabbos *HaGadol* that followed the birth of the Rebbe in 1902, based on a *sicha* in which the Rebbe says that the birth of the Jewish nation began on Yud Nissan.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary, member of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, focused on a *pasuk* in the Rebbe's new *perek Tehillim*. Rabbi Leibel Groner told a story about the Baal Shem Tov, as is customary on Motzaei Shabbos, and then spoke about the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*. He compared the Rebbe to Moshe Rabbeinu, who was told to remove his shoes, signifying his obligation to reach out to even the lowest and simplest Jews. We know that the Rebbe has reached out to every Jew with the *mitvza* campaigns, in order to awaken the Divine spark within world Jewry.

Rabbi Shalom Dovber Gutnick of Australia spoke about the Rebbe's transforming that spiritually barren continent into a place of Torah and Chassidus. The final speaker, Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson, spoke about the Rebbe's

eternality as *nasi ha'dor* and how this should be reflected in the lives of every one of us.

Rabbi Yaakov Herzog was thanked for organizing the wonderful event, along with the Drizin brothers, who



Some of the thousands of people who came to the Yud-Alef Nissan farbrengen



(From right to left:) Rabbis Shlomo Matusof, Chaikel Chanin, Leibel Groner, and S.Z. Gurary



(From right to left:) Rabbis Shalom Mendel Simpson, Shalom Dovber Gutnick, and Shmuel Plotkin

צילום: לאור אלמנטים

צילום: לאור אלמנטים



Rabbi Shalom Dovber Gutnick



Rabbi Leibel Groner



Rabbi S.Z. Gurary



Rabbi Avrohom Osdoba

contributed towards the expenses in memory of their father. After the official program, dozens of smaller *farbrengens* took place until quite late at night. The

evening's program was broadcast live over the Internet. Reuven Blau set up the equipment, which was sponsored by Meir Gutnick. Presently, it is possible to see

and hear what's going on in 770 live every day on the Internet at www.770live.org. We hope the Rebbe's *hisgalus* will be broadcast imminently to the entire world!

YUD ALEF NISSAN CELEBRATED IN PARIS

Beis Moshiach of Paris organized a *farbrengen* to mark the Rebbe's birthday on Yud-Alef Nissan. They rented a large hall and advertised the event throughout the city and its suburbs.

The evening began with a video of the Rebbe and portions of Yud-Alef Nissan *sichos* from previous years. These were simultaneously translated into French by Rabbi Chaim Melul. Then the Rebbe was shown encouraging the singing of "Yechi" on Yud-Alef Nissan 5753.

Rabbi Reuven Matusof, who chaired

the evening, called upon Rabbi Yitzchok Nemenov to read the new *perek* of the Rebbe, followed by "Yechi." Rabbi Pinchas

The Rosh Yeshiva of Brunoy, Rabbi Yechiel M.M. Kalmanson, explained the significance of the birthday of the *nasi ha'dor* according to *nigleh*, and reiterated that the *nasi ha'dor* is the Moshiach of the generation.

Afterwards, Rabbi Shmaryahu Matusof, *mashpia* in Brunoy, delivered a fiery speech about how the Rebbe lives on in eternal life. This was the impetus for the gathering to break out in singing "Yechi," which

quickly turned into medley of songs about Moshiach and Redemption.



Pashter led the learning of a *maamer* that was distributed that explains a number of verses from *perek* 99.

MIVTZA PESACH IN NEW YORK

EMPLOYEES OF THE JOINT, THE U.J.A. JEWISH FEDERATION, ISRAEL BONDS, THE EMBASSIES, THE CONSULATE, AND THE SECURITY DETAIL

"They did a fantastic job!" said Jonathan Roskay, general director of the U.J.A. and the Jewish Federation of New York, about the work of Tzeirei Agudas Chabad. "They brought *shmura matza* to hundreds of employees and workers of the Joint. They really showed us we are one nation."

"This is part of the Rebbe's work," replied Rabbi Shmuel Butman, director of Tzach.

"Chabad is concerned about every Jew," said Ambassador Dr. Yehuda Lankry, Israeli representative at the U.N. "We are truly thankful for the privilege of receiving the *shmura matza*."

"*Kol ha'kavod*," said Israel's General Consul in New York, Ambassador Shmuel Sisu. Ambassador Sisu noted his longstanding friendship with Chabad over the years and promised, "I will always be a friend of Chabad."

"They brought the spirit of Jewish awareness, which is very, very important," said the International President of Bonds who was a Knesset member during four governments, Gideon Pat, personally joining Rabbi Butman in his *matza* distribution. "As long as there are Jews who care about us, we will always stay on the right path."



"All Jews are responsible for one another."

Rabbi Shmuel Butman with Gideon Pat and Raffi Rothstein, one of the directors of International Bonds.

"It is the secret of our existence," said Rothstein.



“They bring Judaism to the public.”

In the picture on the left: Gidon Pat, president of Bonds, carries the boxes of matzos with Rabbi Butman for distribution among the workers. “As long as there are Jews who care about us, we will always stay on the right path.”

“The people at Chabad preserve the embers of Jewish souls.”

In the photo below: Rabbi Butman presents shmura matza to Head Consul of New York, Shmuel Sis. “I will always be a friend of Chabad.”



“To be concerned for every Jew.”

In the picture above: Rabbi Butman presenting shmura matza to Ambassador Dr. Yehuda Lankry, Israel’s representative to the U.N. Over 1,000 workers of the Joint, the U.J.A. Federation, the United Jewish Communities, Bonds, the embassies, the Consulate and the security detail received shmura matza for Pesach.

“One nation and joint responsibility for every Jew.”

Rabbi Butman presenting shmura matza to Mr. Jonathan Roskay, executive director of the Joint and Jewish Federation of New York, and to Rabbi Michael Paley, director of the Council of Synagogues.



RECOGNIZING THE CHOSEN PEOPLE IN JAPAN

EACH YEAR, ISRAELIS FLOCKED TO THE LEE FAMILY IN SAYTAMA, JAPAN, FOR A CELEBRATION CALLED LEIL HASEIDER, ALTHOUGH THERE WASN'T EVEN ONE SEIDER ITEM PRESENT * THIS YEAR THEY CONTACTED RABBI BINYAMIN EDERY, DIRECTOR OF THE CHABAD HOUSE IN JAPAN, AND FOUR TMIMIM WENT TO KASHER THE KITCHEN, CHANGE ALL THE KITCHEN UTENSILS, AND PREPARE A PROPER PESACH FOR TWO HUNDRED TOURISTS * IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE – THE LEE FAMILY ARE JAPANESE GENTILES – WHO UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE THE CHOSEN NATION AND THEIR ROLE IS TO ASSIST US IN FULFILLING TORAH AND MITZVOS * FROM THE DIARY OF ONE OF THE TMIMIM

When the Air Japan Boeing jet left the runway and headed towards New York, I thought to myself that the paradoxes of this place, Japan, were endless and beyond description, and they certainly could not be understood by someone who wasn't there. In general, the experiences we had in the past few days did not take place in the exile world we are used to, but in a world which has progressed towards the fulfillment of the prophecies of Redemption.

We landed at Narita, Japan's international airport, a few days before Pesach. From there we traveled by limousine bus, a tourist bus which brought us to the Chabad House in Tokyo. After a hearty meeting with Rabbi Binyamin Eder, the Rebbe MH"m's *shaliach* to Japan, who instructed us briefly about the upcoming days, we went to rest from our long trip.

The following evening, the son and son-in-law of Mr. Wabung Lee came to take

us to the family estate in the Saytama district, a two-hour drive from greater Tokyo. We immediately noticed how they

treated us with the utmost respect. They insisted on loading into the car all the paraphernalia necessary for the *seider* by



BEIS CHABAD JAPAN

Exactly half a year passed since Rabbi Binyamin Eder and his wife arrived and opened the Chabad House in Japan, land of the rising sun. In this brief span of time, Rabbi Eder has managed to accomplish much with the local community, and to forge close ties with all the community leaders and Jewish organizations.

Rabbi Eder dedicates most of his time to Torah classes and the Rebbe's *mitvzaim* among the local Jews and Israeli tourists who visit Tokyo. From time to time, Rabbi Eder travels to nearby cities to organize *mitvzaim* there, as well.

This past Pesach, Rabbi Eder organized three public *sedarim* with hundreds of people: in Tokyo, there were 120 participants; in Saytama, 200; and in Osaka, 40. There was another *seider* in Kobe with a few dozen people.

As a preparation for Pesach, there was a Yud-Alef Nissan *farbrengen* in which the participants resolved to help the work of the Chabad House. Pesach ended with

themselves. They didn't even let us carry our own suitcases. The long trip to Saytama was an excellent opportunity to speak to them face to face, directly and without a go-between, and try to understand why they were so enthusiastic about helping Jews.

"About ten years ago," began Mr. Kan, Mr. Lee's oldest son-in-law, "an Israeli tourist who worked in Saytama got entangled with the law and went to prison. My father-in-law, who knew the Israeli, managed to convince the court to lessen the punishment and to free him from jail after a brief time. After he was released, the Israeli and my father-in-law became close friends and he became a regular guest of the family. That's when my father-in-law first heard about Jews and Jewish holidays.

"My father-in-law is intelligent and he loves to get to the bottom of things. He began reading books about Jews and discovered that they are the Chosen People, and that G-d chose them to illuminate the world. He read in the Bible that in the perfect world after the Redemption everyone will recognize the Jewish nation, so he decided to help the process along. He's dedicated his life for the betterment of the Jewish nation.

"A year later, my father-in-law decided to celebrate the anniversary of his friend's release from prison. Since it was close to Chanuka, my father-in-law asked him to bring other Israeli friends to celebrate. The party was successful and my father-in-law decided to make a party for Pesach. We've been having these celebrations for ten years."

Rabbi Binyamin Edery arrived in Japan last Chanuka and opened the local Chabad House. In conversations with Israeli tourists he met in Tokyo, he learned about the unusual Chanuka and Pesach celebrations. He became good friends of the family. Rabbi Edery and his wife had long discussions with the Lee's and told them, among other things, that the Rebbe MH"M stated ten years ago that gentiles would begin to understand their role and would assist Jews in fulfilling Torah and

mitzvos.

When the Lee's were asked about the *kashrus* of the food they served the Israelis, it turned out they hardly knew anything about the subject and most of the food was definitely not kosher. For example, they knew that *matzos* were eaten on Pesach, and they even managed to get *matzos* each year, but the *matzos* as well as the other foods were served and cooked in their pots in which not only *chametz* was cooked, but non-kosher food as well.

At a meeting held a month before Pesach, Rabbi Edery brought up the topic



In the yard with some of the Lee's children

and explained to them that despite their good intentions, they were not permitted to serve the Israelis food cooked in non-kosher utensils. "If you truly want to help the Jewish people, you must make sure that the food you serve is kosher and permissible on Pesach," he said.

The family expressed interest in learning the details of *kashrus*. The result of this meeting was an agreement that the Rebbe's *shluchim* would arrange the *seider*, *kasher* the kitchen and supervise the

kashrus of the food. The Japanese family accepted all this quite seriously, and wrote the Rebbe a letter informing him of their decision and asking for a *bracha*.

Tmimim Dov Segal and Dovid Kopf, who are studying for *smicha* in Milano, arrived in Japan a week and a half before Pesach. They purchased the equipment they needed to *kasher* the kitchen and went to the Lee's home. The two boys worked all day, cleaning and scouring the kitchen and dining room. They *kashered* the counters, faucets, and sinks and covered everything with heavy-duty silver foil.

By the end of the day, the kitchen was *kosher la'mehadrin*, similar to a Lubavitcher's home. They didn't have to *kasher* the pots, because the family decided to buy new pots and pans for Pesach. Before returning to Tokyo, the boys gave the Mrs. Lee a list of products she could buy.

Two days later we arrived from New York – Avrohom Veiner, Avrohom Reinetz, and Boaz Sharon – and we brought fish and meat, *matzos* and wine, a total of a few hundred kilograms.

We arrived at Saytama late at night. The sky was clear and by the light of the nearly full moon I saw and was impressed by the large three-story house. Surrounding the porches I noticed wooden fences, which were made in the shape of *menoros*, one connected to the next, and I noticed the giant *Magen Dovid* on the roof. Later, I heard from Mr. Lee that he had built the house just at the time he had met the Jews. In his enthusiasm, he built dozens of Jewish symbols into his home. The *menoros* and *magen Dovid* are only some of the symbols. There are also dozens of Jewish pictures which adorn the walls, and even an illuminated sign that says "*Baruch HaBa Melech HaMoshiach*."

In the entranceway of the house we were asked to follow the usual Japanese custom of removing our shoes and replacing them with slippers. We were graciously brought to the guest suite, where two beautiful bedrooms awaited us.

Along the way, we managed to catch a glimpse of the many tables which filled the two large dining rooms, all of them covered exactly according to the instructions we had left them.

It was only the following morning when we went to burn the *chametz* in the nearby forest that I was able to take in the enormity of the house, and the spacious grounds upon which it was located. The transition from Tokyo, a bustling city in which over twenty million people are squeezed into tiny apartments, to Saytama, which is built in a picturesque village setting where each family has a spacious piece of land alongside lakes and forests, gave us a good feeling of expansiveness, which was fitting for the festival of freedom.

We spent Erev Pesach in the kitchen carefully supervising the cooking and frying and the preparations for the *seider*. One of the *bachurim* went outside to grate the *maror* in the fresh air, while Mr. Lee sat down beside him, wanting to learn more about the holiday and its *mitzvos*, and about the special foods we prepare.

Every few hours we were reminded of the great esteem in which the family held us, and the tremendous efforts they made to accommodate us and to ensure that the *seider* would be done properly. When we asked them to get us some washing cups for *netilas yadayim*, and we explained how we would be washing our hands twice during the evening, they sent a family member on the errand. He returned after half an hour with thirty washing cups and basins so that everybody would be able to wash at the table. Later that evening, they sent around bottles of water to refill the empty cups.

About an hour before *Yom Tov*, we noticed Mr. Lee connecting amplifiers and microphones to a sophisticated sound system, and preparing tapes of Israeli music. Although we had discussed *kashrus* extensively, we hadn't explained that this would be prohibited. We told him it wasn't allowed, and within five minutes it all disappeared.



The final preparations for Yom Tov



Burning the chametz in the forest near the lake:

From left to right: Boaz Sharon, Dovid Kopf, Dov Segal, Avrohom Reinetz, and Mr. Lee

Night was almost upon us by the time we finished our final preparations. The tables were set, and dozens of Israelis began to show up. The family told us that in previous years they had nearly one hundred guests, but this year they expected a few more. The few more grew from minute to minute, and when we began the *seider*, there were nearly 200

people! Even the gentiles agreed with us that the secret to success had to do with the fact that this time it was a real *seider*, *kosher v'sameiach*.

It wasn't the first time I was running a public *seider*, but this year it was really quite moving. Two hundred Israelis, who in previous years had spent the evening

eating non-kosher food with no real *seider*, participated this year in a real *seider* with *matzos*, *seider* plates and wine, and open *Hagadas*.

There were all sorts of Jews from all sorts of backgrounds. There were many tourists, but there were also Israelis who had been living in Japan for years. There was a sailor from the U.S. Navy whose base was nearby, and there was an elderly couple who had come to visit their son who lived in Japan. There were businessmen stuck in Japan for Pesach, and even four entire families with children who had come touring and had decided there was nothing better than a *seider* with Chabad.

We read the *Hagada* together, paragraph by paragraph, with each guest given the honor of reading aloud. I explained everything as we went. When we got up to "*Ma Nishtana*," I called upon one of the children, the six-year-old son of

Israelis living in Rome who had come on vacation to Japan.

When we got up to the paragraph that says, "We screamed to Hashem, the G-d of our fathers," we asked all present to use this auspicious time to scream and beg Hashem to bring the Redemption immediately. I was greatly moved by their cries of "*Ad masai!*" and "We Want Moshiach Now!" A flame of *emuna* and *bitachon* flickered strongly as we continued with the next paragraph, "and Hashem heard our voices."

It was inevitable that the night in which we celebrate our redemption from *Mitzrayim* would be dedicated to strengthening our *emuna* in the imminent revelation of Moshiach with the final Redemption. Indeed, most of the songs we sang during the meal were about Redemption and Moshiach. We were additionally inspired by the fact that it was a Japanese gentile family who had

organized the *seider* for us, a literal fulfillment of the prophets: "And kings will be your nursemaids," and "Gentiles will go in your light." The *seider* ended close to midnight with songs of *Hallel* and Redemption.

Sunday morning just before we left, Mrs. Lee approached us, bowed, and said, "On behalf of the entire family, I want to thank you for giving us the privilege of making the *seider* as G-d wants. We know that you, the sons of Abraham, are the light of the world; you are the chosen people and G-d gave you the key to guard the world and to bring redemption to the world."

When we got into the taxis, which waited for us in front of the house, our hosts saw us off. Parents and children followed us silently, as though their future and the future of the entire world depended on us.

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