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Beis Moshiach
The International Weekly heralding the Coming of Moshiach

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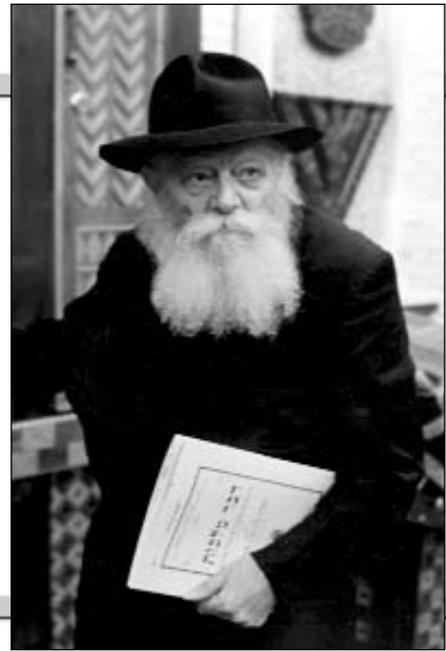
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VICTORY IS REVEALED

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



THE BLESSING DELIVERED BY THE REBBE SHLITA UPON RECEIVING THE PA'N KLALI, EREV ROSH HASHANA

1. Because of the constraints of time upon the community, this is not the appropriate time to read the Pa'N. Before G-d, all the particular requests mentioned here are revealed. He who hears the blessings of His nation Israel will surely fulfill the prayers of His people from His full, open, holy, and generous hand. In this manner, all the particular requests of the Jewish people will be fulfilled in regard to material and spiritual matters, fusing the material and the spiritual together.

May it be a year of light (In the Hebrew, the Rebbe's blessings were given in alphabetical order), a year of blessing, a year of redemption, a year of joy, a year of glory and splendor, a year of good company, a year of great merits, a year of good and long life, a year of great and revealed good, a year of good promises, a year of sustenance, a year of learning with outstanding success, a year when the desires of each one's heart will be fulfilled together with those of the entire

Jewish people thus endowing them with the power of the community, a year of great miracles of both an individual and communal nature, a year of help from above in all matters both material and spiritual, a year of strength for each Jew, that his Judaism can be expressed with more strength and power, a year of redemption, a year of *tzedaka*, a year of holiness, a year of walking upright, a year of exaltation, a year of happiness and rejoicing, a year of Torah, a year of *t'filla* (prayer), and a year of *t'shuva*.

A year when G-d will fulfill the desires of each Jew and the entire Jewish people in a generous and abundant manner including the most fundamental desire for which we are constantly waiting, the coming of the ultimate and complete Messianic Redemption. Then, we will proceed, "with our youth and with our elders, with our sons and with our daughters," all those who gave in a Pan and go together with their families and their students to Eretz Yisroel, to Yerushalayim, to the *Beis HaMikdash*, and to the Holy of Holies.

Then, the entire Jewish people will celebrate Rosh HaShana in Eretz Yisroel. Even there, Rosh HaShana could be celebrated for two days depending on when the witnesses come. However, the two days are considered as one continuum. This will lead to continuous life, the era when, "those that lie in the dust will arise and sing," and with the Rebbe Rayatz among us, we will proceed to Eretz Yisroel, to Yerushalayim, and to the *Beis HaMikdash*, "the Sanctuary of G-d established by Your hands." May it be in the immediate future.

YOM KIPPUR, 5751

1. Our Rabbis taught, "Begin with blessing." Although this teaching is relevant the entire year, it is of particular consequence in the days connected with Rosh HaShana, and especially on Erev Yom Kippur. The most appropriate blessing is that with which G-d commanded the priests to bless the Jews. This blessing should be recited quoting the Biblical text exactly and in a loud voice.

This blessing includes all matters of fundamental importance and also, those matters that are not of

fundamental importance. The priestly blessings create a new Divine will as we say in the conclusion of Shmoneh Esrei: "May it be Your will." Indeed, we see the importance of these blessings is manifest in that they were chosen – in contrast to the Shma, the Ten Commandments, or any other Torah passage – to be included in the blessings over the Torah recited each morning. [The Rebbe Shlita recited the priestly blessings in their entirety, concluding with the phrase:] "And they shall place My name on the children of Israel and I shall bless them."

There are two interpretations regarding to whom the final word "them" refers: One opinion maintains that it refers to the priests. The other opinion maintains that it refers to the Jewish people, i.e., G-d states that He will fulfill the blessing conveyed by the priests. These blessings, thus, include all possible blessings as obvious from their association with the morning blessings where all the needs of the Jewish people are mentioned.

The power of these blessings are enhanced by the nature of the present days, a time when G-d "is close" and therefore, all negative matters can be transformed into merits. May this be a year filled with all possible sorts of blessings and success. [The Rebbe Shlita proceeded to recite a series of blessings beginning with each of the letters of the Alef Beis.] These blessings include all possible blessings.

May it be a year of praise when "Every soul will praise the L-rd. Halleluka." This is associated with the Psalm of this year which includes the verse, "I found David, My servant. I have anointed him with holy oil," and concludes, "Blessed be the L-rd, forever. Amen and Amen."

Our Sages associate the latter verse with victory. Generally, our

victory in the judgment on Yom Kippur is revealed on the holiday of Sukkos. However, since this is a year of "I will show you wonders," that victory is revealed at present, on Yom Kippur eve, and in particular, after the Mincha service recited then. Indeed, in that service, we add a special prayer that is also in alphabetical order. Indeed, that prayer mentions each letter of the Alef Beis twice.

As the Rebbe Maharash (whose yahrtzeit is held in the coming days, the thirteenth of Tishrei) explains,

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the repetition of the letters is connected with the Messianic redemption. [Recently, the maamer explaining this concept was printed and printing, as the Tzemach Tzedek explains, preserves a concept for generations. For this reason, the Mitteler Rebbe made a great effort to print Chassidic texts, explaining in a manner of "the broadening of the river," the seminal points of the Alter Rebbe's teachings which were in a manner of "A maskil of Eitan HaEzrachi." Note the explanations given by the Baal Shem Tov, the

Maggid, and the Alter Rebbe on the latter phrase. These concepts were amplified and explained by the Previous Rebbe.]

These and all other concepts will be revealed in the Messianic age when G-d will "again (Yosef) stretch forth His arm to take possession of the remnant of His people... [even those] from the islands of the sea." Furthermore, this will be in a manner of Yitzchok, "Whoever hears will be happy for me," as the verse states, "Then [in the Messianic age], our mouths will be filled with joy."

May all the above be revealed immediately, even before the Kol Nidrei prayers, even before the meal preceding the fast of Yom Kippur. Indeed, this will serve as preparation for the ultimate feast of the Leviathan and the Wild Ox which will be served in the Messianic age. May we already have a foretaste of that revelation just as on Friday, it is customary to taste the Shabbos foods.

The above is particularly relevant, in this a year in which, "I will show you wonders"; particularly since it follows "a year of miracles," which in turn followed a year associated with the release of debts, which in turn followed "a year of happiness" which was also a Hakhel year. May this lead to the time when we will be able to fulfill the mitzva of Hakhel as commanded, gathering together in the Beis HaMikdash to hear the king read the Torah. As the Rambam writes, this experience was tantamount to hearing the Torah given "from the mouth of the Almighty."

[The Rebbe again began enumerating blessings in alphabetical order, concluding with the letter Samech] that it be a year of sayata d'Shmaya, "help from Above" to understand "the new Torah which will emerge from Me." There will be aspects that we will be able to

understand directly. Other aspects, however, will require “help from Above.”

May all the above be internalized on this the ninth of Tishrei, becoming – to use a metaphor associated with eating – part of one’s flesh and blood. Indeed, in this manner, the ninth of Tishrei complements Yom Kippur and when the two are associated together, we have a fusion of physicality and spirituality.

May the Yom Kippur which will shortly begin be celebrated in the Beis HaMikdash. Then, it can be assumed that we will follow the pattern of Yom Kippur which followed the dedication of the First Beis HaMikdash when the people ate and drank and afterwards, a heavenly voice told them, “You are all assured of a portion in the World to Come.”

Then, we will partake of the Leviathan and the Wild Ox and will witness the fulfillment of the prophecy, “Those who lie in the dust will arise and sing.” This will include the Previous Rebbe and the entire Jewish people, beginning from the Patriarchs, indeed, including Adam and Chava who are buried together with them in Chevron.

Thus, may the very next moment be – not a moment of exile, but rather – the first moment of the ultimate and complete redemption brought by Moshiach and thus, we will not have to wait for “Next year in Jerusalem.” Instead, immediately, we will all proceed to Eretz Yisroel, to Jerusalem, to the Beis HaMikdash, and to the Holy of Holies where the High Priest will carry out his service. Then, Eretz Yisroel will expand and include all the other lands, in particular the synagogues, houses of study, and houses of good deeds established there and may this come about in the immediate future.

There is another point which is relevant to the present occasion. All

of the days of the Ten Days of T’shuva are connected with T’shuva Ilaa (the higher dimension of t’shuva). Similarly, throughout the year, Shabbos is connected with this quality. Therefore, when Yom Kippur falls on Shabbos, this dimension will surely be expressed. This, in turn, will lead to “the age which is all Shabbos and rest forever.”

Similarly, this is connected with tz’daka, for tz’daka brings about the advent of this age. This is connected with the tz’daka to be performed by G-d. Our Sages declared that G-d performed an act of tz’daka by dispersing the Jews among the nations. Similarly, He will perform another act of Tz’daka and gather them in, collecting each individual

***Although this world is
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Jew, his family, and his portion in the world.

(The emphasis on family is also connected with the service of Yom Kippur. Although the High Priest was separated from his wife seven days before Yom Kippur, nevertheless, to perform the Yom Kippur service, it was necessary that he have a wife. This will be brought into actual deed through eating the feast prepared by the Jewish wives on this Yom Kippur eve.)

May this feast include the feast of the Leviathan and the Wild Ox and

may we, led by Moshiach, proceed to Eretz Yisroel, to Jerusalem, and to the Beis HaMikdash. “May our eyes see Your return to Zion in mercy,” when the entire Jewish people – all the inhabitants of Eretz Yisroel – will return to it, and may this come about immediately.

Blessing of Erev Yom Kippur to
the Students of
the Yeshiva before Kol Nidrei

2. [The Rebbe Shlita began by reciting the priestly blessing and then continued:] All the heartfelt blessings conveyed after the Mincha prayers apply to each of you as well. In particular, they are relevant to Yeshiva students who are able to devote themselves entirely to Torah study without any financial concerns. (This is possible because their material needs are taken care of by their parents or the administrators of the Yeshiva so that they would be free to devote themselves to Torah and mitzvos without distractions.)

This approach will cause the natural order itself to assist them. In regard to the promises of material blessing found in the Torah, the Rambam explains that a Jew is given material blessings in order to allow him to involve himself in spiritual activities with greater strength and intensity.

This is particular relevant to Yeshiva students for Torasam umnasam, “their Torah is their livelihood,” i.e., every aspect of Torah they study contributes to their livelihood in this material world. Although this world is the lowest of all the worlds, it is within the material existence of this world that G-d’s essence, the True Being, is found. This, in turn, influences and effects our material existence in this world.

Surely, Yeshiva students need no further explanation of these concepts, particularly, since Yeshiva study is

always carried out in groups, bringing out the unique advantage of communal study. [Thus, any doubts can be clarified by discussing the matter with others.]

The above is enhanced by the influence of the present year, 5751, which follows 5750, "a Year of Miracles." Miracles refer to a pattern of conduct which transcends the natural order. This is surely relevant to Yeshiva students whose study of Torah lifts their conduct above the natural order.

The designation of 5750 as "a Year of Miracles" was accepted throughout the Jewish people. Thus, it has the power of a decision of Torah law.

A further dimension is contributed to our service this year by the fact that Yom Kippur – which

the Torah calls Shabbos Shabbason – falls on Shabbos. Shabbos is a day when "all your work is completed." May this add to the Shabbos-like attitude of calm and fulfillment and thus bring about an increase in the study of Torah.

May this also bring about the ultimate and complete redemption when – to quote Chapter 89 of T'hillim – "I found David, My servant, I have anointed him with holy oil," and as the chapter concludes, "Blessed be the L-rd, forever. Amen and Amen." Our Sages associate this with victory. Netzach, the Hebrew for "victory" is also associated with eternity which will be realized in this world with the Resurrection of the Dead.

May this be a year when all the blessings associated with the Alef-

beis as printed in the Siddurim will be fulfilled for every Jew. (Since the Siddur is relevant to every Jew, man, woman, and child, the blessings it contains are also of universal relevance.) And may the entire Jewish people from all the four corners of the world proceed, in the immediate future to Eretz Yisroel, Jerusalem, the Beis HaMikdash, and the Holy of Holies.

AFTER HAVDALA ON MOTZAEI YOM KIPPUR

3. [After Havdala on Motzaei Yom Kippur, the Rebbe Shlita said:] The Shulchan Aruch states that after Yom Kippur, it should be announced: "Go and eat your bread in happiness." This is connected with the upcoming festival, the season of our happiness. [Afterwards, the Rebbe began his father's Hakafos niggun].

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THE RETURN POLICY ON A DEFECTIVE SOUL

BY BORUCH MEKUR

The ark was opened and the Torah scrolls were brought out before the hushed crowd. The solemn tune of "Kol Nidrei" welled forth from the silence. Yom Kippur had finally begun...

When the evening services came to a close and the congregants began to file out of *shul*, a distraught-looking young man, a student at the rabbinical college nearby, spotted his teacher in the crowd and approached him. "Rabbi," he said, "am I ever glad to see you. Remember you taught us – in the name of the great mystic, the Ari Zal – that 'all those who do not cry in the Ten Days of Repentance (the days between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur) have defective souls?'"

"I suppose you haven't cried yet?" his teacher inquired somewhat in jest.

"Not a drop."

"Don't worry," the Rabbi said, "Yom Kippur has just begun. You still have time."

The following morning, after hearing the cantor's stirring rendition of the Yom Kippur morning prayers, and after reading in the Torah of the death of the righteous children of Aharon HaKohen, the student turned to his teacher a second time: "Still nothing doing, Rabbi. My heart must be made of stone."

But again his teacher tried to reassure him, "you still have the entire afternoon. Mark my words, before Yom Kippur is over, your heart will open up. For sure you don't have a defective

soul."

But the Afternoon Services went by without a tear and the student began to become anxious, thinking, "Maybe the Rabbi was wrong. Maybe I do have a defective soul!"

The student prayed and prayed, but to no avail. Despite his efforts he felt far from being moved to tears. He sought to console himself thinking that his efforts alone must be very precious in the eyes of the Alm-ghty; yet the thought of having a defective soul was overwhelming.

And then it was time for the N'ila Service, the last prayers of Yom Kippur, the time when the entire year's fate is sealed, the time when the gates of Heaven are about to be "locked" (*naul*, as in *N'ila*) – those souls that

have found merit are "locked in," their fate sealed for the good; and those souls who have not found merit are "locked out."

The student prayed and prayed, but to no avail. Despite his efforts he felt far from being moved to tears. He sought to console himself thinking that his efforts alone must be very precious in the eyes of the Alm-ghty; yet the thought of having a defective soul was overwhelming.

Even throughout the last few moments of Yom Kippur, when he joined the congregation in the cry, "HEAR O ISRAEL THE L-RD OUR G-D, THE L-RD IS ONE!" and "BLESSED IS THE NAME OF HIS GLORIOUS KINGSHIP FOREVER AND EVER!" and, "THE L-RD IS G-D!" and he heard the final blast of the *shofar* – even through all of this his eyes remained dry and his heart remained closed.

With only a few seconds to go, he turned to his Rabbi in despair.

The Rabbi paused for a moment to think, and then he gave the diagnosis, "I'm sorry, I must have been wrong. It appears that you do have a defective soul."

Finally, the student broke down in tears and cried like a baby, and his heart opened up to Hashem.

* * *

How is it fair that every Jew is expected to cry in the Ten Days of Repentance? Despite the fact that these days begin with Rosh HaShana – when

(Continued on page 10.)

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE DAY ITSELF ATONES

Now that we've arrived at the awesome day of Yom Kippur, the day when our fate is sealed for an entire year – “who will live and who will die...who will be poor and who will be rich” – in light of this, there is some good news and there is some bad news.

The good news appears in the form of a very accommodating opinion put forth in the Gemara: “Whether one has repented or not,” says Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, “Yom Kippur atones for sin.”

Very optimistic. Very good news.

The bad news is that the law actually follows the alternative opinion expressed in the Gemara, the majority opinion, the opinion of the (rest of the Talmudic) Sages who reject this view, insisting that “Yom Kippur only atones for penitents.”

Very demanding. And it doesn't stop there. The Sages also require that the laws of Yom Kippur be properly observed (including the prohibitions of eating and drinking, anointing, wearing leather shoes, as well as the practice of abstention) to effect the atonement of the day.

And this is true even according to the more lenient opinion of Rabbi; although he maintains that Yom Kippur atones for sin even without repentance, he, nevertheless, agrees with the Sages that it only atones for those who observe the day's prohibitions.

Rabbi and the Sages also agree on another point. Once the prerequisites are met to merit the atonement of Yom Kippur, it is the day itself that atones. A higher power of atonement is attained on Yom Kippur than that which is attainable by one's own efforts at any time throughout the year (including one's own efforts on Yom Kippur). A person can repent all year-round and atone for his sins to whatever extent that he is capable relative to his efforts, yet the atonement of Yom Kippur is on a higher level altogether.

Simply speaking, repentance means to regret the sins that one has done and resolving to improve one's conduct in the future. The penitent is thereby cleansed of the pleasure he had invested in the prohibited

behavior and of the blemish that the sin had caused his soul in severing his connection to G-d.

True repentance even causes the sins themselves to be seen in a positive light; for the penitent acquires a genuine thirst for G-d, reaffirming his connection to Him.

According to this logic of how repentance effects atonement, it is difficult to understand how Yom Kippur itself could accomplish the same thing – and to a far greater extent (and especially according to the opinion of Rabbi, who holds that Yom Kippur atones irrespective of repentance).

So to understand this we must first take a closer look at the result of proper atonement, which is the reaffirmation of our connection to G-d. We can speak of our connection with G-d as existing on various levels:

1. The connection we establish by doing G-d's will, keeping the *mitzvos* and accepting upon ourselves the Yoke of Heaven.

2. A connection with G-d that transcends our keeping of the *mitzvos*. This is a deeper level of connection revealed by repentance – that despite the fact that we rebelled against G-d's will, a sincere repentance reaffirms our connection to Him. And this revelation washes away the blemishes caused by

cutting ourselves off from G-d by transgressing His will.

3. The essential connection to G-d that is inherent to every Jew. This level is not accessible in virtue of following G-d's will, nor is it accessible in virtue of repentance; it exists simply in virtue of the essence of the Jew's soul, which is one with G-d.

Since this essential connection cannot be accessed through our own efforts, it is also not severed through our lack of effort. It is, therefore, within the power of Yom Kippur to reaffirm this level of essential connection to G-d, regardless of past transgressions, by revealing the essence of the Jew. And, of consequence, any blemishes in our souls are instantly nullified and atoned for.

(Adapted from Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, pp. 1149-53)

According to this logic of how repentance effects atonement, it is difficult to understand how Yom Kippur itself could accomplish the same thing – and to a far greater extent.

we hear the cry of the *shofar* and crown the Alm-ghty as King of the Universe – and they continue through Yom Kippur – when we embitter ourselves through fasting, confession, and repentance to atone for our sins – we might feel that, nevertheless, we are still not so holy, we are still not so in tune with these matters to be affected by them to the point of tears. Only a *tzaddik*, only one who is completely righteous, could be guaranteed to be sincere enough in his repentance to be moved to tears. So how is this expected of the average Jew?

Would you believe that the Rebbe asks the exact same question – only in reverse! How is it fair that a *tzaddik* is expected to cry in the Ten Days of Repentance? It makes sense to say that a person who has transgressed at some point in the year has something to cry about – that is, if only he would take a moment to think about how his sin severs his connection to G-d, his true source of life, and how this creates the perception of distance from the Omnipresent – but someone who is completely righteous has no sins to repent. Therefore, how is he expected to cry in the Ten Days of Repentance?

At first glance, we might want to answer that the *tzaddik* is only moved to tears in the Ten Days of Repentance on account of the great joy he experiences in this holy time, when G-d is said to be especially accessible, as it says, “seek G-d when He is to be found, call out to Him when He is close.”

But this answer alone is not enough, because it does not fit in with the saying of the Ari Zal that “all those who do not cry...have defective souls.” This saying groups all those who do not cry throughout the Ten Days of Repentance in a single category, implying that every single Jew, regardless of his righteousness, is expected to cry in a like manner during this time. It is not enough to say that one group cries out of ecstatic bliss in their union with G-d, while the

other group grieves over their sins and their distance from G-d.

Perhaps the *tzaddik* mourns during the Ten Days of Repentance over the fact that he was once in Heaven delighting in his Creator in the most sublime way imaginable, and now that he has “descended from his lofty place and became corporeal,” he is forced to serve Hashem in a much more

We might feel that we are still not so holy, we are still not so in tune with these matters to be affected by them to the point of tears. Only a tzaddik, only one who is completely righteous, could be guaranteed to be sincere enough in his repentance to be moved to tears. So how is this expected of the average Jew?

mundane way than before. The emotional rapture with which he once served Hashem was far more pronounced when he was in Heaven, for a physical body simply cannot endure such intense delight. So the *tzaddik* grieves over his distance from Hashem on account of his descent from Heaven, just as the simple Jew grieves over his distance from Hashem on account of his sins.

But this explanation also falls short, because the *tzaddik* knows that it is G-d's will that he should temporarily leave his Heavenly abode to serve Him in the physical world. And despite the fact that the experience of G-d is less pronounced in the physical realm, he is, nevertheless, following the will of G-d, and he, therefore, maintains his bond with G-d in spite of the descent. Hence, this is no reason to bring the *tzaddik* to tears.

The Rebbe elaborates that while the soul is sojourning in the corporeal world, although it is serving Hashem according to His will by doing so, it still undergoes a descent, and the descent is for the sake of a subsequent ascent. The *tzaddik* is bitter that he has not yet completed his task, the ascent. For as he exists in the physical world, he appears to be separate and distant from Hashem (even if it is only in the most subtle way). Therefore, during the Ten Days of Repentance, when G-d is said to be “close,” the *tzaddik* is confronted with his present distance from G-d, a descent, which causes him to cry bitterly.

And specifically then, when he grieves over his condition, his temporary distance from G-d, the ultimate elevation is achieved. For this is the greatest possible expression of the unity of G-d – that even when he is steeped in his mission in the physical world the *tzaddik* “seeks” and “calls out” to G-d.

And this experience is not limited just to *tzaddikim*, for even the simple Jew experiences this kind of grief, crying over his distance from G-d.

But ultimately, with the coming of Moshiach, G-d will “wipe away the tears from every face,” and we will experience the greatest unity with G-d – specifically here in the physical world – the pure and boundless joy of the true and complete Redemption.

(Adapted from Likkutei Sichos vol. 9, pp. 206-11.)

THE MOST JOYOUS DAYS OF THE YEAR

BY RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK GINSBERG, MASHPIA, YESHIVAS TOMCHEI T'MIMIM – LUBAVITCH, K FAR CHABAD

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



The nervous and fearful approach to Elul stems from the general outlook on the connection between the Jew and G-d as a mere “work agreement.” G-d creates us and gives us life, health, and sustenance, and in return, He demands that we toil in the study of Torah and the performance of mitzvos. When we do not fulfill our share of that agreement as is fitting, we become worried and concerned about how G-d will relate to us. Chassidus changes this approach. It reveals the eternal connection between the Jew and his Creator, and thus, these are not sad days, rather the most joyous days of the year.

In connection with Shabbos Slichos, we will begin this week with a portion of a letter in the *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rayatz in which he relates the well-known story about the essence of “Slichos” (Vol. 5, from p. 437):

The *chassid*, R. Shmuel Munkes, of blessed memory, was once on his way to visit the Alter Rebbe in Liozna, when he stopped at a crossroads inn

(“*kretshme*”) during Slichos. At night, the innkeeper and his wife got up to say Slichos at the nearby village, and woke up R. Shmuel Munkes to go with them.

R. Shmuel Munkes asked the innkeeper, “What’s Slichos?”

“Look at this,” said the innkeeper’s wife, “a man who appears old enough to be a Torah scholar, a

melamed, or a *dayan*, doesn’t know what Slichos is! Slichos is when we go to *shul* and ask from Almighty G-d that the fields will produce good grass as fodder for the animals, which will produce milk and butter, and the land will grow crops so we may eat bread, fruits, and vegetables.”

“Feh!” R. Shmuel Munkes responded. “*Es iz a cherpa! Alte leit zahln opshtein in mitn nacht betn esn!*” (How disgraceful! Elderly people getting up in the middle of the night to ask for food!)

The Rebbe Rayatz continues: *B’sippur zeh shpigelt zich ahp di menshheit bichlal un Yiddishkeit bifrat* (This story is a reflection of human nature in general and Judaism in particular). Not by bread alone – bodily and physical needs – does man live. Rather, every living Jew, whether man or woman, has a purpose for which G-d brought his soul down from the highest peak of the loftiest and purest worlds, filled with His glorious, radiant, and holy light in its most revealed state, to the deep pit of this physical world, filled with thorns and thistles, which entice and seduce with a variety of different tricks away from the path of Torah and *mitzvos*.

For this purpose, Divine providence brings man from country to country, from city to city, from place to place, to the location that has been destined for that person in order to illuminate him with the light of Torah and *mitzvos*. And Divine Providence arranges all types of opportunities for the person to complete his purpose. But along with this, there are also a number of delays that the person must overcome in order to fulfill his purpose.

It is written, "And he saw the place from afar" – *m'rachok* without a *Vav*, indicating the distance (*merchak*). As our Sages explain, "Behold, the Satan, who could not break Avrohom or Yitzchak, begins to create difficulties for them on the way, such as a river in the middle of the road, large rocks and boulders, a high mountain, thorns and thistles – all with the intention of driving them further from their destination. And even though Avrohom recognized the place, as a cloud hovered upon the mountain, the evil inclination drove them further away through a variety of evil devices..." "For the children of Israel are Mine as servants, they are My servants," said Hashem, our G-d. And this is our glory among all the nations on the face of the earth, and this is our purpose in the world, and it is incumbent upon all of us to fulfill our obligation, each and every one of us according to his level.

Every Jew serves in his place to the best of his ability, with love for [the fulfillment of] the *mitzvos*, the spreading of Torah, and love for his fellow Jew. And every Jew has the obligation and the ability to awaken [others] and to make an environment of light, Torah, and *mitzvos*, for the heart of Israel is open and filled with brotherly love.

Service of this type not only lessens the harshness of life, but brings sweetness to life – *aza avoda macht zis dem leben*.

* * *

"Chai Elul brings *chayus* into the entire service of the month of Elul." We can clearly see the great innovation of *chassidus* in the manner it relates to the month of Elul, the days of *Slichos*, Rosh HaShana, and particularly, the High Holy Days. In contrast, there are those who have not merited to experience the light of *chassidus*, even if they are G-d-fearing Jews in every way.

Someone who has not learned *chassidus*, even if he fervently believes in G-d with true *yiras Shamayim*, looks upon these days with concern and trepidation. Here comes G-d, Creator and Ruler of the world, in

Someone who has not learned chassidus, even if he fervently believes in G-d with true yiras Shamayim, looks upon these days with concern and trepidation...

preparation to the coming new year, to judge each and every one of us, the people of Israel and the whole world. He comes to give each person what he deserves – to reward those who conducted themselves in a fitting manner, and to punish those who did not.

We will soon stand in judgment – a most fateful judgment that will determine everything that will be during the coming year in every aspect, materially and spiritually, "who will live and who will die, who will benefit and who will suffer," etc. This judgment will be made by He Who knows all and from Whom it is

impossible to hide anything. A judgment of absolute justice by the One Who gives everyone exactly what they deserve, a judgment no one can possibly evade. Neither bribes nor excuses will be accepted from those who did not fulfill their mission. Each person is given sufficient strength to do so, as "G-d does not request based on His strength, but theirs," the strength of each individual. Each person knows where he is holding in his *avodas Hashem*, how much he is lacking, how much he did not do what is required of him.

When we stand before such a judgment, it is quite natural for a person to be filled with fear and concern. He will make every possible effort to repent and repair his misdeeds so he may be inscribed on the Day of Judgment for a good and sweet new year with all the revealed blessings G-d may bestow.

Therefore, the days of the month of Elul have always been days of awe, the fateful days before the judgment. It is during these days that if we are among those who choose life, we must return and become reconciled with the Creator and Ruler of the world, Who now stands to determine our fate for the coming year in every detail.

All of this is true and is even explained and extrapolated upon at length in *chassidus*. However, it is difficult to say that these things actually bring a person to a feeling of joy and excitement. On the contrary, just a little contemplation on this point brings a person to bitterness, even sadness. He will say to himself: How do I know that I will really do as I should? I know that last year, in spite of all the best intentions, I did not meet up to my obligations. Who knows what will happen this time and what will be decreed upon me as a result?

Therefore, Jews with an especially serious and G-d-fearing nature entered this month with a very disconsolate and worried look. There were even those who refrained from making weddings or other festive celebrations during these days. Some would cut themselves off completely from worldly matters and tried in every way possible to act in an appropriate manner at this time. To beg and plead from the Creator that despite our sins and transgressions, He should give us another chance to mend our ways, even though we may not deserve it. We ask for His mercy to give us a good year with all that we need – children, health, sustenance, and much success.

A person who knows that he is actually standing before so fateful a judgment will not remain tranquil even for a moment (the positive aspect of all this). He exerts all his strength to do *t'shuva*, to take the right path, to beg from the Creator that He will forgive him. But he is fearful and apprehensive about what will happen next.

If we could take a step back and give him the option of choosing, he would prefer to pass up on the whole story of Elul and the High Holy Days that has caused him such fear and anguish.

While all this is true and even explained and extrapolated upon at length in *chassidus*, nevertheless, *chassidim* would relate to this sad type of “Elul” with absolute scorn. Kotzker *chassidim*, for example, who were not startled by sharp and extreme expressions, used to say about such an “Elul,” “*V'HaElilim* [And the idols; in a Galician accent, “Elul” is pronounced “Elil”] shall be utterly destroyed.”

This approach stems from the general outlook on the connection between the Jew and G-d as a mere “work agreement.” G-d creates us and

gives us life, health, and sustenance, and in return, He demands that we toil in the study of Torah and the performance of *mitzvos*. When we do not fulfill our share of that agreement as is fitting, we become worried and concerned about how “the employer” will relate to us (“your employer, who will pay you your wages”) and what His reaction will be to all the failures and problems we have caused, upon which we shall be judged.

Chassidus changes the whole approach and its entire relation to G-d. To put it more correctly, it

When Rosh HaShana comes, this is not just the Day of Judgment, but primarily Coronation Day. This is the day that we request and beg from our Father in Heaven “reign over the whole world in Your glory.”

changes nothing; rather, it reveals the true reality. It reveals the eternal connection between the Jew and his Creator, stemming from an entirely different, even opposite, approach to these days – the High Holy Days.

These are not sad days; they are the most joyous days of the year. It is true that we are being judged and we must complete the repair of all our sins and faults. It is true also that sometimes there is a need for bitterness, a just personal accounting, and an uncompromising

demand for the person to change course and begin conducting himself as is required. But the Judge is not only great and omnipotent; He is also good, “the very essence of good,” and “it is the nature of the good to do good.”

Furthermore, this is not a judgment of a mere “employee” over whether or not he honored the “work agreement.” We are talking about the only son of Almighty G-d, the King of kings. For various reasons, he has strayed from the path of his father, the King, and now the time has come to return and become close to Him again.

The month of Elul is the time when “the king is in the field,” in the most remote and distant locations. In the words of the Rebbe *shlita* MH”M (*maamer “Ani L’Dodi”* 5726), he doesn’t just come to the “field,” an allusion to common everyday matters, but also to those found in a desert. For in spite of the fact that the desert itself is a place where “no (Supernal) man dwells there,” nevertheless, He reaches a Jew in the “desert.” In other words, even if he is held captive by his natural inclination and is unable to wrest himself free of it, G-d is close to him during these days.

He receives everyone, literally, with a bright and shining countenance. He is with them and loves them, even in their present situation. He stretches out to them a warm hand and helps them to shake off the grime so they may come out to greet the King. Afterwards, they follow Him to His private royal chamber to be together with Him in utmost unity, as “Israel and the King are One.” He does this out of love and a deep sense of closeness, greater even than the love and closeness of parents to an only child born to them in their old age.

When Rosh HaShana comes, this

is not just the Day of Judgment, but primarily Coronation Day. This is the day that we request and beg from our Father in Heaven “reign over the whole world in Your glory,” “and You will reign, Hashem, You alone over all Your works.” Therefore, “the *mitzva* of the day is the *shofar*,” and the primary reason for blowing the *shofar* is because on Rosh HaShana we crown G-d as our king, and at the moment of the coronation, we blow the *shofar* and declare “*Yechi HaMelech!*” as in the time of the *Tanach*.

Therefore, we also declare “*Yechi Adoneinu*” specifically on Rosh HaShana, particularly right before the blowing of the *shofar*, as this is the main time of “*Binyan HaMalchus*.” This has been the custom before the Rebbe *shlita* MH”M since Rosh HaShana 5753, when we still merited to see the Rebbe MH”M with our own eyes. As a result of that declaration, the Rebbe *shlita* began to come out and appear publicly again during 5753-5754. For the revelation of G-d’s sovereignty is accomplished through the sovereignty of *Melech HaMoshiach* in the true and complete Redemption. As it is explained in the *t’fillos* of Rosh HaShana, “and You will reign, Hashem, You alone over all Your works on *Har Tzion*, the dwelling place of Your glory, and in *Yerushalayim*, Your holy city,” “and He knows every creation, for You are its Creator.”

The blowing of the *shofar* is not just in order to awaken a sense of fear and dread. Although it is naturally true that there should be such

feelings in connection to G-d, the King of all kings, this is a type of fear that we would prefer not to avoid. On the contrary. This represents absolute *bittul* to our Father in Heaven from the depths of our hearts, when we plead before Him that He should accept the kingship and rule over us



and the whole world in His glory. And as was said earlier, G-d’s sovereignty is revealed in a specific way through the sovereignty of *Melech HaMoshiach*, and therefore, it is crucially important that specifically at this high hour, we declare “*Yechi Adoneinu*.”

Therefore, *chassidim* stringently make every effort to travel to the Rebbe for Rosh HaShana and the month of Tishrei (which contains the letters of the word “*Reishis*,” as this month is the “head” of the entire year). Indeed, the coronation of the king is looked upon in an entirely different manner by those who are actually there with the king and the *nasi*, who is literally everything, and through whom the eternal sovereignty of G-d, the King of all kings, is revealed specifically in this world. As the well-known saying of the Rebbe Rashab goes, “The place of a *chassid* on Rosh HaShana is in Lubavitch. Where else should he be? He has some other place?!”

And as the Rebbe Rayatz says (*Seifer HaSichos* 5696, p. 17): “There was a time when the journey to Lubavitch was very expensive. There were those who saved money the entire year for the trip, and they would kiss the money – because it was so precious to them.”

* * *

Yasher ko’ach to *Vaad Hachnasas Orchim* and *Beis Midrash L’Nashim*. Thanks to those who help so many people come to Lubavitch and enjoy not only material, but spiritual hospitality in a most orderly and organized manner, with classes, *s’darim*, tests, prizes, and *farbrengens* in abundance. Of course, everyone will do his utmost to help, particularly in a monetary fashion, without which it would be virtually impossible to maintain so vast an array of services.

Along with this, there is an additional point of vital importance,

especially for parents who send their sons and daughters to spend Tishrei with the Rebbe, a marvelous phenomenon which proves more than anything else that the Rebbe is literally *chai v'kayam* in 770-Beis Moshiach. Even if they have already made better arrangements (in their estimation), they should still register with and participate in the marvelous programs of *Vaad Hachnasas Orchim* and *Beis Midrash LNashim*. This is a proper receptacle for an overflow of *brachos* the Rebbe gives to each and every one of "my guests," as the Rebbe expressed himself on numerous occasions.

Tishrei in Lubavitch provides full and absolute *hiskashrus* "with great joy and tremendous *bittul*" to last the entire year. Even after each one of us returns to his home, we continue to live and breathe the Rebbe, while instilling this in all those around us,

"The place of a chassid on Rosh HaShana is in Lubavitch. Where else should he be? He has some other place?!"

everywhere we go and with whomever we have contact. This should be done down to the last detail, with emphasis on one central point: "the True One of this world," who reveals himself among us literally through the *nasi* and king, who exists eternally in every generation, specifically in a physical body, completely unchanged – not even by the change of concealment, as with the hidden *Aron Kodosh*.

We must bring the whole world to be nullified to the Rebbe, to fulfill his instructions, to seek his advice, to listen to his counsel, and to believe in his prophecies. This includes the main prophecy, revealed not as a wise man or a judge, but as a prophet, which makes it a certainty. This is the merit and responsibility of every member of this generation, all people – men, women, and children, Jews and non-Jews (via the Seven Noachide Laws), even vegetative and mineral creations, to the point that "a stone from the wall will cry out," and the whole world will scream, "Rebbe!" and the whole world will scream, "Moshiach!" and the whole world will scream, "There is no one besides you," and from every corner of the world, there will burst forth the declaration: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!*

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TRANSLATED BY RABBI SHIMON NEUBORT



From the Sichos of the Rebbe Rayatz in America *Seifer HaSichos – Kayitz 5700* *Daytime Meal of Shabbos Parshas Shlach¹ – Part 1*

1. In Velizh there was a *melamed*, Reb Yisroel Dov, a master of both intellect and *avoda*. Nearly every day he would engage in *avoda* of the heart at length. During his *davening* he would both sing and weep, and occasionally he would pray in a voice so loud that it frightened those who heard him. He was cheerful by nature; a favorite saying of his was: “A *chassid* is always content. If he has [what he needs], he is very satisfied; and if he has not, he is also satisfied.”

Reb Yisroel Dov was a student of the *chassid* Reb Moshe Dov of Velizh. This *chassid*, Reb Moshe Dov, had been among the young scholars who had known the Mittlerer Rebbe, though most of his years had been mainly with my great-grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek. Afterwards, he had attached himself to my great-uncle, the *tzaddik* Reb Yehudah Leib [of Kapust], and later to my grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash. Reb Yisroel Dov was known among

chassidim for his broad knowledge of *chassidus*, and as a master of *avoda* and master of generosity; one who had developed into a *chassid* through hard work. A favorite expression of his was: “If you want to earn a profit you have to work hard.”

During a *farbrengen*, while speaking about refining one’s *middos*, he would often say: “There is a common saying [see *P’sachim* 113a], ‘Skin an unclean carcass in the street, but do not depend upon people’s charity.’ Bad *middos* are like an unclean carcass. One should not touch this with his hands, but rather shake it off himself as he would shake off mud that adheres to his slippers. This is the meaning of, ‘Skin an unclean carcass in the street.’ But if you don’t do it for yourself, then someone else will have to do it for you. That is the meaning of, ‘...do not depend upon people’s charity.’ If you ‘do not’ – if you yourself do not get rid of your

unclean carcass, i.e., your bad *middos* – then you will ‘depend upon people’s charity’ – you will have to depend upon others to do it for you.”

Reb Moshe Dov once said to Reb Yisroel Dov: “I don’t know what’s the matter with you. You work and you work, you study and you *daven*, you sing with inspiration, you clap your hands and stamp your feet, but in the end you remain in the same place. [Today you are] exactly the same as yesterday and the day before. I have no idea why this is the case with you – that when it comes to actual deed, nothing is happening. When we were young men, we would not move from the spot until any decisions we had made while *davening* had been put into actual practice.”

2. I knew Reb Yisroel Dov, and I heard him *davening*. The last time I saw him I was about twelve years old, but to this day (thank Gd) I still remember the scene I saw in the small *minyán* room of the *shul* where he was *davening*, his weeping, and his melodies with outpouring of his soul.

3. I also knew his son, the *chassid* Reb Chayim of Velizh. He was a lumber merchant, and he would make the long journey to Riga. He was a *chassidic* businessman. I heard much from him about his *chassidic* father.

4. The *chassid* Reb Meir Mordechai Czernin² was a *melamed* in Velizh for several years, and he told me many things about Reb Yisroel Dov.

5. The *chassid*, Reb Yisroel Nachman HaKohen Mariashin,³

“I don’t know what’s the matter with you. You work and you work, you study and you daven, you sing with inspiration, you clap your hands and stamp your feet, but in the end you remain in the same place.”

lived for several years in Velizh where he was the *melamed* of Reb Dov Ber Zuckerman of Berlin. He told me much about Reb Yisroel Dov.

6. Reb Yisroel Dov was one of

the young scholars who had been educated during the days of the Tzemach Tzedek’s reign, and he became an adherent of my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash.

7. The Alter Rebbe was very demanding with the *chassidic* community concerning matters of charity. He would send agents [to collect money for]: a) the support of our *rebbeim* in the Holy Land; b) *pidyon shvuyim* [ransoming of Jews who had been imprisoned] because they had failed to pay to the landowners the rent that was due for leasing real estate, mills and inns at the crossroads; c) support of Torah scholars, etc., etc.

8. One of the *chassidim* complained to the Alter Rebbe that he felt no “life” in his Torah study or his *avoda* of the heart: “I learn and I daven, but it is without vitality.”

The Alter Rebbe answered him: “This is not surprising, since you indulge in needless luxuries. You eat white bread even on weekdays. If someone determines that, in view of his financial status, he can afford to eat white bread even on weekdays, he should eat black bread instead. And the extra amount that white bread would cost he should donate to charity.”

9. There was a *chassid* of the Alter Rebbe who was busy all week selling various utensils to the landowners’ courts; he would return home for Shabbos. He used to say that whenever he earned a greater sum than usual, he could be sure

that when he arrived home for Shabbos he would find there an agent sent by the Alter Rebbe or else a letter from him [requesting a donation] for the support of some charitable undertaking. And he would experience great joy because Gd had granted him the privilege of being able to fulfill the Alter Rebbe’s instructions regarding this charitable support.

10. Once during the summer of 5655 at the summer resort in Balivka, while we were eating lunch, my father the Rebbe [Rashab] requested that my tutor, Rashbatz, tell a story about some noteworthy

“When we were young men, we would not move from the spot until any decisions we had made while davening had been put into actual practice.”

event. Rashbatz rose from his seat and related:

At the wedding when my grandfather the saintly Rebbe Maharash married my grandmother Rebbetzin Rivka in the year 5609,⁴ my great-grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, was in great ecstasy, and he

1. A footnote by the Rebbe MH”M indicates that this material is not the usual transcription of the *sichos* but rather a summary copied “from the diary of my father-in-law the Rebbe.” The summaries are in Hebrew rather than the usual Yiddish.

2. See *Links in the chassidic Legacy* by this

translator, *Sichos in English*, 1997, pp. 155-156.

3. An apprentice of Reb Hillel of Paritch; during his last years he was one of those who admitted people to *yechidus* for the Rebbe Rashab. See *Toras Shalom – Seifer HaSichos*, p. 321. [He was a great-grandson of

Reb Yisroel Nachman Mariasha’s – see *The Making of chassidim* by this translator, *Sichos in English*, 1996, pp. 119ff].

4. Translator’s note: elsewhere, the date of the wedding is recorded as 11 Nissan 5610.

said much *chassidus*. At the final *Sheva Brachos* he recited the *maamer* “*Moshiach asa le’asava tzaddikaya bitiyuvta*” [Moshiach comes to cause the *tzaddikim* to do *t’shuva*], which is an exceedingly profound discourse. He made the following remark: “The *t’shuva* of a *tzaddik* has a quite unique taste and flavor.”⁵

The great *chassidim* assembled at a *farbrengen*: Reb Aizik of Homel, Reb Nechemiah of Dubravna,⁶ Reb [Yitzchak] Aizik of Vitebsk, Reb Hillel of Paritch, Reb Peretz of Beshenkovitch,⁷ Reb Pesach of Malastovke, and other elder *chassidim*. They *farbrenged* together at a great and very joyous *farbrengen*, during which the *chassid* Reb Aizik became very emotional; he rose to his feet and declared in an

“If someone determines that, in view of his financial status, he can afford to eat white bread even on weekdays, he should eat black bread instead. And the extra amount that white bread would cost he should donate to charity.”

awe-inspiring voice: “The Alter Rebbe’s *chassidim* knew what was expected of them, and also what their status was [in carrying out what was expected]. Today’s *chassidim* know what is expected from them, but they do not know what their status is.”

My father the Rebbe listened quite attentively to my tutor Rashbatz’s story. Tears ran from his eyes as he said: “This remark was made by an apprentice of the [Alter] Rebbe forty-five years ago. But today, what can we say *now*?”

That’s what my saintly father the Rebbe remarked in the year 5655 in Lubavitch. But what can we say in the year 5700 in New York?

(To Be Continued.)

5. See the *sicha* of *Acharon Shel Pesach* 5694.

6. Reb Nechemiah ben Avrohom Berach of Smilian, a close disciple of the Alter Rebbe. In his second marriage he was a son-in-law of the saintly Reb

Chayim Avrohom (son of the Alter Rebbe). Lived 5552-5612. Author of the *seifer Divrei Nechemiah*.

7. He was a *rav* in Beshenkovitch, Nevel, and Chernigov. A *chassid* of the *Mitteler Rebbe* and later of the

Tzemach Tzedek. See *HaTamim*, Vol. 3, p. 21 [This was the famous Reb Peretz Chein, father of the famous Reb David Tzvi Chein, (known as Radatz)].

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"My wife and I grabbed our two-year-old twins, and ran for the car. Just as we were getting in, a giant cloud of smoke burst onto the street. Within seconds we were engulfed in this cloud, and a hail of tiny rocks and small pieces of glass started falling all over us. We couldn't breathe; we couldn't see or hear anything. We thought that this is the end. We said "Shma Yisroel" and prepared ourselves for the worst.

"A few seconds went by, and we were still alive. Meanwhile I had recovered from the initial shock. I told my wife that if we wanted to live we had better move. I had no idea in which direction to run so we just started inching forward. The children were screaming with fright but I could hardly hear them.

"It was absolutely dark. I had never in my life experienced such a total darkness. I remember thinking at the time that this is what *Makas Choshech* had probably looked like. I suddenly saw a little bit of light and we started crawling toward the light. After a few minutes we reached an apartment building whose doors were still standing and kept the smoke out. The people inside helped us in and one woman actually brought us into

her apartment.

"Once we were inside we were able to clean ourselves off from the thick coating of dust and dirt that covered us from head to toe."

* * *

Rabbi Katz's wife had woken up not feeling well, and had asked him to stay home with the kids until they would wake up. He was late for the meeting, and his life was saved.

There was still evidence of the dust and soot on the hat of Rabbi Shmaya Katz, *shliach* of the Rebbe to the financial district in lower Manhattan, when he spoke to us at the offices of *Beis Moshiach*. He was still very overwhelmed and had a hard

time describing to us the incredible miracle he had experienced with his family just a few days earlier, just a short distance away from the collapsing towers.

Two months later, when the dark clouds of smoke and ash had already cleared and life was getting back to normal, we visited again with Rabbi Katz and his wife and went through the story of their miraculous rescue.

They told us all over again of those first moments of fear, of their rescue, and of the tremendous activities they've been involved in since they were allowed to return to the area, and the outstanding reaction they're receiving from all those who are willing to listen – now more than ever.

* * *

Rabbi Katz began his activities as *shliach* to the financial district three years ago. Originally it consisted mostly of personal connections that he kept with many of the businessmen in the area, but it then expanded to include private and public classes that he teaches, and that's besides the usual *mitzvaim* of *t'fillin* and *mezuzah*, and the other educational programs he has for the

Yomim Tovim.

A while later Rabbi Katz moved in to the area, renting an apartment in one of the exclusive neighborhoods near the World Trade Center. Since then, his personal connections with the people there have greatly expanded, and they have become a lot closer.

On that Tuesday morning, Rabbi Katz was supposed to attend a meeting at the offices of Merrill Lynch on the 86th floor of the Twin Towers at 9 o'clock. Almost everyone there didn't make it out alive. But miraculously his wife had woken up not feeling well, and had asked him to stay home with the kids until they would wake up. He was late for the meeting, and his life was saved.

Rabbi Shmaya and his wife Rachel, tell us what happened that devastating morning.

Rabbi Shmaya: "at about 8:45 I left my house in Battery Park city and started walking toward my office at 150 Broadway. From there I intended to continue on to the meeting I had scheduled in the Twin Towers for 9 o'clock. I'm generally very punctual and I wanted to minimize the delay as much as possible.

I was standing just a few feet away from the towers, when I noticed people looking up at the sky with horrified expressions on their faces. I looked up and couldn't believe

my eyes. I saw a passenger airplane flying at a very low altitude, heading straight for the towers. We heard a giant boom as the plane crashed, and giant flames burst from the building. Everyone in the street started running like crazy, some people said right



Smoking inferno. Photo by Rachel Katz

away that these are terrorists; other people had a hard time believing that terrorism could reach such monstrous proportions.

Within seconds the whole top part of the tower was covered in smoke and flames. I immediately thought of my own twins, Moshe and Avrohom, who were a year-and-a-half old. We live very close to the towers and they were in clear danger, I started running home right away.

Mrs. Katz tells what was happening at home: "I was standing and looking out the window that faces the Hudson River, when all of a sudden I saw a plane flying at a very low altitude heading straight for my building. I was in total shock. For a second the plane was out of my sight and then I heard a tremendous explosion that shook the whole building. At that time I didn't know that the plane had crashed into the World Trade Center, and I was sure that our building was going to collapse any second. I ran to the window and started shouting to the people down in the street. I then noticed that they were screaming and running like crazy. Smoke had started coming into the house, so I ran to the kids' room to shut the window so that the smoke wouldn't harm them."

Rabbi Shmaya: "I got home and I found my wife terrified. She calmed down a bit when I told her that it wasn't our building that was hit. But we hurried and grabbed our children, my *tallis* and *t'fillin*, and a few other things, and we headed for the car which was parked in front of the building."

Rachel: “As we started running to the car I heard people screaming that there was a fire in the Twin Towers. It was then that it first occurred to me that this might be a terrorist attack, as had happened eight years earlier when a bomb had been placed in a truck in the parking lot underneath the World Trade Center.

“I immediately grabbed a camera and ran to the middle of the street, where I had a clear view of what was going on.

“What I saw in those moments, I will never forget. I saw people jumping from the top floors of the towers in a tragic attempt to escape the fire. I saw three people holding hands and jumping together to their certain death. I saw another person wrap himself in a blanket with the hope that it would break his fall...

“I was so shocked that for a while I couldn’t move. Some people started screaming at me to run, and with great effort I was able to tear myself away and start running towards the car. My husband had meanwhile put the kids in the back seat, and put on their seatbelts, and we were just ready to get into the car when the whole world went black.

“We were suddenly engulfed in these black clouds. We started screaming ‘*Shma Yisroel*,’ and I asked Hashem to forgive all my sins, and take me into Gan Eden. We took the kids back out of the car, and we lied down on the floor. The air was full of pieces of rock and ash, and I was breathing it all in to me. After a while I started to gag on all this filth. Pieces of stone and metal were falling all over us, and while we were protecting the children, I was bleeding all over my body. I was feeling horrible, and we had no idea if or when this would end.

“We decided to leave the car, and try to find a safer place. We were so confused that we left all our things in



Rabbi Shmaya Katz

The air was full of pieces of rock and ash, and I was breathing it all in to me. After a while I started to gag on all this filth. Pieces of stone and metal were falling all over us, and while we were protecting the children, I was bleeding all over my body. I was feeling horrible, and we had no idea if or when this would end.

the car. Including my husband’s *tallis* and *t’fillin*, and the Chabad house money that we had taken with us.

“We started to crawl until we saw a beam of light that was coming from the lobby of an apartment building. There were people inside with wet towels to help clean ourselves off, and water to drink. One woman there saw the children and brought us into her apartment where we could clean them off and calm them down.”

Rabbi Shmaya: “we were just getting back to ourselves, when the second tower collapsed, and the heavy smoke started seeping into the building. It was getting really dangerous to remain in the area. Just then, the police came in together with the National Guard, and told us all to evacuate. They took us to a boat out on the Hudson River, which took us to New Jersey. My wife looked so bad that a policeman took our child from her, and held him during the whole trip.

“When we reached New Jersey there were lots of doctors waiting for



Rabbi Katz with Mr. Larry Silverstein, owner of the Twin Towers, lighting the Chanuka menorah

Despite the fact that up until then the people in the area weren't the type that are really that interested in Yiddishkeit, suddenly everyone was looking to add a little more meaning to their lives.

us with first-aid and oxygen. We saw thousands of people there with nowhere to go. One of the policemen saw us with the children and gave us a ride to the train station. From there we could catch a train to the city and start looking for a place to stay. In the middle of the street we found two abandoned shopping carts in which we were able to put the kids, and we started looking for somewhere to rest. The hotels were obviously all full, but after they saw the children they had *rachmanus* on us and arranged a room for us. The people were so touched, that every few minutes someone would knock on the door and offer us food or clothing for the kids.

"From the hotel we were able to call my wife's parents, Rabbi Yisroel and Faigie Drizin, who live in Crown Heights. They immediately set out to meet us. They didn't reach us in New Jersey until four hours later. Meanwhile all the roads going into Manhattan were closed, so the next day we went to Crown Heights."

* * *

I first spoke with Rabbi Katz a few days before Rosh HaShana. He had a lot of big plans for the *T'fillos* of the *Yomim Noraim*. He planned to hold them in a big hall at the foot of what used to be the Twin Towers. He was still hoping that the area would be opened so that he could implement his plan, but sadly enough it remained closed until Erev Yom Kippur, and then was opened for residents only.

When they got back, they saw the extent of the damage to their own home. Everything was covered in soot, the walls, the furniture, and the clothes. The police had already been through the house, and they had put everything in big garbage bags which were labeled, "do not use." The car which they had left there was very badly damaged, but everything inside, including the *tallis* and *t'fillin* and the *tz'daka* money remained untouched!

Rabbi Katz didn't lose an extra minute. With the knowledge that his miraculous rescue had only come in the merit of his being a *shliach* of the

Rebbe, as soon as he was able, he started planning his continued activities in the area. The first event he had coming up was the Yom Kippur *davening*, he immediately rented a large hall, and started publicizing the times of the *t'fillos*.

His wife's family, her parents, and her brother, Zalman Moshe, volunteered right away to help out with everything. The roads were still closed so everything had to be brought over by subway. (Rabbi Katz and his wife couldn't stop thanking her parents for all the help, both the personal help and help with the Chabad house.)

Close to a hundred people showed up to the *davening*, which, considering the type of people in the area, is a great success.

The news of the renewed Jewish activity quickly spread, and there was soon a television crew outside that had come to take a report. After the situation was explained to them, that they would not be able to disturb the

Yom Kippur *davening*, they left and promised to come back that night.

Motzaei Yom Kippur Rabbi Katz organized a service in memory of all those who had died in the attack. In his speech he focused mainly on the lessons that we as Jews have to derive from such experiences.

During the ceremony, Rabbi Katz was interviewed by Rose Abrams, a popular television news anchor, who stressed how impressed they were by how fast they had come back to start working again.

For Sukkos they were not able to build a *sukka*, but the Simchas Torah they had was the real thing. From Yom Kippur and on things just continued to grow. Despite the fact that up until then the people in the area weren't the type that are really that interested in *Yiddishkeit*, suddenly



The Katz twins, Avrohom and Moshe Yitzchok

everyone was looking to add a little more meaning to their lives.

"It's a new world out there," says Rabbi Katz. In the past in order to discuss the Rebbe or Moshiach you would have to give a whole

introduction. Today people are open to hear whatever you have to tell them. They're asking how we can bring Moshiach. What can we do?

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack, Rabbi Katz called all the people he had been in contact with, and realized that not one of them was missing! Each had his own story, but inside they all knew that it was all the same story: the Rebbe watches over us all.

Rabbi Katz has just embarked on a building campaign, with the goal to build a Chabad house in the downtown area. He is also planning on writing a *seifer Torah* in memory of the many Jews who were killed. As a part of this campaign he is giving the chance to *shluchim* from around the world to get involved in this project. The telephone number for more info is (212) 766-3633.

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“HE IS REALLY GOING TO LIKE THIS ANSWER”

BY RABBI TUVIA BOLTON, MASHPIA IN YESHIVA
OHR TMIMIM OF KFAR CHABAD



In the time of the Holy Temple, Yom Kippur was centered on one man: the Kohen Gadol. He alone entered the Holy of Holies and did all the work while the rest of the Jewish people spent the entire day waiting outside of the Bait HaMikdash for him to finish.

To understand this, let's first understand what "t'shuva" means. This coming Shabbos has two names: Shabbos Shuva, after the first word of the *Haftora* portion, and Shabbos T'shuva, because it is one of the Ten Days of T'shuva. But both of them imply what is usually translated as repentance.

The Baal Shem Tov began a great revolution in the Jewish world by explaining that it's not so. T'shuva, he claimed, is a purely Jewish concept and means to "return" to one's source, to return to G-d.

Since the source of every Jew is pure G-dliness (the Torah calls Jews "sons of G-d"), and since G-d is unlimited, therefore there can be no limit to the commandment of t'shuva.

Repentance, said the Baal Shem, is for sinners. But everyone, even the completely righteous, must do t'shuva!

As it says in the Zohar, "Moshiach will bring even the *tzaddikim* (righteous) to t'shuva."

But this idea, which is today the foundation of the t'shuva movement, met great opposition by rigid Torah scholars of that day.

To understand all this here is a story.

The city of Vilna two hundred years ago was a great center of learning. Thousands of genius Torah Scholars studied Talmud day and night, and the town was always filled with the sound of Torah.

But as great as they were in scholarship, so they were adamant in their hatred of the *chassidim*, especially the Chabad *chassidim* and their leader, the Alter Rebbe.

One of the richest and most influential scholars in Vilna was named Reb Meir Refoels, and here is how he ironically became a devoted follower of none other than the Alter Rebbe.

It was late one rainy night when a knock was heard at Reb Meir's door. When his wife opened the door, they were surprised to see standing before

them a woman, ragged and tired from an obviously long and harrowing journey. "Is this the house of Rabbi Meir Refoels?" She shouted over the noise of the rain. When Reb Meir's wife nodded yes, she entered saying, "The Holy Rebbe of Chabad, Rav Shneur Zalman told me to come to Meir Refoels, and that he will find my husband."

Rav Meir turned to his wife in disbelief.

"Who is this woman?! What does she want? What husband?!" His wife took the woman into the kitchen gave her a warm bowl of soup and heard the following explanation. Her husband ran away three years ago without giving her a bill of divorce and now according to the Torah she was an *aguna* and could never remarry until she gets a proper divorce.

Her distraught father went to the Alter Rebbe, who told him that the only man can help is Reb Meir Refoels in Vilna, and that she should go there and not leave him alone until he finds the lost man.

"So now, here I am," she announced, "and I'm not leaving until Reb Meir does what the Rebbe

said.”

The next day the city was abuzz with this latest antic of the Chabad Rebbe.

Needless to say, she made Reb Meir's life unbearable. But after a few weeks he found her a room to live in, and the whole matter was almost forgotten. Then one day, months later, a Russian officer arrived at Reb Meir's house and told him that they were bringing a wagon full of prisoners through Vilna on their way

“Do you know what it means when it says in the Talmud that the kingship of Earth is like the kingship of Heaven?” They looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders.

to jail, and one of the prisoners mentioned that he was a Jew, and that his name was such-and-such from such-and-such a city and they wanted to know if the *rav* recognized him.

When Reb Refoels heard the name he suddenly remembered that it was the same as that of the *aguna's* wayward husband. She was immediately brought, and identified him. Reb Meir convinced him to give a divorce, and within an hour she was miraculously free!

Needless to say Rav Meir began to change his mind about the Rebbe, but he kept it to himself, lest he be accused of heresy.

Then, a few months later,

something happened that made him regret his change of his mind.

It happened that two rich businessmen in Vilna had been falsely accused of cheating on their tax returns. They had been sentenced, first by a lower court and then by a court of appeals, to three years of hard labor in Siberia, which meant almost sure death for the both of them.

They were desperate. They knew that only a miracle that would save them and that is why they were willing to listen when a guest passing through Vilna suggested that the Rebbe of Chabad could help. Like drowning men grasping for straws, they decided to ask Reb Refoels for his opinion, and to their surprise Reb Refoels told them to go to the Rebbe, but not to tell anyone of the trip.

After an arduous journey of several days, there they were, standing before the Rebbe. At first they regretted the whole business, in case anyone in Vilna heard about it. But on the other hand, they kept reminding themselves that they had nothing to lose.

So they poured their hearts out, and when they finished they were both standing there weeping like children.

The Rebbe closed his eyes for a few minutes in deep thought, then opened them and asked. “Do you know what it means when it says in the Talmud that the kingship of Earth is like the kingship of Heaven?” They looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders. The Rebbe answered his own question: “It means that just as G-d has a name written in the Torah but is not called by that name, so also the king has a family name, Romanoff, but is called by a different title.”

“Yes, Rebbe, but what about our problem? What of our trial?”

The Rebbe paid no more attention to them. The meeting was over!! They quickly made their exit and returned in tears to Vilna. Of course, Reb Refoels apologized and admitted that he had made a big mistake, and he decided in his heart that the story with the *aguna* was no more than a coincidence.

Meanwhile, the two accused men decided on a desperate plan. They

The Rebbe answered his own question: “It means that just as G-d has a name written in the Torah but is not called by that name, so also the king has a family name, Romanoff, but is called by a different title.”

heard that in Petersburg there was a special royal garden reserved for the leisure of only the Czar and his ministers. They would travel to Petersburg, sneak into this garden and try to intercept the minister of justice there, hoping against all hope that they could arouse his mercy.

They caught the first train, and a day later they had succeeded in finding the keeper of the garden, and bribing him not only to tell them when the minister of justice would take his stroll, but also to let them sneak in beforehand.

They had to enter and hide there

while it was still night and wait several hours crouching in the bushes, but finally the moment came. The Minister was approaching and the keeper signalled them. They both jumped from the bushes and threw themselves prostrate at the Minister's feet. "Please have mercy on us, we are innocent!! We are loyal citizens falsely charged!!!" They cried and wept.

"What is this?!" Said the Minister with a smile on his face, "Innocent? Ahh... You must think that I am the minister of justice. Well, I'm not. The minister of justice is ill, so I took his turn. I am the minister of education."

Our heroes were just about to begin crying again when the Minister interrupted them. "Tell me, you are religious Jews are you not?" When they nodded in the affirmative, he continued. "Well isn't this an amazing coincidence! Perhaps you can help me. Just today the Czar called me into his study and asked me a question that I did not know how to answer, perhaps you can help me?"

They again nodded saying, "We will try our best."

"Excellent! Then we will begin.

When they repeated the answer of the Rebbe, at first the Minister was quiet, but slowly a large grin appeared on his face.

"I know the Czar," he said. "He is really going to like this answer!"

The Czar heard that it is written in your Talmud that the kingship of the earth is similar to the kingship of G-d, and he asked for an explanation. I told him I would investigate, but I really don't know where to begin. Can you explain it?"

The two partners looked at each other in amazement! This was what the Rebbe had foreseen! When they repeated the answer of the Rebbe, at first the Minister was quiet, but

slowly a large grin appeared on his face.

"I know the Czar," he said. "He is really going to like this answer! He will really be pleased." He shook hands with the two men and added, "now you must tell me your names and what exactly you were falsely accused of, I'm sure his majesty will be more than glad to help."

After Reb Meir heard this, both he and the two businessmen decided to begin learning the teachings of the Rebbe and eventually they all became Chabad *chassidim*.

This explains the work of the Kohen Gadol. In every generation there is at least one Jew whose only interest in life is to renew the connection of all the Jewish people with G-d. The Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe are two examples, and the Rebbe MH"M is another. May this Yom Kippur we all see the Rebbe come out of the Holy of Holies and announce that the Jewish people have all been connected to their source.

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BAIS CHAYA MUSHKA: LIVING WITH THE REBBE TODAY



In 5715 (1955), the Rebbe surprised his *chassidim* when he expressed his desire that Chabad schools be run *al taharas ha'kodesh*, without secular studies. In America at that time, when most *yeshiva* students were coming from typical American homes in which mothers dreamed of their sons becoming doctors and lawyers, the Rebbe's wish seemed farfetched.

The Rebbe actually took the prevailing conditions into account, but only partially: "I would want them not to learn [secular studies] at all, but since, "if you grab too much, you grab nothing," I ask that at least until age twelve, they should not study secular subjects."

After the *farbrengen*, a Chassid from Montreal had *yechidus* with the Rebbe and asked whether this pertained only to boys, or to girls too. The Rebbe said there was no difference between boys and girls in this matter. In another *yechidus*, the Rebbe said that when it comes to *bittul Torah*, there's a difference between boys and girls, but as far as *tumas ha'mochin* (polluting the mind, as it's explained in chapter 8 of *Tanya* that secular studies pollute the *chabad* of the *nefesh*), there's no difference.

A legendary *chassid*, Rabbi Michoel

Teitelbaum, acted *b'mesirus nefesh* and founded the first *Talmud Torah al taharas ha'kodesh* – Oholei Torah. The *yeshiva* was guided by the Rebbe over the years and it grew and flourished despite negative prognostications. Today it is the largest Chabad school in the world.

Despite Oholei Torah's success, nobody took up the cause for the girls. Over forty years went by until the first



and only girls school *al taharas ha'kodesh* was founded.

Bais Chaya Mushka was not founded by *askanim*. A group of parents, led by R' Eliezer Gold, R' Reuven Elberg, and R' Zev Cadaner, who wanted their daughters to be educated "as the Rebbe wants them to be educated," finally realized the Rebbe's dream and founded this school at the end of the summer 5759.

"In these last few years," says the principal of the school, Rabbi Levi Plotkin, "we are witness to the influence of the street entering our schools, and the girls are readily exposed to these influences. We came to the conclusion, perhaps a bit late, that one solution would solve all the problems: establishing an educational institution which 'from Alef to Tav' would be precisely what the Rebbe wants, especially *al taharas ha'kodesh*."

"As the Rebbe wants," is the refrain that is heard repeatedly during the course of my conversation with members of the *hanhala*, teachers, and parents of Bais Chaya Mushka. Every detail of life at the school is permeated with the desire to give the Rebbe *nachas*. Starting with *chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh* and *tznius*, and Yiddish

language, the language of our *rebbeim*, and concluding with a special *chayus* in *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*.

MATHEMATICS – AL TAHARAS HA'KODESH

Each year, when the laws of *kiddush ha'chodesh* and their complicated calculations come up again, and I reread what the Rambam says that even children can learn these calculations and create their own calendar, I wonder. Do we have such children nowadays?

According to Mrs. Chana Goldschmidt, who is the curriculum developer of Bais Chaya Mushka, this year the girls in the sixth grade will learn how to create their own calendar, including the exact *z'manei ha'molad*, according to the calculations in the Rambam!

“Our philosophy is, that if the Rebbe wants *chinuch* to be *al taharas ha'kodesh*, it's not impossible. Since there are a number of subjects that are vital in daily living, it was clear to us that that we'd have to present these subjects *al taharas ha'kodesh*. Actually, we could just take the existing textbooks and convert them, writing five *mezuzos* minus two *mezuzos* instead of five apples minus two apples. But we came to the conclusion that if the Rebbe wants *chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh*, we have to infuse actual *k'dusha* into these subjects, not just superimpose a Jewish veneer.

“It was certainly not easy, but after much effort we have managed to create a curriculum *al taharas ha'kodesh* even for subjects which are generally regarded as secular. Math skills are needed in Jewish life as many *mitzvos* require substantial knowledge of mathematics. Sometimes there's a need for complicated mathematical calculations.

“Our message to the girls is revolutionary since it necessitates a new way of looking at the world. This is not a world divorced from Torah, but a

world in harmony with and in the service of Torah. The girls understand that they need to learn math in order to know how to separate *challa*, in order to better understand the laws of *truma* and *maaser*, and in order to really understand complicated calculations in Rashi, which even adults have a hard time understanding.

“Our texts are based on the usual textbooks, and we consulted with experienced teachers and educators. The curriculum is such that girls in first grade can figure out simple calculations in Torah, like the number of Jews who descended to Mitzrayim, while sixth

“I would want them not to learn [secular studies] at all, but since, “if you grab too much, you grab nothing,” I ask that at least until age twelve, they should not study secular subjects.”

graders will be able to figure out all calculations in Torah, including *kiddush ha'chodesh*.

“We did this with math and with other subjects too. A science lesson is a lesson in the Wonders of the Creator, with each topic permeated with Jewish messages in the style of the column “Nature's Wonderland” in Talks and Tales.

“*Dikduk* is taught with *chassidic* and educational books, most of them published by Kehos. The English language, which is taught only from age twelve, is taught solely from books with

sacred content.”

How can American girls attend school till age 12 without learning English?

Rabbi Plotkin: “First of all, since this is what the Rebbe wants, we do it happily, even if it's difficult. The girls all know basic English since they are living here, and they acquire a better grasp of the language from age 12, when they are still open to developing language skills.”

YIDDISH - THE LANGUAGE OF THE REBBEIM

What language is spoken at school?

“The language of our *rebbeim* – Yiddish.”

What about the parents who don't know Yiddish?

Mrs. Rochel Kesselman is a mother of three girls in the school. Yiddish is not her mother tongue, but she's happy that her daughters can speak Yiddish among themselves. “It's part of *chinuch l'hishkashrus*,” she says and adds, “Children catch on to languages very easily, and so they can speak to me in Hebrew, and speak Yiddish amongst themselves. I am very moved when I see them playing at home and speaking Yiddish to each other. It has a special *Yiddishe, Chassidishe chein*. When guests come and hear my little girl singing Yiddish songs about the *parsha*, they





Eliezer Gold

can't get over it!"

"If I moved to China," said one of the mothers who came to Chabad recently and doesn't know a word of Yiddish, "I wouldn't try to change their language. They would have a few difficult months, but they would manage. As far as we're concerned, as soon as we decided to become Lubavitchers, it was obvious to us that we need to learn the Rebbe's language, the language in which the *sichos* were spoken. It's difficult for my husband and myself at our age, but it's far easier for our children. They had a few difficult weeks but now they're absolutely comfortable with Yiddish. They can listen to a *sicha* and understand it, and I have much *nachas* from this."

Yiddish is not just the language of the school, it's also a subject. The girls read Yiddish stories and learn proper Yiddish grammar. In the upper grades the girls write beautiful Yiddish compositions.

The best part is when the girls begin to perform musical plays and performances in Yiddish. Some of the parents couldn't believe that the girls could be on a level high enough to perform Yiddish musicals and plays. Some teachers had their doubts too, but the girls carried on. Dozens of parents came to the first performance, wanting to see for themselves how successful the

school is in instilling the Yiddish language. They were amazed to see how the girls performed an entire play in Yiddish. "They didn't just parrot the words without understanding what they were saying," said one mother. "They understood it and identified with the meaning of the words. They did so well it was hard to believe this wasn't their mother tongue."

In addition to learning Yiddish, Bais Chaya Mushka puts great emphasis on learning *lashon ha'kodesh*. Many hours a week are devoted to learning Hebrew so that the girls can learn from *s'farim* on their own. The curriculum was designed by a religious Jew, and is replete with Jewish messages. The girls

"When it comes to bittul Torah, there's a difference between boys and girls, but as far as polluting the mind, there's no difference."

learn to write, read, and understand the language.

LIKE TOMCHEI TMIMIM

How do you fill an entire day with *limudei kodesh*?

Mrs. Goldschmidt: "I hear that question from every teacher who comes to teach at Bais Chaya Mushka after teaching in other schools. I understand the question because *limudei kodesh* are generally taught in the morning, and secular studies in the afternoon, whereas we have *limudei kodesh* all day. They think we come up with all sorts of time-fillers. After a month of teaching our curriculum, the teachers say, "I

don't understand how we managed with only half a day until now!"

"Our curriculum is similar to that in other schools, except that we teach on a higher level and the amount of material covered is greater. For example, first grade girls in New York generally learn the first *perek* of *Parshas B'Reishis*, whereas our girls learn the entire *parsha*. We also devote a lot of time to *halacha*, in accordance with the Rebbe's desire that every girl know the basic *halachos* of a Jewish home.

"When I refer to a high level of learning, I mean that they are enabled to learn on their own too. We have incorporated many elements from Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim into our school, for our girls are actually "*Achyos HaT'mimim*." Independent learning is common in *yeshiva*, and there's no reason not to adopt it. Learning *b'chavrusa*, which is routine in *yeshivos*, is warmly adopted by us too, and in the upper grades there are set times for *chavrusa* learning.

"In the coming school year we are planning on having girls from the upper grades learn with girls in the lower grades. The benefits are twofold: first, the girls learn how to learn on their own, and second – all the girls of the school become close to one another."

I heard about the homey atmosphere in the school from each person I interviewed. "When you set out to write about a school," said one parent, "you imagine a large building, long hallways, and dozens of classrooms, with twenty to thirty students in rows leaning over their books. Bais Chaya Mushka is very different. The "*bais*" is actually a home; it's not just meant metaphorically, for it's actually true, and it makes the whole day at school a pleasant experience."

He was 100% right. When I got to the school which is located in a building on President Street in the heart of Crown Heights, I immediately sensed the friendly, homey atmosphere. This

atmosphere is created by the teachers who relate to their students in a familial way. The small number of students (10-15 per class), enables them to get to know each student well, and the teachers share various experiences with their students. Occasionally, teachers invite their class to their homes for a *farbrengen*, and over the course of the year, they even invite the class for a Shabbos meal.

WE'LL MEET IN 770

"*Meshichoi* – these are the schoolchildren," say *Chazal*, and this accurately defines the girls of Bais

Our message to the girls is revolutionary since it necessitates a new way of looking at the world. This is not a world divorced from Torah, but a world in harmony with and in the service of Torah.

Chaya Mushka, who live daily with the *emuna* that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam* and will appear imminently and bring the final *Geula*.

The girls frequently visit 770, going there for every Yom Tov, and even in their free time they go to 770 for its holy atmosphere. Women who *daven* in 770 are impressed each Shabbos by the large group of girls who come and *daven* and behave as would be expected of Bais Chaya Mushka girls.

"The staff infuses the school with an atmosphere of *chayus* in *inyanei*

Geula and *Moshiach*. During recess *Chassidische niggunim* are played and many of the lessons include the topic of *Geula*. Every Yom Tov, the teachers go on *mitzvaim* with the girls. It draws the girls in," declares one of the mothers. "Here there is a positive peer pressure to live with the Rebbe and *inyanei Moshiach*."

At Bais Chaya Mushka *Inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula* are instilled with a *p'nimius*. In addition to "*Yechi*" signs hanging in each classroom, the girls actually study *inyanei Moshiach*. This doesn't mean just quoting a line after *davening*, but a full lesson on the subject. In the lower grades they have this lesson once a week, and in the upper grades it's twice a week. The girls learn about the prophecies of *Geula* in *Chazal*, the *halachos* in "*Hilchos Melachim*" of the Rambam, and even *sichos* from recent years which are all about *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*.

Last year all the girls participated in a project in which each class was assigned a section of "*Hilchos Melachim*" and presented it in various artistic ways. They had an exhibition, and visitors were amazed by how the *halachos* were presented in a clear, concrete fashion.

In the spirit of *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe, *chassidic* concepts are also taught through the Rebbe's *sichos*. In a special program called "*maaseh rav*," the girls listen to a tape of the Rebbe telling about *g'dolei ha'chassidim* of previous generations. After listening to the tape, the material is learned from written material, and the concepts the Rebbe used are analyzed. This is how the girls learn about *bittul*, for example.

Once a week, on Friday, the girls watch a video of the Rebbe saying a *sicha*. Then they *farbreng* with their teachers about what the Rebbe said and what it means to them in their daily lives.

KOL K'VUDA BAS MELECH P'NIMA

On the verse, "false is grace, and vain is beauty," the Rebbe Rayatz once said that in our days falsehood has become gracefulness and vanity has become beauty. At Bais Chaya Mushka, the *pasuk* has reverted back to its original meaning. The school's *tznius* requirements are uncompromising and they come along with suitable explanations. "The importance of *tznius* is instilled within the girls, not just with slogans and

"Since our school works alongside the parents, we've almost never had to send a girl home to change anything. We don't have to contend with tznius problems and this really sets us apart, since we don't have to fight the parents on this. We all see eye to eye."

aphorisms but in daily life," says one parent. "The girls internalize the importance of *tznius* in accordance with *halacha* and the Rebbe's wishes. To my knowledge, the greatest success is in that the girls just love it. They feel that *tznius* is the badge of the *bas melech*."

The school's reputation is known far and wide and the number of applicants increases from year to year, but not all are accepted. Since the school's administration does not want their



students to struggle with a conflict between school and home, only parents who are willing to comply with the school's standards, particularly when it comes to *tznius*, are able to register their daughters at Bais Chaya Mushka.

"Some parents think our demands are excessive," concedes Rabbi Plotkin, "but we won't compromise. Since young girls are readily influenced by their friends, we cannot allow ourselves to accept one girl who won't comply with the rules. The teachers are also hired based on their being able to be role models of *tznius* for their students. We see that when all the students and teachers dress with optimal *tznius*, it doesn't occur to the girls to try to dress differently.

"Since our school works alongside the parents, we've almost never had to send a girl home to change anything. We don't have to contend with *tznius* problems and this really sets us apart, since we don't have to fight the parents on this. We all see eye to eye.

"We initiate *tznius* projects like a *tznius* fair which we hold once a year in which each class presents something related to *tznius*. The girls regularly study the laws of *tznius*, and this becomes an integral part of their lives – something I consider the true measure of success. When modest dress is as obvious to girls

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as wearing a *yarmulke* is to boys, that's educational success."

THE HIGH SCHOOL

What about the graduates of Bais Chaya Mushka who are accustomed to learning *al taharas ha'kodesh*? The first high school *al taharas ha'kodesh* is entering its second year. Mrs. Itty Chazan, an experienced and eminently qualified educator, is the principal of the high school.

The "*Ani Maamin*" of the high school is "to live with the times," which means to educate the girls in accordance with

our times. "Not everything that was suitable over ten years ago is appropriate now," declares Mrs. Chazan. "Take for example, the topic of *hiskashrus*. You can't just instill *hiskashrus* by reminiscing about the past and our yearning for times long gone – that we once had *farbrengens*, *lekach*, etc. The girls need to live with the Rebbe today, to know that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam*, that he is *mashpia* upon us, and that he expects things of us. This is really the motto of our school: living with the Rebbe today, to know that we are sheep with a living shepherd, to believe that the Rebbe is with us, answering our letters, and expecting us to fulfill his *horaos*."

A special emphasis is placed on *simcha* and looking at things positively. The teachers provide a warm atmosphere and the entire school runs on *chayus*, enthusiasm, love and respect.

The high school's philosophy is based on the Rebbe's *horaos* and incorporates a high level of learning alongside *yiras Shamayim* and *mitzvos b'hiddur*. This is conveyed in a spirit of *simcha* and *ahava*. "We want the girls to look back at their four years in high school and long for that time, so that their memories of these years will be of a pleasant experience."

After school hours there is a program called B'nos Chabad. The girls enjoy a range of activities including *farbrengens*, *yimei iyun*, *Melaveh Malkas*, and exciting programs. In this way, the girls live *chassidic* lives even outside of school hours.

The high school curriculum includes *nigleh*, *chassidus*, *Mishnayos*, and *maamarim*. Subjects that are taught over three years in other schools, are taught in one year at Bais Chaya Mushka.

"I believe," concludes Mrs. Chazan, "that when the Rebbe appears, the girls of Bais Chaya Mushka will be in the front row, for they are models of Chassidische girls who live with the anticipation of the *hisgalus* every moment."

TWO TANKS – THAT’S THE WHOLE STORY?

BY SHAI GEFEN



When are they going to realize that all those punishments have long since proven ineffective? Why wait for the Arabs to make mistakes before doing what we have to do?

CHOOSING ONE OF TWO PATHS

“All in all, I moved two tanks,” said P.M. Sharon to representatives of Mafdal who were looking for a reason not to leave the government. And he gave them the reason they needed.

The problem is not with those two tanks, but the principle of the matter. Is Israel ready to rule within these cities and to secure peace and quiet, which is what any normal country would do, or are they continuing with their brilliant tactics and absurd delays? On the one hand, they reconquer territory; on the other hand, they withdraw and give money to Arafat and to his personal accounts in Europe.

Sharon has got to know that this schizophrenic behavior won't work. There are too many people who died or were wounded in vain. This approach hasn't gotten us anywhere. Zigzagging hasn't proven effective,

not in the short-term and not in the long-term. Israelis have caught on to this too, for in public opinion polls they say that their hope for security is gone.

Maybe Sharon takes pride in the fact that he's the one who dared to lead Israel into Area A for the first time, which his predecessors didn't dare to do. It could be that he's right, but what does it help if he still hasn't internalized the fundamental concept that only absolute control of the area, and only steps that will lead the Arabs to understand that Israel is not leaving, period – are the only things which can guarantee our security.

The truth is that we don't expect much from Sharon, because we know him from way back when. He also faces a serious political battle with his bitter foe, Binyamin Netanyahu. We are not interested in mixing in to intra-party wrangling, but if Sharon plans on winning, there's only one

option: to start fighting terrorism and to lead Israel to a speedy resolution of the situation. Each passing day he leads us further towards a dead-end situation.

ISRAELI ARABS – WHO'S GUILTY?

Two key and interesting points are developing now within Israeli society regarding “Israeli Arabs” (an interesting moniker which the fathers of the state bestowed, believing in the idea of co-existence which we've never had).

There are discussions being held by the Light Committee, which was established by former P.M. Barak, following the deaths of thirteen Arabs in the October riots. The establishment of the committee was done to appease the Arabs so that they'd vote for him in the elections. This is where Barak added fuel to the fire. If it wasn't enough that the Israeli Arabs had started the riots together with their fellow Palestinians, the heads of Security are presently standing before the committee which will also (perhaps) bring some of them to “justice.”

It turns out that the main losers are the ones who suggested the

committee to begin with – the former minister for domestic defense, Shlomo Ben Ami, and Ehud Barak. Each of them is trying to evade direct responsibility for the situation. Israeli Arabs rub their hands in glee, seeing how the Jew flagellates himself for crimes the Arabs committed.

Over the last two years we've been witness to a terrifying phenomenon. It turns out that Israeli Arabs are among the Palestinian murderers. Dozens of terrorist acts originated with them. The Islamic movements in Israel support terrorism. Some of the Israeli Arabs, those primarily in the Galil, are connected with the Hezbollah. Two Arab girls who study at Bar Ilan University in Tzfas, were told to get off the bus moments before it exploded near Miron.

The most recent thing that was discovered was the terrorist cell in Eastern Yerushalayim which is responsible for a number of attacks, including the one at Hebrew U. For those who may have forgotten, universities in Israel are hotbeds for agitation by Arab students, but they have not been put down. It turns out that a worker at the university collaborated in the attack, getting orders from the leaders of the terrorist cell not to hurt Arabs in the attack.

Knesset member Kleiner was right in asking that they be brought to justice for treason and be executed for killing dozens of Jews, but the most they're willing to consider doing is revoking their citizenship, as the minister of the Interior suggested. When will the government understand that all those punishments they've tried until now, have stopped being effective? In the end, as the Rebbe said in his letter to Sharon, they'll be forced to do the *real thing* and to arrive at a decisive position. So why wait for Arab mistakes before doing what we ought to do in order to prevent further

massacres, r"l?"

They are building an actual wall to divide the country with the mistaken belief of separation and drawing a line in the sand. Even according to their suppositions, these people don't seem to get that the murderers are on both sides of the line, since Israeli Arabs in Eastern Yerushalayim have become *shahids*. Many suicide bombers have come from among them thus far.

“Not only did they allow them to stay, but they are given whatever they want; they are encouraged to expand their businesses, and they reduce taxes for them – the main thing being that they shouldn't tell the goy to leave, since that isn't democratic!”

But we are guilty when Israeli governments willingly gave up Yerushalayim, the Temple Mt. and other holy places. These governments, including Likud, left Arabs in East Yerushalayim and allowed them to grow and flourish. They opened universities for them and let them study on Mt. Scopus. They were even willing to give them the Old City. Those governments can't look at us innocently today and file complaints against Israeli Arabs

who participate and abet murderous attacks.

31 years ago, the Rebbe MH" M said how they ought to treat the Israeli Arabs in eastern Yerushalayim: “The Arabs there would be happy if they were sent free with **“their silver and gold with them,”** since they thought that the first thing that would happen [would be] that those who had connections to terrorism would be killed immediately and the rest would have everything taken away, and they'd be sent away – just as they did to the Jews. They didn't dream they'd be allowed to remain there!

“Not only did they allow them to stay, but they are given whatever they want; they are encouraged to expand their businesses, and they reduce taxes for them – the main thing being that they shouldn't tell the goy to leave, since that isn't democratic! The Arabs did not anticipate this, and it was only after time went by that they saw it with their own eyes.

“It's been three years already that they're talking about how to give away Yerushalayim, and now they're actually planning to do so.” (Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan 5731/1970)

The discovery of the cell of murderers in Eastern Yerushalayim is not surprising. If Defense Minister Ben Eliezer announced the division of Yerushalayim a few weeks ago, and Sharon talks about a Palestinian state, there's no reason in the world for Arabs in Eastern Yerushalayim not to understand that this is precisely the time to continue their terrorist activities, thus bringing Israel to its knees.

But we are the guilty ones!

“ANOTHER CORPSE”

The terrible agreement of “Gaza First” began last Monday. Defense Minister Ben Eliezer took the credit for the successful negotiations with

the Palestinians. The ink was barely dry from the newspaper headlines and the Defense minister was already beginning to talk about the continuing agreements in Bethlehem and Chevron. Then an Israeli soldier, Kevin Cohen from Petach Tikva, was killed by a bullet shot by a Palestinian sniper.

The connection is so clear, only a fool could miss it. As Israel weakens, Arab terror grows. The more talk about withdrawals and the more money is given to terrorist organizations, the more bodies.

The words the Rebbe MH" M wrote to Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin, z"l, in Kislev 5729 (*Igros Kodesh*, vol. 25 p. 229) are open prophecy, and they need to be reviewed over and over: "Each time there's discussion about returning land and charity towards the nations, the wave of terror increases and there are literally additional bodies and sacrifices in the Holy Land, may it be rebuilt, may Hashem avenge their blood – as we palpably see."

The Rebbe then goes on to say, "It's a law that 'Eisav hates Yaakov,' and the Sages went on at length about the *chesed* of the nations being a sin. It's clear that they won't gain a thing by returning land."

THE MAFDAL AGAIN

Mafdal made noises about leaving the government when the army began leaving cities in Yehuda and Shomron. Effie Fein, the new leader, said that this is a step back in the direction of Oslo, and he spoke harshly about the agreement made with the Palestinians. He said that because of it, Mafdal had no reason to remain in the government. Two days later, Fein changed his tune and explained that it wasn't a political agreement but a security one ...

It's hard to understand and explain the complex subtleties of the

politicians. It seems there's something that makes it really difficult for the minister to part with his seat, even though it's a seat without a portfolio. The Rebbe said, "About their claiming they must remain in the government because of the security situation – they have no knowledge of security and they don't care at all... The only thing they care about is remaining in their seat, so long as they're not thrown out... Their sitting in the government does no good..."

If we acted in accordance with halacha, there's no question that things would look entirely different. Experience has shown that when Israel displays strength, her enemies fall. So why don't we try the Torah's prescription for peace?

On the contrary, when they're outside the government, they have the strength to demand something, unlike when they're in the government they lack nothing, and all they need is the seat" (R'ei 5735).

A few words to the new leader of Mafdal whom many were counting on. Perhaps with the Rebbe's *sicha* we can explain to you why all previous Mafdal leaders fell and the party has disintegrated.

In a *sicha* on Purim 5735, the Rebbe said, "When someone becomes a party leader and does everything, and all his dealings in this are in good faith, and afterwards when some good comes his way, which is not just good for his party but affects the public at large – it's a big test, and he has to think and contemplate how to do it for the benefit of all without being blinded by the graft of benefiting his own party... Unfortunately, there are things associated with the security of three million Jews, and in the natural order until now, the few people associated with parties have made the decisions, and, r"l, they were not yet able to free themselves from their party affiliations in order to decide what is really good for three million Jews, even though it will hurt the members of the party."

Mr. Fein! Cut your party ties, and think about what is good for the Jewish people, and not what's good for the party hacks.

THE BEST "PEACE PLAN"

Nine years have passed since the signing of the Oslo agreement. The Oslo visionaries parade about like grooms at their wedding. Shimon Peres travels from capitol city to capitol city and proclaims "the Oslo Agreement is alive." What Oslo has brought upon the Jewish people doesn't require elaboration. The facts on the ground are more powerful than anything you could dream up. So why then, is this man – who in a normal country would be sitting behind bars for the mess he created – allowed to continue leading the country? Is this a normal country?

The best peace plan is the one outlined by Torah and *halacha*. It may not be pleasant, and it may not sound humanitarian, but it's the best plan for the Jews and the Arabs – the decisive position which the *halacha* in *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim*, *siman*

329 delineates. Even if the gentiles seem to come merely for straw and hay, and war, under the circumstances, seems reckless – this approach guarantees eternal peace. Peace with courage: peace in which the other side realizes that it doesn't pay to try again for "matters concerning straw and hay."

When you don't complete the job, perhaps at first there are fewer dead (though there are no guarantees), but there's no end in sight. The gentiles' appetite grows and grows. This is what happened with Oslo, Camp David, and each time the gentile feels he's gaining a foothold in Eretz Yisroel. The results are obvious to all. Oslo is the most practical lesson for a deep understanding of the *halacha*, which was established thousands of years ago yet is far more practical than anything our present-day

visionaries have offered. If we acted in accordance with *halacha*, there's no question that things would look entirely different. Experience has shown that when Israel displays strength, her enemies fall. So why don't we try the Torah's prescription for peace?

Oslo led to the spilling of innocent blood, which hasn't ended yet, and we still don't see a rosy future ahead of us. If we acted in accordance with *halacha*, there's no question that things would look entirely different. Experience has shown that when Israel displays strength, her enemies fall. So why don't we try the Torah's prescription for peace?

A final word for us: The Rebbe MH"M asked us to publicize that *halacha* in *Shulchan Aruch*. This is the only way, along with the proper

explanations, that can effect a serious change in the situation, since even the human intellect of an officer or general who wasn't raised with Torah can understand the rationale behind the *halacha*.

A senior officer in the IDF, Reservist General Moshe Hager Lau, related that on the eve of the Oslo signing, he went to one of the *rabbanim* who supported the agreement in order to convince him of the dangers inherent in the agreement. He said that if more officers had explained the danger, the *rav* wouldn't have dared to support the agreement, and maybe we could have averted great tragedy.

From this we see how important it is to publicize the words of the Rebbe, with strict adherence to the law in *Shulchan Aruch*.

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BRIGHTON BEACH TRIBUTE TO RUSSIAN JEWISH VICTIMS OF 9/11

To mark the first anniversary of the World Trade Center catastrophe on the Hebrew calendar, (23rd of Elul), the Russian Jewish community will unite this Sunday, September 1, at 12 noon in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn to remember 16 loved ones who perished. (Note: The anniversary will be celebrated on the 24th of Elul, since the Hebrew date this year falls on the Sabbath.) Sponsored by the World Congress of Russian Jewry and Friends of Refugees of Eastern Europe (F.R.E.E.), the ceremony will begin at the giant menorah at Coney Island Avenue and Brighton Beach Avenue, and will conclude with a silent march to the Hebrew Alliance/F.R.E.E. congregation at 2915 Brighton 6th Street for the mourner's prayer service. The program will include the blast of the *shofar*, greetings from dignitaries, tributes from victims' relatives, and chanting of Psalms led by world-famous cantor Avrohom Pressman from Yerushalayim. Each person at the gathering will be asked to make a resolution to add in goodness and kindness to hasten the coming of

Moshiach (the Messiah) in memory of the victims. Then 1000 balloons imprinted with the victims' names will be released. "How do we keep a tragedy like this from happening again? Bring Moshiach!" says Rabbi Hershel Okunov, executive director of F.R.E.E.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Levin of Chabad of Ocean Parkway will speak about the Rebbe's prophecy, announced in 1991, that we are in the time of the Redemption, and how the Rebbe says that acts of kindness can speed up the process. Among the victims, six worked for Cantor Fitzgerald above the 100th floor of the North Tower, two worked for Marsh and McLennan on the 93rd Floor, one was an executive for Reuters filling in for a colleague at a meeting at Windows on the World, and another was an architect with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill who was meeting with clients on the 105th floor. Bella Boyarsky, mother of Gennardy Boyarsky, 34, who worked for American Express as a travel agent in the North Tower, confided that the

family keeps his voice on the answering machine. Every day she calls to hear him, saying, "Hello, how are you, my darling?"

A plaque with the victims' names will be unveiled in F.R.E.E.'s new, glowing sanctuary, lovingly restored by Russian artisans. Sponsors of the plaque are philanthropists Jonathan and Dina Leader. Founded in 1968 at the directive of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, F.R.E.E. has pioneered assistance to Russian Jewish immigrants, subsidizing food, clothing, and shelter, and helping them back to their Jewish roots after severe persecution in the former U.S.S.R. Over 15,000 men and boys, denied a circumcision under Communism, underwent this ritual here in New York, with expenses, arrangements, and support shouldered by F.R.E.E. Today F.R.E.E. services the community with *yeshivas*, adult education and summer camps, and hosts thousands at holiday services at the newly restored Hebrew Alliance/F.R.E.E. congregation in Brighton Beach.

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