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# MIRACLES WITHIN NATURE AND BEYOND

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



## SHABBOS PARSHAS MIKEITZ; ZOS CHANUKA, 2<sup>ND</sup> OF TEIVES, 5750

1. This year, the unique aspect of Chanuka is that it contains two Shabbasos; both the first and the last day of the holiday fall on this holy day. These Shabbasos are special in that they possess a dimension that includes all the other days of Chanuka. In potential, all the days of the festival are included within the first day, as reflected by the fact that on this day the cruse of oil, which burned for eight days, was found. The eighth day contains the influence of all eight days as they have already been celebrated. This dimension receives greater emphasis according to our practice of lighting eight candles on the eighth day, each candle representing one of the days that has been celebrated.

Similarly, the Torah readings of these two days reflect their all-inclusive nature. The Torah reading of the first day of Chanuka describes the princes' decision to bring the sacrifices, thus containing the potential for all the further readings. The Torah reading of the final day describes the sum total of those sacrifices after they had been offered. The all-encompassing aspect of these two days is emphasized by the Midrash stating that it is considered as if "all the

princes offered their sacrifices on the first day" and as if they "all offered their sacrifices on the final day."

Since the first and final days of Chanuka include within themselves the entire holiday, the fact that they fall on Shabbos implies that there is a Shabbos-like quality to the entire festival. The lessons derived from this fact are generally relevant to the totality of our service of Torah and *mitzvos* throughout the year.

Our Sages state: What is Chanuka (i.e., in commemoration of which miracle was the holiday instituted)?...They searched and were able to find only one cruse with the seal of the High Priest. It contained enough to burn for only a single day. [Yet,] a miracle occurred with it and it burned for eight days.

The Beis Yosef asks: Since there was enough oil in the cruse for the *menora* to burn for a single day, the miracle lasted only for seven days. Why then is the holiday celebrated for eight days?

Among the resolutions offered is that the discovery of the oil was itself a miracle. Nevertheless, other commentaries object to this answer, explaining that the discovery of the oil cannot be compared to the miracle of the oil's burning. The latter miracle

transcended the laws of nature. In contrast, the discovery of the oil could be described as a natural occurrence. It was hidden, buried in the ground, and hence, overlooked by the Greeks. When, however, the Jews needed oil desperately, they searched carefully and found it.

Despite this objection, the resolution offered is not rejected. Accordingly, we must understand this sequence: Why is it that the miracle of the first day of Chanuka is one that took place within the natural order, whereas the following seven days saw a miracle that transcends nature? If G-d wanted the miracles of the holiday to transcend nature, the oil could have become available in a totally miraculous way (descending from heaven or the like). If He wanted the miracles to be within the laws of nature, He could have enabled the Jews to find an amount of pure oil sufficient to burn eight days.

This concept can be explained on the basis of the following story. Once during the imprisonment of the Alter Rebbe, before his redemption on Yud-Tes Kislev, he was being taken by ship from one prison to another. In the process of the journey, he asked the ship's captain to stop the ship so that he could recite the prayers connected

with the Sanctification of the Moon.

The captain refused to comply with the Alter Rebbe's request. The Alter Rebbe told him that if he continued to refuse, the ship would stop by itself, but the captain would not listen. Subsequently, the ship stopped and the Alter Rebbe recited the Psalm introducing this prayer. The Alter Rebbe then allowed the ship to continue and asked the captain to stop it. Realizing that he had no alternative, the captain agreed to stop the ship, and the Alter Rebbe recited the appropriate prayers.

A question can be asked that is similar to the question raised above regarding Chanuka: Since the Alter Rebbe was capable of having the ship stop through a miracle, why did he ask the captain to stop it? Furthermore, having performed the miracle, why did he recite only the introductory Psalm? Why did he allow the ship to continue only to ask the captain to stop it again?

The explanation for the above is that *mitzvos* must be performed within the context of the natural order and not through miracles which transcend that order. The preparation for the fulfillment of the *mitzvos* should also be carried out within the context of the natural order. Therefore, the Alter Rebbe wanted the captain to stop the ship on his own volition so that even the preparatory steps for the fulfillment of the *mitzva* would have been carried out in this manner. Even when he was forced to perform a miracle to stop the ship, he allowed it to proceed so that the captain would stop it on his own volition.

A similar concept can be explained in regard to the Chanuka miracles. The entire miracle of the *menora* was not absolutely necessary; according to Torah law, it was permissible to light the *menora* with impure oil, for when there is no alternative, the laws of ritual impurity are waived regarding communal offerings. The miracle was thus an expression of the dearness with which G-d holds the Jewish

people, allowing them to fulfill the *mitzvos* with pure oil for the rededication of the Temple after it had been recovered from the enemy.

Therefore, even when G-d performs a miracle to show the dearness with which He holds the Jewish people, He performs a miracle in a manner that allows the *mitzvos* to be fulfilled in the fullest manner, i.e., within the context of the natural order. That is why the oil did not descend from heaven and was found buried in the ground. Even when it continued to burn for eight days, which was an outright miracle, that miracle involved natural oil.

2. This principle relates to the totality of Torah and *mitzvos*, whose

## ***Material wealth and affluence is granted to Jews to be used for the sake of spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward.***

connection to Chanuka is emphasized by the expression, "the candle of *mitzva* and the Torah of light." G-d created nature in a manner that is appropriate for the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*.

To explain: It is written, "If you follow My statutes, observe My commandments, and fulfill them, I will provide you with rain in its season and the land will bear its crops." The Rambam interprets this and the other promises of material success in the Torah as follows: "[G-d] promised us in the Torah...that He would remove all factors preventing us from observing it...and provide us with all the benefits that will strengthen our

fulfillment of the Torah, e.g., plenty and peace, and an abundance of silver and gold, so that...we can be free to study wisdom and observe the *mitzvos*."

This passage indicates that the nature of the world itself facilitates the Jewish people's performance of Torah and *mitzvos*. This concept applies even in times when the world is characterized by darkness and concealment. Thus, even when "the wicked Greek kingdom rose up against Your people, Yisroel, to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will," and the Greeks entered the *Beis HaMikdash* itself and made the oil impure — i.e., the situation in the world appeared to oppose Torah and *mitzvos* — it was revealed that these negative aspects were only superficial. The Chashmonaim conquered the Greeks, negating all conflicting influences. Furthermore, the miracle of the oil openly revealed how the very nature of the world allows for the performance of Torah and *mitzvos*, since, as explained above, the oil was found in a natural manner and even continued to burn in a manner which did not alter its basic nature.

The association of this lesson with Chanuka teaches a further concept. As mentioned above, it was not absolutely necessary to kindle the *menora* with pure oil. Thus, the use of such oil can be considered a *hiddur mitzva*, the fulfillment of the *mitzva* in the most complete and perfect fashion. Thus, we see that the natural order permits even this level of fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*.

This does not apply only to a person who is on a high rung of Torah observance. Chanuka is associated with the word *chinuch* (education). This implies that even one who is at the initial stages of the service of G-d, merely being educated, still has the potential not only to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* according to the law's minimum requirements, but even to

reach the level of *hiddur mitzva*.

The above relates to our service in Exile. Despite the darkness of exile, G-d gives every Jew the opportunity to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* in a manner of *hiddur*. What is more, the nature of the world leads toward this goal. G-d grants every Jew all that he requires in the realms of children, health, and earning a livelihood so that he can fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* in a state of both spiritual and physical composure.

3. The above also relates to the Messianic age, when we will have the opportunity of fulfilling Torah and *mitzvos* in a complete fashion. At present, because we are in exile and living in the Diaspora, there are many *mitzvos* that cannot be fulfilled. These circumstances, however, do not contradict the principle that the nature of the world is structured in a manner that enables a Jew to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* easily.

Exile is an abnormal situation for the world and for the Jewish people. The world was created “for the sake of Yisroel and for the sake of the Torah,” i.e., to enable the Jews to fulfill all 613 *mitzvos*. “Because of our sins” — acts that run contrary to a Jew’s very nature (as the Rambam states, each Jew, “desires to be part of Yisroel...to observe all the *mitzvos* and separate himself from all the transgressions”) — “we were exiled from our land.”

This change in nature on the part of the Jewish people effects a change in the nature of the world at large. Temporarily, rather than fulfill the *mitzvos* that revolve around *Eretz Yisroel* and the *Beis HaMikdash* in actual deed, it is sufficient that “We will render [the prayers of] our lips in place of [sacrificial] cattle.” Through prayer and study, we can compensate for our inability to perform these *mitzvos*. This compensation fulfills our obligations in regard to these *mitzvos* in the fullest manner possible.

The miracle of Chanuka, however, teaches a further concept — that ultimately, the nature of the world will

be elevated to a level of perfection in the Messianic age. To explain:

Rashi states that the portion of the Torah describing the *menora* was placed next to the portion describing the princes’ sacrifices (as was read in today’s Torah reading) because: When Aharon saw the dedication [of the altar] by the princes, he was shaken that neither he nor his tribe were included....The Holy One, blessed be He, told him, “Rest assured. Your portion is greater. You will light...the candles.”

The Midrash explains that the kindling of the *menora* is on a higher level than the sacrifices because the sacrifices will be offered only during the time the *Beis HaMikdash* is

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Chassidus in  
abundance, stealing  
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business.***

standing, while the candles will always light up the *menora*.

The Ramban questions the latter statement, noting that, in a simple sense, the kindling of the *menora* is — like the sacrifices — dependent on the existence of the *Beis HaMikdash*. When there is no *Beis HaMikdash*, the *menora* also may not be kindled. Accordingly, he explains that the Midrash is alluding to the candles of Chanuka, which are kindled even in the time of exile.

Furthermore, the candles of Chanuka do more than compensate for the kindling of the *menora* in the *Beis HaMikdash*, as “[the prayers] of our lips” compensate for the sacrifices;

they allude to and reflect the kindling of the *menora* which will take place in the Messianic age. Our Sages associate the number eight — the number of candles lit for Chanuka — with the Messianic age. In that era, we will kindle the *menora* in the *Beis HaMikdash* in a manner which will never be nullified.

Thus, the miracle of Chanuka — a miracle of eight days — reflects how, and contains the potential for, the era when the world will be elevated to its ultimate level of perfection in the Messianic age. At present, the natural order is represented by the number seven, reflecting the seven days of creation. In the Messianic age, the nature of the world will be lifted to a higher level, eight, which is symbolized by the Chanuka festival.

The effect of the Chanuka miracle is to elevate the nature of the world to the level of perfection it will reach in the Messianic age. This is accomplished by “spreading the wellsprings of Torah” — the aspect of Torah related to oil — “outward.”

The latter service is required in the present age. The Arizal states that “in these later generations, it is permitted and it is a *mitzva* to reveal this wisdom (the teachings of *P’nimius HaTorah*).” This certainly applies to the revelation of the teachings of Chassidus by the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, and the revelation of Chabad Chassidus by the Alter Rebbe, particularly after the redemption of Yud-Tes Kislev. It also surely applies to the Rebbeim who followed him, including the Rebbe Rayatz, who declared that the “spreading of the wellsprings outward” is the “obligation of the moment” in the present age.

Conversely, the service of “spreading the wellsprings outward” will bring the coming of Moshiach. The “spreading of the wellsprings outward” is itself a beginning and a reflection of the revelation of *P’nimius HaTorah* which will accompany the Messianic redemption.

These qualities are reflected in the Chanuka lights, which we are commanded to place “at the entrance to our homes, facing outward” and shine “until the feet of the Tarmudites (representative of the quality of rebellion) disappear from the street;” i.e., they effect the lowest levels of existence and prepare them for the revelations of the Messianic age.

4. The preparation of the world for the Messianic era through the service of spreading the wellsprings outward shares a particular connection with the arrival of the Rebbe Rayatz in America. America is referred to as “the lower half of the world.” The Torah was given in “the upper half of the world.” Through the efforts of the Rebbe Rayatz after coming to America, the wellsprings of Torah were spread in such a manner that the entire world, even those portions in which “the Torah was not given,” becomes a fit receptacle for “the wellsprings of Torah.”

There is a further point to the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus in this country. In America, in contrast to the situation of the Jewish people in Eastern Europe, Jews live, by G-d’s grace, in affluence. Indeed, this situation has become accepted as natural to the extent that in all aspects — food, clothing, and accommodations — we have become accustomed not to be content with the minimum, but rather to expect comfort.

The reason G-d has granted such affluence is to facilitate the service of Torah and *mitzvos*, to allow for the fulfillment of *mitzvos b’hiddur* and the study of Torah with a broad-minded perspective, so that one can “know the G-d of your fathers and serve Him with a full heart.”

In the previous generations, the Chassidim were involved in the study of Chassidus and the spreading of the wellsprings outward, while living in a state of poverty. Thus, the Alter Rebbe writes, “It is not hidden from me the difficult times when your livelihood

has become constrained...” Nevertheless, he charged his Chassidim not to cut back their gifts to *tz’daka*. In the Mittlerer Rebbe’s time, the situation of the Chassidim was even more hard-pressed, to the extent that some of his Chassidic teachings were not printed in their entirety in a single cover. If they had been, the Chassidim would not have been able to purchase them. Despite these difficulties, Chassidus was revealed in a manner of “the broadening of the river.”

In these later years, beginning from the time the Rebbe Rayatz came to America, the study of Chassidus and the spreading of the wellsprings

***...G-d, in turn, will surely shower him with all the wealth he needs. Indeed, this money already exists. All that is necessary is to go and get it.***

outward has been carried out amidst affluence. As we draw closer to the coming of Moshiach, the wellsprings have become spread out to further frontiers than ever before. The affluence of our environment has enabled us to spread the wellsprings further and to do so with a broadminded perspective, which is also one of the new dimensions of service expressed by the Rebbe Rayatz.

This condition of affluence reveals how the world itself has become prepared for the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward. Thus, material wealth and affluence is granted to Jews to be used for the sake

of spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward.

The latter concept is also connected with the fact that the first and last days of Chanuka fall on the Shabbos. Shabbos is a day when “all your work is completed,” i.e., the work which involves the refinement and elevation of the nature of the world. Accordingly, the nature of the world is on a higher plane.

The influence of Chanuka — and its connection with Shabbos — has an effect on all the days that follow, elevating them to a higher level, a rung on which all matters associated with “the candle of *mitzva* and the light of Torah” can be fulfilled in the fullest degree possible. This will lead to Messianic age, “the era which is all Shabbos and rest for eternity.”

Added influence for all the above is granted this year, 5750, “A Year Of Miracles.” To summarize, these are days when each Jew should take on resolutions to increase his involvement with “the candle of *mitzva* and the light of Torah.” Specifically, he should study Chassidus in abundance, stealing from the time he would devote to his business. G-d, in turn, will surely shower him with all the wealth he needs. Indeed, this money already exists. All that is necessary is to go and get it.

In this context, it is worthy to hold a *farbrengen* after the *Mincha* prayers and another one at night, as a *Melaveh Malka*, to influence people to accept good resolutions in regard to the study of *P’nimius HaTorah*, the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward, and all other matters of Torah and *mitzvos*. Also, at this time, it is worthy to mention that all those who have not fulfilled the custom of giving Chanuka gelt to the extent desired should compensate for this in the days that follow.

May all these activities hasten the coming of the time when we will dedicate the *menora* in the third *Beis HaMikdash*. May it be now, immediately!

# THE HOUR OF RE-CONVERGENCE

BORUCH MERKUR

Today, if you were to try and spot me out of a crowd in Crown Heights, say in 770, it might prove a difficult challenge. "Yeah, he's the one with a beard and a black hat." Good luck.

In the University of Western Ontario, the *shliach*, Dr. Yitzchak Block, had a similar challenge: he had to spot me – and other Jews – out from among the crowd on campus. I guess I blended in a bit too well; it wasn't until my final year of college that I was invited to Dr. Block's Chabad House.

In my penultimate year in college, I was a student in Dr. Block's Philosophy of Religion course. Dr. Block was quite successful at sneaking *chassidic* philosophy into the curriculum. (He had had a *Tanya* class which was unfortunately terminated due to a claim that it was sexist – there were no females in the class. Dr. Block reassured me that this was simply because no women had registered.) To teach the concept of *birurim*, revealing the *G-d*-liness trapped within the physical world, we studied an article by Martin Buber; to illustrate the concept of *kabbals ol*, we learned Kierkegaard's thoughtful account of the *Akeida*, the Binding of Isaac; and to teach selfless benevolence we were told about the deeds of the late Mother Theresa.

Mother Theresa once spared a few short moments away from her non-stop mission of helping the needy to be interviewed by a reporter. One of the questions she was asked, and which she simply could not comprehend, was: what do you do with your spare time? Spare time?! She spent virtually every waking moment helping others (and she only slept a few hours a night).

Later on I became puzzled as to how such a seemingly righteous person could be so devoted to any religion other than the True Religion. The following

news report by Paul Harvey, aired this Friday on WABC (770 on the AM dial), provides a fascinating insight into this matter – amongst others.

*We are learning today from Mother Theresa's own diary that she had doubts about her faith, about her G-d, and about herself. For all of the good works, she was tormented by disbelief for 50 years.*

*So Rome decrees today that her biographies must be rewritten.*

*What a cruel irony, if the saints are having doubts, at the same time the scientists are at the alter.*

*Traditionally, scientists had been reluctant to decree anything which they cannot define. Scientists, by training, mistrust any conclusion which they cannot prove. But then along came Alan Sandage, an astronomer of such credibility that he could dare to say that Creation can be explained only as a miracle.*

*And that broke the ice, so to speak. Now an escalating number of scientists are embracing religion: the late Stephen J Gould, Carl Sagan, Iyora Wilson. The American Association for the advancement of science now conducts periodic dialogues on science, ethics, and religion.*

*Intellectual fashions may to a degree be cyclical, but this one is still gaining credence. Charles Towns is a Nobel-winning physicist, he's co-inventor of the laser, and he says, "An intelligence is at work at what we used to call*

*Natural Law." Biologist, Christian Denué, also a Nobel winner, says, "In no sense is atheism enforced or established by science." And biologist, Francis Collins, director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, says, "Scientists who do not dare to explore their spiritual feelings have no idea what they're missing." Einstein was neither convinced there is a G-d nor convinced that there is not, but he*

***In the author's view, it is this pursuit that is fueling a "re-convergence," an apparent continuation of the revolution that began with "the Enlightenment 3000 years ago." Surely he meant to say 300 years ago, but this Freudian slip reveals something much more compelling.***

conceded that “science without religion is lame, and religion without science is blind.”

*Americans, this is the hour of re-convergence. We are right now living in the greatest era of science-religion fusion since the Enlightenment 3000 [sic] years ago.*

*If you are frustrated by the mystery, uncomfortable with your own skepticism, be patient with yourself – even the scholars are awed by the wonder of it all.*

This report, this audio essay, describes a pursuit of Divinity through science (remarkably in tune with the approach of Rabbi Shimon Silman of the Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib Research Institute, contributing editor of *Beis Moshiach* – see article in this week’s issue) unfettered by the constraints of false religion, for it is crumbling before our eyes (as Rambam writes, “When Moshiach rises up...they will know that they inherited a lie from their fathers...”). In the author’s view, it is this pursuit that is fueling a “re-convergence,” an apparent continuation of the revolution that began with “the

Enlightenment 3000 years ago.” Surely he meant to say “300 years ago,” but this Freudian slip reveals something much more compelling.

Around 3000 years ago Shlomo HaMelech built the *Beis HaMikdash*, the place where the world witnessed the greatest ever (lasting) convergence of natural, physical experience and miraculous, Divine revelation. (The revelation at Mount Sinai was only temporary; not something that could be reproduced in the lab.) Anyone who came to observe the open miracles in the *Beis HaMikdash* would be confronted with an undeniable, empirical experience of the Divine wonder of it all – immediate enlightenment.

The present re-convergence of science with religion is surely a foreshadowing of the ultimate enlightenment of the true and complete Redemption, when we will all be able to recognize G-dliness in Creation, and when we will have the third *Beis HaMikdash*, whose revelation will surpass even that of the previous *Battei Mikdash*.

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# THE MOST RECENT ASSAULT OF THE SAMECH- MEM

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



It wasn't our fathers that Hashem redeemed on Hei Teives, but us! This is not just some story which took place during the time of Antiochus, or when Avigdor slandered the Alter Rebbe, or even the time of the Yevsektzia and KGB, who imprisoned the Rebbe Rayatz 70 years ago. This event took place recently. Most of us experienced it and remember the *sichos* and the situation before and after "*didan natzach*."

We are commanded not to "read the Megilla backward," *chas v'shalom* – as something that took place once upon a time. These days must be relived today, so that by examining what took place in the past, we can try to learn a lesson for our present situation.

\* \* \*

By way of introduction quoting the Rebbe Rashab in a *sicha* of Yud-Tes Kislev 5664 (Toras Shalom p. 43): *Listen Yidden! Today you have become a nation. Chassidus was given on this day. It is a day of the Rebbe's simcha. Yud-Tes – Chaf Kislev is entirely a holiday. Chassidus began back in 5538, and this was in the year 5559 when chassidus was vindicated in court, chassidus emerged victorious, everybody agreed to*

*chassidus. At first there was an attack on chassidus but afterwards they all agreed about it. It was all a spiritual matter which was an attack on the Torah of the Baal Shem Tov. That's what the Rebbe wrote in a letter and I also once wrote that Yud-Tes Kislev is the Rosh HaShana of Chassidus, etc...*

*The approach was similar to Chanuka, when "they wanted to make us forget your Torah and to turn us away from the statutes you desire." It was the same here, except then it came about through the Greek kingdom, who wanted them to forget, etc., and here it came about through a Jew. The S"M ("Samech-Mem" i.e. Satan) en clothed himself in a Jew and did his work through him. But the en clothment of the S"M was deliberately through a Jew. Indeed it was Avigdor in which he en clothed himself in order to carry out the accusation, etc. You have to know that Avigdor was not a simple man; he was a rav. Where was he a rav? In Pinsk, where the holy Berditchever had been rav before him. From the holiness of the Berditchever you can understand the l'umas zeh (the opposite, as the force of holiness is balanced and countered by the force of unholiness) of Avigdor who was not a simple man. For the l'umas zeh is always comparable to the matter of holiness, etc.*

The reason it was specifically a Jew is based on what it says, [in reference to demons] "they have a shadow but not the shadow of a shadow" that the *klipos* have no *yechida* of the soul, and *chassidus* is from the *yechida* of the soul and so the opposition had to be en clothed in a Jew, for a Jew contains everything. That's why the S"M en clothed himself in him that he should oppose it... and he found Avigdor suited for this and led the opposition through him. In any case, after all is said and done, *chassidus* emerged victorious, for everybody agreed about *chassidus*, which is the truth of the Torah of the Baal Shem Tov. That is *chassidus*.

(This idea is brought in short in the *sicha* of Parshas Mikeitz 5752, footnote 66 (Seifer HaSichos vol. 1, p. 220): except that on Chanuka it was the Greeks who made the decrees, unlike in the time of the Alter Rebbe, where the decree was en clothed in a Jew who also contained "the shadow of a shadow," the aspect of *yechida*, so that the opposition to the revelation of the *yechida* aspect of Torah was specifically through him.)

Along the same lines is the *geula* of Yud Beis-Yud Gimmel Tammuz. Since the G-dly revelation was even greater at that time, it wasn't enough to have just "any Jew" oppose it; such a wondrous G-dly light could not be



concealed by just “any Jew,” for this purpose a *chassid* was needed, or at least a scion of *chassidim* and one who grew up among *chassidim*, such as the officer Nachmanson (the one who arrested the Rebbe Rayatz), who stemmed from *chassidim* and had himself learned from a *chassidic melamed* in Nevel. Only such a person could oppose the wondrous G-dly revelation of the Rebbe Rayatz, who came as a continuation of the Rebbeim who preceded him.

In our generation – the “seventh generation,” when we’ve finished the *avoda* and have reached the ultimate goal, i.e., drawing the *Sh’china* down to earth (as the Rebbe said in his first *maamer* “*Basi L’Gani*” 5711) – *chassidim* said (during the trial of the *s’farim*) that this concealment of the revelation of *atzmus* could not be accomplished even by somebody who stemmed from *chassidim* and who was born and raised among *chassidim*. Somebody on the “inside” was needed, who came from *beis ha’Rav*.

(By the same token, it was necessary that it be with the help of someone from the chief secretariat of the Rebbe Rayatz – who was arrested with him in 5687. The Rebbe Rayatz wrote in his account of the arrest that he was the only one who knew how to continue his (the Rebbe’s) work!)

Such a person could momentarily conceal the wondrous revelation, and do it in a way and with reasons of holiness and *chassidus*, such as claiming “*kavod Lubavitch*” (the honor of Lubavitch was at stake), etc.

The Rebbe related at the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5745 that it was suggested – for the sake of the situation and for *kavod Lubavitch* – not to let the matter go public and to compromise with them with some monetary compensation. Regarding this “suggestion,” the Rebbe cried out from the depths of his heart: I know good and well what

Lubavitch is and what its honor entails, and I take full responsibility and say that in order for Lubavitch to be what it ought, and for its honor to be as it should – one cannot compromise with them in any way at all. It is forbidden to give them even one penny, *ch”v*, and whoever gives them even one penny is going to war with my father-in-law!

To those that maintained that, nevertheless, the Rebbe meant this in spiritual terms only, but as far as the *gashmius* reality, there was no recourse except to save the *s’farim* by paying

***“It is forbidden to give them even one penny, ch”v, and whoever gives them even one penny is going to war with the Rebbe, my father-in-law!”***

them for it, the Rebbe screamed: This is in the category of *k’fira* (heresy) and actual idol worship! How could a G-d-fearing Jew, never mind a *chassidic* Jew, even consider making a separation between *ruchnius* and *gashmius*!?

The Rebbe felt so strongly about the matter that from the moment that the trial began, on Yud-Tes Kislev 5746, he stopped saying *maamarim* of *chassidus* with the *maamer niggun* (with the exception of two surprise *maamarim* on Yud Gimmel Nissan and Erev Shavuos 5749). Some time later, he even stopped saying *maamarim*

with the *niggun* for *sichos*.

It was only years later, when the whole episode had concluded and the other side signed a document in which he conceded that he had no rights and no demands, etc., that the Rebbe said, “*yetzt vet men kenen zogen chassidus* (now we can say *chassidus*). Despite this, the matter hasn’t truly been concluded, i.e., until the final *Geula*.

One can see how strongly the Rebbe felt by the following statement made at the time: “It would have been proper, and that is what I initially hoped for, that *the chassidim themselves* get involved, and spare me from all the *agmas nefesh* (grief).”

And when the glorious day of Hei Teives 5747 arrived, when the federal court publicly ruled that “*didan natzach*,” the Rebbe spoke at length (as soon as the good news arrived) that “it wasn’t you who sent me here, but Elokim” (which Yosef said to his brothers,” and “the spirit of Yaakov their father was revived”).

The following Shabbos, the Rebbe announced that “not another thing remained except the true and complete *Geula* and the building of the third *Beis HaMikdash*.” He added that we must openly say the true reality according to Torah even when people claim “they eulogized and embalmed” (referring to Yaakov) and one shouldn’t take people’s reactions into consideration since the world is ready to accept this. It simply has to be said with words that emanate from the heart, for then they are effective. Also, it should be done in ways of pleasantness and peace, etc. (see *Seifer Hisvaaduyos* 5747 vol. 2 p. 203, 209 etc.)

The closer we get to completing the task of drawing the *Sh’china* down to earth “for good” with the true and complete *Geula*, the stronger the S”M (Satan) tries to ruin things, for his end is near, as it says in the prophecy, “and

I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land.”

On the other hand, since we are approaching the revelation of G-d's Essence with the *Geula*, he cannot make use of his “bad messengers,” for they aren't of much use anymore. He has to be clever and dress things up in a mantle of holiness.

In all the earlier concealments, the S”M “dressed up” as people who behaved in unacceptable ways, even though they were Jews, and stemmed from *chassidim*, and were even related. But now we have reached the peak, at a time when the Rebbe MH”M stands and proclaims that “everything is finished,” and all that's lacking is “opening the eyes,” when it is not enough to deal with somebody who *once* was a *chassid* in order to conceal the “revelation of the essence” of the Rebbe. This time there was no choice but to “enclothe” it in those who are presently *chassidim*, and even *chassidim* of the seventh generation. They learn *chassidus*, even the Torah of the Rebbe MH”M, in depth, contemplating it, and with enthusiasm; they are *ovdei Hashem* through *t'filla*; they *koch zich* in *ahavas* and *achdus Yisroel* and work on *middos*; they put in great effort in the Rebbe's *mitzvaim* and in drawing close the hearts of Jewry to their Father in heaven. They are even ready to sacrifice their souls and bodies and their very lives for the Rebbe! They have just one problem – they don't go for the *shturem* regarding Moshiach and *Geula*.

Their intentions might be good, since they think that this *shturem* turns people away from *chassidus*, and that in this way it adversely affects the honor of Lubavitch and the honor of the Rebbe. etc., and therefore they think (using phrases like “*ofen ha'miskabel*” and “*keilim d'Tikkun*,” which are holy words of the Rebbe when talking about disseminating the *besuras ha'Geula*) that the Rebbe

wants us to drop it all and to return to the “original Lubavitch” for “Lubavitch is not active.” It has begun looking for “new goals,” proclamations and various slogans, and has lost the *p'nimius* it once had.

Therefore, in their opinion (in which the one who enclothed himself, “enclothed” himself earlier on during the time of Chanuka with the Greeks, with Avigdor, with Nachmanson, with the “other side” in the court case), we

***The following Shabbos, the Rebbe announced that “not another thing remained except the true and complete Geula and the building of the third Beis HaMikdash.” He added that we must openly say the true reality according to Torah.***

must “hide away” the *sichos* of 5751-5752, G-d forbid! At the very least they feel we should say that “we don't understand the Rebbe's words at all,” and they try to return Lubavitch to the “good old days” of yesteryear, before the new era which the Rebbe established.

When we know that the Rebbe is actively fighting, and he “throws his life aside” in order to actually bring the *Geula*; when we know that we are

in the final moments of *Galus*, and for some reason that we don't understand we still don't see the final *Geula*; when we know that the Rebbe “needs” us now more than ever (since that is his desire and because it is the inner intention), and he begs, asks, and demands of us “do all in your power...to actually bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu,” any attempt to concentrate on things “acceptable” to all stems from the one who was enclothed in the Greeks, then in Avigdor, Nachmanson, and the “other side” in the court case. Even if he wears “silk clothes” and speaks “*in di Chassidische shprach*” about Lubavitch as it once was, and about the “seventh generation” as it once was...

We cannot escape from the ongoing call of the Rebbe MH”M to us. He calls out to each one of us in order to give us one job which is “*kabbalas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu b'poel mamash*”; of course this includes learning and doing the things we used to do, except now they have to be saturated with what is *now* the call of the hour: *inyanei Moshiach and Geula*.

Without this, even if we are to learn and live with the most elevated matters, it is shirking the only task we have to do. We all know what we call someone who deserts the battlefield at the height of the battle (“*di hechtse tzeit*”) when the general “throws his life aside” to attain the final victory.

Hashem will certainly work things out, and the Rebbe will certainly work things out, but in these final moments, which for some inner reason “need our input,” so to speak, let us unite to learn the Torah of our king, Moshiach, particularly the *sichos* of 5751-5752. Let us “live with Moshiach” ourselves and disseminate the *besuras ha'Geula* wherever we can, until we see our king for ourselves with the final *Geula*, immediately.

# DISCOVERING MANUSCRIPTS

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER



*In honor of Hei Teives in which we celebrate the Chag HaS'farim, "didan natzach," we present Rabbi Ben-Tzion Grossman's story of how he located and bought old manuscripts of chassidus, which were written and said by the Rebbeim.*

"I don't remember a time when manuscripts that came to the Rebbe remained such a long time in his room, but yours gave the Rebbe great *nachas ruach*, and this is your *z'chus*." This is what R' Leibel Groner told me after I sent the handwritten booklets of the Rebbeim to the Rebbe, even though generally, after the Rebbe received manuscripts and looked them over briefly, he would send them to the library.

\* \* \*

Rabbi Ben-Tzion Grossman's hobby of collecting old manuscripts began when he was a child, when his father, R' Yisroel Grossman would occasionally show him old handwritten *s'farim*, and would tell him the story behind each seifer.

"My parents had a number of *bichlech* (booklets) of *maamarim* of the Tzemach Tzedek. My father's

grandfather, the *chassid* Rabbi Zecharia Mendel, *a"h*, was the one who wrote them.

Before describing R' Zecharia Mendel's dedication to writing *maamarei chassidus*, R' Ben-Tzion relates how R' Zecharia Mendel came to be a *chassid*.

"My father's grandfather, R' Zecharia Mendel lived in the principality of Zingberger, which bordered with Austria-Hungary of that time. He was considered an outstanding genius and *oved Hashem* in his town. He was the *rav* of the "Yekke" community, a community which had no exposure to *chassidus*.

"One day, *chassidim* of the Tzemach Tzedek came to town. They attempted to publicize *chassidus*. R' Zecharia Mendel, who knew nothing of *chassidus* at that time, was very impressed by the teachings of the

Tzemach Tzedek and by the enthusiastic personalities of the *chassidim*. He began learning *chassidus*, and after he felt he was ready, he decided to travel to Lubavitch to see the Rebbe.

"R' Zecharia was a recently married young man, and he knew that if he would ask permission of his wife and in-laws, they would refuse to allow him to travel to distant Russia in order to see some Rebbe they had never heard of. Since he yearned to see the Rebbe, he decided, heavy-heartedly, to travel without first asking permission.

"After a long and difficult journey, R' Zecharia Mendel arrived in Lubavitch and began drinking thirstily from the wellsprings of *chassidus*. He studied *chassidus* day and night, and with time, began *davening* with *avoda*. It reached the point where he was nearly cut off from the world. By day he *davened* with *avoda*, and at night he delved into *chassidus*.

"His wife Leah, seeing that her husband had disappeared, began searching for him, but all attempts at locating him were fruitless. When they despaired of finding him, they

declared her an *aguna*.

“Six years passed and the *tzaddik*, R’ Aharon of Chernobyl arrived in Zingberger. Crowds flocked to see him, Leah and her mother among them. They asked for the blessing and advice of the *tzaddik* as to what to do to find her missing husband. The Rebbe of Chernobyl read their note and curtly said, ‘Zecharia Mendel will arrive home soon.’

“A few weeks later, Zecharia Mendel returned home. Joy and tears intermingled, and then R’ Zecharia Mendel related his experiences and said that he had simply forgotten his family while delving into *chassidus*. Then one day, he was called into the room of the Tzemach Tzedek unexpectedly, for no apparent reason.

“The Rebbe asked him when the last time he had written home was. R’ Zecharia said he hadn’t written at all. ‘How long are you here?’ asked the Tzemach Tzedek. R’ Zecharia said he didn’t know. After he did some calculations, he figured out when he had come to Lubavitch, and discovered that he had been there six years! The Tzemach Tzedek instructed him to return home immediately so that his wife wouldn’t remain an *aguna*. R’ Zecharia Mendel and his wife later realized that this took place on the same day that she had received a *bracha* from the Chernobler.

“During his stay in Lubavitch, R’ Zecharia Mendel wrote booklets of the Tzemach Tzedek’s *maamarim*, *bichlech* that were passed down from father to son until R’ Yisroel Grossman had them.

Concluded R’ Ben-Tzion, “Not only did the handwritten booklets get passed down to us, but also the *chayus* for *limud ha’chassidus*.”

\* \* \*

Aside from these *s’farim*, R’ Yisroel also had handwritten manuscripts from his grandfather’s grandfather, Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid zt”l, one of the *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov. He had copied by hand the *sifrei kabbala Eitz Chaim* and *Pri Eitz Chayim*, which hadn’t been printed yet. The Grossman family inherited these *s’farim*, too.

“These *s’farim*, as well as other *s’farim* and handwritten copies, interested me. Whenever I came across an old seifer or handwritten



Rabbi Ben-Tzion Grossman

manuscript, I looked into who had written it and in what year. When I grew older, I enthusiastically got involved in the business of *s’farim* and old manuscripts,” said R’ Ben-Tzion Grossman.

\* \* \*

One of the Rebbe’s famous “hobbies” was *s’farim*; *s’farim* old and new, as well as manuscripts. The Rebbe’s main interest was writings of the Rebbeim, writings which could reveal new “lights.” An example of this would be the editions of the *Tanya* which were published over the

years. It was based on the various editions and printings that the Rebbe arranged the *luach ha’tikkun* (corrections) for *Tanya*. The Rebbe made every effort to obtain as many editions as possible, even though only a few editions were missing. For this reason, there were *chassidim* who saw it as a challenge to make every effort to obtain editions of *Tanya* that the Rebbe didn’t yet have.

It wasn’t only editions of *Tanya*, but also old manuscripts of the teachings of the Rebbeim. “In the course of my work, I began making every effort to obtain as many of these manuscripts as possible,” says R’ Grossman.

\* \* \*

### Why weren’t the *maamarim* and manuscripts kept by the Rebbeim or their descendents?

Although in Chabad they were careful about preserving every word which the Rebbeim uttered, for which reason they preserved every *maamer* that was put out by the Rebbeim, still, a large portion of the *maamarim* were lost or burnt over the years as a result of wars and fires which broke out in the wooden houses in Lubavitch. Many of the *s’farim* and manuscripts ended up in different places, and are scattered around the world today.

In the Rebbe Rayatz’s library there were unbelievable treasures of handwritten manuscripts and *maamarim*. When the Rebbe Rayatz had to flee from Warsaw with the outbreak of the Second World War, he left his large library behind. The library was returned to Lubavitch in 5738 (1938), but over the years, seasoned businessmen managed to steal some of these treasures and do business with them.



For example, there are many *maamarim* that the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote for the *chassidim* living in Eretz Yisroel. Those *chassidim* were far from the source of *chassidus* in Lubavitch, and the Mittlerer Rebbe would write *bichlech* of *chassidus* for them and send them to Eretz Yisroel. These *maamarim* circulated and efforts have to be made to locate them.

Another fact: most of the manuscripts and *maamarim* went from Rebbe to Rebbe *b'yerusha* (inheritance), but you must remember that the Tzemach Tzedek had seven sons, and although most of the *yerusha* went to the youngest, the Rebbe Maharash, a certain portion of them went to the other sons. The Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe MH"M obtained some of them, but a significant number of them are still in the possession of the descendents of all those children. In other words, they're scattered all over the world.

In the HaYom Yom it says that the Tzemach Tzedek wrote 24,000 pages of *chiddushei Torah*, with each page containing eight columns. What we have today is only a fraction of those pages.

**What does a *bichel* cost?**

The prices of old handwritten

copies are very high. For example, a page with a few lines written by the Divrei Chaim of Tzanz, costs close to \$15,000.

**And you pay prices like that?**

There's a clear directive from the Rebbe not to pay high sums for manuscripts of the Rebbeim, and so I

**NEW MAAMER RECENTLY PUBLISHED**

After a great deal of work which produced such tremendous results, other members of *Anash* also got involved and have delivered manuscripts that were in their possession. The *mekubal*, Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburg, *rosh yeshiva* in Sh'chem, began to express interest in this area after I showed him a number of manuscripts. His late father even gave the Rebbe a *bichel* of *chassidus* that he had inherited from his grandfather, a *chassid* of the Tzemach Tzedek.

Amongst the *maamarim* and manuscripts in my possession are many which have yet to be published. So, for instance, Rabbi Ginsburg recently published a *maamer* of the Alter Rebbe on the subject of *pidyon ha'ben*. This *maamer* was copied from a booklet written by a *chassid* of the Alter Rebbe, and later the Mittlerer Rebbe.



must be careful about this.

**What's the reason?**

Since it's known that *chassidus Chabad* has many *k'savim*, and that to a Lubavitcher, these *k'savim* are a treasure, the Rebbe didn't want prices to go through the roof.

**How do you convince the sellers?**

When I first got involved, over thirty years ago, this was the main problem. For this reason, I worked very hard to convince those in the business to lower the prices. I explained to the collectors and businessmen, most of whom were *frum*, that I don't collect these manuscripts as my personal hobby, but I send them to the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Surprisingly, they accepted this, and I always managed to come to an agreement with them over the price, something which went against all

rules of business.

I'd like to tell you of another problem that I had to deal with. There were collectors and businessmen who, for various reasons were against Chabad and refused to sell manuscripts of the Rebbeim to a Lubavitcher *chassid*.

When this was the case, the way I dress, which is like other Chassidic groups (not Chabad) helped me out. I felt that this work is in the category of *pidyon shvuyim* (redeeming captives), something which could not be done by others.

It's very interesting work which requires tremendous patience. I'll tell you an interesting episode. I discovered that a certain Jew had a *bichel chassidus*. I went to see him and he confirmed that he had it and showed it to me. I was sorry to see that he had only half a *maamer*. When I asked him where the other

half was, it turned out that it was on the side of the world, so I had double the work in obtaining both halves, which required double negotiating. In this unusual instance, I had to verify that both halves really matched.

**How do you check something like that?**

It entails a great deal of work, and not just in this last instance I told you about, but each time I get hold of some manuscript. The first step is verifying whether the manuscript is an original or a copy or even a forgery, something common in the world of business.

At this point I turn to Rabbi Aharon Chitrik of New York, a member of Otzar Chassidim which works on preparing manuscripts for publishing. He compares it to other manuscripts. I also consult with R' Leibel Groner who knows a great deal

about things of this sort. They also have knowledge of various *maamarim*, as to whether they were actually said and when. There were times when they too couldn't figure something out, and I had no choice but to consult with the Rebbe who would decide.

*The Rebbe asked him when the last time he had written home was. R' Zecharia said he hadn't written at all. 'How long are you here?' asked the Tzemach Tzedek. R' Zecharia said he didn't know. After he did some calculations, he figured out when he had come to Lubavitch, and discovered that he had been there six years!*

After we authenticated a manuscript, we had to obtain the money to purchase it.

**Why was it so complicated to compare manuscripts?**

There were *chassidim* who copied *maamarei chassidus* of the Rebbe and

would mimic the Rebbe's handwriting. There were even *chassidim* who were so expert that one could think it was the Rebbe's own handwriting.

**Could you give an example?**

In 5672 (1922), they printed the *Maaneh Lashon* in a Vilna print and then Kehos published it in 5710 and 5727. They added a *reshima* of the Tzemach Tzedek to the *Maaneh Lashon* that he wrote at the time of the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*. Those who published it were sure they were copying a handwritten letter of the Tzemach Tzedek.

I miraculously obtained the actual original manuscript of the Tzemach Tzedek that he wrote at the time of the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe. I sent it to the Rebbe and to my surprise, that year, when they printed the *halachic* work *Piskei Dinim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe instructed them to add a photocopy of the Tzemach Tzedek's *reshima*, even though it had nothing to do with *halacha*.

This is what was written in the introduction to *Piskei Dinim*: "Since we just obtained a *reshima* in the actual handwriting of the Tzemach Tzedek, we thought it proper to print it in this work."

\* \* \*

The main question, aside from being able to identify a manuscript, is how to obtain the money to buy it. Manuscripts such as these cost a fortune. R' Grossman relates:

"A number of *chassidim* helped me out, among them Rabbi Shmuel Dovid Raitchek, *a"h* who even worked on obtaining manuscripts himself. He helped fundraise from Rabbi Berel Weiss of Los Angeles. In the early years, R' Shmerel Gurary of Tel Aviv helped with money. R' Shmerel traveled to the Rebbe every year for a number of years in a row,

and each time he would bring the Rebbe one of the *bichlech* I obtained.

President Shazar also helped me in my work, and sometimes he would obtain money from various funds. For this purpose, I met with him a number of times at his home. When he came to visit the Rebbe he brought

*Although in Chabad they were careful about preserving every word which the Rebbeim uttered, for which reason they preserved every maamer that was put out by the Rebbeim, still, a large portion of the maamarim were lost or burnt over the years as a result of wars and fires which broke out in the wooden houses in Lubavitch.*

one of the manuscripts I had sold him as a gift to the Rebbe.

\* \* \*

At this point in the interview, R' Ben-Tzion Grossman took out a number of valuable old manuscripts. With visible awe he takes out a folder

with pages handwritten by the Rebbeim. Each page is carefully wrapped in plastic. All it takes is a glance for R' Grossman to know all there is to know about the page. He points out the handwriting of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, and the Rebbe Rashab.

The writing of *talmidim* of the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe are extremely crowded but clear. On a medium size page you can count

over seventy lines! Despite the large number of lines, they are very straight and there's an equal space between lines. The crowding of the letters is tremendous but the amazing thing is that the letters don't touch one another. There's a clear space between each letter.

R' Grossman explains in amazement, "You have to be an extremely patient person with *gadlus ha'mochin* in order to be able to write

like this, so legibly and precise."

R' Grossman continues removing manuscripts, each one another surprise. The next *bichel* has copes of *maamarim* which were written by *chassidim* of both the Alter Rebbe and Mittlerer Rebbe. It was from this *bichel* that the *maamer* said by the Mittlerer Rebbe at the time of the *histalkus* was publicized for the first time (*Beis Moshiach* issue #253).

The next *bichel* has *maamarei chassidus* which were written by the Tzemach Tzedek's sons. They are compiled in one book. Rumor has it that after the *p'tira*, there were those who wanted to know which son to follow, and they distributed the teachings and customs of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons.

Something which isn't an antique but still arouses one's feelings, is a mathematics notebook made in Russia from the year 1961, which has a handwritten copy of the *HaYom Yom*, written by a *chassid*. "Apparently the *HaYom Yom* couldn't be obtained in Russia, and when they got a copy, the *chassidim* quickly copied it into their personal notebooks."

R' Grossman has a notebook with the diary of a *chassid* of the Rebbe Rayatz. The diary includes customs of the Rebbe, *farbrengens*, *sichos*, and *maamarim*. The *chassid* also added the original *t'shura* he received from the Rebbe Rayatz at the Rebbe's wedding to the notebook.

Grossman continues to locate and buy old manuscripts of the Rebbeim. "In my home I have many manuscripts of the Rebbeim, and I continue my work in obtaining as many of these as possible in order to be able to give them to the Rebbe MH" M when he comes *teikef u'miyad, b'karov mamash*."

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**Beis Moshiach**



# EIGHT SPARKS THAT WERE IGNITED

*Eight touching stories by writers for Beis Moshiach,  
about neshamos that were ignited.  
Presented for Chanuka. \* Part 2 of 2*





# TRAIN STATION TRANSFORMATION

BY AVROHOM JACOBSON

The following story happened about 25 years ago, at the train station in Lud. In those days, the passengers from Chaifa to Beer Sheva had to get off at the station in Lud, and wait for the train from Tel Aviv, which took them from Lud to Beer Sheva.

Some of the *talmidim* of the Chabad *yeshiva* in Lud decided to take advantage of this waiting period to put *t'fillin* on with the dozens of people waiting for their next train.

Avner (a pseudonym) was from an assimilated family in the U.S. In the 60's he began searching for meaning in life, and got to know a group of missionaries. They managed to draw him in, and he enthusiastically joined them in their activities.

The missionaries realized that Avner was very persuasive, and after a brief training period they sent him to work in India. The *sitra achara* was thrilled with this *neshama* and pulled him further and further down into the depths of *klipe*.

Avner was very successful in India, and his missionary bosses decided to promote him and transfer him to Egypt. He married an

***You would never guess what putting on t'fillin in the train station would lead to. He himself certainly never imagined what putting on t'fillin one time would lead to!***

Egyptian woman and they had four children. After a number of years of work in Egypt, he returned to the U.S., but not for long. His bosses sent him to the most difficult job location of all: Eretz Yisroel.

He arrived in Beer Sheva with his gentile wife and children, pretending to be a Jewish family interested in settling in Eretz Yisroel. The corrupt Law of Return allowed them all to enter the country, and he began to work among the new immigrants in Beer Sheva.

One day, as he stood at the train station in Lud, on his way to Beer Sheva, a *yeshiva bachur* approached him and suggested he put on *t'fillin*. Avner looked at him in surprise. He, the big missionary, should put on *t'fillin*? It was too absurd!

But the *bachur* wouldn't give up. "The Lubavitcher Rebbe asked that every Jew put on *t'fillin* to strengthen security in Eretz Yisroel," he exclaimed.

Avner planned on getting rid of the pesky *bachur* but suddenly an inner voice called out to him to accept the boy's offer and to put on *t'fillin*. For a few moments he wavered, but then his G-dly soul won and he agreed to put on *t'fillin*.

If you saw Avner crowned with *t'fillin*, you would never dream that this was a missionary who enticed Jews to convert to Christianity, and you would never guess what putting on *t'fillin* in the Lud station would lead to. He himself certainly never imagined what putting on *t'fillin* one time would lead to!

The train for Beer Sheva arrived, and Avner quickly removed the *t'fillin*, thanked the *bachur* politely,

and boarded the train. He sat down and tried to nap, but just could not. Thoughts rushed about in his head. “I put on *t’fillin* because I am a Jew. If I am a Jew, why do I work for Christians? Why was I so moved when I put on *t’fillin*? Do I really have a Jewish soul, despite everything?”

His thoughts went round and round throughout the trip. When he arrived at his home in Beer Sheva he decided he had to investigate the matter more thoroughly. He took a

Jerusalem phone book and began looking up the names of rabbis. The first rabbi he called slammed down the phone when he identified himself as a missionary. The same thing happened with the other rabbis he called.

After much effort, he managed to reach a rabbi who agreed to hear his story, and even invited him to visit him at his home in Yerushalayim. After hearing Avner’s story up until the point that he put on *t’fillin*, which had ignited his Jewish spark, the

rabbi told him how to do *t’shuva*.

\* \* \*

Avner divorced his wife and sent her to Egypt together with her four children. Then he moved to Tzfat where he began leading a full Jewish life. The *bachur* would never have known about the incredible life changes that resulted from his efforts, if Avner hadn’t been interviewed back then by *Maariv*, and told the story about putting on *t’fillin* in the train station in Lud.

## PERFECT TIMING

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN CHAVIV

“I felt my heart racing. People would approach me and talk to me, but I didn’t hear a thing. All I could make out were choppy syllables, as though people were speaking to me from behind glass. I was very frightened, not understanding what was happening to me. Today I realize that it was simply my *neshama* beginning to wake up. After so many years of spiritual suffering, my *neshama* was crying out: Save me!

I sought help from a doctor, but nothing worked. My condition continued to deteriorate. My *neshama* cried out with all its might. I sat at home all day and cried like a child. I began trembling and then came the crisis.

I sat at home, crying and shaking, and began praying to Hashem, “Hashem, if you save me and get me out of all this, I promise that I’ll do whatever you ask of me.”

\* \* \*

These were peak moments in the life of Alon. To tell you the truth, when *Beis Moshiach* called me, wanting a story about a hidden Jewish spark that suddenly burst into flames, I

immediately thought of Alon Nardi. As someone who lives and works within the Chabad community of Ramat Aviv, which is comprised primarily of *neshamos* that were ignited in the most wondrous of ways, I can tell you that the stories of *neshamos* “roll about under the table” with nobody bothering to pick them up. But for some reason, Alon’s story always stuck in my mind as a classic example of a Jewish spark that burst forth and lit up the darkness within the darkness itself.

When I asked Alon about writing his story for the magazine, he agreed right away. We arranged to sit down together after the Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen* in the *yeshiva* of Ramat Aviv.

From the open window of Alon’s house, you can see the sea in all its majesty. I turned on the microphone and began taping the story which poured forth from him.

\* \* \*

“I was raised in a typical home in Tel Aviv. We lived on Dizengoff in a completely secular environment. Today I know there’s no such thing as a secular Jew. In any case, we observed nothing at all. From a young age I

began being particular about certain things on my own. I don’t even know why. At about age eight, I began to kiss the *mezuzah* and I stopped eating non-kosher. Even when we had meat and milk, I was always careful not to mix them together on my plate. For some reason, for some unexplainable reason, I always kept them separate.”

Alon’s *bar mitzva* took place in the large *shul* on Arlozorov Street. His parent bought him *t’fillin*, but he knew he wouldn’t touch them the day after the *bar mitzva*. Right after the *bar mitzva*, they moved to Ramat Aviv and Alon continued to grow up as a typical Ramat Aviv youngster.

“My army service was shorter than usual. After I was released, I lived for a year in Eilat and returned to Tel Aviv. I was offered a job in a restaurant, and at the same time, I studied in a school for restaurateurs and completed and excelled in an international course on wine and alcoholic beverages.

I began working as a manager in a restaurant when the owner decided to make a change. He transformed the restaurant into a very exclusive establishment, and unfortunately

began to serve seafood, as well as keeping the restaurant open on Shabbos.

In the meantime, I advanced in my job and quickly became a buyer and took care of the money, and a short time later, also ran the takeout store alongside the restaurant. Business was great. We made millions of shekel a year, and this dizzying success led to the opening of another similar type restaurant in Hertzeliya with an investment to the tune of a million and a half dollars.

I was working like a maniac, twelve hours a day, including Shabbos and holidays. We were open every day of the year except for Yom Kippur. I remember that every so often I would take the car on Friday nights, hop over to *shul*, and then go back to work. The only thing that interested me at that time was making money and impressing my friends; having the most fashionable home and the finest clothes. I was so immersed in this that it became my obsession.

That was my life at that time, a constant pursuit of money, honor, constant pressure from the intense work load and the non-stop attempt to be at the top of the heap, and crazy entertainment, which included wasting tons of money, drinking and smoking.”

Alon sighed, poured us some *l'chaim* and said, “We’re continuing the Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrenge*, huh?”

“Apparently, due to the great strain, I began to feel physically unwell. I became very depressed, feeling a constant pounding of my heart. I woke up in the middle of the night in confusion, and things only got worse.

“My spiritual state was at its *nadir*, to the point that it affected my physical well being. My soul cried out from within.

“One morning, as usual, I went to work, where I got a phone call about a friend who had been in an accident and was in the hospital. I hung up the phone and my pressure began to rise. I

didn’t even have a chance to figure out how I would organize my day with work and the hospital when the phone rang again, this time with a friend who told me about another close friend who had tried to commit suicide, but had failed, thank G-d.

“They hospitalized him in the psychiatric ward,” he told me, “and we’ve got to go visit him.” I hung up the phone and went back to work, feeling horrible. I went into the office and began to cry. I didn’t know what had happened to me, for I had never cried before, and now I was crying like a child.

“I didn’t know what to do, and then the bomb struck. My *neshama* decided to put an end to the crazy life I led. Later on, when I learned *chassidus*, I discovered that this is called an *isarusa d’leila*.

“I felt my heart pounding, people coming over to me and saying something, but I couldn’t hear them. All I could hear were choppy syllables, as though they were speaking to me from behind glass. I was very frightened, not understanding what was happening to me. Today I realize that it was simply my *neshama* beginning to wake up. After so many years of spiritual suffering, my *neshama* was crying out, “Save me!”

“At some point I began walking towards the ocean, where I sat alone with my thoughts. Suddenly I felt an unfamiliar urge to speak to a rabbi. I called my brother Eren, who was a *mekurav* for some time to Rabbi Yossi Ginsberg, *shliach* in Ramat Aviv, and I told him what was going on with me. He arranged a meeting with Rabbi Yossi.

“In the meantime, I went back home and rested for a few hours, but my *neshama* gave me no rest. I got up and again felt this awful sensation. My brother, seeing me in this state, took me to Rabbi Ginsberg that very same evening.

“I sat there with Rabbi Yossi and

told him my life story. I finished and said, ‘I think I’m going crazy.’ We spoke for a long time, and when we concluded he told me to leave my job and to write a letter to the Rebbe, not to worry because everything would be alright.

“The next evening I began feeling strong chest pains. Within a few minutes the paramedics had come to the house and they took me to the hospital, thinking I had probably had a heart attack. They did all sorts of tests and finally said, ‘Alon, your heart is healthy as an ox’s. There’s nothing wrong with you.’

“I returned home, with this feeling just growing stronger and sharper. That night I really felt I was going to die. My brother saw me and took me straight to Rabbi Yossi. It was ten o’clock at night.

“I told him, ‘I’m suffering. I’m suffering and I don’t know from what and why.’

“‘First of all, you need a healthy soul in a healthy body,’ he said. ‘Get a good night’s sleep and eat well, but first write a letter to the Rebbe.’

“I sat down with Yuval Barnes, a young man in the neighborhood, and poured out my heart to the Rebbe, writing all that had happened to me lately, concluding with, ‘Rebbe, what is happening to me?’

“I put my first letter to the Rebbe in a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. I don’t remember the exact spot, but I remember that it was a very short letter, which said as follows: ‘you are in a stage of *hisorerus* (spiritual awakening). Take each day as a new day, learn *Tanya*, and there will be good news.’

“I had no idea how or why the Rebbe wrote to me about *hisorerus*. ‘I feel as though I’m going to die, and the Rebbe tells me about *hisorerus*?!’ And what’s the connection with studying *Tanya*? I didn’t understand a thing, and I went back home disappointed, as though I didn’t get an answer at all.

“My mother decided to take me out to relax. We went to a park with a large

restaurant, but I couldn't eat. I didn't understand what was happening, and I suddenly burst into tears. I cried uncontrollably like a baby, right there in the restaurant.

"I began shouting to my mother, 'Ima, take me out of here. I'm losing my mind! I'm going crazy!'

"I tried a doctor but nothing helped. My condition continued to deteriorate. My *neshama* cried out with all its might. I sat at home all day and cried like a child. I began trembling and then came the real crisis.

"I sat at home, crying and shaking, and began praying to Hashem, 'Hashem, if you save me and get me out of all this, I promise that I'll do whatever you ask of me.'

A few more days passed, and then it was Shabbos. I remember myself lying on the couch at home and suddenly deciding to begin keeping Shabbos. Just at that moment, as a sign from Heaven, my cousin asked me to go to a *farbrengen* at the *yeshiva* Nechmad Sheim. He said there were nice guys there, singing, *simcha*, and that it would take me out of my depression.

"The truth is I don't know how I agreed to go, because I had already entered a deep depression and I had no interest in anything. I got to the *yeshiva* and didn't know a soul, and then you came over to me and suggested I join a *Tanya* class that you give. I heard the word "*Tanya*" and it rang a bell. I remembered that the Rebbe's answer said I had to start learning *Tanya*. I agreed to join the *shiur*.

"I'll never forget it. We learned

*The only thing that interested me at that time was making money and impressing my friends; having the most fashionable home and the finest clothes. I was so immersed in this that it became my obsession.*

about the source of the G-dly soul and the animal soul, and about the difference between the soul of a Jew and the soul of a goy, with the idea of whatever is higher falls lower.

"Suddenly I began to understand that this was talking to me. I was completely in the clouds. When we finished learning, I went home and after nearly a month of non-stop confusion I suddenly felt terrific, as though my *neshama* had gotten some oxygen. I realized that it was as though I hadn't been breathing all my life, and the first *shiur* I attended provided air for my *neshama*. I felt so good I can't even begin to explain it. I felt better than I had felt in the 26 years of my life.

"I began thinking about everything that had happened to me, and I understood what the Rebbe had written about *hisorerus* and learning *Tanya*. I didn't sleep a wink all night, and I thought about what I should do. I remembered that Rabbi Ginsberg told me not to go back to work, and so on Sunday morning, after six years of managing two restaurants while working around the clock, I called to say I quit. They were shocked. 'You're crazy,' they said, but I never went back.

"I felt much better after that. I took my cousin, and we went together by bus to southern Tel Aviv. I bought some pairs of *tzitzis* for myself and for him, and began wearing them.

"When I returned home I called my brother and said, 'Do me a favor and speak to R' Ginsberg about my learning in *yeshiva*.'

Alon attended *yeshiva* and committed to a full Jewish life. "I began to feel great. Each day I returned home flying, joyous, with inner and outer *simcha*."

Alon made tremendous progress as he invested all his time and effort into the study of *chassidus* and *mitzva* fulfillment. A little over a year ago, he married Moran who had been with him all along, including his darkest times when his *neshama* cried out from within thick walls of captivity, deprived of air and spiritual nourishment.

\* \* \*

Moran followed him in doing *t'shuva*, accompanied throughout by the Rebbe's *brachos*.

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# A LIGHT FROM THE EAST

BY SHAI GEFEN



Uri Duner was born 29 years ago in Eretz Yisroel to an upper-class family. For a while they lived in an exclusive *yishuv* in the south, and then moved to Hertzeliya. His father is an architect, his mother, a teacher in Ramat Aviv. Uri attended a school of engineering in Ramat Aviv. “I lacked nothing in my childhood,” says Uri, “I had money, and whatever I wanted.”

Religion wasn’t exactly regarded warmly in the Duner family, to say the least. The anti-religious sentiment that prevailed in the country affected the young boy, who grew up in an atmosphere of “anti.” So it’s not surprising that he felt estranged from anybody with a religious appearance.

Although he did not like religion, Uri always sought something. The emptiness of Israeli society bothered him, and unlike his friends, he did not accept everything matter-of-factly. When he grew a bit older, serious questions began bothering him, and he didn’t stop asking himself whether he was going in the right direction.

His financial and material lot in life was excellent, but the questions didn’t stop bothering him, and the feeling of emptiness continued to grow. He began searching, but in all the wrong places. The aversion to religion with which he was raised, prevented him from looking in the

right places.

Thus he found himself sitting for hours in front of his physics teacher, who knew a great deal about Eastern philosophy, listening eagerly to talk of spiritual worlds. For a year and a half, Uri sat like a *talmid* before his *rebbe*, listening to descriptions of all religions except his own.

*For a year and a half, Uri sat like a talmid before his rebbe, listening to descriptions of all religions except his own.*

Uri went to the army and then attended the Technion in Chaifa. When he finished this, he decided to see the world. “As many Israelis do, I went to Thailand,” says Uri, where he had many interesting experiences.

“On one of my trips, I arrived at a monastery and decided to take a course there. I did meditation for

months at the monastery, getting up at four in the morning after only four hours of sleep and barely eating. This period of my life was one in which I went from monastery to monastery, learning and practicing Eastern religions.”

He was so far from Judaism that he needed a reminder that he was indeed Jewish. It was two bloodthirsty Arabs who reminded him.

“One day when I was in Bangkok, two Arabs stopped me. They pulled the chain I wore around my neck and said threateningly, ‘Are you Jewish?’ I said I wasn’t, but they didn’t believe me, and they declared, ‘You’re Jewish.’ I saw I couldn’t get out of it and so I asked them, ‘How do you know I’m Jewish?’ They said, ‘What do you mean? We see it on your face! How many Arabs did you kill so far?’ I miraculously managed to get away from them.”

Uri has another story from the period of time he spent at monasteries. “After I had spent a number of weeks at the monastery, I wasn’t feeling well. I didn’t eat or drink. I just slept all day. I felt as though something was happening, but didn’t know what it was. I felt an inexplicable sense of euphoria.

“Two days later, I met an Israeli girl who told me that two days earlier

had been Yom Kippur which had fallen out on Shabbos. I saw this as another sign that the Far East had nothing to offer me.”

Uri continued to wander about the foreign desert of Eastern philosophy and idolatry. He finally returned to Eretz Yisroel, and went back to the Technion. He continued wearing the chain that he had gotten at the monastery. Friends at school asked him to give them courses in meditation, and Uri agreed.

One day a friend came by and said, “Uri, you’ve tried everything. Why don’t you try Judaism?”

This friend had gotten to know Rabbi Shmuel Frumer, and he suggested that Uri meet him. Uri recalls that meeting, “I said to myself, ‘I’ve learned about Christianity, lived Buddhism, and learned all the teachings of the Far East. Really now, why *shouldn’t* I get to know a little bit about Judaism?’ That’s how I first got to meet Rabbi Frumer, meetings that changed my life.

***He was so far from Judaism that he needed a reminder that he was indeed Jewish. It was two bloodthirsty Arabs who reminded him.***

“After the very first meeting with him, I said to myself, ‘I’m remaining here.’ This was the first time I felt that there was real meaning to life. This time, it was at a *chassidus* class.

“Two weeks later, at the end of a series of intensive *chassidus* classes with Rabbi Frumer, I went back to the Technion wearing *tzitzis* and a *kippa*. The guys were sure something had happened to me. One day I was a idolatrous, and the next day I was *dati*!

“I began living a full Jewish life. I kept kosher at the Technion, I put on *t’fillin*, and began observing other mitzvos. In order to replenish myself, I would go to the *yeshiva* in Tzfat every Friday in order to learn and make up for all I had missed, and mainly to absorb the atmosphere.”

\* \* \*

While studying at the Technion, Uri started a sort of Chabad house, and he was the address for anything Jewish. He was *mekarev* quite a few people while studying to become an engineer.

When he graduated as an engineer, he went back to the army and serves as an officer at the air force base in Tzrifin. He married three and a half years ago and has a little boy. Despite his busyness, Uri continues spreading the wellsprings within the army and wherever he finds himself. Uri is yet another torch lit by the Rebbe MH”M.

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# WHAT DON'T WE DO FOR OUR CHILDREN?

He stood near the door to the Chabad house, his hand on the doorknob, pushing the door open for a moment, but then retreating. He stood there deliberating, hesitant, wavering, and then finally pushed the door open and walked in. For the first time in his life.

Rabbi Menachem Yaakov Reinitz, who works at the Chabad house in Lud, looked him over. All sorts of people walk into Chabad houses, each one a world onto himself, but this fellow didn't look like the sort who entered Chabad houses. He looked like a typical Ashkenazi, an older man, with cold features and an icy gaze. 'What could he possibly want,' wondered R' Reinitz, as he warmly greeted the man and asked how he could help him.

At that point, a strange dialogue ensued.

"I'm interested in buying *mezuzos* for my home," said the man between gritted teeth. It was apparent that it wasn't easy for him to be saying this.

"Do you know how to put them up yourself?" asked R' Reinitz.

"I have no idea. Come to my house and put them up for me," said the man curtly. It looked as though he wanted to get out of the Chabad house as fast as possible.

"No problem. I'll come with you and check things out," said R' Reinitz pleasantly, "but if you want, I can teach

you, and you can do the *mitzva* yourself."

"No!" the man shouted. "I don't believe in this and I don't want to touch them."

"Just a minute ago you said you wanted to buy *mezuzos*, didn't you?" wondered R' Reinitz.

"Yes, my house needs *mezuzos*, but I don't want to touch them," he exclaimed.

"Why?" asked R' Reinitz.

"Take a good look at me," said the man, his eyes flashing in anger and pain. "I lived through Auschwitz. I was a little boy. My entire family went up the chimneys, and only I remained alive. I saw the worst atrocities that man can imagine. I saw G-d-fearing Jews, *shomrei Torah* and *mitzvos*, killed in the thousands. After all I saw, I don't believe in G-d, and want nothing to do with Him."

"Yet you want to buy *mezuzos*?" asked R' Reinitz, puzzled and trying to understand what this man was all about.

"Yes. It's because of my daughter. She doesn't want to enter my home until I put up *mezuzos*."

"She's religious?" asked R' Reinitz.

"No. She's in the army now, and yesterday she called and said that if I don't put up *mezuzos*, she'll remain at the base. Nu, what don't we do for our children?" the man sighed.

"And how is it that an non-religious soldier insists that her father put up *mezuzos*?"

"It all started when she was a little girl. Every Shabbos, a pair of boys from the Chabad *yeshiva* came and did religious activities with the kids. They called it '*mesibot Shabbat*.' I didn't want my daughter to participate, but all her friends were going, and they got candies, and so I had to let her go. When I heard her say the *p'sukim*, I comforted myself by saying that she'd get over it.

As I anticipated, she grew older and forgot it all. I was sure it was all in the past, but apparently I was mistaken. She called me yesterday and asked for *mezuzos*. I was sure she was kidding, because what interest could she have in *mezuzos*, but she made it clear that she was serious and she wouldn't enter the house until it had *mezuzos*.

"I asked her who brainwashed her, and she said, the *Chabadnikim* at the *mesibot Shabbat*. It's unbelievable, over ten years had passed and she hadn't forgotten. She told me that lately she had been remembering the stories she heard at the *mesibot Shabbat*, especially the ones about *mezuzos* that protect the house. I have no idea what got her started up again, but she told me in no uncertain terms that she would not enter the house until all the doorposts had *mezuzos*.

"I tried to dissuade her, to explain to her, but nothing worked. Something within her was ignited, and she didn't budge. Nu, tell me, do I have a choice? I need my daughter to come home ..."



# TO BE A PROPER MEMBER OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

TRANSLATED BY RABBI SHIMON NEUBORT



*From the Sichos of the Rebbe Rayatz in America*  
*Seifer HaSichos – Kayitz 5700*  
*Daytime Meal of Shabbos Parshas Shlach – Part 4*

As indicated in a footnote by the Rebbe MH"M, the material presented earlier in parts 1-3 is not the usual transcription of the *sichos*, but rather, a summary copied "from the diary of my father-in-law, the Rebbe." Those summaries were in Hebrew rather than the usual Yiddish. From this point onward, the material is taken from "a transcription by one of the listeners (who wrote it in detail), which was edited by the Rebbe [Rayatz] *shlita*; the text differs somewhat from the version presented previously."

1. It was a regular practice of my saintly father, the Rebbe [Rashab], that from time to time he would speak about the different types among *Chabad chassidim*: Masters of intellect; masters of good *middos*; those whose good *middos* resulted from their hard work; those whose intellectual achievements resulted from their hard work; also, the different manners of behavior, those who were cheerful and those who were gloomy. Father would recount their praiseworthy qualities; he would

conclude by saying that every one of them — without distinction as to the form that their *avoda* took — labored with all the powers of the soul that were constantly visible. And even though there were among them differing characteristics in their natures of joy and bitterness, nonetheless, all of them were sincere.

Father would regularly explain to me the difference between one who is born a master of intellect or master of *middos* and one who has become a master of intellect or master of *middos* by means of his hard work. He would try to describe the advantage of *avoda*, explaining that the chief *avoda* in the path of *chassidus* is to change one's inborn intellect and *middos* through *avoda*.

He would conclude by saying that one who is a natural-born master of good intellect or master of good *middos* is even more deficient than one who possesses bad intellect and *middos*. One who is deficient is aware of his deficiencies, and it is natural for one

who is sick to seek remedies. And if one seeks remedies, G-d helps him to become well. But if one is not even aware that he is sick, then the situation is very bitter.

On Tuesday, 9 Adar Sheni 5676, during a stroll in Rostov on the Don, father told me about two elder *chassidim*, both *melamdim* in Lechovitch: Reb Moshe Dov Ber, a native of Lechovitch, and Reb Yisroel Dov Ber, a native of Homel, who had married into a Lechovitch family. The *chassid*, Reb Moshe Dov, was older than the *chassid*, Reb Yisroel Dov — the former had already been [a *chassid*] in the Alter Rebbe's day, while Reb Yisroel Dov began his career at the time of the Mittlerer Rebbe. Both were great masters of intellectual achievement and masters of *avoda*, but of different natures: Reb Moshe Dov was naturally joyful while Reb Yisroel Dov was by nature dejected.

Once, when they were in Lubavitch visiting the Mittlerer Rebbe, Reb Moshe Dov said to Reb Yisroel Dov: "I don't know what is the matter with you. When I *davened*, I didn't go away from my *davening* until I had accomplished something with myself. But as for you, you *daven* and *daven*, you clap your hands and stamp your feet, but you remain standing in the same place." The

Alter Rebbe's *chassidim* were not satisfied with Torah and fear of Heaven alone.

2. The Alter Rebbe strongly promoted the concept of charity. The Rebbe inspired and revealed within the *chassidim* the power of generous giving. The Alter Rebbe had a *chassid* named Reb Tzadok. This Reb Tzadok would recite *Mishnayos* by heart. Even when traveling on foot to the villages [in pursuit of his business] he would recite *Mishnayos*. He used to travel around to the courts of the nobility, buying and selling various objects of silver and gold. Whenever he earned more than what was needed for the bare essentials of life, he would say, "Most likely an agent or a letter from the Rebbe will arrive, saying that funds are needed for various charitable purposes; and that is why Heaven has favored me with extra income."

3. The Alter Rebbe educated *chassidim* not only in matters of *avoda* regarding Torah and prayer and refining one's *middos*, but also in matters pertaining to how one should conduct himself at home. The Alter Rebbe's conduct with *chassidim* related to all matters in detail, such as how one should honor his wife, how one should supervise the running of his household, and how one should train his children with great care.

The Alter Rebbe instructed the *chassidim* that they should conduct themselves regarding household expenses, food, and clothing, with moderation. He cautioned the *chassidim* to carefully avoid being either miserly

or wasteful; this applied also to matters of *tz'daka* and charity. Though the Rebbe had great need of funds for supporting the public institution he had established in the Holy Land and settling the communities of *Chabad chassidim*, the Rebbe nevertheless taught the *chassidim* that each person should donate according to his income, without placing undo hardship upon himself. The Rebbe educated *chassidim*

***The people of Israel knew that they were the Chosen People. Each person took inner pride in this, and did everything possible to be a proper member of the Chosen People.***

in all matters.

The *chassid*, Reb Yirmiyah of Pleshtchenitz, a wealthy shopkeeper, was very fussy about what he ate and drank, and the clothing he wore. But he was a businessman who occupied himself with *avoda*: he studied much, and he *davened* delightfully, and donated large sums to the Rebbe's charity funds. Once, when he was with

the Rebbe for *yechidus*, he complained that — although he studied and *davened* as required — his intellectual grasp and excitement of the heart nevertheless lacked vitality.

The Alter Rebbe said to him: "From where would you expect to get vitality in your intellectual grasp and excitement of the heart? From the white biscuits that you eat on weekdays, or from the fine clothing you wear on weekdays? The whole point of *chassidus* is to make form the master over substance."

4. Jews of the previous generation knew the correct meaning of the expression, "a custom of Israel is law." Jewish customs were scrupulously observed by Jews, regardless of whether they were Torah scholars or ordinary Jews. Men, women, and children, even at a young age, knew the Jewish customs and observed them faithfully with the greatest respect for their sanctity. Each person, regardless of whether he was rich or poor (regarding both material wealth and in Jewish knowledge) knew that the customs are the glory of Israel (beyond the fact that the foundations of these customs lie in the heights of holiness, and beyond the fact that customs of Israel are Torah). The people of Israel in general, without regard to whether they are men or women, Torah Jews or simple Jews, old or young, or even children, knew that they were the Chosen People. Each person took inner pride in this, and did everything possible to be a proper member of the Chosen People.

(To be continued.)



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# THE FACE OF A DOG, HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE

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



The section of Mikeitz opens with Pharaoh's dreams and his frustration due to his inability to interpret them. The most powerful man in the world was not happy. Pharaoh was, in a sense, the ideal man – he owned everything and ruled everyone, he could do what he wanted and have what he desired – but nevertheless, he was miserable. Why? Because he lacked knowledge, he couldn't understand his own dreams.

Fortunately he understood that the interpretations given by his advisors and soothsayers were false. He realized that, try as he might, he didn't know the truth. And because his desire for an explanation was so great and deep, he was willing to humble himself and listen to the advice of even a lowly prisoner, a despised Jew at that. Yosef, because of his integrity, saved himself and the entire world from starvation. This should be a lesson for us: seek truth.

Life itself is much like a dream. But until our generation, people didn't really care if they understood the true meanings and implications of what was going on around them. Nowadays, however, the shelves in the bookstores are filled with a cornucopia of self-improvement books. People want to change themselves. Like Pharaoh, they realize that something is wrong with the

interpretations that they have been making until now.

The Rebbe MH"M explains that we are now in the generation of the Moshiach, about which it says in the end of Tractate Sota that, "the face of that generation will be like that of a dog." That is, just as a dog is hungry for everything, so this last generation will be hungry for knowledge.

The Jewish people were chosen to interpret "dreams," namely to put as much meaning as possible into the short amount of time that each of us has on this planet.

But just as back then, in the days of Pharaoh, the big picture depended on one Jew, Yosef, to properly assess the situation. So too in every generation, G-d always provides that one person to properly size up what really is underlying the visible world.

One example of this is the Baal Shem Tov and his followers. To illustrate my point, here is a story about the Alter Rebbe.

One of the followers of the Alter Rebbe was a successful businessman who lost all his wealth and suddenly found himself a debtor, unable to pay even the dowry that he had promised for his daughter's upcoming marriage. Being a *chassid*, he begged for help and

poured out his heartrending problems to the Rebbe. He was about to lose his house and reputation, his daughter's wedding would certainly be cancelled, and his innocent creditors would lose their fortunes all because of him.

The Rebbe listened, looked at him sternly and said, "You have told me what you need, but have you thought about what you are needed for?" The *chassid* fainted.

For two weeks thereafter he sat among the Rebbe's pupils and devoted himself to Torah learning and prayer – not so that G-d would send him what he needed but that G-d would make him into the type of Jew that G-d needed. Needless to say his material problems cleared up, as well.

Another example is the Rebbe MH"M. Like Yosef HaTzaddik 4000 years earlier, the Rebbe has a talent for interpreting things. In addition to teaching that every event, no matter how small or seemingly natural, has a deeper significance and contains in it a lesson on how to utilize our talents to serve our Creator and make the proper decisions in life, just like Pharaoh's dreams, he also gave us the criterion for interpretation: over 25 volumes of letters of advice.

It was the Rebbe who, like Yosef,

sensed what was hidden behind the apparent; under the veneer of non-observant indifference is, in every Jew, a treasury of Jewish emotion and feeling.

That is why over thirty years ago began the now universal Outreach Movement in Judaism. He encouraged his followers to take to the streets and seek out non-religious Jews, to open *yeshivos* for *baalei t'shuva*, to put a *mezuzah* on every Jewish door and *t'fillin* on every Jewish man's arm, just as Yosef gave Pharaoh a practical plan to save the world.

We just have to humble ourselves a bit and take the advice of the Yosef of our generation.

We can also learn a very important lesson from Yosef – that if one thinks positively, it will be good. Yosef had every reason to be depressed. He had been a handsome talented young man, and now, the victim of hatred and treachery, he was wasting away in an Egyptian prison with no chance of pardon. But he also had a dream: the stars of the heaven and the produce of the earth would bow to him.

Yosef dreamed that he was the perfect Jew, the true example of man – Yosef HaTzaddik – the whole world depended on him. It was a dream, but he was sure that all his misfortunes would somehow bring this dream to fruition and create a new world reality.

***“The face of that generation will be like that of a dog.” That is, just as a dog is hungry for everything, so this last generation will be hungry for knowledge.***

It was this positive thought that kept him sane and allowed him to optimistically not be broken by what a normal man would consider real bad luck.

Just think, if his brothers hadn't hated him, or had subdued their anger, or if Yaakov hadn't sent Yosef to look for his brothers, or if Reuven had saved Yosef from the pit, or if Potifar's wife hadn't lied, or her lie had been revealed, or he was given a lesser punishment than imprisonment, or even a shorter sentence; if Yosef had been spared even one of these misfortunes, we would not be here today. The seven-year famine would have destroyed the world's

population! But a normal man would be consumed with anger and resentment against G-d and man after even one of these tragedies. Yosef's positive attitude also enabled him to receive the G-dly inspiration to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, as well.

The soothsayers gave negative explanations of Pharaoh's seemingly negative dreams: Seven healthy cows being devoured by seven frighteningly emaciated ones is not, on the face of things, a very promising picture. But Yosef found the positive side even in this, and that is what appealed to Pharaoh. Yosef understood that G-d was sending practical advice, and that his own dreams were about to be fulfilled. The fact that the fat and the starving cows were standing together before the one devoured the other was a sign that Pharaoh must take swift and positive action to assure that the produce of the seven bountiful years would be together with all the seven lean ones, and that Yosef would manage the project.

Here we have two of the many lessons that we can learn from this week's section: From Pharaoh we can learn not to be satisfied until we know the truth, and from Yosef we can learn the importance of thinking positively despite all odds once we know the truth.

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# THE SCIENCE OF MOSHIACH

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN

DIRECTOR RYAL INSTITUTE ON MOSHIACH & THE SCIENCES



This week's *parsha*, *Mikeitz*, tells of a famine in the Land of Israel in the time of Yaakov Avinu. Yaakov and his sons still had grain while the other peoples of the area had already run out of food. Thus Yaakov's sons made no special effort to look for more food. Nevertheless, Yaakov challenged his sons and asked them, "Why are you giving the appearance that you have plenty of food...?" (B'Reishis 42, 1 and Rashi) He wanted them to go down to Egypt to buy more food.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach explains that the basis of the approach of Yaakov's sons to the issue of getting food was that they saw that Hashem had provided them with food while everyone else had none. They understood that Hashem was sustaining them in a miraculous manner just as He had done to their grandfather Yitzchok in a time of famine. They maintained that since they were the children of Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, whose lives were conducted in a supernatural manner – Hashem was always doing miracles for them – they did not have to go out and look for food like the other nations did. They had absolute trust that Hashem would continue to provide for them miraculously and they didn't have to do anything on their own.

## THOUGHT FOR FOOD

Melech HaMoshiach continues to explain this on a deeper level. Wisdom

and knowledge are called food in the abstract sense. Just as physical food is taken internally, is digested, and gives life to the body, so too an intellectual concept is taken internally and processed by the mind and gives a person life. The fact that Egypt was the source of food at that time was the result (in a spiritual sense) of its being the center of knowledge and science at that time.

Now, we Jews sometimes need scientific knowledge in connection with certain Torah matters. For example, we need mathematics and astronomy to make the calculations necessary for declaring *Rosh Chodesh*, making leap years, etc. But we don't need the science of Egypt as a source for this scientific knowledge. We have our own source of knowledge – the Torah. When things are the way they should be, all the knowledge we need – even scientific knowledge – comes directly from the Torah and the Jewish scholars have this information readily available. This was the case in the time of the prophets when the Jewish scholars from Shevet Yisachar wrote books on the calculations of astronomy which they derived from the Torah. In fact, the Kuzari says that these sciences were originally in the possession of the Jews, and the early nations who studied astronomy, etc., received this knowledge from us.

Thus the position taken by Yaakov's sons was essentially correct. We don't need to go to the nations of the world for food or thought. Because of our special relationship with Hashem, we get both our physical food and our spiritual food (wisdom) directly from Him.

The issue of where the knowledge comes from is not just a matter of spiritual significance (does it come from a holy source – Torah – or from a secular source – human intellect?) but it is of practical significance, as well. It may happen, for example, that in a certain matter the Jewish scholars and the secular scholars deal with the matter the same way – e.g., they may make the same calculations. Thus Rambam writes that those calculations of the Greeks that have clear proofs can be relied upon (because one is relying upon the proof, not on the Greek mathematician who made the calculation). Even in such a case we would go to the Jewish scholars and not to the secular scholars because there is a major difference in their approach to knowledge.

## THE SCIENCE OF THE GREEKS

The difference between the Jewish approach to knowledge and the secular approach is represented by the Chanuka story. The Greeks had been studying the Greek translation of the Torah for 100 years. Being highly intellectually

oriented, they appreciated the deep wisdom expressed in the Torah and were highly impressed by its laws. But the Greeks themselves believed only in human intellect and philosophy, and denied prophecy and G-dliness. The concept that the Torah was given by G-d Who is above any intellect or understanding, and that His commandments are G-dly and holy and not merely human laws – all this went against their way of thought and they fought against it. What began as an ideological conflict developed into physical coercion and military oppression.

The exact nature of the decrees of the Greeks against the Jews is expressed by a phrase from the prayer “*Al HaNissim*” (which is added to the *Shmona Esrei* and blessings after a meal) in which we thank Hashem for the miracle of Chanuka. We start the prayer by describing the decrees of the Greeks. We say that the Greeks attempted to make the Jew “forget *Your* Torah and to violate the laws of *Your* desire.” They had a deep appreciation for the wisdom of the Torah itself, and therefore, did not oppose its study *per se*. But they tried to eradicate the belief that this is G-d’s Torah. Similarly, initially they did not oppose the observance of the *mitzvos per se*. Rather, they decreed against the observance of the *mitzvos* as G-d’s commandments. *Mitzvos* that could be explained rationally or could be seen as having cultural value could be observed – as long as they were detached from any notion of G-dliness or holiness.

### THE SCIENCE OF THE JEWS

The Jewish approach to knowledge is the exact opposite. Our approach is represented by the word “Torah” which means “instruction.” The Torah itself is instruction and any knowledge we need is for the purpose of helping us study the Torah and carry out its *mitzvos*. In this way even secular knowledge can be brought into the realm of holiness and can even become part of the Torah.

This is the greatness of the wisdom of the Torah. As *Chazal* say, “The study of

Torah is great because it brings to action.” Its greatness lies in the fact that it clarifies what is good and what is bad, and instructs us on a proper course of action.

### THE SCIENCE OF MOSHIACH

Thus, in normal times we would not go to the secular scholars to get wisdom since our approach is fundamentally different from theirs. It is only during the time of *Galus* that we may have to use the sciences of the nations, such as the books of the Greeks on mathematics and astronomy which Rambam referred to in writing the Laws of Sanctifying the New Moon. So too did Yaakov’s sons eventually have to go down to Egypt to buy food.

*They had absolute trust that Hashem would continue to provide for them miraculously and they didn't have to do anything on their own.*

When the *Geula* of Moshiach is complete, however, all wisdom and science will return to the Jewish scholars who will derive this knowledge directly from the Torah itself, as Rambam writes: in the Era of Moshiach, “there will be an abundance of knowledge and wisdom” and “the Jews will be great scholars...for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea bed.”

It is evident that the man who brings all this about must be a man who knows what he’s looking for and knows how to find it, i.e., a man who has mastered the sciences of the world and at the same time has a knowledge of Torah deep

enough and vast enough to derive the “Torah’s science” from it. Thus, when Rambam writes about the wisdom of Moshiach, he says that Moshiach will be even wiser than King Solomon.

As we have seen in many other areas, we see here too that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach is the one who fits this description. During the 1930’s the Rebbe Rayatz sent him to Berlin and Paris to study the sciences of the world. There he mastered both theoretical science, such as mathematics and physics, etc. (he attended the lectures of Erwin Schrödinger on Quantum Mechanics), and engineering.

His phenomenal knowledge of the sciences is evident from his encounters with many world renowned scientists. As an example, Professor Yirmiyahu Branover of the University of the Negev relates that he once presented the plans for a new invention to the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach. Branover presented the value of the “two-phase flow velocity” and the value of the efficiency of the system and the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach immediately responded that those two values were inconsistent. Branover took the plans back to Beer Sheva, where his team reviewed their calculations but found no error. It wasn’t until eight months later that their error was discovered by a new doctoral student who had joined their team.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach’s knowledge of Torah is vast and deep beyond description. This has been attested to by all the Torah authorities of the world. For example, the former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, said of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach: “There is no rabbi as great as him in all areas of the Torah in this generation. In the logical understanding of the Torah, no secret is hidden from him... Similarly in the hidden and *kabbalistic* levels of the Torah... It is absolutely correct to say of him that he is the greatest in the generation. There is no one second to him. But what is most important is his humility...There is no one like him.”

# THE WANDERING TANYA PRINTER

BY SHAI GEFEN  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



*For the past five years, Rabbi Eliezer Ben-Efraim has gone around in his private vehicle to print copies of the Tanya. He reaches every possible location in Eretz HaKodesh, particularly in dangerous parts of Yesha, where he prints the newest editions of Tanya as part of the campaign for the defense and protection of the region. In an interview with Beis Moshiach, he tells about the more than one hundred editions of the Tanya he has printed, the enthusiasm, the excitement, the stories behind the scenes, the miracles, and most important, the Jews who are brought closer to chassidus and the Rebbe MH”M. His great dream is to print the Tanya in the third Beis HaMikdash with the revelation of the Rebbe MH”M. Presented in connection with the start of the daily Tanya schedule on Yud-Tes Kislev.*

Gilad Farm, Motzaei Shabbos Kodesh. Thousands of IDF soldiers and policeman come to remove the settlers forcibly and with cruelty. The scene virtually resembled a battlefield. The entire media jumped upon the shocking pictures as victors to the spoil. Members of the Zar family are beaten bloody. Israel

reaches a new low.

Yet, even here, the printing of the holy *seifer Tanya* emerges as the secret weapon. The following day, Sunday evening, when the settlers began returning to Gilad Farm, the van of R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim appeared on the

horizon. Rabbi Moshe Levinger, leader of the Jewish community in Hebron, was in the midst of a Torah class before dozens of young participants, when suddenly he sees the *Chabadnikim* arriving to print the *Tanya*. His eyes brighten. “Now I am certain that the struggle here will succeed,” he says with a sense of assuredness, and he runs to call his wife and tell her about the *Chabadnikim* who came all the way to the Gilad Farm.

A short while later, Chapter 32 of the *Tanya* emerges from the printing press. Nothing can be more relevant than this to the prevailing situation at Gilad Farm. A feeling of optimism reigns. “If the *seifer* of the *Baal HaTanya*, who supported the settlement of *Eretz HaKodesh*, can be printed here,” Rabbi Levinger declared in typical fashion, “I am sure that even this place will become a permanent settlement,” to the rousing applause of the entire crowd.

This campaign is just one of the many battle projects administered by R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim, a resident of Rehovot, who has set out to print editions of the *Tanya* throughout the length and breadth of Eretz Yisroel, and particularly in Yesha. The campaign requires speed and agility, and every new settlement merits the printing of a new edition of *Tanya*.

R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim sees miracles and wonders in the holy work he has



taken upon himself. To date, he does not know what he did to merit to have the privilege of printing *Tanyas* in every location. The invitations that are dispatched to him come regularly and usually are of an urgent nature. He does everything he possibly can out a sense of mission to bring the wellspring everywhere with the goal of bringing the revelation of the Rebbe MH"™.

4895 – this is the number of the last edition of the *Tanya* that was most recently printed by R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim, who has been entrusted with the printing of the holy *Tanya* in every location throughout *Eretz HaKodesh*. In recent years, R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim has turned into something of a mobile Chabad House for *Tanya* printing.

**Is there a place in Eretz Yisroel where a *Tanya* has yet to be printed?**

Although it seems that there is no place left where a *Tanya* has not been printed, nevertheless, we always succeed in finding new locations, primarily in Yesha and other places where the Jewish people are in need of special protection and security. All this is thanks to the generosity of R. Leibel Zaiontz from Brazil, who, in response to the Rebbe's instructions, invests personally in *Tanya* printings to this very day. Similarly, we print in new neighborhoods or in institutions and organizations which make special events that commemorate them with a special *Tanya* printing.

**When did you begin this special work?**

Up until six years ago, the Chish printing press printed the *Tanya*, however, this stopped after the theft of a truck containing much valuable equipment. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak

Kobelkin dealt with the *Tanya* printings in Yesha for a while, but when this also stopped, the matter was left abandoned until they asked me to accept the responsibility, since I am a printer by trade.

This was not a simple undertaking for me at all. I knew the great importance attached to the matter. There was also the fact that not everyone was allowed to print, as explained in the preface to the *Tanya*, that no one dare to print, etc. I then decided to ask the Rebbe MH"™ in *Igros Kodesh*, and the content of the answer was: *yasher ko'ach* on the *s'farim* that he sent until now, and much thanks for the *s'farim* to come...

On the day that I received the answer, I decided to order all the necessary equipment for printing the *Tanya*. All this would be done in addition to my regular daytime work at the printing press.

**How many editions of the *Tanya* have you personally printed so far?**

More than one hundred editions, however, they are not at my initiative. All these printings are the result of appeals from private individuals, institutions, and organizations which then turn to me.

The printing of the *Tanya* in these modern times is a far easier and more pleasant experience than the printing of editions twenty years ago. The computer age has brought tremendous technical improvement in the *Tanya* printing process. The pages are much clearer, and the words clearer, thanks to the scanning of the entire *Tanya*, which was made especially for the computer. "These improvements were made due to numerous complaints made over the poor quality of the printing. Therefore, we decided to make a computerized scan

of everything, including the daily learning schedule as it appears in the 'Heichal Menachem' edition."

**Is the number of copies in each edition printed to "fulfill the obligation"?**

G-d forbid! In accordance with the instructions of the Rebbe MH"™, every *Tanya* printing produces at least one hundred copies, though there are exceptions. There have been editions with printing exceeding 400 copies, even 1,000 copies, such as the bilingual Hebrew-English edition printed recently at the Ascent Institute of Tzfas.

**What is the required procedure in printing a new edition?**

First of all, we need to ascertain the edition number, and this is obtained from Rabbi Sholom Jacobson, the person in charge of all *Tanya* printings. In connection with this, the date for the printing is set, and then we're off to our destination. In accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, several additional copies of Chapter 32 are printed to be left at the location immediately after the printing, while the remaining sheets are then taken to the binders and brought back to the printing location about a week or two later.

**What do they do with the printed *Tanyas*?**

In accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, all the copies are left in the place where they were printed, with the exception of a few copies that are brought to the Rebbe's library and some select private collections. In the vast majority of the locations, new *Tanya* classes are established as a result of the printing.

**Is the cost of the printing high? Who sponsors it?**





The printing of one hundred copies of the *Tanya* with a hardcover binding costs approximately \$1,000; with a soft cover binding, the cost is \$770. The cost is less with a printing of a larger quantity of copies. Local residents of the printing location sponsor the job or order the printing, along with other contributors who have an interest in participating in the project. When the event takes place and the enthusiasm of those present at its height, many usually give from their own money and make dedications for the *Tanya* in their names and the names of their family members and friends.

The more that I am involved in *Tanya* printings; I continue to reveal how much this magnificent campaign draws people closer to *chassidus*. The very idea of a mobile *Tanya* printing brings the person to the wellsprings of *chassidus*. People feel an unusual sense of identity with the idea when the *seifer* is printed specifically in their place of residence.

#### Can you give examples?

There are many, however, I will specifically bring you one from the negative side, which, in my opinion, proves the influence that the whole matter carries. Once, we came to print a *Tanya* at the Breslov settlement of Ibi HaNachal, located in the southern Gush Etzion region in the Yehuda desert, near the Dead Sea. During the printing, a Jew approached me and asked me what I am doing here, and I explained to him that we are printing the *Tanya*. He told me angrily, "And if I tell you to stop the printing, will you listen to me?" I gently answered him that there is a clear instruction from the Rebbe to print the *Tanya* in every location, and thus, even this settlement will merit the printing of a *Tanya*. The man responded even more

angrily: You'll turn this into a Chabad settlement, and publicize to the whole world that it belongs to Chabad, since the name Ibi HaNachal will appear in the *seifer*!...

Only then did I understand the great importance of including the name of the printing location within the *Tanya*, besides those aspects that the Rebbe himself noted...

On another settlement where we came to make a printing, the response was "Here come the *Chabadnikim* again, acting as if they own the place..."

These are negative examples, but in general, it is accepted warmly and happily everywhere. Even in places where there are *misnagdim*, the matter is eventually accepted with much warmth

and great interest about the study of the holy *Tanya*. I know of numerous regular classes that have begun, and even Jews who have actually become *chassidim* as a result of the *Tanya* printing. As one who is involved and lives with this campaign, I have begun to reveal the depth of the whole matter of printing *Tanyas* in every possible location.

I had an interesting story on the Bruchim settlement near Kfar Tapuach in the Shomron. We came there in order to print the *Tanya* after numerous delays and postponements. Upon our arrival, the settlement leader told us that they are starting to build permanent structures on the settlement today, the sixth anniversary of its establishment. So we see that everything has its proper time,

### A PRINTER'S STORY

R. Eliezer Ben-Efraim's connection to the printing press also brought him to his connection to the Rebbe MH"M. He came to Chabad when he was working for a printer in Rehovot. Rabbi Shmuel Ganz, a Lubavitcher *chassid*, introduced him to Chabad *chassidus* and from there, the road to his *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe MH"M was short. Even before this, when he was a boy, he studied in the Chabad school in Zarnoga.

R. Eliezer recalls his trip to the Rebbe in 5749. "I was then before my wedding. Before the trip, I was involved in *Mivtza Kaparos* and distributed literature all over Rehovot, in close to 20,000 mailboxes. As a result, I suffered pains in my leg, which caused severe damage. When I went to the Rebbe for Tishrei, the pain not only didn't pass, it intensified due to the cold weather that prevailed there. When we went in for the general *yechidus* on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Tishrei, I decided that I had to ask the Rebbe for a *bracha*. I could no longer stand the pain, and I said that I had done it all for the Rebbe. I told this to the Rebbe and the Rebbe blessed me with "Gezunterheit." My friend, who went out with me, said, 'Start dancing'. I told him that I felt strange. The next morning, I got up as if there was nothing..."

"That year, I also traveled to the Rebbe for Shavuos. During Sunday dollars, I asked for a *bracha* to become engaged. I felt as if the Rebbe was scanning me from head to foot, and then he gave me a *bracha*. Within the year, I had become a *chassan*..."



according to the wonders of Divine providence.

**Naturally, you don't just print, you also speak at every location to explain to people the essence of the matter...**

(Smiling) Of course, and it's not easy both to print and explain to people. When we saw the need, we prepared a short booklet with the content of the Rebbe's *sichos* which discuss the matter's importance. The booklet has been distributed at every location. People read it while waiting for the printing to commence, and they understand the meaning and importance of the printing.

No less a part of the new *Tanya* printings during the last two years are those held in Yesha. These printings involve certain logistics that are by no means simple. There is coordination with the local councils, settlement committees, the IDF, other security forces, etc. But it's all worth it, since the printing, besides all the standard qualities it carries, brings a spirit of hope to the settlers and soldiers. "Great spirituality is hidden here," says R. Eliezer. "Many miracles and *brachos* are connected with the printing of the *Tanya* in Yesha or at remote IDF outposts."

**Can you be more specific?**

On every journey into Yesha, I am strengthened in the belief that this is a holy *shlichus* of the Rebbe. This pertains directly to the holy cause of *shleimus ha'Aretz* and also brings *chassidic* light and vitality to other Jews, together with the *segula* of protection and security of Jewish lives. Only recently, we printed editions at South Mt. Hebron, Maon Farm, Old Susia, Avigail, and Gilad Farm, where something very exciting occurred. I remember that during the

printing, a photographer from the *Maariv* daily came rushing towards the scene to record the event. As he took the pictures, he said that he heard that they were printing here a "*seifer Torah*."

We also came to the Kisufim Checkpoint in the Gaza Strip, where there have been a number of terrorist attacks, and the Kfar Darom Junction, where the sister of Rabbi Yaakov Lenchner of Rehovot had been wounded. In response to this, he initiated a *Tanya* printing there, and the local residents can give testimony to the fact that since then, the place has experienced complete quiet.

In addition, I can tell you that, G-d willing, a *Tanya* will be printed during Chanuka at the new Menucha Rochel Kollel, established near the gravesite of the Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel in Hebron.

**What other printings are due for the coming days?**

Last Friday, 400 copies of the *Tanya* were printed at the local Chabad girls school, and subsequently distributed to all the students. On Yud-Tes Kislev, a printing was held at the Chabad-Lubavitch Center of Kfar Saba. G-d willing, on the second night of Chanuka, the *Tanya* will be printed at the observant IDF company post near Arad, at the invitation of the soldiers, as part of a special Chanuka *farbrengen*. We have received permission for a similar printing at the IDF base at Palmachim, and are presently looking for a donor to sponsor the event.

**What are the reactions that you receive when you come to a location to print a new *Tanya* edition?**

Growing interest and great

excitement to the whole subject that arouses a tremendous attraction among people. There are those who see this as a very special *segula*. Polish *chassidim* ask me to let them throw the switch on the printer as they say with all the *kavanos*, "*LSheim Yichud...*" Some stand by the machine as the fresh sheets emerge and silently request *brachos* and *yeshuos*.

In general, all the enthusiasm from the people around us helps me understand a little about why the Rebbe wanted so much that the *Tanya* be printed everywhere. When we printed the *Tanya* in the prime minister's office six months ago, there was great excitement. The prime minister himself asked to press the power button on the machine, and all the office employees came to see with their own eyes. Many of them came close to the machine for *brachos*. Afterwards, the *rabbanim* learned Chapter 32 with the prime minister.

The *Tanya* has also been printed in thirteen settlements throughout the northern Negev. We even made a printing at one of the religious Zionist *yeshivos* that has a Lithuanian brand approach to education. The event was received most enthusiastically. During the printing, the *rosh yeshiva* told one of the *bachurim*, "Don't think that the Rebbe is the exclusive property of Lubavitchers. He belongs to all to us. Moshiach is for all Jews." As the excitement grew, everyone began to dance and sing "*Yechi Adoneinu*"... The *rosh yeshiva* told me afterwards that they regularly learn *Torah Ohr* and *Likkutei Torah* of the Alter Rebbe.

This is characteristic of how everyone's connection to the light is eventually revealed. The Rebbe showed us how to bring the light everywhere.

**Are there also miracle stories surrounding such events?**

While the printing actually takes place, I am totally preoccupied with the procedure. However, it is clear from the reactions we receive that the efforts made in the *Tanya* printing have had a tremendous effect. Rabbi Nissan Nachshon, the *shliach* in Efrat, told me that a week before the terrorist attack at the central supermarket, when a suicide bomber came in wearing an explosive belt and blew himself up, miraculously causing no injuries, a new edition of the *Tanya* had been printed near the supermarket. Residents clearly made the connection between the miracle and the *Tanya* printing.

Here's a story that I will never forget. On the Friday before the administrative building in Hebron was blown up, we printed a new edition of the *Tanya* near the building in a school under IDF protection. R. Leibel Zaiontz, who sponsored the printing, was overwhelmed. He called me and said, "We conquered Hebron." A few hours after the printing, the IDF decided to blow up the administrative building, the symbol of Arab rule in the city.

Hundreds of copies were printed at this event, and then distributed to all the soldiers at the installation ceremony for the new unit commander. After the ceremony, there was a festive meal which was highlighted by a speech by the new unit commander, Lt. Gen. Dror Weinberg, may G-d avenge his blood. The first dedication in the *Tanya* was made in honor of Dror Weinberg, who was murdered earlier this month in Hebron...

**Aren't you concerned about traveling in Yesha with the state of war that prevails in the area?**

Once my wife was very worried about it, but then she received an astounding answer from the Rebbe MH"M via *Igros Kodesh*. The Rebbe wrote that only thinking about the matter can cause damage, and the Rebbe noted the idea of "*Tracht gut, vet zain gut*" (think good, and it will be good).

*Baruch Hashem*, I really see that no harm befalls *shluhei mitzva*. Even in Yerushalayim, we printed in several neighborhoods that are considered "adangerous," such as the Shimon HaTzaddik neighborhood, where only two Jewish families live. At one point, I noticed two young Arabs coming up behind us. I was a bit apprehensive. Then suddenly, they grabbed one of the printed sheets and ran to show it to their mother. Eventually, they came and brought us something to drink and helped us with the printing. We see clearly that the inner teachings of Torah nullify all barriers, from within and without.

**I understand that you sometimes print in locations where there have been serious terrorist attacks?**

To our great sadness, we are all quite familiar with the situation in Eretz Yisroel today. Therefore, in order to increase security for the Jewish people, we also print in locations where there have been terrorist attacks. During the *Shiva* after the terrorist attack on the Sbarro restaurant in Yerushalayim, we made a printing nearby. Similarly, a new edition was printed at Wadi Karmia, where an Arab sniper murdered ten Jews, and at the IDF base at Tarkomia, where several *bachurim* were miraculously rescued several years ago after being wounded by Arab gunfire during Purim *mivtzaim*. The latter printing was initiated by HaTamim Shneur Wigler.

Regarding the hilltops, I want to tell you something interesting. The government plan also included the removal of Mitzpe Asaf after Gilad Farm. In the end, the planned removal was halted until further notice. Exactly one year before the proposed removal, a *Tanya* was printed there, and I absolutely see this as the reason why the plan was halted.

On the other hand, I want to emphasize that the *Tanya* printings don't occur just in dangerous places, but also specifically in prominent Chabad locations. I wish to point out that several Chabad *yeshivos* have printed *Tanyas*

within the *yeshiva* itself. This was primarily in light of the Rebbe's *sicha* from Hoshana Rabba 5752 to open *yeshivos* all over the world and to do so through a *Tanya* printing. Many see the importance of printing the *Tanya* within the walls of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, whose primary objective is to bring the wellsprings to the outside world.

**What are your feelings regarding the future of this special campaign?**

As one who is extremely involved in the matter, I discover more and more how important it really is. It brings many Jews closer to Chabad and the study of *chassidus*.

I wish to take this opportunity to request from all *Anash* members that they take a personal sense of initiative regarding the printing of *Tanyas* at special events such as annual dinners, the establishment of new institutions, *yeshivos*, etc. We see that Chabad Houses and other institutions actually cover the expenses through dedications received during the printing. Anyone that has seen the people's enthusiasm can also understand the importance.

In these times when we are a brief moment before the revelation of the Rebbe MH"M, everyone must do everything possible to bring another printing to another location. When a Chabad House prints a *Tanya*, you see its supporters genuinely moved by the event, which influences them to participate in *Tanya* and *chassidus* classes. When someone receives a *Tanya* printed with the name of the location, the institution, or the *yeshiva* to which he is connected, he truly feel a personal connection with this *Tanya*.

**What is your aspiration regarding the Tanya printings?**

With G-d's help, to have the privilege of printing the *Tanya* in "Your holy courtyards" in the Third *Beis HaMikdash*, with the Rebbe MH"M standing and contemplating the scene, together with all the *Rebbeim*, including the Alter Rebbe himself. I hope and pray that I will be so privileged...

# THEY STARTED IT – LET THEM FINISH IT!

BY SHAI GEFEN



*The suicide bomber boarded the bus, set off his explosives, and murdered twelve Jews and wounded dozens of others.*

## “PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE TO WHOM THIS SEAL BELONGS”

On the Wednesday before last, a huge massacre in Yerushalayim took place on an Eged bus, upon which rode children and grandmothers among others, one fine morning. The terrorist was from Bethlehem, which is, of course, part of the plan of Judea First, for which reason the army withdrew its forces (thanks to the primary election strategy of Fuad and Sharon).

The suicide bomber boarded the bus and set off his explosives, murdering twelve Jews and wounding dozens of others. In the pictures seen later in the papers, the Jewish people saw the burnt out bus, the blood, bodies torn asunder and the orange shirts worn by members of ZAKA and Hatzala, along with the picture of a distinguished rabbi with the slogan, “*L’hachzir atara l’yoshna*” (returning the crown to its glory).

Somebody commented to me saying that perhaps it would be better if that party publicized a picture of their rabbi

along with the words, “I regret Oslo.” Signs like that are preferable to tired slogans and clichés.

The time has come for that party, along with other parties that worried about their seats and what was good for them over the past many years, to stand up and cry out, once and for all, about their responsibility for the terrible situation we now find ourselves in.

It’s time that these parties do a serious accounting about how it is that 680 have been killed and about 5000 wounded. Who was in the government who approved the Oslo Accords and raised his hand in favor of the Chevron Agreement? Who supported the Wye Accords? Who supported concessions?

You can be a “Rightie” on the eve of elections in order to appease the voters, but it’s not enough to wipe hands clean of blood. The demolished bus with the picture and slogan, was an excellent lesson along the lines of, “please acknowledge to whom this seal belongs” (said by Tamar to Yehuda, hoping he would own up).

It’s very hard to write this when the Jewish nation is in such terrible straits, and people walk about like blind men in the darkness, and the politicians are interested in nothing but what’s in their best, personal interests. But it’s impossible not to cry out when those parties from the “national camp” and the religious, continue to support all withdrawals and concessions to the Arabs. Anyone who still believed in politicians’ concern for others, learned these last few weeks about exactly what our leaders are interested in.

In this difficult situation, we *chassidim* of the Rebbe MH”M must raise a banner of protest in order that the Jewish people know who warned, screamed, and cried about what would happen.

## WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU

I met a childhood friend who is not a Lubavitcher, and he asked me: Where are the *Chabadnikim*? Why is it that now, when everybody sees and understands how right the Rebbe was, and he was the only one who screamed against everybody else about what would happen, do you remain silent?

I felt uncomfortable and looked away, because what was there to say? He was right. To tell you the truth, this wasn’t the first time that I’ve been

confronted with this question by non-Lubavitchers.

On Shabbos, Erev Yud-Tes Kislev, Rabbi Shabtai Slavatitzky, *shliach* in Antwerp, *farbrenge*d in Nachalat Har Chabad. He told us that decades ago, Rabbi Sternbuch, a distinguished *rav* in Europe, asked him what connection there was in what the Rebbe said between signing a peace agreement with Arabs and murder.

A few weeks ago, said R' Slavatitzky, he got a phone call from that *rav* who wanted to come to the Chabad *shul* in order to publicly ask forgiveness from the Rebbe, since now he clearly sees how right the Rebbe was.

If somebody among us still asks himself what the role of *chassidei Chabad* is today, we have a ready answer. Today, more than any other time, what the Rebbe said is accepted positively. The Rebbe's words have penetrated even to the lowest of places. Today there is no one who doesn't understand what the Rebbe prophesied decades ago.

In light of the situation developing today, we have a job to do; one that the Rebbe asked of us on Parshas Shoftim 5751: "to publicize to all members of the generation that Hashem selected an individual with free choice ... who is incomparably greater than the members of his generation, he is the advisor of the generation and the prophet of the generation ... including the main prophecy, *l'alter l'Geula* ..." Let us not be like that foolish goy who went to a Jew Pesach night, who bolted angrily from the table, right before *Shulchan Aruch*.

Throughout the years, we've publicized what the Rebbe said regarding the Six Day War, the Yom Kippur War, the Gulf War, etc. Therefore, now of all times, in the few moments remaining before the *hisgalus* of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, let us broadcast his prophecies, particularly the *besuras ha'Geula*.

Let us explain to one and all, who

was it that warned us about what would happen in Eretz Yisroel if we did not follow the Torah's directives. Let us remember who was the one who promised that Israel would triumph in all its wars, and that during the Gulf War said, "Eretz Yisroel is the safest place." Let us tell everyone that the Rebbe said the *Geula* is already here, and that Moshiach is already present, and we just need to open our eyes to see this and to greet Moshiach.

It's hard to understand the heaviness that weighs upon us, now, of all times,

*Today, more than any other time, what the Rebbe said is accepted positively. The Rebbe's words have penetrated even to the lowest of places. Today there is no one who doesn't understand what the Rebbe prophesied decades ago.*

when more than ever we must bring the Rebbe's message to the world. The Jewish people (and the rest of the world) are waiting for us.

**"ALL THE PARTIES JUST WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS"**

Recently, a letter from the Rebbe to Geula Cohen was published for the first time (*Yechi HaMelech*, issue 438). Geula Cohen was a Knesset member at that time, for the Techiya movement. In his

letter, the Rebbe explains how the government is constantly heading towards concessions and withdrawal, including evacuating settlements, while all the parties just go about their business. The letter is dated 24 Elul 5741, and was written while the settlements in Yamit and Sinai were being demolished.

"According to the approach of those who had and have influence in matters such as these throughout the 32 years [since 1948], I see that it goes in one direction: towards concessions and withdrawals, etc. And the last being greatest of all – returning oil sources, which would provide more than half, and some say 3/4 of what we need in our land for industrial maintenance and for defense purposes. And they actually returned them with no appropriate reaction from the residents of our land, despite the fact that every one of them knows that this is the weapon which is most effective and vital for the land's security, and also for its economy. There's no need to go on at length about something obvious. And in comparison to this, what do they care about getting rid of settlers from one, two, or even more places, especially when the pressure from the outside intensifies, etc., and especially when they've actually done this; they've used the army for this and *all* the parties just went about their business!"

In this letter we see two interesting points, first, the connection between the economy and security which cannot be severed. If we act without concessions, withdrawals, and capitulations, then the economic situation would improve, which is not what they're trying to sell us now. They claim that concessions will lead to an improved economy.

Second, those who are ready to concede and give in regarding our security, will not hesitate to uproot Jews from their homes, while the parties remain silent.

Sad to say, we're experiencing this now. We've arrived at one of our most

critical hours, but instead of seeing an uprising on the part of all the parties (at least those who are called “Right”) to stand up and say: That’s it; it’s not happening – we see even leaders on the Right making their peace with the situation and being willing to make concessions, including uprooting people from their homes and establishing a Palestinian state, *r”l*.

### THE SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT

Amram Mitzna, the new chairman of the Labor party, is the product of the failures of Sharon and Fuad. We already hear the exultation in the Arab world about Mitzna’s being elected to head the Labor party. Arafat praises him, as does Dachlan. Mubarak practically celebrated for a week. The European Union already see him as the next prime minister of Israel. Yossi Beilin, the P.A.’s man in Israel, is already having his tailor make up some new suits.

But we’re not rejoicing. Not at all. We hear the terrible declarations of “Barak’s twin” promising withdrawal from all of Gaza within a year, the evacuation of all settlements, uprooting the Jews of Chevron, as well as other concessions. This scares us.

We also know who’s behind this golem who rose up and suddenly conquered the members of the Labor party. It’s none other than Sharon and Fuad. Sharon and Fuad had dozens of opportunities to eradicate Palestinian terror, and to triumph over the enemy once and for all, in a war. But this didn’t happen. Hundreds of dead have fallen, and these two guys thought of one thing only: how they could continue to remain in power. The two of them played dirty politics for two years, at the expense of hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded. They chose selfish considerations, over eliminating the Palestinian entity.

Mitzna, with his absurd plans, is nothing more than the sin and the punishment. Whoever didn’t destroy the Palestinian entity, and preferred

ongoing sacrifices, shouldn’t be surprised that now we’ve got this mutant who wants to give the Arabs everything in exchange for nothing.

But that’s not all. As the days pass, it becomes clear that not only did they create this *golem* which wants to give everything away, but that they themselves are the *golem*. What Amram Mitzna says out loud, Sharon, Fuad, and Netanyahu say quietly, and they’re ready to take action. Sadly, this is the bitter truth, and it must be said even if it doesn’t please some people who

*For the rest of her life she won’t be able to forgive herself for favoring political considerations over the military’s advice, and for the rest of her life she will see before her, all the dead and wounded who fell as a result of this failure...*

regularly try to convince themselves that there’s someone to rely on.

### “THE BEGINNING OF DEFEAT IS FLIGHT”

Thank you very much. The prime minister decided to annul the “Bethlehem First” idea, after the massacre in Yerushalayim. This was after months of getting used to the slogans about withdrawal with the word “First.” In the beginning, it was “Gaza First,” then it was “Yehuda First.” They

moved on to “Bethlehem First,” and then “Chevron First.” Last week this ended (hopefully forever) with “Fuad First.”

It might sound funny to someone who lives in the Far East, but not to us, residents of the Middle East. It wasn’t for naught that they used the word “First.” Maybe they’re not aware of it but their “mazal” apparently senses what our Sages said that “*t’chilas nefila – nisa*” (the beginning of defeat is flight). The defeat begins, as always, with withdrawals, concessions, and capitulations.

Colonel Dror Weinberg, a *yerei Shamayim*, knew – as a military man – that the beginning of defeat is “Chevron First.” He warned the prime minister and the defense minister at that time not to make this terrible mistake, but Sharon and Fuad didn’t listen to the man who himself fell in that ambush, may Hashem avenge the blood of him and his comrades.

Sharon’s crime in abandoning Chevron to the Arabs is ten times worse than the despicable Chevron Accord which Netanyahu made six years ago (when he was a partner in the service of the foreign minister). Sharon has seen the results of that bitter Accord. His reentry to Chevron a few months ago, proved itself. His second withdrawal was ten times worse than what Netanyahu did (not that this is a *limud z’chus* for what Netanyahu did, *chalila*, for he was the one who maintained Arafat’s viability, and was the one to call him “friend and partner”).

### WHAT JEB BUSH UNDERSTOOD

The newspapers reported that Jeb Bush, governor of Florida, brother of the president, expressed his amazement that Israel hasn’t eliminated Arafat while besieging the Muktaa for the second time in a little less than two months. Jeb Bush said he was sure that Israel would eliminate him, getting rid of him once and for all. He said this to an Israeli diplomat who said that Israel stands by

its word, and they promised not to touch Arafat.

It's likely that what Jeb understood, his brother George understood, and they're not the only ones. Less than a year ago, Fuad announced that the American Vice President Dick Cheney told him, "As far as I'm concerned, hang Arafat." Other diplomats said that the American government is more hawkish than the Israeli government, but as always, we didn't take advantage of the momentum. We let everybody know that murdering Jews in Eretz Yisroel is much like a heavenly decree, and we can't get involved. We led the whole world to understand that butchering Jews is an accepted, natural phenomenon, r"l.

Over the past two years we had broad hints from Washington that we could take care of things once and for all, but we had people who insisted on not finishing the job, just as the man who presently runs the country did,

back in the Peace in Galilee war. At that time, too, the *Nasi HaDor* screamed – hurry up and finish! The American criticism is just for show.

The Rebbe said then, and the words are relevant and precise for today, too: **Everybody knows that Hashem wants things to run naturally, and therefore, we need help from the nations of the world for money, weapons, and the like. But the reality is that the nations of the world give money and weapons unconditionally (and only announce certain limitations for the outside), but they hide this from three million Jews, or they tell them only half-truths.**

Furthermore, not only do the nations of the world provide aid in money and weapons, but they want the action [Peace in Galilee campaign] to fully end, "in one hour and one moment," but they don't want to broadcast this officially, because announcing this puts them in an awkward position, for then they have to

justify themselves about whether they knew or not, if they were angry or not, and the like, and therefore, it's better not to consult with them openly.

As was said earlier, there are two or three people who have the power to decide about ending the operation, and therefore, they have the responsibility, i.e. since they began this operation, which has cost hundreds of dead and wounded, and this operation is mostly done, they have the responsibility of finishing it, as soon as possible.

And if they don't do so, it will be like the failure of the Yom Kippur War, as the prime minister of that time admitted, that for the rest of her life she won't be able to forgive herself for favoring political considerations over the military's advice, and for the rest of her life she will see before her, all the dead and wounded who fell as a result of this failure...

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