



Beis Moshiach

The International Weekly Heraldizing the Coming of Moshiach

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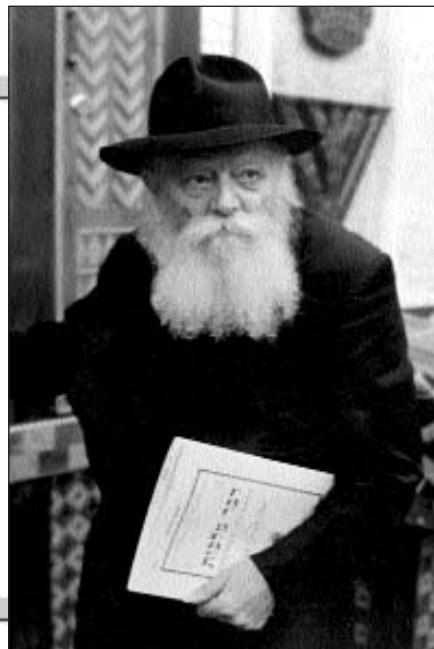
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ACKNOWLEDGING THE NATURAL ORDER VS. DEFYING IT

The episodes related in the Torah are not merely historical narratives, but rather contain lessons which are applicable in all times and places. This concept surely applies to the narrative at the beginning of Parshas VaYigash which describes how Yehudah (Judah) approached Yosef (Joseph) and said, "Please, my master, let your servant speak..., for you are like Pharaoh." [70]

Both Yehudah and Yosef represent the entire Jewish people. The very word Yehudi, Hebrew for "Jew," is derived from the name Yehudah. [71] Similarly, the name Yosef is used (as in the Book of T'hilim) to refer to our people as a whole. [72]

Both of these personalities demonstrate the way in which a Jew is not restricted by the limits of the worldly environment in which we live. This is reflected in the above narrative which describes Yosef as "like

Pharaoh," i.e., equal in power to the ruler of the entire civilized world. From this same narrative, we can also appreciate the power of Yehudah. For although Yosef was the ruler of the land, Yehudah approached him without any hesitation, without asking permission, ignoring totally the norms of court protocol. [73]

As we look more closely, a distinction can be drawn between the two. Yosef's position was granted to him by Pharaoh. This implies a degree of respect for Pharaoh's authority, i.e., an acknowledgement of the power of the natural order. Yehudah, in contrast, by approaching Yosef as he did, [74] reflects how he refused to acknowledge those limits entirely. As such, he demonstrated the true infinite power a Jew possesses, a power that cannot be confined by any constraints.

A CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The difference between the approaches of Yosef and Yehudah and

the relevance of these two thrusts to our present-day lives can be clarified by analyzing our Sages' interpretation [75] of the verse from the Megilla, [76] "So had the king established... to do the will of each person." In the original, the latter phrase reads *ish va'ish* – lit., "this man and that," and here our Sages perceive an allusion to Mordechai and Haman. I.e., when Achashverosh was preparing his feast, he desired to satisfy the desires of both of them.

There are two opinions among our Sages regarding the success of his venture: One opinion maintains that since Mordechai and Haman represent two diametrically opposed approaches to life, it is impossible for their divergent wills to be satisfied simultaneously. A second opinion concedes that at present it is indeed impossible for these two polar approaches to be reconciled; in the new world-order of the Era of the Redemption, however, this will become possible.

70. B'Reishis 44:18.

71. See Rashi on Esther 2:5.

72. In the verse, *Noheg katzon Yosef* ("You, Who lead Yosef like a flock"; T'hilim 80:2, and see Rashi there), it is clear from the context that

"Yosef" signifies the whole House of Israel.

73. Note the comments of B'Reishis Rabba on B'Reishis, loc. cit.

74. Although Yosef was in fact his brother, Yehudah was not aware of this and considered

him simply as an Egyptian viceroy.

75. Megilla 12a.

76. Esther 1:8.

To explain the analogies involved: Achashverosh, as the Sages teach, is representative of G-d;[77] the feast represents our world,[78] and in an ultimate sense, the fulfillment of its purpose,[79] the Redemption.[80] Mordechai represents a Jewish approach to life, while Haman represents the opposite, the challenges which the material world poses to Jewish practice.

FREE WILL

According to the first of our Sages' interpretations, G-d's desire to make the feast satisfy the desires of Haman and Mordechai refers to the free choice we are granted. To quote the Rambam:[81]

Free will is granted to all men. If one desires to turn towards the path of good... the choice is his.... Man can on his own initiative... know good and evil and do as he desires.... There is no one who compels him, decrees his fate, or leads him to either of these paths.

Thus, at this level, we are confronted with a choice; material involvement would appear to run contrary to the study of the Torah and the observance of its commandments. A Jew, however, has the potential to follow the example of Mordechai, who "would neither bend the knee nor bow down." [82] Despite the pressures of the material environment in which we all live, he can hold steadfast to the life-tasks of the Torah and its *mitzvos*. Moreover, like Yosef, he can rise to a

position of power without compromising his spiritual integrity at all.

Nevertheless, such an approach does not negate the limitations of the material world. On the contrary, at this level, although a Jew is not controlled by the material aspects of his environment, he is still influenced by them. Indeed, the Torah itself teaches that[83] "The law of the land is binding"; i.e., the fundamental climate of all existence is material, and a Jew's spiritual endeavors are carried out in this context.[84]

A Jew is not restricted by the limits of the worldly environment in which we live.

SATISFYING BOTH MORDECHAI AND HAMAN

A different perspective, however, is opened up by the second of our Sages' interpretations – that the Era of the Redemption will accommodate the two contrary thrusts of Mordechai (the Jew's spiritual tasks in this world) and Haman (this world as a barrier to the fulfillment of these tasks).

The Rambam concludes his discussion of that Era with the

verse,[85] "The world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed." By quoting this proof text, the Rambam highlights the manner in which G-dliness will permeate the world in that age. To understand the simile: In contrast to the creatures that live on the dry land, the multitude of creatures which inhabit the ocean are not readily discernible as independent entities. When looking at the ocean, it is the ocean as a whole and not these particular beings that we perceive. Similarly, in the Era of the Redemption, though the material world will continue to exist, its limitations will not be apparent, for it will be suffused with G-dliness.[86]

We have the potential to "live with the Redemption," to experience a foretaste of this era, at present. In this manner, one can "satisfy the desires of both Haman and Mordechai": one can live in the material world (Haman's desire), and yet appreciate the spiritual nature of material reality, realizing how in fact it is not separate from G-dliness. And this realization is the ultimate expression of Mordechai's service.

SHABBOS AS A FORETASTE OF THE WORLD TO COME

To clarify this idea further: The Era of the Redemption is described as "the Day which is entirely Shabbos, and rest for life everlasting." [87] Similarly, Shabbos is described as "a microcosm of the World to Come." [88] And

77. Thus the Meorei Or quotes the Midrash which states, "The name Achashverosh – this alludes to the Holy One, blessed be He, for the beginning and end [of creation] belong to Him."

78. Cf.: "The world...is like a wedding feast" (Eruvin 54a).

79. Cf. the opening lines of Tanya, ch. 37, on "the ultimate perfection of the Messianic Era...."

80. Cf. the sustained metaphor on man's place in the world in Avos 3:16, which culminates

with the phrase, "and everything is prepared for the feast."

81. Mishneh Torah, Hilchos T'shuva 5:1-2.

82. Esther 3:2.

83. Gittin 10b.

84. To cite the example of Yosef: Although he functioned as the viceroy of Egypt, the gentile hierarchy of that country still continued to exist. Indeed, Pharaoh ruled as king.

85. Yeshayahu 11:9; quoted in Mishneh Torah,

Hilchos Melachim 12:5.

86. See the essay entitled "The Ultimate Good of the Era of the Redemption" (reprinted in "I Await His Coming Every Day," published by Sichos In English, 1991), where this concept is discussed in a slightly different context.

87. In the original, Yom sh'kulo Shabbos.... See the closing words of Tamid 7:4, incorporated in the Sabbath prayer inserted near the conclusion of the Grace after Meals (Siddur T'hillas

indeed we see a fusion of material existence and spirituality on the Sabbath. We are commanded[89] to celebrate it with physical pleasure, yet the prevailing mood of the day is spiritual.

Our Sages[90] state that a Torah scholar is called “Shabbos.” This implies that he extends the fusion of materiality and spirituality experienced on Shabbos into the ordinary weekdays, living his life in constant connection to G-dliness.

This is the approach of Yehudah, who is not confined at all by the limitations of material existence. Similarly, our Sages[91] describe a Jew, a Yehudi, as “one who denies the worship of alien gods.” In the original, this phrase is *avoda zara* (lit., “alien worship”). In an extended sense, this refers not only to a person’s outright idolatry, but also to any[92] “worship which is alien to him,” as a Jew. This includes not only forbidden activities, but even any motivation that is not directed toward G-dly purposes. For a Jew, then, since he is “one who denies alien worship,” even his mundane and seemingly neutral activities are directed to a spiritual purpose. As our Sages taught,[93] “All your deeds[94] should be for the sake of Heaven.” And it is likewise written,[95] “Know Him in all your ways.”

ENJOYING THE REDEMPTION AHEAD OF TIME

In this way one can anticipate the Redemption, and enjoy a foretaste of it now. Indeed, the potential for “living with the Redemption” in this manner is far greater at present than in earlier times. For all the spiritual tasks G-d has demanded of the Jewish people have been completed. To borrow an expression of the Previous Rebbe,[96] “We have even polished the buttons, and are standing prepared to greet Moshiach.” The feast of the Redemption is prepared,[97] we are sitting at the table together with Moshiach. All that is necessary now is for each of us to open his eyes.[98]

And this can be seen in the world at large: many governments have adopted values of freedom and tolerance; regimes that have defied these values have collapsed; norms of communication and sharing have become widespread. In contrast to the persecution and oppression our people have suffered in earlier years, the nations of the world are giving Jews full permission – even active assistance – in their observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*.

REORIENTATION AS A CATALYST

At such a time, it is easier than ever before to follow the course of behavior

described above. The world has already been refined to the point that all around us we see receptive people, previously unconnected with Judaism, and now able and eager to appreciate and internalize its truths. It is as if the world were asking a Jew to realize a state of redemption within his own life.

Moreover, “living with the Redemption” in this manner will help make the Redemption an actual reality. Our Sages explain[99] that, in contrast to the other living beings which were created in pairs, man was created alone. Why? – So that every individual should say, “The world was created for me,” and thus appreciate that his conduct can affect the totality of existence. Thus the coming of the Redemption depends on every single individual. Simply put, were people to open their eyes, as said above, the door would open and Moshiach would enter.

Every individual should realize that he is capable of this, of reorienting himself and making a determined step in the direction of *t’shuva*, which means “return” – for, as explained above, every Jew is a Yehudi. And it is through realizing this distinctively Jewish potential, that each of us and all of us together can hasten the coming of the scion of the House of Yehudah, the Moshiach.

May this take place in the immediate future.

Hashem, p. 93), which asks that we be privileged to inherit that eternal Day.

88. In the original, *Mei’ein Olam HaBa*, a phrase which appears in the *z’miros* sung at the Shabbos table. Cf.: “The Shabbos is a sixtieth part of the World to Come” (*Brachos* 57a). This too, like the phrase quoted in our text, alludes to “the World to Come, which is entirely Shabbos” (in the original, *HaOlam HaBa*, *sh’kulo Shabbos*; in *Osiyos d’Rabbi Akiva*, sec. 4).

89. See *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Shabbos*, ch. 30.

90. *Zohar* III, 29a; cf. beginning of *Shabbos* 119a.

91. *Megilla* 13a.

92. See *Bava Basra* 110a, and *Rashbam* there.

93. *Avos* 5:20.

94. In the original, *kol maasecha*. This implies not only “all of your deeds,” as above, but in

addition “your deeds in their entirety.”

95. *Mishlei* 3:6. See also *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Deos* 3:3.

96. See *Sichos Simchas Torah*, 5689.

97. See *P’sachim* 119b.

98. See the essay entitled “Open Your Eyes and See,” in *Sichos In English* Vol. 50, pp. 243-248.

99. *Sanhedrin* 37a.

Tonight is the eve of the Tenth of Teives, one of the four fasts instituted by the Rabbis in connection with the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash. The Tenth of Teives possesses a dimension which makes it more severe than the other Rabbinical fasts, even Tisha B'Av.[115] For all the other fasts are postponed if they fall on Shabbos. In contrast, were the Tenth of Teives to fall on Shabbos, it would be necessary to fast on that day, for in regard to this fast it is written, "On the essence of this day..."

(According to the fixed calendar we follow at present, this is impossible. When, however, the calendar was established through the testimony of witnesses,[116] it was possible for the Tenth of Teives to fall on the Sabbath.)

This concept is also relevant to us at present. For a fast day is, as the Alter Rebbe explains in Igeres HaT'shuva, "a day of will." Since the obligation to fast on the Tenth of Teives is stronger than on other fasts, it can be understood that the element of being "a day of will" is also stronger than other fasts, even than Tisha B'Av which, as explained on previous occasions, is significant because it is the birthday of the Moshiach.[117]

The strength – both of the obligation to fast and the positive influences – of the Tenth of Teives stems from the fact that it commemorates the first of the tragedies associated with the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash. On this day, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem.

Thus this date begins the process of destruction. It is well known that the beginning of any process contains more power than the subsequent stages and for this reason, there is added power to the Tenth of Teives.

The connection between the Tenth of Teives and fasting is also reflected in the very event which transpired on that day. Since the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem, its inhabitants were

Just as the Tenth of Teives began the process leading to the Beis HaMikdash's destruction, it is also appropriate that this "day of will" be used to hasten the coming of the Redemption.

unable to go out and procure food supplies. Although the Babylonians did not enter the city on this day, they merely camped around its wall, this was serious enough to cause hunger. The ultimate intent, however, was that this would motivate the Jews to t'shuva, and thus ward off the subsequent tragedies which culminated in the Beis HaMikdash's

destruction.

Just as the Tenth of Teives began the process leading to the Beis HaMikdash's destruction, it is also appropriate that this "day of will" be used to hasten the coming of the Redemption. This is particularly true since, as the Zohar explains, the Jews are on the level of *tzaddikim*. As such they are prepared to turn to G-d in t'shuva.

T'shuva is an instantaneous process. For at every moment, a person can turn to G-d. We see an expression of this concept in Torah law: If a man consecrates a woman as his wife on the condition that he is totally righteous, the act is valid even if he was known to be utterly wicked beforehand. Why? We assume that he repented at that moment.

This process of turning to G-d in t'shuva will speed the Redemption, for as the Zohar writes: Were a single tzaddik to turn to G-d in t'shuva, the Redemption would come. Similarly, the Redemption will be hastened by the distribution of money to be given to tz'daka.

And in the immediate future, we will proceed "with our youth and with our elders... with our sons and with our daughters," "on the clouds of heaven" to the city of Jerusalem. There will be no siege around the city's walls. On the contrary, the city will expand and grow as will all matters associated with Jerusalem, including and in particular, the Beis HaMikdash, "the Sanctuary of G-d established by Your hands."

115. In other ways, Tisha B'Av is more severe. For on Tisha B'Av, the fast begins from the eve of the day, while on the Tenth of Teives and the other Rabbinic fasts, the fast begins only in the morning.

Indeed, it would have been appropriate that all the fasts last for a full day. Nevertheless out of G-d's compassion for His people, He takes their health into consideration and limits the fasts other than Tisha B'Av to the daytime hours.

116. This practice continued for many years after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash.

117. See the essay entitled "The Birthday of Moshiach," in *Sichos In English* Vol. 49, pp. 116-121.

YES, IT'S NORMAL, IT'S LOGICAL, IT'S JUDAISM

BORUCH MERKUR

A friend of mine, a *mashpia*, wrote the following (but asked for anonymity if I were to reprint it):

I've been thinking about this for a while. I really enjoy the columns of Shai Gefen, but I'm not so sure that they belong in Beis Moshiach. I agree that we have to protest, but it seems that his articles go beyond that, and really add a note of nastiness (albeit deserved) that I don't believe is in tune with the message and purpose of the magazine, which is: Prepare for Moshiach!

I'm not sure I'm right, but the reason I'm writing is because after I read his column I find myself overcome with anger and pure hostility to the bad guys (and they really are bad), and not optimistic and excited about doing something to bring Moshiach, which is what I think the Rebbe wants.

(Not only that, but every week he has more bad stuff to say, and he really seems to enjoy saying it – something like how cats try to kill mice but they hope there will be as many of them as possible.)

Moshiach NOW!

* * *

Though, in general, I feel I can relate to this criticism, it is my impression that Shai Gefen writes largely out of pain, not malice, as the Rebbe MH"M says: when it hurts, you cry out – without calculations. When we identify with the victims of this war, we are struck by utter horror and filled with vengeance. If we identify an obvious felon at fault, one directly responsible for the dire consequences, it is virtually impossible to withhold from crying out in protest, especially when this message may inspire others and affect public opinion, maybe start a revolution of sorts. If the whole nation, the entire Jewish people, cried out together, there would be no room for the bad guy.

The problem is when we feel we have no outlet for channeling our rage, when we feel the situation is out of our control and sphere of influence. Of course, the Rebbe taught us not to think that way, that our actions *can* truly affect the world and change it for the better. The actions, words, and even thoughts of a single Jew can tilt the balance of the world and bring the true and complete Redemption!

To answer whether there is, nevertheless, too much emphasis on the negative, I responded:

Remember Shai Gefen is not the exclusive spokesperson of Beis Moshiach; anyone is perfectly welcome to submit their views – even weekly. I would love for you (or someone you might inspire) to express an alternative perspective and submit it for publication.

He wrote back:

I just think it should stress more about how the only alternative is the Rebbe. How the only real leader is the Rebbe, because only Moshiach is willing to fight the wars of Hashem – and not so much about how the only bad guy is Sharon, the only sinner is Sharon, and only Sharon is wrecking the country.

* * *

Moshiach is apparently fighting the wars of Hashem on two separate fronts, the physical realm (the body) and the spiritual realm (the soul). The battle in the physical realm is agonizing and brutal; Jewish lives are at stake, *r"l*. The strategy employed is to elevate the way Jews approach issues of national security, especially when it means overcoming diplomatic pressure from outside. It involves publicizing the views of the Torah and the leader of our generation regarding the integrity of the Holy Land and the integrity of the Jewish people. Shai Gefen is an example of one who is on the frontlines of this battle (as well as others, such as Rabbi Volpe and Zushe Kohn, both of whom are featured in this week's issue) as he aims to articulate and apply the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's approach to this pivotal issue, an issue of *pikuach nefesh*, which certainly brings the Redemption closer.

The battle on the spiritual front involves lighting up the souls of our fellow Jews with the Rebbe's *mivtzaim* and especially through teaching about and publicizing the message of imminent Redemption, bringing this message down to earth to appeal to the man on the street. It is our challenge to make the message tangible and relevant, to take the prophecy of the Moshe Rabbeinu of this generation – that "behold, Moshiach is coming!" and "immediately to Redemption" – and publicize and explain it to others so that the entire world opens its arms to receive Moshiach. Reb Chaim Yitzchok Cohen of London, England, a Moshiach activist, is an example of one on the frontlines of this battle.

With all the self-sacrifice of a soldier at arms, and in the face of apathy and adversity, R. Chaim Yitzchok succeeded in organizing and hosting the third annual European Moshiach Congress on Yud-Tes Kislev (see the article in this week's issue) with the intent of inspiring others "to put Moshiach at the centre of our lives, and do all we can towards our *shlichus*," as R. Chaim Yitzchok put it in his speech at the Congress.

The Congress was covered by the London-based newspaper *The Jewish Chronicle*. The article opens with a description of the Motzaei Shabbos *hachnasas seifer Torah*

arranged by R. Chaim Yitzchok's *shul*, Beis Menachem Chabad Community Centre: "North London...became a scene of jubilation. Hundreds of members of the local strictly Orthodox community danced in the road or thronged at a torch-lit procession to welcome a newly completed Sefer Torah."

But the article quickly shifts tone, focusing on the controversy R. Chaim Yitzchok's successful *shlichus* has set off, especially concerning the issue of Moshiach. You see, from the start, one who *The Jewish Chronicle* terms "the principal of Britain's official Lubavitch movement" tried to derail the Congress.

Besides a slew of baseless slurs against Meshichistim and an assault against the notion of identifying Moshiach, "the rabbi ridiculed the idea that he [the Rebbe] somehow inhabits a physical body. 'Is that normal? Or logical? Or Judaism,'" he asked.

Yes, it's "normal" – at least for the *nasi ha'dor*, the "extension of Moshe Rabbeinu in every generation," whose "spiritual life remains eternally within the *physical* world in virtue of being invested within the body of the *nasi ha'dor* of every generation" (as it is explained in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, pg. 7).

Yes, it's "logical" – that is, there is a logic to it, I'm sure; just one that might be beyond our limited human minds. In perhaps the most esoteric paragraph of the famous *sicha* of Parshas Chayei Sara 5752, the Rebbe MH"M alludes to a (logical) process of the gradual refinement of physicality from its coarsest bodily manifestation until it becomes an ephemeral, subtle body, perhaps even a spiritual body, and then returns as the "spirit of Moshiach" clothed in a body:

Rain is also connected with the *shlichus* of Moshiach – from below to above (like the moon) – [as it is written] "a mist ascended from the earth." Then specifically, "from the earth" (*Ba'N*), a soul *in a body*, coarse [physicality] becomes [ordinary] physicality, and physicality becomes a "mist" (the element of air, the most refined element), which "ascends" higher and higher, even higher than "the spirit of Elokim hovered upon the waters," "that is the spirit of Moshiach," since it becomes resurrected in actuality as the soul of [the Rebbe Rayatz], as a soul in a body (and not only as he is a "spirit...hovering upon the waters").

Yes, it's "Jewish" – that is if we still define Judaism as what the Torah defines as Judaism. The Rebbe MH"M expounds on this issue with regards to the statements of our Sages, "Moshe did not die" (Sota 13b; see *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, pg. 1-9)

and "Yaakov did not die" (Taanis 5b; see *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 35, pg. 223-228), saying that they refer even to their physical lives.

Regarding Moshe Rabbeinu, the Rebbe MH"M writes:

Concerning Moshe Rabbeinu they say, "he did not die": Since the quality of Moshe is the quality of *truth*, there can be no death or interruption in his life, even as it is connected with the physicality of the world; there remains something eternal even in *the physicality* of the world.*

*Footnote 60: *Iyun Yaakov* (on *Ayin Yaakov* of Sota, *ibid*) suggests that the concept of "Moshe did not die" also refers to his body...

Regarding Yaakov Avinu, the Rebbe MH"M writes:

The intent of Rabbi Yochanan [in saying], "Yaakov did not die" is not with respect to the existence of Yaakov as he appeared to the Egyptians, but to his *true* existence (also of his body), for this is his existence as it is [established] in the Torah. [Also, see footnote 66 of *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, pg. 7]

By arming ourselves with the knowledge of the Rebbe MH"M's approach to the concept of Moshiach, the Torah approach to Moshiach, which was the focus of the European Moshiach Congress, we take the straight path to Redemption.

As it appears, it is the foot soldier who is going to gain the victory of the complete Redemption, not the principal in his ivory tower.

* * *

In this week's *parsha*, Parshas VaYigash, we find a *pasuk* that helps shed light on the forces at work here in the wars of Moshiach. In the course of recounting the events before the viceroy of Egypt, Yehuda tells a lie, saying, "My

master asked his servants, saying: do you have a father or brother? We said to my master that we have an elderly father and a young child he had [begotten] in his later years, but his brother died..." (B'Reishis 44:19-20). Rashi explains on the words, "and his brother [Yosef] died": "Out of fear, he uttered something false from his mouth, saying: if I tell him that he [Yosef] is alive, he will say, 'bring him to me.'"

Evidently, there is a fear we have of validating something that is beyond us, something intangible. Even if we know the truth, we are liable to cover it up if it is difficult to explain or prove. But we must overcome this temptation and tell the world that "we have merited that Hashem has chosen and appointed a person with free will, incomparably greater than anyone else in the generation, to be the judge, advisor, and prophet of the generation, etc."

Besides a slew of baseless slurs against Meshichistim and an assault against the notion of identifying Moshiach, "the rabbi ridiculed the idea that the Rebbe somehow inhabits a physical body. 'Is that normal? Or logical? Or Judaism,'" he asked...

HE'LL HANG HIS CROWN ON A SIMPLE, ORDINARY NAIL

BY RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK GINSBERG, MASHPIA, YESHIVAS
TOMCHEI T'MIMIM – LUBAVITCH, Kfar Chabad



Reb Mendel Futerfas, a”h, related: There was once an old, learned man who took care of the *shul* and Jewish life in his local town. He organized the *davening*, gave *shiurim*, and looked for new congregants, and was also involved in public matters (such as *mikva*, *kashrus*, Shabbos, etc.) to the best of his ability.

Then came the days of the Communist Revolution, when the *haskala* and communist groups were at their height, and youth from his town left Torah and *mitzvos* for the allure of foreign pastures. When the old man saw that his days were numbered, he groaned and said, “Nu, the fact that I have to leave this world, that doesn’t upset me too much; after all that’s the way things work. But what *does* upset me is seeing what is going on around me. *Oif vemen lozen mir de velt?* (who are we leaving the world to?) What will happen to Judaism in the town when I’m gone?”

When Reb Mendel recalled this old man he began singing the tune of “*Chayalei Adoneinu*” and said, “Thank G-d, we don’t have to worry or deal with the problem of ‘*oif vemen lozen mir di velt*,’ for (aside from the fact that we are in the final generation of *Galus* and the first generation of

Geula, so we aren’t “leaving” this world), the Rebbe is establishing a generation of dedicated and loyal soldiers, who even if they’re relatively puny compared to earlier generations, they go loyally on the Rebbe’s *shlichus* to transform the world. They do this, not with their own abilities, but with the strength of the Rebbe, so we have nothing to worry about “*oif vemen lozen mir di velt*”; somebody is taking care of that.

Then R’ Mendel added, once upon a time, everything was definitive, as opposed to being “borrowed terms.” *Chassidim* were *chassidim*; *roshei yeshivos* and *rabbanim* were real *chassidishe rabbanim* and knowledgeable in all parts of Torah; *mashpiim* were real *mashpiim* and *shluchim* were really worthy of being the Rebbe’s *shluchim*.

Today all those terms are “borrowed terms.” The Rebbe takes a “block of wood” and out of it he makes a *rav*, *mashpia*, *rosh yeshiva*, or *shliach*. If the person is dedicated to fulfilling the task and mission given him, he is far more successful than those whose titles were earned and justified, despite their attainments and wonderful attributes.

Indeed “*Chayalei Adoneinu*,

Moshiach Tzidkeinu!”

We are presently within the “thirty days before the holiday,” a time which the Rebbe says we should utilize for the necessary preparations for the great day of Yud-Yud-Aleph Shvat, Rosh HaShana for *hiskashrus* (connection). These thirty days begin shortly after Hei Teives, when *didan natzach* (our side was victorious in the *s’farim* case).

Right after that victory, the Rebbe announced (Sichas Parshas VaYigash 5747 – *muga*; *Hisvaaduyos* 5747 vol. 2 p. 203) “that we completed all the requisite work for the *Geula*, and therefore, we must announce and publicize that in our days we find ourselves in a special time (and place). Only one thing remains – and a person must quote his teacher, as my father-in-law said: All of you stand ready for the building of the future Beis HaMikdash with the coming of Dovid Malka Meshicha.

“It would seem that somebody can come and say that this talk is “*vilde raid*” [wild talk], talk which was never said in prior times or generations, and why are we suddenly talking like this? How will the world react upon hearing such talk?!

“So first of all, we have to know

that we don't have to be impressed by the world, and what they'll say, etc. Since this is the truth according to the Torah of truth, we have to openly proclaim it as such.

"Furthermore, the situation is such that today even the world is ready to accept this. You just have to come and say it openly."

We seem insignificant, and we think that anything we can do won't change matters much, but in reality the exact opposite is so. Though we are truly small and lowly, and indeed "who am I and what am I" – this is something to remember in the right time and place (such as when somebody insults me, etc.). But when the Rebbe "throws his life aside" and demands of his loyal soldiers that they be totally committed to the mission, and that they forge ahead without taking anything into consideration (of course, this should be done with true *ahavas Yisroel*, and true *chassidic* brotherhood, even with those who disagree), the simple soldiers (especially) have to put all considerations aside, even things which are true and fall into the category of "*yiras Shamayim*" and *chassidishkeit* – and they must

The king will never remove his crown and place it on one of his servants, not even on one of his ministers, as great as he might be. For the king's crown belongs only to the king and to no one else.

Where does he put his crown? He'll hang it on a simple, ordinary nail.

dedicate themselves and everything they have to carrying out the goal the Rebbe gave us!

And it is especially *because* it is true that "who am I and what am I" –

that when I put aside my "*metzius*" (ego) and "throw myself" into carrying out what I have to do without any calculations as to whether I'm suited to it or not or capable or not – that the matter will be accomplished.

For then the matter is carried out, not because of my abilities (for in truth, I don't have abilities; but even someone who has great talents does not have the ability to carry out such a "inward and essential" thing), but with the infinite abilities of the Rebbe MH"M; the abilities that were given only because of the "inner intent" which decided and willed that this be carried out through me. That's why I must completely nullify my "I" (my ego) and devote myself to carrying out what the Rebbe decided should be carried out by me.

There's the well known analogy of the king's crown. The king will never remove his crown and place it on one of his servants, not even on one of his ministers, as great as he might be. For the king's crown belongs only to the king and to no one else.

Where *does* he put his crown? He'll hang it on a simple, ordinary nail. This is because the nail has no *metzius* of its own at all, and will never think that the crown is hung upon it because it deserves it for any reason. In other words, when the crown is hung on the nail, the nail only feels the crown.

This teaches us that in order to receive the "king's crown," all the talents and abilities won't help (and may cause harm!). It is only with absolute *bittul* (self-nullification), like the simple nail, that one can receive the king's crown.

The truth is that this is unique to the seventh generation. The earlier generations had to be (and in fact were) "*baalei madreiga*" (men of spiritual stature) in order to accomplish anything. The *rabbanim* were awesome *gaonim*, the *chassidim*



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were completely saturated with *chassidus* and could contemplate a particular topic for many hours. The *mashpiim* knew every *talmid* inside out, and directed their every step. The *shluchim* were “*baalei tzura*,” were amazing in their knowledge and conduct. There wasn’t even a shadow of a doubt that they would have any ulterior motives such as honor for themselves which could affect their *shlichus* and their work. Examples of such *shluchim* were R’ Hillel of Paritch and R’ Itche der Masmid.

But in the seventh generation, the Rebbe takes us all and we are well aware of our faults which sometimes are quite marked, and he turns us into *rabbanim*, *chassidim*, *shluchim*, *Mashpiim*, directors of organizations, *roshei yeshivos*, etc. He gives us unlimited abilities for success. All we need do is completely devote ourselves to fulfilling the task given to us, and know that we are nothing but the “simple nail” upon which the king’s crown must hang.

Hei Teives is not only the day in which “*der Rebbe hut oisgefirt*” (the Rebbe was victorious); it was the day in which we were instructed (and every year this instruction is renewed in a greater way) and were told that the revelation of the seventh generation had begun in a way different than anything that came before it.

Therefore, immediately after “*didan natzach*” the Rebbe proclaimed a new era in which nothing remained except to stand ready for the future *Beis HaMikdash*. That’s why he said not to be impressed by the world, and to “explicitly say the true reality.” Immediately following that, the Rebbe announced the preparations for Yud Shvat (with ten days of tests and precise reports with the “threat” that regarding whoever did

not send in an accounting it would be understood to mean that he had done nothing!)

The Rebbe is in the lead and he doesn’t consider retreating for even a moment *ch”v*. He “throws his life aside” for the sake of ultimate victory in the final battle. He demands (especially in connection with Yud Shvat) that we be a “simple nail” and devote ourselves totally to fulfilling the final job: drawing down and

revealing the *Sh’china* “here on earth” with the true and complete *Geula*. This should be accomplished by our making personal resolutions which are based on our individual task within the greater project.

It is only in this way that we will complete – with the power of the Rebbe – the entire puzzle and bring about the revelation of the Rebbe with the true and complete *Geula* immediately.



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התורה והנביא



ARE WE OKAY?

BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN

All too often, when I discuss with other religious Jews matters pertaining to the integrity of the land of Israel, I am told: "True, all the Israeli politicians are more or less the same – protecting Jewish lives is not their number one priority – but someone has to run the country. We can't just *not vote* and let the country run on cruise control!"

Without getting into a discussion about whether or not little Israel wouldn't be better off at this point with a small dose of anarchy – hey, the people would be forced to take matters into their own hands in the fight against terrorism, and they would no doubt do an exceedingly better job than our last few insecurity cabinets have done. Most likely, run-of-the-mill civilian fighters would not build cages around themselves, but would instead, take up arms and teach our enemies a thing or two about Jihad – those who make this argument are missing the whole point.

Instead of scratching our heads trying to figure out which politician is the better of two (or more) evils, the entire country should be asking itself how these clowns got to their positions in the first place. The real problem is not that there's nobody to vote for, but that Israeli society has produced the very politicians who are now destroying her (may G-d protect us)! Any nation

that produces prime ministers, defense ministers, foreign ministers, etc., who refer to restraint as strength, to a suicide mission as a peace process, to an arch-

It's time to recognize the fact that our choice of leaders says a lot about ourselves. Healthy people don't choose unhealthy leaders. In a healthy environment, people who would cater to the enemy never make it to positions of leadership.

terrorist as a partner, to a Jewish settlement as a problem, to a society of cold-blooded murderers as a poor and

frustrated people, has got to ask itself where it has gone wrong. A democratically elected government of Jews that ignores reality for the sake of a dream, that favors agreements with Washington over the blood of its citizens, that supports the establishment of a regime bent on its destruction, can only be the product of a severely confused people. (Granted, 2000 years of exile, with their endless trials and tribulation are to blame for this – but the problem is not going to fix itself.)

It's time to recognize the fact that our choice of leaders says a lot about ourselves. Healthy people don't choose unhealthy leaders. They don't create, and they certainly don't maintain, an unhealthy political climate. In a healthy environment, people who would cater to the enemy never make it to positions of leadership.

If we the people, time and again, produce "leaders" who are puppets of the U.S. at best, and outright traitors to the Jewish people at worst, then there is obviously something very wrong with our methods. We cannot continue to walk around in a daze, mumbling, "Well, who else are we going to vote for?" We've *got to* create a climate in which the only ones who have any chances of getting elected to leadership

are those who are sworn to retaining every inch of the Land. We've got to have leaders who are not afraid to tell foreign governments that G-d gave the Land to the Jewish people.

[By the way, to those of you who support the destruction of Jewish towns in *Yesha* – what about Tel Aviv? What about Chaifa? Jerusalem? By what right, if not by Divine right, do we live in any of these places? Why don't you tell the people the truth – that as far as you are concerned, Uganda would be just fine?! Why do you babble this gibberish about dismantling “the settlements in *Yesha*” when, according to your view, Tel Aviv is nothing but a highly populated settlement? Tell the Jewish people what you really believe! Tell them that you are sorry you were born a Jew, sorry you are occupying “Palestinian” land, sorry that suicide Arabs are dying in the process of carrying out their mission, sorry that you didn't say sorry sooner, and just... sorry!

If you cannot find it within in you to do these things, then stop *hocking-a-china-ik* (Yiddish for nonsensical babble

that drives people bananas) about *Yesha*.

To return to our main point:]

Anyone who knows anything about the major reforms that have taken place in the last decade in totalitarian regimes like Russia and Yugoslavia understands that it was the people themselves who brought these reforms about. Why should Israelis not do the same now? Why wait until more Jewish blood is spilled, G-d forbid?

Sharon wants a “Palestinian” state? (Never mind the fact that there's no such thing as a Palestinian.) Then let him be the first one to move there. As for the tough talk we keep hearing from Bibi Netanyahu – it ought not impress anyone. Certainly not anyone who remembers how he capitulated at Wye; how he transferred Chevron to Jibril Rajoub; how he abandoned Jonathan Pollard despite his promise that negotiations were contingent upon Pollard's release; how he told a group of Chabad *rabbanim*, to whom he swore that he would not give away any land to foreign authorities, that the Palestinian Authority is not a foreign authority.

With a foreign minister like Bibi, who needs enemies! Why is Bibi now calling for Arafat's expulsion rather than his assassination? Furthermore, why is Sharon, who supports the establishment of a Palestinian state, considering offering Bibi the defense ministry, if the latter is truly opposed to such a state? Isn't that like hiring someone to thwart your intentions?

Time to wake up and smell the coffee. What we need is a critical Jewish mass to rise up and wrest the reigns of power from those who are abusing them. Doubtless, this will happen if things continue their present course, G-d forbid. The only question is when. How much more do we have to suffer before we boil over?

As we put away our *menoros*, until next Chanuka, we would do well to reflect on the story of the Chashmonaim, and their indomitable spirit. Like them, we should fear neither the enemies all around us, nor the enemies within. Let us proclaim unequivocally: “Who is for G-d – to me!” Who is for Palestine – to Uganda!

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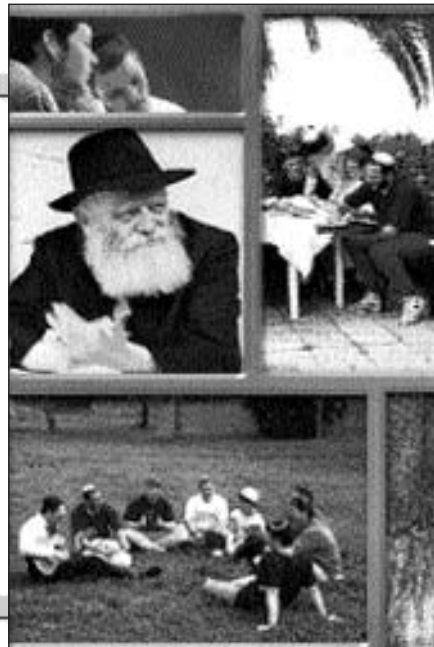
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WHERE YEHUDA GOT THE GALL FROM

BY RABBI TUVIA BOLTON, MASHPIA IN YESHIVA
OHR TMIMIM OF Kfar Chabad



This week's section speaks of the reuniting of Yosef and his brothers.

The majority of the portion is only dialogue with very little action or change of scenery. But there is much to be learned here.

The joke is told about a rabbi who loved to play golf. One Yom Kippur he's sitting in his seat in the front of the huge congregation listening to the cantor when he suddenly gets this big urge to go golfing (which is forbidden on Yom Kippur for about ten reasons). He tries to dismiss the thought, to think of something else, but to no avail; his body and his whole being is longing for the game. He knows that nothing will help. Without thinking too much he stands up and silently slips out the door, next to his place, which leads to his study. Closing the door behind him, he removes his prayer shawl, quickly takes his wallet out of his desk drawer, slips it into his pocket as he opens the backdoor and is outside.

The sun is shining brightly, a beautiful day, as he briskly walks to the corner, takes a quick turn down the next block, and, still walking, not looking back, removes his *yarmulke*, puts it in his pocket, puts on a pair of shades and flags down a cab, "Country Club Golf Course please, and step on it

if you can!" A half-hour later, there he is, teeing off on the first of eighteen holes, and he feels great! The wind is at his back, the sky is clear as he swings back and...wow! What a drive! He can't believe it as he watches the ball fly like a missile until he can't see it

***Any time that a Jew
or anyone works for
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given extra powers
from G-d.***

anymore. "Wow! Wow!" he keeps saying to himself as he jumps into his golf cart and heads toward the hole, "What a drive! What a drive!" Yes, dear readers it was a hole in one. And so it was on the second hole and the third and the fourth, in fact it was the

perfect game. Never had such a game been played in the history of golf; eighteen holes in eighteen strokes!

Meanwhile in heaven, the angels were going wild, and their dissatisfaction reached G-d Himself. "Can it be that a Jew, a rabbi yet, transgresses the holiest day and gets such a reward?" The voice of Hashem thundered in reply "What reward? What are you angels talking about? Reward? Ha Ha! I just gave him the worst punishment of all, hell on earth! ... It's true that he got eighteen holes-in-one, but who is he going to tell about it?"

This joke doesn't have much to do with this week's segment, but I think it's a good joke. It shows that sometimes kindness can be the worst punishment for sinners.

The fact that Hashem is so forgiving may, on the one hand, encourage transgression, but on the other hand, it leaves a big door open for self-improvement, and that is the worst punishment for the sinner – to become a different person; the sinner in him dies.

And now when a person does repent, he does it for the right reason; not so much from fear of punishment as from the shame of the fact that he

repaid the infinite goodness of Hashem with his own evil. The result is that one changes not only in accordance with G-d's might and awesomeness (by turning from evil), but also, one tries to repay Hashem's kindness by doing more good.

So was Yosef's motivation in this week's Torah reading.

But first let us analyze the behavior of Yosef's brother, Yehuda. In the beginning of this week's reading, Yehuda suddenly approaches Yosef and begins to speak forcefully, and Rashi explains that Yehuda was ready for war.

If you think of it, it is very strange. Where did Yehuda get the *chutzpa* to approach Yosef without permission and consider fighting him and his entire army? He was outnumbered a million to one! The Midrash relates that even Yosef alone demonstrated that he was stronger than Yehuda, so how did Yehuda rush in to a place where even his brothers didn't think of going.

The Rebbe MH"M explains that Yehuda derived his courage from the fact that earlier he had promised his father that he would be a guarantor for his youngest brother, Binyamin, and any time that a Jew or anyone works for the sake of his brother – especially a child, especially a Jewish child – he is given extra powers from G-d.

The Rebbe continues that this is the main obligation of our generation: to be guarantors for the children that they

receive a proper Jewish education, so that they know that G-d is the King of the Universe and everything in it. And when a child makes a blessing, for example, on even something as simple as a piece of fruit, all the angels in all the upper worlds listen because it gives pleasure to the King. How much more so if he does a *mitzva* or a good deed. And if we take this upon ourselves we will be given special energy and blessing to succeed, much as Yehuda did.

* * *

Next let us return to Yosef. To refresh the memory of the reader, the last picture the Torah gives us of the previous meeting of Yaakov's sons is of them throwing their brother Yosef into a pit full of scorpions and serpents.

This week, however, the situation has been reversed; Yosef is now sitting on a throne as the ruler of Egypt (and the rest of world) and the same brothers (who do not yet recognize him) are at his feet and at his mercy.

But instead of unleashing upon them the revenge that they well deserve, Yosef does the opposite; he first brings them to regret their past deeds and then showers kindness upon them.

This unnatural conduct is brought in the Zohar and explained in the *Tanya* (end of the twelfth chapter) as the best example of how to fulfill the *mitzva* of loving others as yourself. Namely to never even think of revenge, but rather, to do good to even those

that you are justified in harming. The secret, explains the *Tanya*, is to try to emulate Yosef, to be truly concerned about what G-d wants, and not so much about *you* want. As it says in Pirkei Avos, "Make your will like His will."

I think that this is the meaning of the question that Yosef asks his brothers immediately after he reveals his true identity to them: "Is my father still alive?"

Now, if you think about it, it makes no sense. In the end of last week's section (42: 27-28) it relates that only a short time earlier he asked his brothers the same question "Is your father all right? Is he still alive?" and they answered in the affirmative! Can it be that Yosef had such a short memory?

I think that the reason he asked again is because he wanted to say the word "my," "my father." Now that he no longer had to hide himself from his brothers he could finally call his father "mine," and that is a world of difference from saying "Your father."

So it is also with the service of Hashem. All the time that G-d is in the books, in the heavens, in the place of worship, with the rabbis, etc., we don't really get very excited or concerned about what He wants; it's sort of like saying "Your father." Then what really ends up interesting us is what we want. Then it is very possible to hate someone unnecessarily.

But when we begin to really take the whole thing seriously – that Hashem really creates us, the Torah is really His will; the *tzaddikim* are Hashem's gift to the world; the Moshiach, who will unite all the Jews, will really be a human being, and he is here in every generation – then we can begin to say "My father." Only then will it really be possible to love our fellow man, even the "bad guys," and really learn from the example of Yosef.

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Speech of R' Chaim Yitzchok Cohen at the third annual European Moshiach Congress

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed. A gut yom tov and a heartfelt Shalom Aleichem to the very many distinguished visitors from all over the world who have gathered here for the 3rd European Moshiach Congress.

The reason we are assembled here is because, unfortunately we continue to try to open our eyes and have not yet succeeded. Many events continue to be held, and many events on Moshiach are ongoing this very minute. There are publications, gatherings, and so much more. But to sit and discuss, as the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach advised, to see how to bring about the revelation, has to be an ongoing event, as long as we fail to see the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach in his full glory.

And therefore, we have arranged the 3rd European Congress. Let us take this time that we sit together united as one, and make resolutions to bring back each to their respective countries, to speed up the process of the revelation. And how we need it now more than ever.

Someone who tries to focus on

hiskashrus and giving himself over entirely to the Rebbe *shlita*, but thinks that this can be done without being involved in the *shlichus* of the hour – to bring Moshiach – misses the point! This is not *hiskashrus*, and it is not giving oneself over to the Rebbe!

When it came time for the Jewish people to leave Mitzrayim, *Chazal* tell

us that many Jews did not want to leave. These were not isolated cases, for according to one explanation in Rashi, it was four out of five Jews who did not want to leave! That's 80% of the nation who died during the Plague of Darkness! Only one fifth actually left Mitzrayim. According to other Midrashim, the numbers are even larger: only one out of fifty wanted to leave, or even one out of five hundred.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach explains in a *sicha* of Acharon Shel Pesach, 1962, that we are told all this



to teach us that even if it seems to us that our Jewish environment is not interested in leaving Exile, we shouldn't let them discourage us. We have to do what we have to do, and in the end everybody will see it our way.

Now among those Jews who left Mitzrayim there were great sinners! Micha's idol, which appears in the book of Shoftim, came from Mitzrayim. Micha himself was one of the babies the Egyptians put into the wall of a building, and Moshe Rabbeinu rescued him. This same Micha took an idol with him out of

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Mitzrayim, across the Yam Suf, had it at Mattan Torah, and throughout forty years of miracles in the desert.

So many Jews did not leave Mitzrayim because they did not want to go. It doesn't say anywhere that they worshiped idols. It is very possible that some of them were even *tzaddikim*. Their problem was that they simply did not want to leave. Micha, on the other hand, was an idol worshiper who took an idol with him out of Mitzrayim, but he did, in fact, want to leave.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach

explains (*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 11): Since their sin was in the very matter at hand – in not wanting to leave – for this reason, they were not allowed to leave, for “a prosecutor does not defend.” But even the greatest sinners, idol worshippers, could leave, simply because they wanted to leave. The Rebbe goes on to say that, in contrast to the Exodus from Egypt, in the final Redemption, Moshiach will not leave a single Jew in Exile.

We can learn a tremendous lesson from this for our times, especially for Yud-Tes Kislev, *Chag HaGeula*. Although it is true that everyone is guaranteed to leave Exile, nevertheless, the Redemption will be achieved specifically through our work in Exile, and as the Rebbe MH”M said, we must do “everything in your power” to bring Moshiach. We certainly must learn *nigla* and *chassidus*, *daven* at length, do *mitzvos b'hiddur*, strengthen our *ahavas Yisroel*, and do *mitzvaim*, etc., especially when we know (as the Rebbe MH”M said) that at any moment the Rebbe can walk in and look at his *chassidim* to see where they are standing. However, if all this takes us away from the goal to bring Moshiach, then even with all the righteousness in the world, we would have been left in Mitzrayim (back then).

But when we follow the leader of the generation and want to leave the present Mitzrayim and do everything we can to make this happen, then, even if, *ch”v*, one serves idols, he will still leave Mitzrayim!

So there is no question that we must take on good resolutions in Torah and *mitzvos* in general and in *inyanei Chassidus* especially, and in *hiskashrus* and *mitzvaim*, but the main focus has to be the leader of the generation's goal: to bring Moshiach.

Moreover, this must be done both internally and publicly: Each of us must personally live with Moshiach, especially by learning *inyanei Moshiach* in the weekly D'var Malchus, the *sichos* of 5751-5752, where the Rebbe MH”M

explains what is demanded of us in these times, and where the Rebbe MH”M describes the most effective ways to bring Moshiach. And at the same time, we must “publicize and proclaim” that Moshiach is already revealed and all that remains to be done is to greet him or accept him so that he can do his *shlichus* and take the Jewish people out of Exile.

This especially applies to the “only remaining service,” to receive our righteous Moshiach”:

At the end of this 3rd European Moshiach Congress, the most

***At the end of this
Third European
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important resolution each of us can make is to put Moshiach at the center of our lives, and do all we can towards our *shlichus*. In this is expressed the “*bittul* and *hiskashrus* to the *nasi ha'dor*.”

The very decision that “this is my side,” and I support it and identify with it, might well be the final act that tips the scales and brings about the ultimate purpose of all things, the final and complete revelation of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach *shlita*, immediately NOW!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed.

DIARY OF THE 3RD EUROPEAN MOSHIACH CONGRESS

BY R' CHAIM YITZCHOK COHEN



Thursday 17 Kislev: Every Thursday evening in Beis Moshiach in London we have a Leil Shishi program,

which we started some six weeks ago, and it has proved to be very successful.

At 10 pm every Thursday evening we show a video of "Liros es Malkein" on the weekly *parsha* as well as



Rabbi Bezalel Kupchik speaking at the Congress



Rabbi Kalmanson speaking, Rabbi Shneur Zalman Liberow sitting together with Rabbi Gershon Zvi (Hershy) Gluck



Rabbi Kalanson dancing with the new seifer Torah



Dancing outside Beis Moshiach

showing a video of Kos Shel Bracha and Dollars.

Cholent and cake and light refreshments is served to all the participants who looked forward to this event the whole week.

The program is very well attended, with up to 60 people attending, including many *bachurim* from Satmar, Bobov, Ger, and Belz. Many *chassidim* who learn in the local Kollel also participate.

They all join in singing Chabad *niggunim*. Amongst the most popular is “*Yechi Adoneinu*” and “*HaRebbe MiLubavitch Melech HaMoshiach*.”

The Leil Shishi program officially ends between 1 – 2 am.



Part of the very large crowd assembled to hear the distinguished speakers



Rabbi Menachem Shagalow dancing with the new Seifer Torah



Rabbi Menachem Shagalow donating the new crown for the seifer Torah



Rabbi Bezalel Kupchik dancing with the new seifer Torah



Rabbi Zvi Telsner writing one of the final letters in the seifer Torah



Chaim Yitzchok Cohen writing the final letters in the seifer Torah

This week we were privileged to have Rabbi Bezalel Kupchik *farbreng* with the *bachurim* and *Yungerleit*, and it turned out to be a very exciting evening and many newcomers attended. The proceedings continued until well after 3 am.

Friday 17 Kislev: Several of the guest speakers arrived, including Rabbi Shalom Ber Kalmanson, Rabbi Reuven Matusof, and Rabbi Shneur Zalman Liberow. *Kabbalas Shabbos* was at 3:45 pm. Rabbi Naftali Tiefenbrun *davened* at the *amud*, and after the *davening*, the guests made *Kiddush* at 7 pm. There were over 30 guests at the meal, including Rabbi Yaakov Ben Ari from Tzfas, Rabbi Yitzchok Marela of Ramla. The family Weinberger came from Antwerp.

After dinner, the *farbrengen* continued and many members of *Anash* and *chassidim* returned to Beis Moshiach at around 9 pm and stayed until about 5 am Shabbos morning. I stayed at Beis Moshiach, as it would have been too much for me to go home and come back for *Shacharis*. I finally lay down to rest at 6.20 am and was up again at 7.15 am to prepare for the *Kiddush* after *davening*.

Shabbos morning: *Shacharis* started at 10:00 with Reuven Matusof *davening* *Shacharis* at the *amud*. *Davening* was very spirited with *Hakafos* after *HaAderes HaEmuna*. Shmuel Dan from France *davened* *Musaf* at the *amud*, and after *davening* we enjoyed a special *Kiddush/farbrengen*. The *farbrengen* continued until *Mincha* and continued after *Mincha* until nightfall and *Maariv*.

Motzaei Shabbos Yud-Tes Kislev: After showing the weekly video of “*Lirois es Malkeinu*” we proceeded to the house of Shimon Nemni, one of our founding *baalei battim*, to write the final letters of the *seifer Torah*. We started writing the letters at 6.45 until 7.45, after which time we proceeded to Beis Moshiach in Oldhill Street via the main thoroughfare, Upper Clapton Road. Many local dignitaries, including *rabbanim*, came to write letters in the

seifer Torah, including all *mispallelim* of Beis Moshiach and many guests.

At 8 pm, I finished writing the last letters. It was a very emotional scene. The *seifer Torah* was completed after many trials and tribulations which we have endured over the years. I recited *SheHechyanu* and we got ready to start the *Tahalucha* to Oldhill Street.

Rabbi Benzion Shagalow from Eretz Yisroel was in London to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary and his children, including Rabbi Menachem Mendel and Rabbi Moishe from Crown Heights, were present. They attended the *siyum seifer Torah* even though they were in the middle of their own private *simcha*.

The *Tahalucha* was very lively with *bachurim* from the Yeshiva Gedola Kingsley Way as well as the *bachurim* from the Mechina L'Yeshiva in Stamford Hill attending and dancing enthusiastically as well as many locals.

In total, there was approximately 750 people including children taking part in the *Tahalucha* and attending the Moshiach Congress.

On arrival at Oldhill Street, the *sifrei Torah* in Beis Moshiach were taken out of the *Aron Kodesh* to greet the new *seifer Torah*. There was joyous singing and very lively dancing. Rabbi Zalman Liberow noticed that we did not have a Crown for the new *seifer Torah*. Spontaneously Rabbi Menachem Mendel Shagalow offered to donate one, and by *hashgacha pratis*, the silver store directly opposite to

Beis Moshiach opened its doors to sort out *menoros* for Chanuka. Menachem asked the store owner if he had a *kesser*, and guess what – he had one! But it was \$1700. Of course, that didn't stop Menachem. He bought it for us. He placed the crown on the *seifer Torah* and has dedicated it in the *z'chus* of his parents.

Not finished with that, Zalman Liberow auctioned the recital of *Yechi* and Menachem bought that for \$1000. Zalman also auctioned the recital of

V'Haya Zaracha... for 770 British Pounds, and three people bought the *z'chus*.

The *Hakafos* started, and then the *rav* of London, Rabbi Efriam Padwa, Head of the Kedassia Beis Din and *Mora D'Astra* arrived. We were *mechabed* him with a *pasuk* of *Ata Horeisa* and a *Hakafos*. He danced outside the *shul* and came in to join in the festivities.

So many *Anash* came in defiance of the ruling given several times during Shabbos that no one should come, and if they do, they will regret it bitterly.

The *Jewish Chronicle* photographers were there and the reporter came to interview me on Monday for well over two hours. A full report appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* this week.

After the *Hakafos* we sat down to a *seuda* at about 9.30 pm and were addressed by very inspiring speakers, including Rabbi Bezalel Kupchik, Rabbi Reuven Matusof, Rabbi Doniel Chaim Kahn, Rabbi Gershon Zvi (Hershel) Gluck, and a live broadcast from Eretz Yisroel from Rabbi Shalom Ber Wolpo. Rabbi Shalom Ber Kalmanson was the keynote speaker. *Baruch Hashem*, the program made a very good impression on the Stamford Hill community.

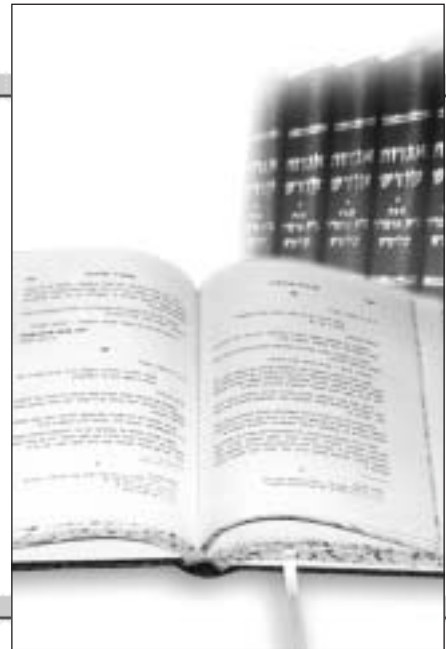
The main program of the evening continued until about 1 am, and then the *farbrengen* started and went on until 5.30 am. Once again I slept in Beis Moshiach until *Shacharis* at 7 am.

The resolutions made during the Congress was to prioritize the establishing of a *yeshiva* in Beis Moshiach for a *smicha* program and to incorporate *B'suras HaGeula* and the teaching of the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*.

Copies of Rabbi Shloma Majeski's *seifer, Likkutei Mekoros*, were given out as a *t'shura*, gifts that were very favorably received by the participants. Beis Moshiach UK are proposing to arrange *shiurim* to learn this *seifer* from cover to cover.

THE REBBE'S LETTER ARRIVED JUST BEFORE THE CRITICAL MOMENT

BY SHAI GEFEN



The Arieli family of Kiryat Malachi knows that their son Nattan was born solely thanks to the Rebbe's *bracha*. Mrs. Arieli tells her story.

Everything was ready; the

paperwork in which the parents gave their permission for the doctor-recommended abortion, *r"l*, and the appointment Monday afternoon. But the Rebbe's letter changed all her plans,

and the family was blessed to have Nattan join their circle.

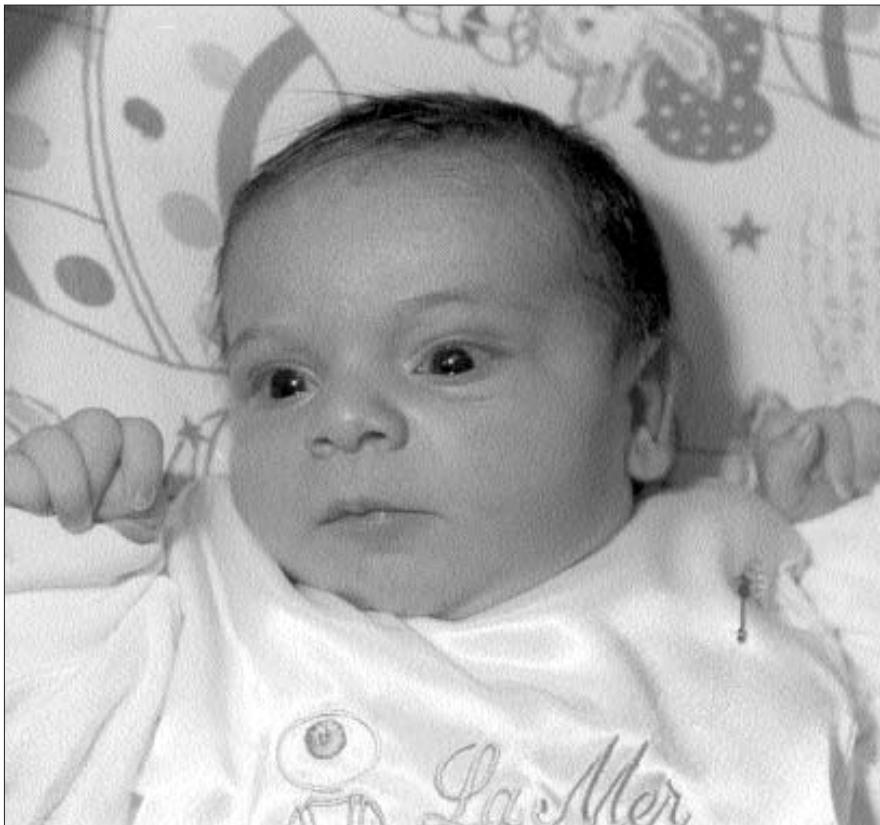
When Mrs. Esther Arieli tells about the incredible miracle in the *z'chus* of the Rebbe's letter, she relives the experience incredulously. Although eleven years have passed, she remains as emotional as ever. All she can say is, "He's the Rebbe's child."

* * *

Mrs. Arieli was born and raised in a traditional home, and was raised with faith in the words of *tzaddikim*. Over the years, her family was privileged to have a string of miracles from the Rebbe MH"M.

Mrs. Arieli: "Five years after our first son was born, we still didn't have another child, although we really wanted one. We underwent many treatments and visited the best doctors. Among other things, I wrote to the Rebbe that I wanted another child, and I committed to strengthening my observance of family purity. I did not receive an answer from the Rebbe, but a year later I gave birth to a girl. Then we had another daughter - three children in all.

I really wanted another son, though, and when we discovered that this was indeed going to happen, I was thrilled. But upon medical examination, the



"The Rebbe's baby," Nattan Arieli

doctors warned me about the pregnancy and pressured me to abort. I did not agree, for I really wanted this child.

Our home life was tense with the doctors exerting pressure and my husband not knowing what to do. On the one hand, he understood me, but on the other hand two doctors kept warning us, so he tried to convince me that the doctors knew what they were talking about.

The doctors kept up the pressure, and at a certain point I felt I no longer had the strength to hold out. I believed this story was going to have a sad ending.

Everything was ready. The date was set for Monday at the end of Teives 5752. I felt awful about it, and couldn't bear the thought that this would end so tragically.

A few days beforehand, my father, *a"h*, dreamt that a tragedy had occurred in our family. He woke up in the morning and was very shaken by this dream. He rushed over to our house and saw that everything was alright, but he asked us to keep a close watch on our oldest son. He didn't know why I suddenly burst into tears.

My mood plummeted. I stayed indoors all day, miserable, waiting for a miracle from Heaven. But the days passed and my appointment with the doctor was looming, and there was no miracle in sight.

When all seemed lost, I reminded myself that there's a Rebbe, and I decided to turn to him through some acquaintances I have in the Chabad neighborhood. One of them said that in situations such as these only the Rebbe could help.

It was the afternoon of 11 Teives when I sat down to write a letter to the Rebbe, in which I said I was in my third month of pregnancy, and I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that I should have all the spiritual strength to withstand the pressure being exerted against me. At the same time, I resolved to strengthen

my observance of family purity.

I wrote the letter, but to tell you the truth, I saw no way out of my situation. The tension in the house increased day by day. Not one day was peaceful, and I didn't know what to do with myself under such terrible circumstances. My Lubavitcher friend, who helped me write the letter, calmed me down and encouraged me, saying that surely the Rebbe wouldn't let the unmentionable happen.

The day came. I woke up and took a *T'hilim* and began reading and crying to Hashem that He save me, though I was sure it was hopeless. But the Rebbe did not forget me.

Four hours before I had to go to the doctor, my husband went to work. When he checked the mailbox, he saw an unusual envelope from abroad. When he opened the letter, he was stunned. It was a personal letter from the Rebbe with his signature. My husband immediately realized this was no simple matter, but he thought he'd hide the letter from me since at this point he fully agreed with the doctors.

The Rebbe addressed me as follows:

Madam Esther *tichyeh*

Bracha v'Shalom!

In response to your informing me of your situation, Hashem will complete the days of your pregnancy properly and easily, and you will give birth to a child in the right time, normally and easily. The *pa"n* you enclosed with your letter will be read in an auspicious time at the *tziyun* of the Rebbe my father-in-law...

At the end of the letter, the Rebbe added:

P.S. It would be proper that you check the *t'fillin* and the *mezuzos* of your apartment to be sure they are kosher.

As I said, my husband planned on hiding the letter from me, but at work there was a religious employee who was a *mekurav* to Chabad. When he consulted with him and asked whether he was doing the right thing, the friend

read the letter and said, "Beware, you're playing with fire. If, *chalila*, you do not do what the Rebbe said, you yourself can be harmed."

An hour before we were supposed to go to the doctor, my husband came home a wreck. He showed me the letter and told me it was from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, addressed to me. At first I didn't know whether he was kidding or serious, but when I read the letter I realized the miracle had arrived. I fainted on the spot.

I saw how the Rebbe sat in Brooklyn and personally watched over every Jew in the world. I also saw the miracle in the letter's timing, as it arrived four hours before it would have been too late. This time my crying was tears of thanks to the Rebbe who saved me, and especially my son.

We checked the *mezuzos* and *t'fillin* that same day and discovered that many *mezuzos* were *pasul*. We exchanged them for kosher ones.

The Rebbe's letter accompanied me throughout the pregnancy. I didn't part with the letter that saved my son. I kept thinking about what would have



Nattan Arieli

ONE LETTER - TWO MIRACLES

In the letter Esther wrote to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha*, she also asked for a *bracha* for her neighbor who had lost a baby twice in the seventh month of pregnancy.

After the doctors feared additional pregnancies, the woman conceived and gave birth to a boy a year after the letter to the Rebbe, even though with her too, the doctors warned that the baby wouldn't be normal.

stayed in the hospital with the Rebbe's letter under my pillow. I felt confident that with the Rebbe's letter everything would work out just fine, as the Rebbe had promised.

One day, a doctor noticed the letter and rebuked me for my "nonsensical beliefs." I was furious with him but I didn't have the strength to respond.

When I finally gave birth, I could see that the doctor was pale as a ghost. It turned out that the baby had made it by a hairsbreadth. The situation was critical and the baby was saved at literally the last minute. Here I had my opportunity and I said, "This letter from the Lubavitcher Rebbe is what saved the baby." This time, the doctor didn't smirk.

The baby was large and the doctors wrote in the medical file that this had been a medical miracle that nearly ended otherwise. "You received this baby as a gift," the doctors told me, not knowing that this was a double gift. Apparently the Rebbe's *bracha* for a normal birth saved me not only from an abortion but also from a complicated birth, thus saving my life and the baby's life.

We named our baby Nattan because Hashem had given him to us in a miraculous fashion. Today he's a sweet boy who attends a religious school. He watches over the Jewish character of the house, making sure his father says *Kiddush*, among other things. He will soon be celebrating his eleventh birthday.

Natti is well aware of being "the Rebbe's child," and he makes sure to remind us, as well as his friends, of this.

"I don't know how to thank the Rebbe for the enormous miracle he did for me," says Mrs. Arieli. "We merited *brachos* from the Rebbe and we feel it's a great privilege. In our family, the Rebbe is everything, and we continue to ask for his *brachos* today," she says. "I want to say just one word to the Rebbe, and that is THANKS!"

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
1701 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213
טל. 738-2200

הוֹדוֹת וְשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה
לְיוֹנָתָנָא
הוֹדוֹת וְשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּיָמֵינוּ

בְּיָמֵינוּ, כִּיזוֹ טוֹב מְשׁוּבָּה
בְּרוּקָלִין, נ.י.

כָּרַח אֶתְּמַר בְּיָמֵינוּ

בְּרַחֲמֵינוּ וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה

בְּמַעֲנֵה עַל הַחֲדוּעָה אֲדוּדוֹת מְשׁוּבָּה,

הַפְּסִיטָה יִמְלֵא יָמֵינוּ חַיִּים וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה בְּשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה
זְמַנֵּינוּ בְּעֵתָהּ וּבְשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה.

הַפְּסִיטָה אֶתְּמַר יִמְלֵא יָמֵינוּ חַיִּים וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה בְּשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה
זְמַנֵּינוּ אֲדוּדוּרֵינוּ דְּחֻקֵּינוּ לְבָנֵינוּ דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.

כָּרַח אֶתְּמַר
בְּיָמֵינוּ

ב.י.

הַפְּסִיטָה לְבָנֵינוּ חַיִּים וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה בְּשׁוֹמְרֵי שְׁמִי וְשִׁמְעוֹנָה
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The Rebbe's letter which arrived four hours before the deadline

happened if the Rebbe's letter had come a few hours later.

The months flew by and the day had arrived, but I had not yet given birth. The pregnancy was longer than usual,

for I had still not given birth in the 42nd week. The doctors were afraid for both me and the baby. They tried to induce labor three times, but failed. I

“HE WHO RELEASES THE PRISONERS AND REDEEMS THE HUMBLE”

BY SHAI GEFEN

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



The special relationship and demands of the Rebbe MH”M for the welfare of Jewish prisoners is well-known. Numerous Chabad shluchim worldwide deal with this important matter and do all they possibly can to make their prison life easier and even to hasten their release. After reading in the Torah about Yosef HaTzaddik’s imprisonment and release, Beis Moshiach unfurls the story of the Rebbe’s unique connection to Jewish prisoners, and brings thrilling and emotional stories on the special activities of Chabad shluchim worldwide on their behalf.

Thousands of Jewish prisoners throughout the world know that without the *shluchim* of the Rebbe MH”M there would be no one to care about them during their incarceration behind prison bars. As in so many other areas, Chabad *shluchim* are clearly the source of inspiration, warmth, and encouragement to all Jews, including those who slipped up in life and are now paying their debt to society.

The Rebbe’s personal connection to these prisoners is unique. On

numerous occasions, the Rebbe engaged in special activities on their behalf, while inquiring into every detail of the condition of Jewish prisoners all over the world. The Rebbe’s relationship towards the prisoners can best be expressed in the following words: “We have to think about even a single Jew, and *halacha* states that saving the life of even one Jew defers the entire Torah.”

The Rebbe said these words before a group of visiting *rabbanim* from South America. During the discussion, the Rebbe took an interest in the

welfare of the Jewish prisoners under incarceration. One of the *rabbanim* replied that they are “terrorists,” to which the leader of the Jewish people gave his wondrous response that he does not let a single Jew go to waste...

As a general principle, the Rebbe categorically rejected imprisonment as a form of punishment, arguing that nowhere does such a punishment, which deprives a person of his freedom, appear in the Torah. The Rebbe also reasoned that the idea of a prison is to inflict punishment, and not to repair a person’s actions.

In one of his *sichos*, the Rebbe notes that in recent years, we see a change for the better in the conduct of more progressive nations regarding the whole idea of the prison system. “Its purpose is not merely pain and torture, but for a particular benefit. Above all, no harm should befall the public. But more than that, the period that the prisoner is in jail should be used to the fullest in order to bring him back to the straight path and to place the truth before him in order to train him for a new life, a life based on honesty and justice, after he leaves prison.”

A crowning symbol of the Rebbe’s relationship was the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Naso 5745, which



included the participation of a group of prisoners. In one of the *sichos*, the Rebbe related specially to the prisoners in attendance and said, "Because of their efforts for the benefit of the prisoners, they create the possibility that even during their period of imprisonment, they can conduct themselves according to their religion. And even when this entails additional expense and effort for the prison administration, no effort is spared. Similarly, prisoners are periodically furloughed. Furthermore, when they see the prisoner's good conduct and how he is trying to reform himself, he is placed on parole, and thus released before his sentence has been completed."

By the way, when the prisoners arrived for the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe asked to spread them out in the *beis midrash* and not to seat them in one section, so not, *ch"v*, to cause them dishonor.

On the 21st of Kislev 5739, a *rav* from South Africa entered *yechidus*. During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe requested that he should try and see that all Jewish prisoners have Chanuka *menoros*.

In preparation for Rosh HaShana 5735, the Rebbe sent a letter to the administration of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in *Eretz HaKodesh*. The letter was addressed to prisoners after he received numerous requests for *brachos* "from those who for now are in jail." The Rebbe writes that "certainly all those who request learning texts of our holy Torah will be provided with the necessary *s'farim*, together with the possibility to learn from them in a spirit of calm."

As Purim 5736 approached, the Rebbe requested that *mishloach manos* and *matanos l'evyonim* be sent to Jewish prisoners and detailed how it should be done. "Since there are inmates in penitentiaries who need to fulfill the *mitzvos* of *mishloach manos* and *matanos l'evyonim*, and the law in many countries including the United

States allows inmates to receive items of food, but not to leave money at the prison offices, it is thus possible for the person bringing *mishloach manos* to a prisoner to hold a *pushke* in his hand, and give the inmate a gift of a few coins to drop in the *pushke* in fulfillment of the *mitzva* of *matanos l'evyonim...*"

The Rebbe continued the *sicha* by emphasizing that the fulfillment of these *mitzvos* with prisoners has been sorely neglected.

In 5739, the Rebbe MH"M sent a general letter to "prisoners who for now are in jail." The Rebbe instructed those who are involved in prison outreach activities to distribute the letter to the prisoners. Even though one does not know them personally, the letter should be presented as a personal letter, and it would be appropriate to explain its content to the prisoners.

By taking a closer look at the letter, we see that it is written in a most uncustomary fashion. The Rebbe writes, "Especially when the authorities establish that [prisoners] can be released much earlier than supposed, and their conduct is fitting to the will of the Creator of the world and its leader... their release will hasten the process towards normal life in every detail."

Another feeling of concern from the leader of the generation for every Jewish prisoner was expressed by the Rebbe in 5739 about the need to make certain that they have enough food to eat on Erev Yom Kippur. "It's a wonder how so few people worry about those Jews who are in prison that they receive their meals on Erev Yom Kippur in a manner that will allow them to fulfill the *mitzva* of increasing in food and drink enough for two days in order that they can fast easily. Similarly, it must also be made certain regarding Motzaei Yom Kippur, since most places give food and drink in the middle of the day or at least before nightfall, that the relevant authorities

give permission to the Jewish inmates to change the format and break their fast properly on Motzaei Yom Kippur."

Many *shluchim* throughout the world dedicate much time to deal with Jewish inmates whose prison is located in their area. These activities take place in standard democratic countries and even in those with different governing systems. One of the *shluchim* who is known for his involvement with prisoners is Rabbi **Nechemia Wilhelm**, *shliach* in Bangkok, Thailand. He has succeeded in securing the release of more than one hundred prisoners since he began

"I intentionally send the Israeli tourists inside the prison so they can see for themselves that it is not a very good idea to get entangled with the local authorities..."

his *shlichus* in Thailand, and numerous stories attributed to him have reached far and wide. "The law in Thailand is extremely rigid," Rabbi Wilhelm explained. "Many Israelis who come here as tourists get tangled in legal problems, primarily those pertaining to drugs. To the best of my knowledge, there are currently nine Jewish prisoners in Thailand, five of whom are Israelis."

Rabbi Wilhelm's activities with prisoners are very diverse. His first job is to extricate those who have become tangled with the law. "If it is a matter of a minor offense, we succeed in

getting them out. We have strong connections with the local police, and as soon as an Israeli is arrested, they turn to us on their own."

Prison conditions in Thailand are by no means simple. Prison meals consist of a plate of rice and muddy water, which they call "soup." This represents their daily food allotment, though prisoners are allowed to buy food from the prison canteen at their own expense. Most of the prisoners do not have any funds, and part of Rabbi Wilhelm's activities include making certain that the Jewish prisoners have money. "Every few days, I send the Israeli tourists to visit the prisoners, and I give them money to bring to the prisoners so they will have what to eat in prison. I intentionally send the Israeli tourists inside the prison so they can see for themselves that it is not a very good idea to get entangled with the local authorities..."

As is known, Thailand also has a death penalty. Have there been rescue activities on this front as well?

We had a story with two prisoners who escaped from prison and were later apprehended. As a result, they were sentenced to the maximum punishment – the death penalty. We applied pressure from all over the world. We even involved the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and eventually, we succeeded in commuting the sentence to life imprisonment. In this instance, all of the appeals that the two made in the court system were to no avail, and therefore, this was a clear case of saving Jewish lives.

Do you have contact with the prisoners' families?

Absolutely. The families send money and clothes to the prisoners through us. We also bring them letters, etc. The families in Israel look upon us as the local authority, and have tremendous confidence in us. We have in our mailbag hundreds of thank you messages from prisoners who we succeeded in releasing or

assisted during their imprisonment and their families.

What are the regular activities that you do with prisoners?

Every Thursday, we send them *challos* for Shabbos, and as Pesach approaches, we send them *matzos*. Several times each month, I come to make a personal visit to the prisoners. At the beginning, this was a nightmare for me, but slowly I got used to it. As I said earlier, in addition to my visits, I send the Israeli tourists to see them, which naturally gives them a breath of life and bolsters their morale. Twice each year, we can meet the prisoners face-to-face, and we use the opportunity to put *t'fillin* on them. On the other occasions, the meetings only take place behind bars.

* * *

Numerous stories on Rabbi Wilhelm's activities with the prisoners have been printed. The Israeli newspapers have also mentioned frequently the involvement of the Chabad *shliach* in saving and assisting Jewish prisoners. Even the official Israeli authorities cooperate with him, since they know that he is the right address. "It's difficult to focus on a

particular story," Rabbi Wilhelm said, when I asked him for some interesting anecdotes on the subject. For him, it's now all part of regular everyday life.

What do your visits do for the prisoners?

First of all, this is a tool in Jewish outreach. Despite the fact that the activities with prisoners are not connected to their spiritual state, this is a matter of *pidyon shvuyim*. There was an interesting story a few years ago with a young man who I came to release after the local police had arrested him. While we were sitting in the waiting area prior to his release, I saw his face redden as he said to me, "Rabbi, I apologize."

I didn't understand why he was apologizing, so he explained himself. "Yesterday, you asked me to join a *minyan*, and I refused, and today you come to release me..." He was eventually expelled from the country, but until he left Thailand, he helped us complete many *minyanim* over a period of two months.

Once there was a prisoner who spent many years behind bars and wanted on numerous occasions to commit suicide. Every time I came, he

would say to me, "You came here from Heaven. You don't know what I was just thinking." It turns out that these visits simply saved their lives.

* * *

Evidence of Rabbi Wilhelm's special connection with the authorities comes from a Jewish prisoner who received a royal pardon from the king. According to the rigid laws in Thailand, the recipient of a royal pardon goes from prison directly to the airport in order to leave the country. "In this case," Rabbi Wilhelm retells, "the instructions were that the prisoner can pass via the Chabad House to partake in a *kosher l'mehadrin* lunch. This particular prisoner served fourteen years in a Thai prison, and as he was traveling with me from there, he displayed genuine excitement from the sight of the automobiles and the sunlight. That's how cut off he was from the rest of the world. Today, this same prisoner is in Eretz Yisroel, where he lectures on behalf of the War on Drugs Authority."

How do the local police relate to you in lieu of your activities and interest on behalf of the Jewish prisoners?



Let me answer that from another angle. This entire matter has enabled me to explain the Alter Rebbe's words about the G-dly soul found within every Jew, as opposed to the nations of the world, whose acts of kindness are all done from selfish motives. The police commanders always say to me with much admiration that every time they arrest a Jew, they are besieged with inquiries as to how they can get him released. However, when non-Jews from other countries are arrested, more than a month can go by without anyone asking about them. The police commander told me about a case where they had a foreign prisoner, who for over a month sat in jail without a single person offering to bail him out. The commander took pity on him and called on one of the local residents and requested that he help him get released. The person looked at him and said, "I don't know him at all," and he refused to post bail.

I am constantly reminded of the well-known question that one of the Czar's ministers asked the Alter Rebbe about the difference between a Jew and a non-Jew. The Alter Rebbe smiled and declined to answer. Quite often, I receive a clear answer on this matter. The police commanders in Thailand already understand well the difference between a Jew and a non-Jew...

Have you also had contact with prisoners outside of Thailand?

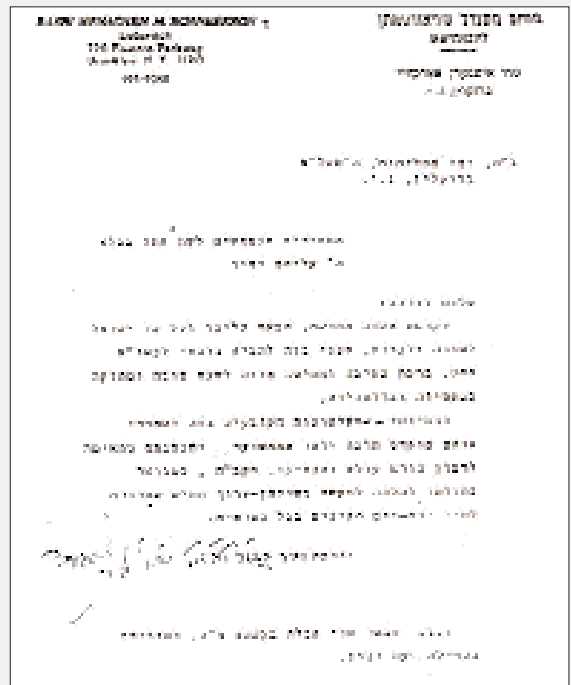
One of the more interesting stories on this subject occurred about three years ago. An Israeli couple had a domestic quarrel during their visit to Thailand. Eventually, the husband was arrested in India, and he notified his wife that he would not give her a divorce, thus leaving her an *aguna* forever. The woman called me and asked me to travel to India to try and influence her husband. As Divine providence would have it, a Jewish couple in India had requested that I perform their marriage ceremony. They said that if I wouldn't come, they would get married in a civil ceremony.

MORE ON THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE REBBE AND JEWISH INMATES

In a letter to one of those who is most active in prisoner outreach, the Rebbe wrote, "I was pleased to receive his letter. Much appreciation for the good news from his activities on behalf of our fellow Jewish brethren, *sheyichyu*, who are in prisons. With regard to *mitvza mishloach Manos* and *matanos l'evyonim*, and in the strengthening of *Yiddishkeit* in general, there is great merit in this, certainly among its oppressed. No need to elaborate..."

In a interesting letter sent by Rabbi Chadakov to Lubavitch Youth Organization in Eretz HaKodesh Chairman Rabbi Yisroel Leibov, he writes, "I am interested to know if they have also inquired as part of the T'fillin Campaign regarding those who are sitting in prisons." Rabbi Chadakov's letter continues by taking note of the fact that since there are new and different approaches in the treatment of prisoners, "efforts are required to bring them to the correct path. Therefore, for this very reason, those in charge must admit to the great importance of influencing them to put on *t'fillin*."

Also on Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5740, the Rebbe aroused the need to help prisoners and to bring them *simcha*. "And the matter is clear that there will be appropriate times to explain to each and every one of them at each event that they must be *b'simcha*."



These two stories followed the same path, so I decided to make the trip to India.

I performed the ceremony on my first night there, and on the following morning, I went to the jail to speak to that woman's husband to try and convince him to give her a divorce. He was shocked when he saw me. I came with two *bochurim*, who would serve as witnesses in the event that the husband would agree to make us his *shluchim* to make the *get*. I spoke with

him for several hours, and would not relent. In the end, he gave me his word of honor that the minute he is released, he will give her the divorce. Before leaving, I told him, "Keep in mind, just as I came to you here, we'll come to you no matter where in the world you are." This frightened him and he agreed. After he was released, he returned to Eretz Yisroel, and in fact, kept his word and divorced her.

In another case about a year ago, two police captains from Ashkelon

arrived in Thailand for a vacation. While touring in the northern Thai city of Chong Dau, they unintentionally ran over two Thai nationals, killing them. The Israelis were released only after intensive intervention plus our activities with the assistance of Attorney Mordechai Tzivin and the Israeli Consul, Mr. Amnon Klammer.

* * *

The stories all over the world on prisoners and Chabad have already become daily occurrences. Attorney Mordechai Tzivin is among those who can bear witness to these activities. He is involved frequently in prisoner rescue and often receives help from Chabad *shluchim* worldwide. His impressions have also been expressed in numerous interviews he has given to the media.

One such story involved an Israeli prisoner in Bulgaria, who was suspected of credit fraud. The prisoner suffered a stroke and was released under house detention to the local Chabad *shliach*, Rabbi Yosef

Solomon. "Without the *shliach*, he might not have survived," Attorney Tzivin noted.

A few months ago, even the major Israeli newspapers dealt with the tremendous help that Chabad provides to Jewish and Israeli prisoners all over the world. "Chabad Houses, spread out to the four corners of the earth, are an inexhaustible source of information and assistance," says Mrs. Orit Shani, director of the Israelis Overseas Department in an interview in a weekend edition of the *Ha'Aretz* daily.

Attorney Tzivin: "From my personal experience, Chabad Houses worldwide are the only places where Israelis overseas, including prisoners, receive any significant help. Among other things, they use direct influence to help secure the release of Israeli prisoners."

Even in Russia, the Chief Rabbi, HaRav Berel Lazar, has provided assistance to prisoners who got entangled with the local law, including an interesting case regarding an Israeli

rabbi who had been arrested. A similar case occurred a year ago in Barcelona, Spain, when an Israeli woman was released on bail posted by the local *shliach*, Rabbi David Leiberson. In accordance with the decision of the local courts, Rabbi Leiberson posted bail totaling \$100,000!

In Australia, for example, *shliach* Rabbi Yoram Ulman succeeded in securing the release to house arrest of a *chareidi* couple from Yerushalayim, parents of little children, after the magistrate accepted his testimony as a spiritual leader. It turns out that the couple was suspected of smuggling, however the charges were proved to be baseless accusations by a third party.

The court's decision to release the couple was rare in nature and represented a unique gesture to Rabbi Ulman. The imprisoned man told his story afterwards in an interview. He said that for several days he ate only apples due to concerns over *kashrus*. Australian prison officials were convinced that he was making a



hunger strike. "I tried to explain it to them, but to no avail. It took several days until the Chabad rabbi in Sydney, Rabbi Yoram Ulman, could arrange kosher food for me," he related. The couple was eventually released unconditionally.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gurewitz, *shliach* in Argentina, helped an Israeli paratroop officer who was about to be tried on charges that could have resulted in ten years imprisonment. Attorney Mordechai Tzivin, who travels around the world regarding these matters, speaks with great admiration about the assistance he has received from Chabad Houses on behalf of prisoners. In Paris, for example, Rabbi Mendel Azimov helped to release a young pregnant American woman. Even in Germany, he received assistance from the Chabad *shliach*.

* * *

In Florida, where the *shliach* Rabbi Sholom Dovber Lipsker serves, there are many Jews who have been privileged to be released from prison in the merit of his impressive appearances in court. In an interview given in India about a year ago to the Israeli daily *Maariv*, Attorney Tzivin said that "it doesn't seem possible that the Chabad-Lubavitch Movement with its thousands of *shluchim* worldwide is forced to be a country's subcontractor." This indeed constitutes a sad testimony to the inefficiency of Israeli government channels, compared to the activities of the *shluchim*, who work with total self-sacrifice for every Jew.

This is illustrated by a most recent story from just a few weeks ago in Costa Rica with an Israeli youth, related to a prominent personality who is well known to the Israeli public. The youth was arrested on suspicion of drug trafficking. He had considerable difficulty conducting a religious life while in prison, until the case was brought to the attention of the local Chabad *shliach*, who



Rabbi Yitzchak Gansburg at activities with prisoners

arranged kosher food for him.

The story that made the most headlines was the case six months ago of Ravit Shariki, a young Israeli woman, who was arrested in India for drug possession. Her infant daughter was born within the walls of an Indian prison, and the heart-wrenching story gripped hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens. After she was released, she said in an interview with the *Yediot Acharanot* daily, "I want to thank the people of Chabad for arranging my amnesty from prison."

Attorney Mordechai Tzivin also assisted a great deal in this case by arranging the amnesty. One particular story, which was not very flattering for prison authorities in the United States, was when Attorney Tzivin tried to give an inmate a *yarmulka* by circumventing the entire bureaucratic process. The prison warden was furious with Tzivin and punished the inmate with several days of harsh confinement. As a result, Attorney Tzivin registered a serious complaint with the Committee on Religious Affairs near the United States Congress.

One of the more longstanding organizations in the United States that deals with the cause of Jewish

prisoners is the Aleph Institute, founded by Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber Lipsker of Bal Harbour, Florida, and run today by the *shliach*, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Katz.

The Aleph Institute today serves approximately eight thousand Jewish inmates in penitentiaries throughout America. These prisoners have a variety of hardships in their daily lives, and the Institute tries to help them in every way possible.

The Jewish inmates contact the Institute via telephone from the prison, or via referrals received from family members. However, the main source of referrals comes from the prison chaplains, who already know this Chabad organization well, and refer interested Jewish inmates directly to the Institute.

The Institute remains in direct contact with hundreds of prisons in the United States and the local *shluchim* responsible for the area where the prisons are located, while serving as the go-between. According to Rabbi Katz, about three hundred visits are arranged each week between *shluchim* and inmates. The inmates warmly receive the Institute's representatives, put on *t'fillin*, and ask to buy *t'fillin* for their own personal

use. The stories are indeed touching, and the work continues unceasingly.

It is interesting to note that one of the Rebbe's *sichos* leading up to Pesach 5736 dealt with the need to make certain that they will have all the necessary products for Pesach. "And these preparations possess the strengths to affect that they will fulfill their obligations in prison merely through the preparations themselves, so that they will be released even before Pesach, just as the entire people of Israel that is in prison during the exile."

There are an estimated eight thousand Jewish inmates in penitentiaries throughout America. The Aleph Institute relates to each one of them as a "whole world," thus, the relationship pertains even to those prisoners found in the most remote locations.

For their part, we see that the inmates don't forget Chabad. Many of them maintain contact with Chabad

and come closer to *Yiddishkeit* in the merit of the Chabad activities that take place behind prison walls. The Aleph Institute also makes every effort to provide kosher meals for those inmates who are interested. The Institute brings hot meals or portions that are frozen and double-wrapped which only require microwave heating. Several hundred inmates are privileged to receive these meals, thus removing the problem of cooking kosher food in the prison.

In general, the Aleph Institute asks that their activities remain discrete. They fully realize that this is a most sensitive issue that can only benefit from silent contact. Those who are involved in these activities work out of a sense of deep commitment to this *shlichus*, as instructed by the Rebbe MH"M, to help Jewish prisoners in every way possible, anytime, anywhere.

The Aleph Institute's most recent initiative is the establishment of a

yeshiva program for inmates. Such a program has recently been established temporarily in Florida, though it demands a great deal of logistical coordination.

The Rebbe's concern for prisoners is amazing. In a letter to one of the *askanim* involved in prisoner outreach, the Rebbe notes, "According to the saying of our *chachamim*, of blessed memory, that the deed is the main thing, the purpose of this letter of mine, Mivtza Pesach, is to bring it into actual deed with greater force and greater strength. And particularly, to those who for now are in prisons, they depend on assistance from those on the outside to a larger extent and more importantly, in order to enable them to fulfill the *mitzvos* of Pesach, including the days of *Chol HaMoed*, to the fullest and out of *simcha*."

Dedicated to Baruch Marzel, who currently sits under house arrest in Yerushalayim, away from his wife and nine children in Chevron, for his self-sacrifice on behalf of shleimus ha'Aretz.

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JUST THE REBBE MELECH HA'MOSHIACH

BY RABBI SHOLOM DOV BER VOLPE

The Zionist leaders mocked the six million for going like sheep to the slaughter, yet the country with the “best army in the world” and with the most advanced weapons, is made powerless in the face of terrorism.

1

The Rebbe *shlita* MH”M warned the Jewish people that political negotiations with Arabs would lead to Jewish blood being shed not only in the Holy Land, but outside of it. The Rebbe explained that when the Arabs see that there is a willingness to give away parts of Eretz Yisroel, they intensify the terror in order to ensure that our capitulation to them be complete, and so that they can get everything in exchange for nothing.

From this Torah-true perspective, when we see the prime minister constantly declaring that he is in favor of a Palestinian state, we understand that he is putting a sword in our murderers’ hands, and he is personally responsible for all the attacks both in and outside Eretz Yisroel.

Security men at Ben Gurion airport are working to ensure that no

passengers board a plane with a pocket knife or nail clipper, yet the prime minister himself is giving sharpened swords to thousands of suicide bombers, and opens the gates of the country for them.

The son of the poet Uri Tzvi Greenberg, z”l, defended Sharon this week, saying, “He doesn’t mean it seriously. He won’t actually establish a Palestinian state. In the meantime he just talked about it, but did no evil.”

They don’t understand that talking about it is destructive, because the terrorists are encouraged to keep up their murder and mayhem when the prime minister so much as talks about it. They don’t need us to take action; they’ll take care of that themselves.

In the meantime, the Israeli ambassador to the U.N. followed Sharon’s lead and dropped a bombshell when he announced that

Israel was ready for “two countries for two nations.” All the ministers and Knesset members yelled in righteous indignation, “Who allowed him to say that? Who does he represent?” as though they don’t know that he has a good teacher who sent him a message from Yerushalayim.

The very idea that “it’s only talk,” is a mockery. Experience has shown that all such talk inevitably leads to action.

2

The Rebbe also said a number of times that Israel’s non-reaction to attacks causes additional murder. The only way to wipe out terror is by reacting strongly, not with restraint which demonstrates weakness and vacillation, and which causes us to lose our deterrence capability.

They don’t retaliate against the terrorists, like by eliminating those places from which the terrorists operate and replacing them with Jewish settlements, or by bombing the Muktaa. On Thursday, 23 Kislev, when Jewish blood soaked the ground in Beit Shaan and in Kenya, what interested our Leftist, Peace-loving Prime Minister was that people go vote.

"We won't let them ruin our democracy," shouted Sharon into the microphones. What he meant was, "They can continue murdering men, women, and children in the streets of our cities, but they won't succeed in messing around with our insane Israeli democracy, since the *oilem goilem* will continue voting for me despite the destruction I'm responsible for."

The Zionist leaders ridiculed the Six Million for going "like sheep to the slaughter," yet here's a strong nation with (what they call) "the best army in the world," and with the most advanced weapons, made to stand powerless in the face of ongoing daily terror. Instead of striking back at the enemy, traitorous declarations are

***"The oilem goilem
will continue voting
for me despite the
destruction I'm
responsible for."***

made and the other cheek is turned towards them.

3

After the bus attack in Kiryat Menachem in Yerushalayim, Mayor Olmert was on the radio and he called Arafat, "*ish ha'damim*" (man of blood, violence). But when he was asked whether he thought this *ish ha'damim* should be expelled from the country, he said, "That's a tactical matter."

Arafat hears this, and how! He knows that his life is assured until 120, and the ongoing bloodshed makes no difference. He can continue to orchestrate terror within Eretz Yisroel and with direct contact with the terrorist groups.

Then the interviewer asked Olmert how it was possible that "life goes back to normal," after horrifying attacks like this one. Have we become used to "living (or dying) like this?" The mayor coldly said, "What do you want – that we should walk around depressed all day?"

Your honor, Mr. Olmert, tell us the truth. If *your* son was attacked, *ch"v*, would you be depressed all day or not? The reason you're not depressed is because the cries of the orphans and the wounded don't reach your ears. Even the members of your party, the prime minister and his ministers, are not depressed because the bottom line is: it didn't happen to them yet. On the other hand, their salaries continue to get paid, their drivers wait for them downstairs, and their place for the next four years is guaranteed for them in the primaries. The fact that dozens of people were killed in one week doesn't move them. Only a mega-attack, *ch"v*, would make them begin to worry, and even then, it wouldn't be because of the blood that would be spilled, but because of their voters' reaction.

Apparently the murder of a mother and her children, a grandmother and her grandchild, schoolchildren on their way to and from school, two teenaged brothers in Kenya, and thousands of devastated families are still not considered a "mega-attack" and doesn't make them depressed, not only the fat-cat politicians, but even the man on the street. This is because the P.L.O. collaborators along with our Arafatian media, managed to instill in us the idea that the weekly bloodshed is unavoidable and it must be accepted stoically.

After all, even bereaved mothers, fathers, wives, and husbands speak coldly. How frightening it is to hear them swallow their deep pain and speak in hollow clichés, in the foolish Israeli style of "life goes on," and "we can't let them break us."

How can we not be broken?! How can we go on living in this insane way? How long will we have hearts of stone?

If we were a normal nation, there'd be no end to our depression and our broken heartedness. And then, with our bitterness and pain, we would all go out, the groom from his chamber, the bride from her *chuppa*, and would unleash an attack, from the midst of

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our tears and storm of emotions, on our enemies, and would correct what Rabin, Peres, and the perverted Oslo Criminals did to us.

If we were a normal nation, our lives wouldn't return to normal. We would go out to the streets and stop the insane process of the "Zionist Authority," until it went out to protect its people, conquered all of Eretz Yisroel forever, destroyed our enemies of the seed of Amalek, and gave us back peace and security in our land.

In the *chareidi* paper *Kehillot*, which is published by those who belong to Degel HaTorah and which is distributed in the Negev, they wrote in the *VaYishlach* edition that the ones responsible for the massacre in Chevron are the Jews who live there, and those who preach that people should come and pray there!

This is what they wrote, "On Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Chayei Sara,

Even bereaved mothers, fathers, wives, and husbands speak coldly. How frightening it is to hear them swallow their deep pain and speak in hollow clichés, in the foolish Israeli style of "life goes on," and "we can't let them break us."

the Jews of Chevron brought thousands of Jews to Chevron and its environs for Shabbos, which provoked the murderers of Chevron so that two weeks later, they murdered more than ten Jews outside the M'aras HaMachpeila. Since Chevron is a dangerous place, it is forbidden *al pi Torah* to go there to *daven*, and to convince another Jew to do so is to convince him to do something forbidden." They went on to call upon the Jews of Chevron to learn from

their brothers, who after the massacre there in 1929, left the city and did not remain in a dangerous place, and "at the time, no one tried to say that terror won't defeat us."

I read this with incredulity. This reminded me of the unfortunate letter their leader wrote on 15 Av 5739/1979, which called for giving away land to the Arabs, that explained, "for they demand what we conquered from them, and if we return it to them, they agree to make peace; certainly there is salvation in this."

Even now, after they see the bloodshed which was caused by our concessions, they continue to stick with these sick ideas of their leader, which sound amazingly like the "*daas Torah*" of Yossi Sarid, Shulamit Aloni, Achmad Tivi, and Azmi Bishara.

If the massacre in Chevron was due to provoking the Arabs, and the conclusion is that we must leave Chevron and do as our murderers demand, what should our reaction be regarding terrorist activities in Yerushalayim, Tel Aviv, Chadera, Afula, Netanya, Kfar Saba, and Beit Shaan?

If we ought to return land because "they demand what we captured from them," then why shouldn't we return the *Kosel* and the Old City of Yerushalayim, French Hill, Ramat Shlomo, Tel Tzion, as well as Beitar, Elad and Kiryat Sefer and everything we won in the War of Independence in 1948?

The Klausenberger Rebbe, *zt"l*, wrote (in *G'dolei Torah al Hachzoras Shtachim* p. 17): "If, *chalila*, you appoint a gentile judge or one who is not your brother in Torah and *mitzvos*, he will rule that you are forbidden to dwell in Eretz Yisroel, which belongs to the poor Arabs who were expelled from here, and you must bring back all these Arabs and not touch anything that belonged to them." And further

on he writes: "The very existence of a live Jew is the greatest provocation to the *goyim*, not the land we live on."

Menachem Begin wanted to listen to the opinion of the *g'dolei ha'Torah* regarding the Camp David agreement. Upon the Rebbe's instructions, Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin sent Begin a pamphlet with the decision of all the *g'dolei ha'dor* that it is absolutely forbidden to give away land from Eretz Yisroel, and any area needed for our security, to the Arabs.

But when Begin saw the pathetic letter mentioned earlier, of the leader of the *Kehillot*, in which he wrote at length about the wonderful *mitzva* and salvation the Jews would have by

He relied on this gilui panim b'Torah she'lo k'halacha, and the results fill cemeteries and hospitals till this very day.

giving away land, he relied on this *gilui panim b'Torah she'lo k'halacha*, and the results fill cemeteries and hospitals till this very day.

5

This revered leader wrote, "let us not forget that if we resist everyone, this will cause great tension among the *goyim* ... and there will be a great increase of hatred for Jews by doing so ... and our way, the way of the Torah is ... not to stand out among the nations."

The *gaon*, Rabbi Mordechai Savitzky, *z"l*, responded (ibid p. 78) by saying, "There are those who say that we are forbidden to anger the whole

world against us. My question is: What world? The world that saw 6 million Jews go up in smoke and kept quiet? The world won't react at all if we return land and then the Arabs attack us, as they did on Yom Kippur 1973!"

After two years of what we've been through, they can blame the precious Jews of Chevron for bloodshed, this is only because they have drawn sustenance from the "broken wells and foul water" of the one who fought the Rebbe MH"M and *chassidus* in general, and who, in his stubbornness in this war, trampled on *shleimus ha'am*, *shleimus ha'Aretz* and *shleimus ha'Torah*. This teaches us that even when you see someone waving the *Degel HaTorah*, you must remember that Chazal say, "if he doesn't merit, it [the Torah] becomes poison for him."

(Now we can understand how the head of their *kashrus* office became a Leftist even in Torah and *mitzvos*, to the point that he has become the leader of the, *chozrim b'sh'eila*, and distributes tens of thousands of heretical booklets each month.)

I had the privilege of *farbrenging* with the Jews of Kfar Tapuach in the Shomron, on Yud-Tes Kislev. I saw the *mesirus nefesh*, and heard how at five

in the morning the new *mikva* is crowded with boys who get up for a *shiur* in *Toras Chaim* of the Mitteler Rebbe.

You see those who are connected to the *nasi ha'dor* and to *chassidus*, who learn Torah in purity, and who are full of pure faith and *mesirus nefesh*, and contrast them with those who follow the path of the "*gadol*" who was *megaleh panim b'Torah sh'lo k'halacha* (not just regarding *shleimus ha'Aretz*, but in every single issue, as is known to those who have looked at his *s'farim*), and it's very hard, but we have no choice but to follow the Rebbe's order not to say "*l'havdil*" when speaking of two Jews.

6

Another person who did not learn a lesson is Interior Minister Eli Yishai. On a number of occasions, he himself was a member of delegations that met with Arabs or with President Bush that agreed to outrageous concessions. Even after the terror that reigns in our streets, he continues to say (on the radio), "now there's nobody to talk to, but when the leadership within the P.L.O. changes, we'll be able to sit down for political negotiations." After these pretty words, is it any surprise that on the bus that exploded in Kiryat Menachem there still hung the sign,

"*Shas machzirim atara l'yoshna*"?

Thank G-d the terrible test that entrapped many Jews in the past two elections was abolished and there's no need to vote for a prime minister. But even when voting for a party, there's not a single *chareidi* candidate who, experience has shown, does not fall into the category of "accomplice to murder."

You've tried Bibi and gotten Tivi. You've tried Sharon and gotten *ason* (tragedy). All the so-called *chareidi* parties were accomplices to terrible security decisions. The religious representatives did not say boo to the horrendous forced, *chillul Shabbos* by a thousand soldiers and police, which caused an unparalleled *chillul Hashem*. In my humble opinion, there's nobody who deserves to be called, "the most religious party."

Therefore, the time has come to say to Hashem: We are disgusted by this crumbling state. *Chassidei Chabad*, of all types, want only the Rebbe MH"M. *Ribbono shel olam*, reveal the glory of your majesty to us, and then you'll see how we'll run joyfully to vote for the most religious party, that of *Malchus Dovid v'Shlomo*.

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed.

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WE ASK, WHAT PALESTINIAN STATE DOES HE MEAN?

BY SHAI GEFEN



Where were you when five thousand were wounded these past two years? Why are you waking up now – because it hit home?

TAKING AWAY THEIR FREE WILL

Israel announced, for the first time at the U.N., that it accepts President Bush's vision of the establishment of two states which will live side by side in peace and tranquility. This statement was made by Israel's ambassador to the U.N., Yehuda Lancry, and it was written up in the protocols of the U.N.

At the Knesset meeting that followed that announcement, Sharon and Netanyahu said Lancry spoke without their knowledge. Yeah right.

Until now, not even former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres announced in the U.N. that he was in favor of a Palestinian state. He preferred to speak only in general terms, saying he supported the Bush plan to resolve the dispute. But now the cat's out of the bag and Israel formally announced that it is in favor of a Palestinian state.

Yes, Ariel Sharon seriously plans on establishing a Palestinian state in most of Yesha, including the Old City of Yerushalayim. In less than two months,

when the noise from the elections dies down, we'll hear Sharon sing a different tune. We'll all watch as Sharon and Mitzna join forces in a unity government whose goal will be to accept whatever the Americans dictate to them in the destructive "road map" plan, which includes dismantling *yishuvim*. Within two years, there'll be a Palestinian state over most of the area, *r"l*.

Whoever naively thought that Sharon was all talk, is apparently wrong. A Palestinian state is, *r"l*, a given, as far as our leaders (including Netanyahu and Evette Lieberman) are concerned. Naturally, each one twists the truth and speaks in riddles for the purpose of appeasing the electorate, but they are all intent on the same plan.

Our question is: what's the difference between Netanyahu's "Autonomy Plus" and Sharon's "Palestinian state minus," when we all know where the threatened withdrawals lead us?

Under the circumstances, when *b'derech ha'teva* there's no salvation, we

must quote the Rebbe's shocking statement which he made to Sharon:

"It's not a change in the Jewish public opinion that will make a difference, but the mistakes made by the Arabs and their supporters. As it was in the past, when such mistakes forced, last year [during the Six Day War], the pursuers of peace to ultimately agree to defend themselves, and consequentially led to a pre-emptive war. If only in the future it goes much easier and won't, *ch"v*, affect a *nefesh* or *guf*, and not even any money of our Jewish brethren, wherever they may be." (12 Elul 5728)

The Rebbe MH"M did not anticipate a change among the leaders, and he saw prophetically that only mistakes made by the Arabs would effect a change. Unfortunately, even Arab mistakes are not helping today.

When the Rebbe was asked by Rabbi Yolles, *zt"l*, in *yechidus* about the situation, the Rebbe said, "free will should be taken away from the leaders, and then they'll behave properly. In the meantime, they are not behaving properly."

DON'T LET TERROR INFLUENCE YOU

Cynicism is an important component in Israeli politics, especially

when it is connected to the position of a politician. They are ready to do anything to win, including making use of terrorist acts.

On Thursday, in the midst of the Likud elections, a massacre took place at Likud headquarters in Beit Shaan. Sharon became nervous lest his opponent win because people would simply be afraid to go out and vote. This was not the first terrorist incident of its kind in the past two years. There were many worse attacks than what we saw at Beit Shaan, but in the course of hundreds of attacks these past two years, the prime minister, upon the advice of his advisors, always preferred to lie low. At most he would say, "Restraint is strength." Then he would wait for the shock to wear off so that, *chalila*, the responsibility for what happened wouldn't be placed on his doorstep.

Apparently, Sharon was right. Like Teflon, he managed to avoid becoming the focal point of the pent-up rage of the citizenry. But on Thursday, everything changed. When he saw that his rival might win because of this terrorist attack, he didn't hesitate. He went to Kirya in Tel Aviv, and there, together with the defense minister and the commander of the Air Force, he began angrily banging on the table and ordered his stunned underlings to go and vote. "Don't allow terror to influence you," he shouted. "Go and vote," he continued yelling hoarsely, and all the media that had come to the dramatic press conference Sharon convened, were sure that he was going to announce a new security policy in light of the massacre in which three children of his good friend, Dovid Levy, were injured.

It didn't happen. It was only personal and pressing considerations that got Sharon to lose his equanimity on election day. That is what interested the prime minister at the time that blood of his people became the cheapest commodity in Israel. This is one of the greatest achievements of the

Unity government: "Jewish blood will be *hefker*." They gave citizens the sense that attacks are decrees from Heaven, that nothing can be done about them, and we must live with it. This is what Sharon bequeathed to the citizens: A Palestinian state is a done deal, and the dozens of dead this week are unavoidable.

Sharon decided that this approach would make it easier for him to continue to survive politically. He asked citizens "to bite your lips and continue as always." He asked us to do this after

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the murder of tens of young people, explaining that "restraint is comprised of strength." He, the compassionate prime minister, asked that we accept the judgment lovingly.

But when it looked like the attack would affect his personal interests, he got up and banged on the table saying, "Go vote! Don't let terror influence you."

For two years, people have been afraid to go out in the street. Despair has eaten away at us. Things have

reached rock-bottom, but he's not interested. He was only interested when he feared he wouldn't be elected as leader of his party. We haven't had such a low character, I don't think, since the beginning of our history.

Our hearts have become numbed to the plight of the terror victims, because of Sharon's carefully orchestrated political machinations. Contrary to what Sharon said, he and only he is responsible for this horrendous situation. The policies of concessions and capitulations as the appetite for a Palestinian state grows are what has brought us this wave of terrorist attacks.

What would happen if, *chalila*, one of Sharon's family members was hurt in a terrorist attack as Levy's children were? Would his reaction be the same? Would Omri and Arik still continue to sell us the idea of a Palestinian state, or would they wage a war of destruction against despicable murderers?

After one of the attacks in Yerushalayim, Sharon arrived at the scene of destruction and there, in front of the burned out bus he asked, "What Palestinian state do they mean?" We ask, what Palestinian state does *he* mean?

In that same *yechidus* with Rabbi Yolles, the Rebbe asked him what happened with those Jews who did not fulfill "and you shall choose life" – where does the measure of fear of Heaven that was bequeathed to that person go?

"The answer is: those who love the cruel, hate those who are upright. When fear of Hashem is lacking, the fear is used to fear the *goyim*, and so, they are frightened of the *goy* ... Frightful things are happening there, especially now in Lebanon, things the world has yet to see. They brought soldiers, set them up in their places, and forbade them to go forward and shoot until they are shot at first. And they don't let them retreat!

Arafat himself said that by entering Lebanon, Israel displayed its weakness in that they're there for half a year

already, non-stop, in their place, while they had the ability to conquer it immediately. They placed soldiers in a position where they can be shot at, *r"l*, and they are in fact shooting at them, and they ordered them not to start – so as not to anger Washington!

... when they make a mistake and “a year passed,” they repeat the same mistake a third time! The same mistake and the same *tzaros*, it's an incredible thing!

... I said to begin with, this is worst of all. An enemy that is given more strength, will not seek peace because of it. Therefore, he merely guarantees his ability to win. We're seeing this in action!

If you want proof of the cynicism of the politicians, take a look at three news items that appeared last Thursday at that fateful time, side by side: “Four dead in shooting attack in Beit Shaan”; “Among the dead in Kenya, two Israeli children”; “Matteh Sharon: Netanyahu's men are hiding ballots from the ballot-box.” This is what bothered Sharon and his people during those trying times for our nation!

FROM KENYA TO ARIEL

The terrible tragedy that took place last Thursday in distant Kenya, when missiles were shot at a plane full of Jews, and then Israeli tourists were murdered, ought to raise red flags. Two Israeli children and an adult were killed in Kenya.

Sharon talks about establishing a Palestinian state. That is his vision. Why doesn't he pay attention to missiles aimed at planes? Can't the same thing happen in Israel, *ch"v*? Members of the

security forces say that aiming missiles at civilian planes in Eretz Yisroel, is only a matter of time. Ben Gurion Airport in Lud is within range of a handheld LAW missile fired from the future Palestinian state of Sharon's vision. Not too many know that pilots have already been told not to fly low over certain areas in Israel, for fear that someone will try to bring down the plane. So what Palestinian state are they talking about?

There's no question that the worldwide terror is directly connected to our concessions to our enemies, and to our capitulation to the nations of the world. The Rebbe MH"M, prophet of the generation, clearly saw the worldwide terror that would take place because of concessions to Arabs. It was thirteen years ago when the Rebbe prevented the establishment of Peres' government at the last minute. In a conversation with Elimelech Neiman, representative of Ger, the Rebbe said:

“Since the party met with representatives of the Arabs, and held negotiations with them, and news of this meeting was publicized amongst the Arabs, which results in – naturally and logically – Arabs all over continuing their action. They harmed some of our Jewish brethren *shlita* and even came to murder, *r"l*. Not only in the Holy Land but also in other countries, and who knows whether as I speak, for “don't open your mouth, etc. [to the Satan], at this very moment, something, *r"l*, did not happen to a Jew, for their arm is still outstretched ...”

You'll remember that this was said 13 years ago!

OUR LEADERS' BLOOD IS REDDER

At the funeral of the five who were killed at Beit Shaan, Knesset member Dovid Levy spoke with great pain about how a government that cannot protect its citizens, cannot be called a government.

These are certainly harsh words, especially when the Levy family paid the price when three of their children were hurt in the attack. May Hashem send them a *refua shleima*. But why was this said only when family members of distinguished people are hurt? How come, when Machlouf was killed on the Rechov Yaffo in Yerushalayim, or Chaimowitz was killed in Afula, our leaders were quiet? Why, Mr. Levy, can't the government be called a government only when *your* family members are injured? Where were you when 700 Jews were killed and body parts were gathered up in bags? Where were you when another 5000 were wounded these last two years? Why didn't you cry out then?

Yes, we know it's not nice to talk like this to someone in his hour of sorrow, but we are in *our* sorrow and pain day in and day out. Each day we accompany our dead to the cemetery to the cries of young widows, brokenhearted widowers, parents burying their children and young orphans burying their parents. Why do you wake up only when *you* are hurt?

We do not doubt that if another few ministers personally experienced the terror, *ch"v*, the reactions would be far different. A “Palestinian state” wouldn't be in their vocabulary, and restraint and withdrawal would no longer be options.



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BRIS AVROHOM: A SYMBOL FOR EVERY AMERICAN CITIZEN

*The curtain was raised before 400 guests at the 23rd annual dinner of Bris Avrohom. * The guest of honor, Mr. William "Pat" Schuber, executive, Union County, New Jersey, home to Bris Avrohom activities, surprised the audience with a ringing declaration:*

The Sheraton Hotel, not far from Newark International Airport, was adorned with a festive holiday appearance on a Sunday evening last month as hundreds of guests began to arrive for the 23rd annual dinner in salute of the Bris Avrohom organization, based in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

This was indeed "an evening that couldn't be missed" – a refreshing and pleasurable event enjoyed by all the participants. Mr. Efraim Senito, President of the Board of Directors, explained the source for this unique feeling experienced by all. "Yesterday, Shabbos Kodesh, we read in the Torah about the difference between the hospitality of Avrohom and the hospitality of Lot. In Avrohom's home, the angels appeared as men, whereas at Lot's home, they appeared as angels."

"From this, we can learn the greatness of Avrohom Avinu, who demonstrated immense kindness toward all people – and not just toward angels. It is usually far more difficult to be attentive and caring to people than it is to angels, but not so Avrohom Avinu, who embodied the attribute of kindness."

"The disciples of Avrohom Avinu, those who run the Bris Avrohom organization, are marching along that same path. They are kind to people, are concerned about them and their success, ensure their Jewish identity,

and bring them closer to Judaism. Therefore, we have come here tonight – to salute with great pleasure this wonderful humanitarian project."

THE REBBE: AN IMPORTANT INSTITUTION

The program was opened with the reading of the Rebbe's letter to the annual dinner in 5749, which was a leap year, similar to this year. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Zaltsman, Director, Chabad Russian Jewish Center in Toronto, Canada, was honored with reading the letter. In the letter, the Rebbe establishes Bris Avrohom as "a *vichtiger mosad*" (an important institution), and no one who was at the dinner was in need of an explanation as to why this institution is so important and vital to the large Jewish community (*bli ayin ha'ra*) that left and continues to leave the former Soviet Union. Current informational data on the organization's activities reveals that more than 25,000(!) Jews use its services on a personal basis, besides the hundreds of thousands who have been exposed to educational Torah programs through the print and electronic media.

The assembled guests then heard the Mayor of Elizabeth, New Jersey, Mr. Chris Bollage, who took pride that Bris Avrohom bases its operations in his city. He told about his first meeting with Rabbi Mordechai Kanelsky. He revealed

that at first, he didn't understand what he had in common with the young bearded man standing before him. However, "Rabbi Kanelsky made me understand quickly and simply that we both are striving towards the same objective – to help the new population to adapt to and integrate into the city. We then became good friends, and \$30,000 later – our paths met..."

A RESPONSE OF LIGHT – AGAINST TERROR

The next invited speaker was the evening's guest of honor, Mr. William Schuber, Executive, Union County, New Jersey, home to Bris Avrohom activities, and a total of 900,000 residents to whom Mr. Schuber bears the responsibility of their social and economic welfare. His friendship with Bris Avrohom began in recent years and continues to thrive and grow.

The guest of honor opened his speech with a question: "When Rabbi Kanelsky comes and requests something, can anyone possibly tell him 'no'? The answer is 'No!' And I also think so. I cannot refuse a fine man, a fine organization, with such fine activities. Therefore, when I was approached to be the guest of honor here, I could only say 'yes,' and with great pleasure."

"Let me tell you something. Since the September 11 terrorist attacks,

many people ask me, 'What can I do to make the situation better?' I answer them that besides supporting the security organizations, we must improve social relations. To be more tolerant, kinder and gentler to others,

and thus, we will improve the situation on a national level."

"The model for social policy and conduct is 'Bris Avrohom'. We can learn from the nature of their activities what patience and love is, what caring is, and

how this dedication leads to practical action. To Rabbi Kanelsky and the other rabbis, I wish you success in your work and may you continue to be an example to all our county's residents."

DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Rabbi **Mordechai Kanelsky**, accompanied by his wife, Shterna Sara – described by the master of ceremonies as "the organization's heart and soul" – then approached the podium. "142 years ago yesterday," he said, "the Rebbe Rashab, Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber of Lubavitch, was born. When he was four years old, he wept before his grandfather and asked why G-d does not reveal Himself before him as He did before *Avrohom Avinu*. His grandfather responded, 'When a Jew at the age of ninety-nine decides to circumcise himself, he has proven worthy that G-d should reveal Himself to him.'

"Bris Avrohom has already brought 5,300 Jews into the covenant of Avrohom, most of who were closer to the age of ninety-nine than the age of eight days. These Jews have merited to feel the *Sh'china* within them, to see Eliyahu HaNavi with the eyes of their spirit, to begin a new Jewish life on the correct path, the path of the King."

Rabbi Kanelsky then took note of additional achievements: "Ten new Jewish couples who were married according to the law of Moshe and Yisroel, an extensive increase in the Torah classes program, and double the number of students in the new *cheider*, *Yaldei Menachem*. We have only one purpose in mind: to hasten the Redemption and give *nachas* to the master of this institution and its commander-in-chief: the Rebbe."

He thanked all the guests, the supporters, Rabbis Boruch Levkivker and Dovid Wilensky, the members of the County Administration for authorizing the construction of a playground measuring 6500 square meters in diameter for the Sunday school children of Bris Avrohom in



"ALWAYS SAY YES"

Rabbi Mordechai Kanelsky, Mr. William "Pat" Schuber, Mr. Milton Gralla, Rabbi Chaim Dov Ber Zaltsman, Bris Avrohom Director, Fairlawn



(From R to L) Efraim Senito, President of the Board of Directors, R. Danny Kahane, Guest of Honor William "Pat" Schuber receives an artistic rendition of the Holy City of Yerushalayim as a gift of appreciation from the dinner's Honorary Chairman Mr. Milton Gralla, Rabbi Mordechai Kanelsky.

Fairlawn, the members of the Board of Directors, "Freedom of Religion Celebrations" (annual wedding ceremonies) founder Mr. Milton Gralla, *mohel* Rabbi Eliyahu Shain (who honored the event with his presence), R. Danny Kahane, his wife and mother, and all those who took part in activities and programs. He offered special thanks to the teaching staff of the kindergartens, the schools, the clubs, and their untiring efforts, to the dedicated and responsible office staff for their superb organization and efficiency – Mrs. Tova Bar-Chaim, Mrs. Oshra Golan, and Mrs. Bella Wolfman, Mr. David Sharpe and the catering staff for the elegant meal, and last but not least, his wife, Shterna Sara, who merited to hear from the Rebbe that she is a full partner in bearing the yoke of administration and work, which she proves twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, with her great toil and effort to bring the institution's successful activities to fruition.

AS SWEET AS HONEY AND THE HONEYCOMB

The Sunday school children of Bris Avrohom in Fairlawn, under the administration of the *shliach*, Rabbi Chaim Dov Ber Zaltsman, now came up to the dais and burst into a joyous Chassidic musical performance. In song and story, they described the happiness of learning Torah and understanding the meaning of Jewish existence. With pure illustrative authenticity that only children know how to bring, they expressed the *chassidic* message of "As long as the candle burns, it is still possible to repair." The grace and sweetness that accompanied the performance brought tears of emotion to many in the hall. The musical concluded with a short yet meaningful educational statement from each of the children as prepared by the school's principal, Mrs. Nechama Volovik, which received much applause.

The evening closed with a special video presentation prepared especially



Members of Bris Avrohom's Board of Directors
Center – Rabbi Mordechai Kanelsky and R. Danny Kahane

for the dinner. The film was highlighted by a look at the seventeen annual wedding ceremonies that have been held so far. The pictures were indeed worth more than thousands of words. The happy faces of the couples and their families and the spiritual revival that appeared on the screen took the audience by storm. The film was followed by an entertaining interlude of song from HaTamim **Avrohom Kanelsky**.

Sendy Shmueli followed suit with a

rendition of "*Hineh Ma Tov U'ma Na'im Sheves Achim Gam Yachad*," and this was exactly the feeling. Sendy performed an hour's worth of *chassidic* melodies and joyous songs which totally broke through the official atmosphere and led the audience into festive dancing.

The program concluded in a spirit of momentum toward greater activities to hasten the salvation of His people with the True and Complete Redemption.

There he sat wiping tears of emotion. The sight of the children telling about the Jewish values that they learned in Sunday school captured his heart. At the conclusion of the dinner, he approached Rabbi and Mrs. Kanelsky and said, "My children study in an Orthodox *yeshiva* with a very high annual tuition – \$12,000 per child. Nevertheless, I have my doubts if their teachers possess the wisdom to bestow the values of education so my children can present them as clearly and beautifully as your students from Fairlawn proved here tonight."

* * *

"What touched your heart the most from this beautiful evening we experienced together?" I asked my friend and fellow Lubavitcher who sat at a nearby table. "To tell you the truth," he answered, "what got to me the most is the fact that eight years after Gimmel Tammuz, in the presence of close to 400 people who are not Lubavitcher Chassidim, a *shliach* of the Rebbe stands up and states quite clearly and simply that the *baal ha'bayis* of this great and vast organization which they have come to appreciate is the Rebbe, and that the whole purpose is to give him *nachas*. This is an exact realization of the Rebbe's words that first and foremost, a *shliach* must know that "I am Avrohom's servant."