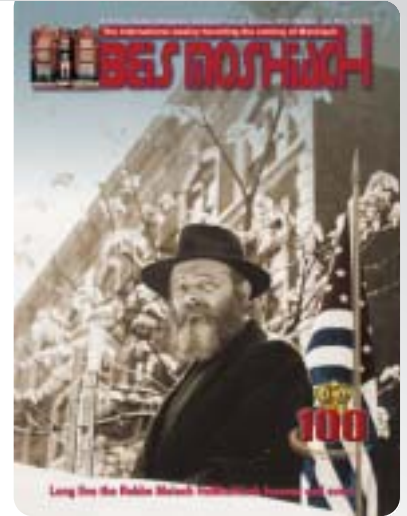


CONTENTS



4 | TORAH LAW INCREASES PEACE AND BRINGS THE GEULA

D'var Malchus / Sichos in English

8 | A GIFT THE REBBE ACTUALLY WANTS TO RECEIVE

Editor's Corner / B. Merkur

10 | NOT TO BE ASHAMED

Farbrenge with Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg

14 | TORAH IS (NOT) IN HEAVEN

Shlichus / M. Ziegelboim

21 | THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHINA'S MILITARY TECHNOLOGY TO PEACEFUL USES

Science & Geula / Rabbi S. Silman

24 | A PLACE IN THE WORLD TO COME: NOT PLACE ENOUGH

Farbrenge with Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

28 | PARALLEL LINES

Profile / S.Z. Berger

34 | "RELIGIOUS PARTIES" VERSUS PARTIES THAT ADHERE TO HALACHA

Shleimus HaAretz

37 | EVENTS FOR CHAF-BEIS SHVAT HELD AROUND THE WORLD

News

The international weekly heralding the coming of Moshiach
BEIS MOSHIACH

U.S.A

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409
Tel: (718) 778-8000
Fax: (718) 778-0800
admin@beismoshiach.org
www.beismoshiach.org

ERETZ HA'KODESH

ת.ד. 102 כפר תיבד 72915
טלפון: 9607-290 (03)
פקס: 9607-289 (03)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

Beis Moshich (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$130.00 in Crown Heights, \$140.00 in the USA & Canada, all others for \$150.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshich, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshich 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409.

Beis Moshich is not responsible for the content of the advertisements.

TORAH LAW INCREASES PEACE AND BRINGS THE GEULA

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS MISHPATIM; 27TH DAY OF SHVAT, 5752

1 In Parshas Mishpatim, there is an allusion to the conclusion of the exile and the beginning of the Redemption. To explain, Parshas Mishpatim is primarily concerned with laws governing the social and business relations between different individuals. In the Mishna, these laws are included in the order Nezikin.

Our Sages explain “the entire order of Nezikin is a single tractate.” In particular, this applies to the three tractates, Bava Kama, Bava Metzia, and Bava Basra which form a single continuum.[293] Therein lies a connection to the concepts of exile and redemption. For in general, the concept of Nezikin, “damages,” refers to exile and in particular, the three tractates mentioned above refer to the three periods of exile endured by the Jews, the Egyptian exile, the exile after the destruction of the First *Beis HaMikdash*, and the present exile which began after the destruction of

the Second *Beis HaMikdash*.

When comparing these three tractates, a marked difference becomes apparent. Bava Kama and Bava Metzia begin with negative factors, the four sources of damages and a dispute over a lost article. Bava Basra, by contrast, begins with a description of partners who voluntarily desire to minimize the damage which one might cause the other.[294]

Similarly, the conclusion of the tractate focuses on an increase in wisdom which alludes to the ultimate increase in wisdom which will accompany the Era of the Redemption. And this increase in wisdom will in turn nullify all the undesirable influences in the world.[295]

Spreading peace and unity serves as a catalyst for the Redemption. This is also reflected in Parshas Mishpatim, for the purpose of the laws placed in the category of

mishpatim is to increase peace. In a similar context, our Sages relate that Zion will be rebuilt through judgment as it is written, “Zion will be redeemed through judgment and those who return to her through *tz’daka*.” Significantly, we find an emphasis on deeds of kindness in Parshas Mishpatim which mentions the *mitzva* of offering free-loans.[296]

And the tractate Bava Basra associates this with the Redemption, stating “Great is charity for it brings close the Redemption.”

There is an allusion to these concepts in the present days of the month, beginning with the previous Thursday, the twenty-fifth of the month, which is associated with the Priestly Blessing which begins “So (*ko*, numerically equivalent to 25) shall you bless the children of Israel.” As our Sages mention, this blessing must be recited with feelings of love for every member of the Jewish people.[297] This blessing contains all the blessings required by the

293. Note the comments on this concept in the Rambam’s Introduction to the Mishna and in Zohar, Parshas Mishpatim.

294. More particularly, the tractate opens with the discussion of partners building a wall

with large stones which can be interpreted as a reference to the building of the *Beis HaMikdash*. Moreover, shortly thereafter, in one of the first passages of the tractate direct mention is made of the construction

of the *Beis HaMikdash*.

295. Similarly, Bava Basra contains several passages that describe the Era of the Redemption and the division of Eretz Yisroel at that time.

Jewish people in a perfect manner, including the ultimate blessing, the blessings of the Redemption.

This leads to the twenty-six of the month, a date which is numerically equivalent to G-d's Name Havaya. This relates to the service of "I placed G-d before me at all times." And this service will hasten the coming of the Redemption and the revelation of G-dliness throughout the world. (This revelation is also connected with the recitation of G-d's Name in the Priestly Blessing in the *Beis HaMikdash*.)

And this leads to the present date, the twenty-seventh of Shvat numerically equivalent to the Hebrew word "zach" which means "pure" and alludes to the pure oil with which the *menora* in the *Beis HaMikdash* was kindled.

This Shabbos is also the Shabbos on which the month of Adar is blessed. This blessing is associated with Rosh Chodesh, the renewal of the moon. The renewal of the moon

Spreading peace and unity serves as a catalyst for the Redemption. This is also reflected in Parshas Mishpatim, for the purpose of the laws placed in the category of mishpatim is to increase peace.

after its concealment is used as an analogy for the Redemption and the complete renewal of the Jewish people "who will in the future be renewed as [the moon] is renewed." This is particularly true in connection with the month of Adar whose "mazal (source of influence) is healthy."

should give generously. (To encourage attendance of this function, the director of the free-loan fund, Rav Shimon Goldman, was invited to speak.)

297. *The prominence of these feelings of love is*

Our Sages associate the month of Adar with "joining one redemption (the redemption of Purim) with another redemption (the redemption of Pesach)." May we merit the ultimate Redemption immediately – with all the significance of the word immediately, *miyad* in Hebrew. As explained on previous occasions, this word refers to the three Jewish leaders associated with Redemption; Moshe, Yisroel (the Baal Shem Tov), and David (who is referred to as Malka Meshicha, "the anointed king"). And most importantly, may we merit the simple meaning of the word *miyad*, that the Redemption come immediately without any delay.

The Rebbe *shlita* completed the *farbrengen* with a short *sicha* acknowledging his satisfaction at the printing of an album of Torah thoughts in memory of Rav Moshe Yitzchok Hecht, *a"h*. The Rebbe concluded with the prayer that all mourning be nullified with the coming of the ultimate Redemption in the immediate future.

emphasized by the fact that the Alter Rebbe placed the statement "Behold I accept upon myself the fulfillment of the mitzva, 'Love your fellow man as yourself' " at the very beginning of the prayer service.

296. *In this context, it is significant to mention the Melaveh Malka that will be held this evening in connection with a free loan fund in the community. This function should be well attended for "Amidst many people is the glory of the King." And those who attend*

SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES: DISARMAMENT AS IN ISAIAH

The headlines of the last days of Shvat this year (corresponding to the last days of January, 1992) informed the world that the President of the U.S.A. – and, a few days later, a meeting of major world leaders – announced the intention to significantly reduce arms budgets in favor of the more peaceful needs of agriculture.

In public addresses soon after, the Rebbe *shlita* declared that this news

signified a tangible foretaste of the idyll envisioned by the prophet Isaiah*: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any more."

Here, before our very eyes, the major powers are proclaiming their desire to establish a new and humanitarian world order of justice and peace.

Humanity learned its first lesson in the ideals of justice and peace when G-d revealed His Law to the

people of Israel at Mount Sinai. It is thus no mere coincidence that the recent portentous meeting of world leaders took place at the time that Jewish congregations around the world read the weekly Torah passage known as Mishpatim. This begins with the words,** "And these are the laws which you (Moshe Rabbeinu) shall set before them." Analyzing the opening (Hebrew) words of this passage, the Sages explain: Even the laws regulating interpersonal conduct that mortal understanding grasps and moreover dictates, should be observed – by Jews and gentiles alike – not by

virtue of any transient social or intellectual imperative, but by virtue of their Divine origin.

In the addresses outlined in the essay before us, the Rebbe *shlita* teaches us how to react to the headlines of our unique era. Living our daily lives in the harmonious and brotherly spirit of the imminent Redemption will not only grant us a foretaste of the Redemption, but will expedite its coming.

FROM ARMAMENTS TO AGRICULTURE

The Baal Shem Tov taught that everything a person sees or hears should provide him with a lesson in his service of G-d.[298] Therefore, when trying to comprehend any event that takes place in the world at large, we should sensitize our perception – to look beyond that event’s overt socio-economic causes, and appreciate its spiritual message.

In this context, the events of the past week take on unique significance. In his annual address to his people, the president of the most powerful nation in the world announced major cuts in military expenditure with the intent that the resources saved be devoted to agriculture and social improvements.

Directly afterwards, he met with the leaders of other world powers – including the leader of the country which until recently had led an opposing bloc of nations[299] – and they joined in this thrust to disarmament, proclaiming their desire to establish a new world order of justice and peace.

These efforts are a foretaste of the fulfillment of the prophecy,[300] “They shall beat their swords into plowshares.... Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor will they learn war any more.” For from “swords,” representing armaments in general, these nations have agreed to make “plowshares,” implements which will cultivate the earth and feed the world’s hungry millions.

A LONG-AWAITED ADVANCE

In their commentaries on the above verse, our Rabbis[301] emphasize that the nations’ progress towards peace will be motivated by the Moshiach. He will “judge among the nations and rebuke many peoples,” and this will provide them with the impetus to resolve their differences.

In harmony with this motif, it can be explained that the above trend towards disarmament and unity that we are witnessing, results from the

heightened desire for the coming of the Redemption that has been expressed in recent years.[302] Rabbis have issued *halachic* decisions, ruling that Moshiach must come. The attention of Jews – and of mankind in general – has focused on the imminence of the Redemption and the subject has been highlighted in reports in the news media.[303] This process has effected changes within the world at large, producing developments that anticipate the peace and harmony which will permeate the world in the Era of the Redemption.[304]

Nevertheless, as we open our eyes and see so many signs of the Redemption, we cannot help but wonder: Why hasn’t the Redemption actually come? We are at the pinnacle of Jewish history, the time most appropriate for Moshiach’s coming – and yet he has not arrived. Ad Masai! How much longer must we wait in exile?

CREATING THE OPTIMUM SPIRITUAL CLIMATE

Not only does the pattern of events in the world at large give us a foretaste of the Redemption: it also demonstrates the nature of the activities necessary to hasten its coming. The unity, cooperation and

298. *HaYom Yom*, entry for 7 Tishrei. Yeshayahu 2:4.

** See *Shmos* 21:1 and Rashi there, based on *Gittin* 88b.

299. The participation of this nation in these talks is an obvious indication of the transformation that its policies have undergone. In previous years, this nation had enforced its authority through oppression, ruthlessly trying to stamp out all other ideologies. Recently, that entire Communist hierarchy underwent a metamorphosis, giving way to a new regime which has announced its intention to foster the ideals of justice and peace.

This reflects a similar process of transformation in this nation’s approach to Jewish practice. Previously, they undertook

every effort possible to crush the observance of the Torah and its mitzvos. Now, they are allowing the spread of Jewish observance. In earlier years, the emissaries of the Previous Rebbe had to carry on their activities clandestinely, under the constant threat of danger. Today’s emissaries are free to conduct such activities openly, and, at times, they are even granted the assistance of the government.

300. Yeshayahu 2:4.

301. Radak, Yeshayahu, loc. cit.

302. This pattern can be seen as having deeper roots. The UN came into being during and after the Second World War, declaring its purpose to be the establishment of peace and harmony between nations. Significantly, it had the above verse from

Yeshayahu engraved on its very wall.

What was the underlying cause for this development? – The change in the spiritual climate of the world brought about by the calls the Previous Rebbe issued at this time, “Immediately to t’shuva immediately to redemption.”

303. Chassidim used to say, “When Moshiach comes it will be reported in the newspapers.”

304. See Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Melachim* 11:4: “He [Moshiach] will then perfect the entire world, [motivating all the nations] to serve G-d together, as it is written (Zephaniah 3:9), ‘I will make the peoples pure of speech, so that they will all call upon the Name of G-d and serve Him with one purpose.’ “

sharing espoused by the world powers reflect thrusts that are fundamentally necessary in preparing the world for the Redemption.

Our Sages[305] teach that G-d created the world so that He would have a dwelling place among mortals. This ideal will be realized in the Era of the Redemption.[306] What is the essence of this concept? – Just as it is in a person's home that his personality finds expression without restraint or inhibition, it will be in this world, G-d's dwelling place, that G-dliness will be revealed without restraint.

To allow for this revelation, unity is necessary. We see a precedent for this in Jewish history. When the Jews approached Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, they camped "as one man, with one heart." [307] This oneness created the spiritual climate necessary for the giving of the Torah. Similarly, to merit the revelations of the Redemption, a macrocosm of the revelations which accompanied the giving of the Torah,[308] we must join together in unity.[309]

MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL CHARITY

This unity must be expressed, not

We now have the potential to anticipate this new and forthcoming world order, and to currently live our lives in the spirit of the Redemption.

only on the level of feeling, but also through concrete acts within the context of our daily lives. This is implied by our Sages' statement,[310] "Great indeed is tz'daka, for it brings the Redemption near." Sharing with our fellow men and seeking their material welfare reflects how the bonds of unity that we share permeate every dimension of our existence.

These efforts should also be accompanied by "spiritual charity," sharing knowledge.[311] This increase of knowledge will herald the coming of the era when "One man will no longer teach another... for they

will all know Me." [312]

This emphasis on deeds of kindness and tz'daka should be communicated to others, to Jews and gentiles alike.[313] And as evident from the decision of the world powers to "beat their swords into plowshares," the climate in the world at large is ripe for these ideas to be accepted and implemented.[314]

ANTICIPATING FUTURE HARMONY

In the Era of the Redemption:

There will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor competition, for good things will flow in abundance.... The occupation of the entire world will be solely to know G-d.[315]

In these days, which are moments before the advent of that era, we have the potential to anticipate this new and forthcoming world order, and to currently live our lives in the spirit of the Redemption. We can reflect the interpersonal unity which will characterize that age in our present conduct. And these efforts will hasten the coming of that era, when G-d's all-encompassing oneness will permeate the totality of existence.

305. Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas B'Chukosai, sec. 3; Tanya, ch. 33.

306. See Tanya, ch. 36.

307. Mechilta and Rashi, commenting on Shmos 19:2.

308. Tanya, loc. cit.

309. Our Sages (Yuma 9b) teach that the cause for the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash and our people's exile was unwarranted hatred. Accordingly, if this cause is nullified, its effect, the exile, will also cease.

In the present age, however, our main task in this area is not to negate undesirable influences, but rather to prepare the world positively for the manifestation of G-d's presence, and in this way, to anticipate the oneness of the Era of the Redemption. See the essay entitled, "Living With the Redemption: A New Perspective of the Love of Our Fellowman," published by Sichos In

English (N.Y., 5751).

310. Bava Basra 10a.

311. In this context, it is appropriate to mention current efforts to reprint Torah texts that were originally printed in Rashi script, using the more conventional Hebrew typeface, and similarly, the extensive projects to translate sacred Jewish texts into other languages. These efforts allow for the wealth contained in these texts to be shared with many additional readers.

312. Yirmiyahu 31:33.

313. Although tz'daka is not formally and explicitly one of the seven universal laws communicated to Noach and his descendants, it should be practiced by gentiles. See Eicha 4:6 and its commentaries, and the gloss of Rabbeinu Nissim to Sanhedrin 56b. See also Likkutei Sichos, Vol. V, p. 157 ff., where this subject is summarized and documented.

314. This leads to another concept. On the surface, the importance of sharing among nations and the negation of weapons of destruction is a logical concept that is easily understandable. Nevertheless, throughout the annals of world history, it has never been applied. Why? – Because the spiritual climate of the world had not been refined, and thus the conduct of individuals and of nations was motivated by selfish interests which hampered their ethical development.

At present, by contrast, the spiritual climate of the world has changed. All the divine service necessary to bring the Redemption has been completed. It is therefore far easier for people today to rise above these selfish concerns, and to conduct themselves according to the values and principles which logic dictates.

315. Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim 12:5.

A GIFT THE REBBE ACTUALLY WANTS TO RECEIVE

BY BORUCH MERKUR

Among the fascinating stories and insights gleaned from the *farbrengen* in 770 this Shabbos afternoon, hosted by Rabbi Zushe Silberstein of Montreal, was a description of a letter the Rebbe MH"M received from a certain *chassid*. In the letter, the *chassid* enumerated a number of the wonderful things G-d had blessed him with. "I have this and I have that and I have the other thing, and so on and so forth – even my spiritual accomplishments are impressive." What he was lacking, the *chassid* concluded, was happiness. Notwithstanding all his wealth and material possessions – even spiritual wealth – the man remained discontented.

The Rebbe's answer was brief; he didn't even write a single word. All the Rebbe did was circle all the instances the *chassid* had written "I," and then sent it back to him.

Our happiness is not a product of amassing wealth or even spiritual stature; only when we truly internalize what the purpose of all the gifts G-d has blessed us with, and use them to that end, can we truly experience happiness, the unlimited happiness of our infinite Creator.

Another amazing story Rabbi Silberstein told at the *farbrengen* is a story about a wealthy individual, a *g'vir*, who approached the Rebbe with a priceless gift: an enormous and brilliant jewel.

Not one accustomed to taking gifts, especially ones

such as this gem, the Rebbe told the *g'vir* that if he really wanted to make the Rebbe happy, he should donate the value of the gem to charity. The *g'vir*, not willing to concede so easily, had a contingency plan. "If the Rebbe accepts this gift," he said, "then I will donate the equivalent value to charity." The Rebbe answered with a simple gesture, holding up two of his holy fingers. The message was clear: the *g'vir* was to meet his original pledge and also to donate the value of the gem he wished to give the Rebbe.

If we really want to give a gift to the Rebbe, it is not enough for us to give something that we think the Rebbe should be happy with, but something that the Rebbe himself actually wants.

The ego can confuse the mind of a *chassid*. It is not what we want, what we feel comfortable with that is important, but what the Rebbe wants – even if it requires us to go beyond our limitations. Just as it is ridiculous for a *chassid* to *koch zich* in *Mivtza Chanuka*, giving out *menoros*, just before Pesach, when he should be giving out *matzos*, so it is absurd for one to suffice in *koching* in *Mivtza T'fillin*, or the like, when the call of the hour is *Mivtza Moshiach*.

The world is ready for Moshiach, and we, being part of the world, must go out and take this message to the rest of the world without any debate or calculation. Moshiach now!

Not one accustomed to taking gifts, especially ones such as this gem, the Rebbe told the g'vir that if he really wanted to make the Rebbe happy, he should donate the value of the gem to charity. But the g'vir was not willing to concede so easily...

NOT TO BE ASHAMED

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



The late *mashpia* Reb Mendel Futerfas, o.b.m., once related an interesting incident:

“One time when I was still a young boy (before the age of *bar mitzva*), I had occasion to accompany the *gaon*, Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, on his way to *shul*, where he was going to teach *chassidus*. Although Reb Zalman Shimon would later serve as *Mara D’Asra* in many locations, at that time he was still a 19-year-old *bachur* in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim, albeit one who was already proficient in *Shas* and *Poskim*. Everyone said he had a great future ahead of him.

“In any event, while we were walking we happened to pass an outdoor cafe. The tables and chairs were full of empty-headed young men sitting and smoking cigarettes and talking foolishness. As soon as they saw us, two *yeshiva bachurim*, they decided we were an easy target and started to curse and make fun of us. We made believe we didn’t hear them and continued walking.

“Halfway down the block, however, Reb Zalman Shimon changed his mind. Doing an about-face he marched right back to where those hooligans were loafing and vehemently quoted to them the second verse of *Shir HaShirim*

[No, I’m not going to tell you what it says; go look it up yourselves], with several appropriate additions.

“I was shocked. ‘Is that how a *Tamim* is supposed to behave?’ I asked him accusingly. ‘Why did you go back? Why was it necessary to stoop to their level?’

“I’ll tell you,’ Reb Zalman Shimon replied. ‘At first I was of the same mind as you, thinking that it made no sense to respond and that the best thing to do was ignore them. But then I remembered something I once heard from the Rebbe, that when one encounters people who mock and ridicule Torah and *mitzvos*, one must fulfill the precept of ‘And do not be embarrassed in front of those who scorn’ and quote the second verse of *Shir HaShirim*... The only reason I went back was to fulfill the Rebbe’s words.’

* * *

The following is an excerpt of a letter written by the Rebbe MH”M on the first day of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5714, addressed to Agudas Chassidei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel (printed in Volume 20 of *Likkutei Sichos*, page 621):

“We already know this from the days of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of

chassidus Chabad (its teachings, customs and ways), for there were many who were opposed, led by an individual named Avigdor, who leveled many accusations against him. Soon enough, however, his shame was revealed publicly, even though he did succeed in swaying the hearts of those who were not well- acquainted with the Evil Inclination’s tricks. Nonetheless, his downfall was complete and he ended up in disgrace, and *chassidus* won a decisive victory (over the course of several weeks it continued to grow and spread and capture the hearts of tens of thousands of Jews). I need not elaborate on this, as all the details are well known.

“How much more is this true now, seven generations after the Alter Rebbe, when *chassidus* is growing and spreading in both the spiritual and physical sense. For even if a lowly and disgraceful individual were to rise up to oppose [*chassidus*], there is absolutely no reason to be alarmed, as all of his *chutzpa* comes from seeing that people are afraid of him and his threats are effective, i.e., that people aren’t *farbrenging* as much on special days, etc.

“However, if he were to be immediately exposed for what he is

and the entire truth made known, he would disappear, as explained in *Tanya*. And just as Avigdor was later reduced to relying on the beneficence of the *chassidim*, so would it be in this case, too.

“But there is no use in decrying the past; my intent is to address the future, regarding the success of your individual affairs in addition to your communal ones. Thus, it is extremely imperative that no attention be paid to baseless threats and intimidation, and that the truth about the above-mentioned individual be exposed (even though it would eventually become known anyway). For just hearing these words coming from you will cause him to realize that his plans are hopeless, and he will melt away like wax. Then you will see that he has no substance; all the sorrow he caused was only because you allowed him to do so. In this way will you see success in both your personal and communal affairs, perceptible to the physical eye.

“It is my hope that these few lines will spur you on to follow in the ways of our forefathers. For together with the commandment of our holy Torah, which states, ‘And the *sins* shall depart the earth,’ and not, ‘And the *sinners* shall depart,’ nonetheless, such is the nature of *klipe* (as explained in chapter 29 of *Tanya*, that G-d grants it permission to rise up against the G-dly soul so that the individual will ultimately overcome and vanquish it). This is true even if the *klipe* enclothes itself in a person wearing a long beard and a long garment, who seems to be (externally) following the ways of *chassidus*. For the saying of the Alter Rebbe is well known, that even Eisav the Wicked wore a silken *sirtuk*...

“May G-d grant you the tranquility of mind and heart that every Jew should possess – how much more so Chabad *chassidim*, about whom the Tzemach Tzedek stated, ‘We are day workers,’ i.e., our task is to illuminate the world with ‘the candle of *mitzva*

and the Torah of light’ and the ‘light of the Torah,’ that is, the teachings of *chassidus* – for it is a necessity.”

* * *

Regarding the exodus from Egypt, the Rebbe Rayatz stated (*Seifer HaMaamarim* 5705):

“As explained in many *s’farim*, the wicked scoffers used to ridicule the Jews who sincerely believed in the

“While we were walking we happened to pass an outdoor cafe. The tables and chairs were full of empty-headed young men sitting and smoking cigarettes and talking foolishness. As soon as they saw us, two yeshiva bachurim, they decided we were an easy target and started to curse and make fun of us...”

Geula, and they made great sport at their expense, until the believers in G-d became dejected and lost hope of being redeemed. But when Moshe came along and announced that the redemption was imminent, the belief in G-d and in His promise to Avrohom Avinu, of blessed memory, was [again] aroused and uncovered, as it states, ‘And the nation believed.’ That is, after

they heard that G-d had remembered His people and the end foretold to Avrohom had arrived. As time passed, however, not only did the *Geula* not materialize, but the suffering of the Jews increased. Again the heretics who denied G-d and His promise of redemption rose up and tried to discourage the believing Jews. Indeed, because they were so tortured and afflicted they lost hope, until the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared to them and redeemed them.”

* * *

Of late [actually several years ago, when this article was originally printed – Ed.], a bitter controversy has stirred up, appearing in the secular media by those purporting to represent Lubavitch. Just what was at the center of the controversy? What was the terrible sin that sparked such a heated response?

It all started many years ago, when Rabbi Yisroel Halperin of Hertzeliya brought home a bottle of water from the *mikva* in which the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, had immersed. For years the bottle sat in his closet. No one looked at it, no one opened it up. Now, this in itself would be an unforgivable sin, but Rabbi Halperin’s “misdeeds” proved to be even more reprehensible.

A few weeks ago a Jew who frequents Hertzeliya’s Chabad House came to Rabbi Halperin in a very agitated state. Weeping uncontrollably the man told him that a relative of his was lying at the brink of death, G-d forbid, and that the doctors had given up all hope for the woman. Rabbi Halperin wrote a letter to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha* and placed it in the *Igros Kodesh*, but the man was not yet consoled. He wanted something tangible from the Rebbe, something he could hold in his hand. Rabbi Halperin then reminded himself of the bottle of *mikva* water, and poured the man a few drops, never imagining that it would

bring any special benefit. What happened, though, was that the man, in a burst of *emuna p'shuta*, ran at once to the sick woman and gave her the water to drink. A few days later she was completely recovered. The next time the relative came to the Chabad House he was again in an emotional state, but this time in a joyful mood. He could not stop talking about the miraculous powers of the Rebbe's water. As a result of this word of mouth publicity, a huge demand was created, and Rabbi Halperin has been positively bombarded with requests for the special *segula* water. Many people have since told him of other miracles and wonders that have occurred.

And what does Rabbi Halperin have to say? Well, being that the whole thing came about *b'isarusa d'l'eila* (an arousal from Above), and that we have a clear directive from the Rebbe about such matters (stated on Shabbos *Parshas VaYeishev* 5752, in response to the claim of some *chassidim* that "miracles are not that important": "Publicizing the miracles G-d does in our own times has a direct effect on bringing the true and complete Redemption"), how could it even be permissible for him *not* to publicize what happened? "That is why I decided to go public," Rabbi Halperin has stated, "but not before I asked the Rebbe his permission and received a clear and unequivocal answer through the *Igros*. Furthermore, because some people might drink the water without making a bracha, I decided to print up a page of 'instructions' (based on several of the Rebbe's directives that it be in the form of a 'suggestion') explaining that one should recite the '*Sh'ha'kol*' blessing, give *tz'daka* with the specific intent to hasten the *Geula* (Shabbos *Parshas Tazria-Metzora* 5751), say '*Yechi Adoneinu*' (Beis Nissan, 5748) and *daven* that one's personal request be fulfilled."

You can agree or disagree, argue about strategy, methods or tactics. But is making an issue an object of

derision and publicly ridiculing those who believe in it – indeed, launching an entire holy war against Hashem and against Moshiach – is this the Lubavitcher way?

The concept that physical objects used or touched by the Rebbe brings a special *z'chus* is a well-established tenet of our belief. On page 25 of Volume 32 of *Likkutei Sichos* the Rebbe states, "The holiness of the *tzaddik* permeates all aspects of his existence (including the aspect of space, and the vessels he uses in his service of G-d)." [Footnote 61: "And not just that a residue of holiness remains after the *tzaddik* has used it, such as in his table or *shtender*."] Then

The concept that physical objects used or touched by the Rebbe brings a special z'chus is a well-established tenet of our belief.

there is the statement, "The [*tzaddik's*] holiness rests upon the place where he learns Torah as well as all objects that he uses as part of his *avoda*."

How many examples do we have of *chassidim* going out of their way to use the personal effects or belongings of the Rebbe, even though there is no specific directive to do so? Take, for instance, the custom of every *chassan* to wear the Rebbe's shirt (or *sirtuk*) instead of a *kittel*, and the *kalla* to wear the Rebbe's *dektuch* (a piece of cloth with which the Rebbe covered the *challos* on Shabbos, or a piece of the sheet in which the Rebbe wrapped himself when he emerged from the

mikva). How many times did the Rebbe make a point of personally giving *mezonos* or *challa* or water to Rabbi Yaruslavsky, o.b.m., to distribute in Eretz Yisroel as a *segula*? What about the custom of putting a picture of the Rebbe MH"M under the head of the infant at his *bris mila*? (I was told by the late *mohel*, Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Raskin, of blessed memory, that the Rebbe once told him in *yechidus* that by doing so, the Rebbe is considered to be acting as *sandek!*) Then there is the story related in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Kiddushin* 20) about the mother of Rabbi Yishmoel, who wanted to drink the water with which she had washed her son's feet. The Sages ordered Rabbi Yishmoel not to prevent her from doing so!

We are not in the market for new *segulos*, nor do we actively seek them out. But if Almighty G-d has so orchestrated events that a certain matter becomes publicized, what right do we have to cover it up? On the contrary, it must be seized as an opportunity to arouse as many Jews as possible to Torah and *mitzvos* and cause them to cry out for the *Geula!*

Of course, this is hardly the first time that the "*chassidim* of the Rebbe of Liozna" have been accused of suffering from hallucinations and ridiculed for their beliefs.

Just listen to the instructions issued by one "Shimon the Heretic" to his enlightened flock in the times of the Alter Rebbe (*Seifer HaToldos*, page 168): "You should read the following list of books poking fun of the pious – those who believe in angels, the evil eye, ghosts and bad spirits, etc., so that the foolishness that was instilled in them by ignorant *melamdim* can be rooted out.

"For we," he continues, "are of the opinion that all this is nonsense, was always nonsense, and will always be nonsense. It makes no difference if they say '*Nakdishach*' and '*Kesser*' or '*Nekadesh*' and '*Naariztach*' [*chassidim*

or *misnagdim*], as all of them persist in holding on to antiquated notions and must be enlightened. If you yourselves witnessed what I have seen you would agree that no matter how much the members of the Vilna Council oppress these dreamers and ‘hallucinators,’ it is only a small share of what the *chassidim* of the Rebbe of Liozna truly deserve...”

Even then the *Maskilim* (proponents of the Enlightenment) rightly perceived that the strength of the *chassidim* lies in their absolute faith in the Rebbe, in the holiness he imbues into every object with which he comes into contact, and in their belief that every syllable uttered by the Rebbe’s holy lips is true and eternal. “It has never happened,” continues “Shimon the Heretic” condescendingly, “that a *chassid* should mention the Rebbe’s name without first washing his hands three times and wiping them on

***No, we are not
ashamed of what we
believe in. Nor will
we ever be
embarrassed in the
face of those who
scorn and laugh at
everything we hold to
be holy and true.***

a towel.”

No, we are not ashamed of what we believe in. Nor will we ever be embarrassed in the face of those who scorn and laugh at everything we hold to be holy and true.

Our Sages tell us that although the wicked Jews died in Egypt during the three days of darkness, one individual who held onto “an idol of Micha” was redeemed and left Egypt in the Exodus along with the worthy. For as the Rebbe MH”M has explained, a Jew who worshipped idols was redeemed if he *wanted* to leave Egypt; an upright and observant Jew who *didn’t want* to leave was left behind.

Of course, this pertains only to the *Geula* from Egypt: “If he had been there, he would not have been redeemed.” For *all* Jews without exception will be redeemed in the *Geula* with Moshiach – even those who ridicule his coming, or who wrap themselves in a “silken *sirtuk*” while mocking the age-old faith of *chassidim*...

“*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed!*”

LIVE SHIURIM ONLINE

Anywhere, Anytime !

CHITAS

INYONEI GEULA
& MOSHIACH

RAMBAM

SHIURIM IN LIKUTEI
SICHOS KODESH

חת"ת

עניני גאולה
ומשיח

רמב"ם

שיעורים בלקוטי
שיחות קודש

WWW.770LIVE.COM

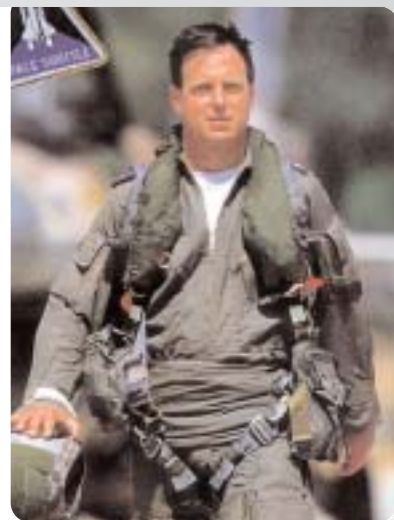


יחי אדונינו מורנו ורבנו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

Graybar Graphics Ph/Fax: 493-3105

TORAH IS (NOT) IN HEAVEN

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



“Rabbi, when you’re in space, how does one count the days of the week and then take on Shabbos?”

There is little doubt that Rabbi **Chaim Konikov**, *shliach* of the Rebbe MH”M in the “Space Coast,” is the only rabbi who is asked such a question in a practical manner, i.e., not just in theoretical terms. The question has been posed by Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut to fly into space. Ramon blasted off for a series of scientific experiments in space on Flight STS-107 of the space shuttle Columbia, which was launched this past Thursday from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Colonel Ramon was scheduled to spend Shabbos Parshas B’Shalach, the first of his two *Shabbosim* in space, hovering on the shuttle deck, and becoming the first Jew to read *Shiras HaYam* in orbit...

Rabbi Konikov offered this question to a number of well-known *halachic* authorities (see box). Among them were Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Halperin of Yerushalayim, a leading specialist in *halachic* consultation to advanced technological companies, and Rabbi Gavriel Tzinner of New York. The

rabbis had difficulty coming to a clear and accepted decision to a question of unprecedented relevance. In the end, it was ruled that Col. Ramon would keep Shabbos according to the clock of his point of departure, i.e., south Florida.

Another issue that Ramon raised was solved much more easily. Ramon requested that he receive kosher meals during his stay in space. NASA processed the request and supplied the Columbia pantry with “*glatt kosher*” meals sufficient

for a sixteen-day trip.

Col. Ramon, 48, who has served as an F-14 and F-16 flight commander, is not observant in the strictest sense. However, he is a Jew with a warm heart and deep-rooted knowledge of the historical meaning of his mission. “I feel that I am an emissary of the entire Jewish people, and therefore, I requested kosher food,” he told reporters before being transported to the launch site. Among the few things he was permitted to take with him into space, Ramon chose to include a



הרב חיים קוניקוב עם האסטרונאוט אילן רמון



The launching rockets ignited at full force, and the space shuttle Columbia blasted off bearing Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut to fly into space. For the past six months, the astronaut has been in constant contact with Rabbi Chaim Konikov, shliach of the Rebbe MH”M in the coastal region of Florida which serves as the center of the space industry. The astronaut asked a variety of fascinating halachic questions that will only be applicable while he is hovering in the space shuttle. He even requested that Rabbi Konikov be the final person to escort him to the spacecraft and say with him T’fillas HaDerech. Rabbi Konikov tells in recent interviews with the media about his activities in the “Space Coast” region, the difficulties with which he contends, and the more unique aspects to his shlichus in the launch area. 4..., 3..., 2..., 1...

drawing made by a child during the Holocaust and an ancient Jewish coin.

Ilan Ramon may be the most famous Jewish astronaut in the world, but the Kennedy Space Center is home to tens of thousands of Jews. Rabbi Chaim Konikov is the only Orthodox rabbi.

“When I arrived at ‘Space Coast’ ten years ago, there was not a single Shabbos observant Jew,” says Rabbi Konikov. “Now, there are about five families. I am not necessarily here for religious Jews alone. I am here for Jews in general. Every Jew has the ‘*pintele Yid*’ and my job is to find it and make it shine, similar to Chanuka lights that must be kindled.”

The “Space Coast” is a prestigious area that includes a row of towns which stretch around the Kennedy Space Center. Approximately ten thousand of its half a million residents are Jewish.

Rabbi Konikov, 36, and his wife have been working on *shlichus* there for twelve years. The Chabad House is the only synagogue in the area. “When we came here, there was not even the slightest characteristic of Judaism anywhere,” he stated in a newspaper interview. “Today, thank G-d, we have five Torah observant families, a community of friends and supporters, a *minyan* with daily prayer services, Torah classes, and more.”

The Konikovs have six children who have grown up near the space center, totally removed from any Jewish way of life, without even a Jewish school. Their oldest, a boy aged 12, learns in a *yeshiva* far away from Florida. The rest of the children receive private lessons from their father and mother. Despite the difficulties, Rabbi Konikov sounded enthusiastic and filled with self-sacrifice for the task. It’s not so simple to conduct a *l’mehadrin*

Jewish lifestyle in such a place. For example, to go to a kosher *mikveh* requires traveling to Orlando, more than a hundred miles away from the “Space Coast”. Food supplies are also brought in from distant locations.

On an average Shabbos, dozens of men and women, half of whom

“For the moment, my children are the majority of the students,” he laughed, “but, I hope that slowly we will grow. After all, five families have already found their ‘pintele Yid’ and have begun to keep Shabbos. This is what I hope will happen. Slowly but surely, another Jew will do another mitzva, and then another. That’s why I’m here.”

are tourists, participate in Shabbos activities at the Chabad House in south Orlando. At the *Kiddush* that is held immediately after *davening*, you can hear people speaking in almost every language. Only there can you stumble upon a *siddur* translated into whatever language

you want. The Chabad House’s doors are open to all Jews from the United States and the entire world. The facility is located just a few miles away from the famed, Walt Disney World. Disney World and the surrounding parks draw in millions of tourists every year, including tens of thousands of Jews who come for rest and recreation in the Orlando area.

Rabbi Chaim Konikov and his family, who moved to the area about three years ago, can be seen mingling among them, involved in outreach activities with immense vigor.

The Chabad House has become a warm home for every Jewish tourist visiting Orlando. These days mark the peak season for tourism in Orlando and thousands of Jews fill the parks and hotels.

“Many Jews come to the Chabad House to get some material or spiritual assistance, and they are delighted to see Jewish representation, even here in Orlando,” says Rabbi Konikov, who is busily spending this time getting a *minyan* together, supplying kosher food, and teaching Torah classes. “Many people call us even before their arrival in Orlando. The Jewish tourists try to plan their trip in such a way that they do not interfere with their traditional lifestyle. We make certain that they are provided with kosher food, even directly to the hotel, located within walking distance from the Chabad House at special prices.”

Rabbi Konikov arranges special programs, Torah classes, and other enriching activities for the hundreds of families in the Jewish community. Most of the community members make their living from the tourist spots in the area. For these people, the Chabad House is a place to relax and restore their spirit.

One of them is “Mickey Mouse,”

as she is known during working hours, or Jenny, as she is known outside of her work environment as an active volunteer at the Orlando Chabad House. For Jenny, her “Mickey Mouse” days are long behind her. Today, Rochel, as she is now called, spends much of her time at a *baalos t’shuva* institute in Eretz Yisroel.

“It warms my heart to know that I am here and I can influence people who, though they are not religious, become so inspired that they can do

something for the sake of Judaism. I have the privilege to be a *shliach* here at the Space Coast, where we can bring *Yiddishkeit* to the four corners of the earth.”

Recently, Rabbi Konikov opened a Jewish school. “For the moment, my children are the majority of the students,” he laughed, “but, I hope that slowly we will grow. After all, five families have already found their *‘pintele Yid’* and have begun to keep Shabbos. This is what I hope will happen. Slowly but surely,

another Jew will do another *mitzva*, and then another. That’s why I’m here.”

One of Rabbi’s Konikov’s recent successes is the printing of the title page of the *Tanya* in space. Amazingly, the astronaut who took the page with him, Ken B., is a non-Jew who has yet to return from his mission in space. Rabbi Konikov tells this unusual story:

“Ten years ago, when I had just arrived here, a Jewish astronaut named Hoffman went into space. At

RABBI KONIKOV’S LETTER TO PROMINENT RABBINICAL AUTHORITIES

(FREE TRANSLATION)

To follow up our telephone conversation today, I am writing this letter in relation to my meeting with Mr. Ilan Ramon, the Israeli astronaut who is presently connected with Columbia Mission STS-107, scheduled for launch into space on June 27, 2002.

I was deeply impressed by Mr. Ramon, particularly by his love and fondness of Judaism and Eretz Yisroel. During our talk, he raised a question with me in my role as the official NASA rabbi. The question is: Inasmuch as I have to be in space on Shabbos, what should I do in order to keep Shabbos and according to which clock do I go in order to know the time that Shabbos begins and ends?

As we discussed on the telephone, I responded with the story of the Alter Rebbe when he stayed in Leningrad and it was not possible for him to know the time of sunset, and I noted that at present, it appears to me that he has to count twenty-four temporal hours from the moment the shuttle takes off from Cape Canaveral (its point of departure). I added that I will clarify the matter further and get back to him with an answer on the subject.

As you know, this question has already been debated at length by several Torah authorities, but to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that such a question is being asked not just in theory, but in practical application. Therefore, I feel the need that before making a practical *halachic* ruling, I must consult on the matter with experts of the subject, due to its relevance to practical application.

Therefore, I turn to you, since you are known to be well-versed in numerous answers on the subject and have already dealt with this issue in the past.

As I have mentioned, Mr. Ramon very much wants and is ready to count twenty-four hours, however, he is interested in counting them according to local Israel time, particularly since he is an Israeli citizen (his “accustomed place,” in his words).

I will be most grateful if you could help me in the aforementioned as soon as possible.

Thank you very much in advance.

Rabbi Chaim Tzvi Konikov

This is the first time that such a question is being asked not just in theory, but in practical application.



the time, I had received an answer from the Rebbe to print a *Tanya* in space. Ken B. is going now to a space station where he will spend a lengthy period of time. He helped me print the title page of the *Tanya* in space together with another Jewish astronaut on the space shuttle. The idea is for *chassidus* to reach the farthest possible places, and therefore, the *Tanya* is printed in every location. When I received the *shlichus* to be the rabbi of Kennedy Space Center, I had no doubt that one of my primary objectives was to make sure that the *Tanya* was sent into space.”

In relation to this, Rabbi Konikov relates the following amazing story:

“One of the first astronauts in the American space program, during the sixties, was John Glenn. Afterwards, he became a United States Senator, and just three years ago, he went back into space in order to break the record as the world’s oldest astronaut.

“When he returned, they made a huge parade in his honor, in the presence of President Clinton and other dignitaries. The parade was scheduled to pass by Cocoa Beach, located about fifteen minutes away from the Chabad House, so I decided to go. As I left, I took a pair of *t’fillin* with me, thinking that if I come across a Jew who will want to put on *t’fillin*, I’ll be ready. Essentially, this is my job here, isn’t it?

“I left for the parade, where there were hundreds of thousands of people. The first face I saw was of a skinhead covered in tattoos, standing in a group of similar boys.

“I knew this boy. This was a Jewish boy and I called him by his name. Ten years ago, when I had just arrived, his grandfather brought him to me so he could learn some Hebrew. He was five years old at the

time. His maternal grandfather dreamed that his grandson would have a *bar mitzva* as any other Jewish boy. I learned with the boy for a number of years. In the meantime, the grandfather had become ill. As he lay dying in the hospital, he cried to me that all he wanted in this life was to see his grandson celebrate his *bar mitzva*. After the grandfather’s passing, the connection with the boy was broken. His mother and father didn’t really see a need to continue learning with the rabbi. So it was that at the parade, among hundreds

I know it sounds strange, but I believe that Glenn traveled back into space just in order for me to meet that boy and put t’fillin on him. What other reason could there possibly be?”

of thousands, perhaps even millions of people, I saw him.

“His fellow skinheads were in shock that a ‘rabbi’ was turning to one of them. But his ‘*pintele Yid*’ was kindled and despite everything, he approached me. I took out the *t’fillin* and asked him if he would agree to put them on. The boy immediately agreed and lifted his leather jacket.

“I told him, ‘You should know that you are giving joy to your grandfather in heaven.’ He put on the *t’fillin* and went on his way.

“Just as I finished putting the *t’fillin* away, at that moment, John Glenn came right by me in an open automobile, and waved hello to me. I know it sounds strange, but I believe that Glenn traveled back into space just in order for me to meet that boy and put *t’fillin* on him. What other reason could there possibly be?”

* * *

The connection between Rabbi Konikov and astronaut Colonel Ilan Ramon was established when the latter came with his fellow astronauts from the Johnson Space Center in Houston, where they spent much of their time in training for the launch pad in Florida in order to practice on the shuttle itself. Ramon asked to clarify a number of questions with the *shliach*. Since their meeting, they have regularly corresponded with one another via e-mail.

During the last few weeks, Col. Ramon has stayed in Florida, from where he would be launched into space, and again met Rabbi Konikov. Ramon, who had already surprised observers by his request for kosher food in space, made yet another astonishing inquiry when he asked Rabbi Konikov to find out for him how he will be able to keep Shabbos aboard the shuttle.

“In space, every ninety minutes, there is a sunrise and a sunset, and every ten and a-half hours, there is a Shabbos. Every twenty days is Rosh Hashanah. What do you do?” explained Rabbi Konikov. “And the question that is posed is: What does a Jew do in such circumstances? This question has already been discussed at great length in a number of books, however, this marks the first time that it is being asked as practical *halacha*?

“I was extremely impressed by [Ramon], as a unique individual and as a proud Jew. His questions were



“In space, every ninety minutes, there is a sunrise and a sunset, and every ten and a-half hours, there is a Shabbos. Every twenty days is Rosh Hashanah. What do you do?” explained Rabbi Konikov.

asked out of a serious and practical approach. He is a loyal person who is devoted 100% to his task. He is a Jewish Israeli astronaut, and therefore, he feels the need to represent faithfully the Jewish people with all the accompanying religious implications. It sounds amazing that someone of his status would trouble himself with such questions. I believe that they were asked sincerely, as it was clear that he wanted to observe Shabbos in space. When we spoke, there were neither cameras nor reporters. His only motivation was a genuine desire to keep Shabbos in space.”

Rabbi Konikov posed the question to other *halachic* rabbinical authorities in Eretz Yisroel and the world at-large. Their ruling was that in such a situation, he should observe Shabbos according to the clock at his point of departure.

“The eventual decision was that Ramon will set his clock to Cape Canaveral, Florida time, from where he blasted off, and keep Shabbos according to this time.

“There was a further question regarding *Kiddush*. Since there is no gravity in space, it is impossible to pour wine into a cup, as is customary. Ramon asked me if he could make *Kiddush* on a closed bottle of wine and drink from it with a straw. I told him that in these circumstances, it is certainly permissible. Without a doubt, this will be an unprecedented *Kiddush*. *Kiddush* in space. An amazing *Kiddush*, and a tremendous *kiddush Hashem*.”

Maybe a Jewish astronaut doesn't need to go so far in stringencies and limitations? Wouldn't it be preferable for him to go to *shul* every Shabbos and make *Kiddush* at home with his family?

“This is a good question. However, in my opinion, many people who have asked me questions along these lines are unaware of the situation that prevails today within Judaism and among Jews. To our great sadness, we all want to be in the era of the Third *Beis HaMikdash*, and to keep Torah and *mitzvos* as is proper and correct according to halacha. Still, there are many Jews who have yet to reach this level. So what we do? Do we tell them that we won't speak to them? Should I tell him that it would be better if he observed the Torah on earth, and only afterwards will I teach him how to keep it in the heavens? We must deal with every situation as it is at that moment. This is the whole essence of Chabad: to look for the good in everything.

“I see a great deal of good in this. Here is someone who is completely not religious, who is involved in scientific projects for NASA and everything he must do in connection with NASA's mission, and who seemingly doesn't have the time to get involved with *Yiddishkeit*. Yet, in such a place, he goes and makes a great *kiddush*

Hashem amongst Jews and non-Jews alike. In my opinion, this is a tremendous thing that is a reflection upon his Judaism, the 'pintele Yid,' which at times is even stronger among someone who is not religious, since he wants it so much. Ilan Ramon said himself, 'Even though I am not religious, I feel unity with *Klal Yisroel*.'

When Rabbi Konikov speaks about his activities to awaken the 'pintele Yid' within the Jews living in his area, he adds that Ilan Ramon's has already been awakened. "One must understand that Ramon represents NASA's 'finest.' He's not some ordinary person. This is someone who will do marvelous work in the framework of his role in space. Specifically for this reason, he feels the need to fulfill his role 100%, including that of a Jewish emissary. He will serve both NASA and Israel with amazing success, and will also make a great *kiddush Hashem* in the world."

After all the publicity over Ramon's orbital Shabbos observance, Rabbi Konikov was invited for interviews on this subject by all the major American networks, something that created a *kiddush Hashem* of worldwide proportions.

"After September 11, people began looking for the truth. They wanted to hear something and they were listening. Ilan Ramon's message regarding Shabbos was universal with pertinence for all the world's people. When Ramon is hovering in space, racing against time, he is essentially a reflection of the average American racing against time in an attempt to make another transaction in Japan, another good 'deal' with his supplier of goods, etc. When Ilan Ramon asks to observe Shabbos in space, he is telling the whole world, 'Wait a minute, everyone has to see what his true destiny in the world is. Everyone has to find what

the correct emphasis must be. Yet, somewhere between a business deal in the Far East and one in the Gulf, he has to stop for a minute – 'to take it easy,' to hug his kids, to think about the reason why we are here in this world. This message on the concept of Shabbos, that each person has an objective in this world and that we are not just

"This is someone who will do marvelous work in the framework of his role in space. Specifically for this reason, he feels the need to fulfill his role 100%, including that of a Jewish emissary. He will serve both NASA and Israel with amazing success, and will also make a great kiddush Hashem in the world."

running without purpose, was delivered by Col. Ramon in a most unique fashion which made a great *kiddush Hashem*.

"I have no doubt that NASA chose a man with the right stuff, the most qualified person it could possibly choose. I wish him much success in space, and that he should

make an even greater *kiddush Hashem*."

Since the growth of the American space program, liftoffs have taken place at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, and "Mission Control" has been based at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. However, as the date for liftoff approaches, "full countdown" training sessions and shuttle ejection drills are conducted at the Florida site.

As mentioned earlier, the space shuttle Columbia lifted off last Thursday as scheduled. The security arrangements surrounding the liftoff were unusually tight, as United States Air Force jets imposed a "no-fly" zone on all flights within the vicinity of the Kennedy Space Center at the scheduled time of liftoff.

Many of Ramon's close friends and family came to Cape Canaveral, Florida to witness the liftoff, including representatives of the Israeli Air Force. Yet, the one who stood at Ramon's side in the final seconds before he entered the space shuttle was Rabbi Konikov. His final pre-flight preparation with Ramon: reciting *T'fillas HaDerech*. "He recently asked me to be with him prior to liftoff. This marks the first time that I will actually be present for the liftoff. Usually at liftoff, I am several miles away, however this time, I will be there to say *T'fillas HaDerech* with him.

"I told him that I have a dollar that I received from the Rebbe in order to make him a *shliach mitzva*. As you know, the security has been very tight, to the point that they were not even publicizing the final time of liftoff. I hope that I will be able to give him the Rebbe's dollar as a *shliach mitzva*. The fact that he asked me to be by his side in the waning moment before liftoff and to give him a *bracha* is a great *kiddush Hashem*."

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHINA'S MILITARY TECHNOLOGY TO PEACEFUL USES

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN, RYAL INSTITUTE AND TOURO COLLEGE



*And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks nation shall not raise a sword against nation nor shall they learn any more war...
(Isaiah 2, 2-4)*

IT'S HAPPENING NOW!

Eleven years ago this week (Parshas Mishpatim, 5752), a well known conference took place in New York City at the United Nations between the leaders of the major nations of the world – President Bush, Yeltsin, and leaders of other major military powers. In this meeting a joint resolution and declaration was made to begin reduction of armaments, and use the resources and technology to further the improvement of economic conditions in the world, to increase food production and to benefit mankind in general.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach spoke about this event at length the next day at the Shabbos

I am occasionally asked to explain how we can say that the prophecy of Swords into Plowshares is being fulfilled if there are still wars in the world. The answer to this, I believe, can be found in the prophecy itself.

farbrengen. He explained that this declaration of intent by the world

leaders to reduce their military operations and increase food production in the world was the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, thousands of years earlier, that in the Era of Moshiach the nations of the world will beat their swords into plowshares.

He emphasized that this was the direct effect of Melech HaMoshiach on the nations of the world. For several decades the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach had been spreading *chassidus* and *Yiddishkeit* in general throughout the entire world, and especially the spreading of the concepts of goodness, justice, and fairness as embodied in the Seven Noachide Commandments among the nations of the world. This effort reached its climax with the collapse of the atheistic government in Russia and its replacement with a government committed to justice, fairness, and peace based on the belief in G-d.

As a follow-up to this, the meeting at the United Nations took place between the new leader of Russia the president of the United States and several other heads of state where the “Swords into Plowshares” declaration was made.

Another aspect of the *Geula* has begun to unfold before our eyes. Melech HaMoshiach brought the nations of the world to the point where they made a resolution and a declaration regarding world peace. This was followed by Melech HaMoshiach’s own announcement that the declaration by these heads of state was, in fact, the beginning of the fulfillment of Isaiah’s Swords into Plowshares prophecy.

In the eleven years since this declaration, “Swords into Plowshares” has become a global phenomenon. There is even an international organization called the “Bonn International Center for Conversion” (BICC) is an independent non-profit organization that documents the process of the conversion of military resources to peaceful uses. One of their reports, written by Prof. Yitzchok Shichor of the Hebrew University, documents the transformation of China’s military technology – especially nuclear technology – to peaceful uses.

In two earlier articles (*Beis Moshiach* of 30 Shevat and 6 Nisan, 5761) we reviewed the intense development of China’s nuclear technology from the 1950’s to the 1980’s, emphasizing its collaboration with Russia, the subsequent break between China and Russia and, in general it’s ever-increasing perception of being threatened. As Chairman

Mao Zedung put it, “If we are not to be bullied in the present-day world, we cannot do without the bomb.”

With the Swords into Plowshares declaration in 1992, China’s threat perception was greatly reduced and a genuine Swords into Plowshares process began in China. Russia was no longer the threat that it formerly was and China found that it no longer needed the vast nuclear weapons machine that it had developed nor the vast army that it

The highest form of Swords into Plowshares occurs when the peaceful conditions will bring about a change of attitude on the part of the countries of the world. They will not feel threatened by each other. They will feel secure so they will not need instruments of war.

had organized.

Reduced threat perception is an aspect of a Swords into Plowshares (SIP) transformation that Melech HaMoshiach emphasizes in the *sicha* based on the commentary of the Radak who says, “There will be no war between one nation and another because [Moshiach] will bring peace among them. Thus, they will not need instruments of war, and they will beat them to make from them

instruments for working the ground.” We might say that the highest form of Swords into Plowshares occurs when the peaceful conditions will bring about a change of attitude on the part of the countries of the world. They will not feel threatened by each other. They will feel secure so they will not need instruments of war.

NUCLEAR SIP TRANSFORMATIONS

One example of the transformation of nuclear technology was the Modern Physics Research Institute, founded in 1950, which played a key role in China’s nuclear weapons program. It has been renamed China Institute of Atomic Energy (CIAE). It has 50 research offices, an overseas engineering projects office, and various research and testing centers.

Its services include: application of nuclear energy and radiation, development of energy saving products, environmental science, including environmental protection, biological engineering, etc.

It produces high polymer materials, new medicines, food additives, fine chemicals, isotope instruments and meters, electronic components and devices, heavy water research reactors, cyclotrons, sterile generators, etc.

Another Chinese institution which emerged from the SIP nuclear transformation was the China Institute for Radiation Protection (CIRP) which has eleven research offices dedicated to labor hygiene and occupational disease, radiation

medicine, radioactive waste disposal, radioactive organisms, nuclear safety, application of nuclear techniques, etc.

Its services include providing comprehensive environment evaluation, technologies for harnessing radioactivity and industrial waste, biochemical preparations, bio-engineering and tissue culture techniques, immunodiagnosis medical kits, techniques for radiation sterilization and processing, etc.

It produces continuous environment monitors, aerosol sampling machines, rock stratum stress gauges for earthquake and landslide forecasts, radon education meters, nucleon scales, and various medicines and medical kits.

NOR SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE

While China, as well as other countries that have undergone

extensive SIP transformations, still maintains a strong military in general and a nuclear weapons capability in particular, this is no contradiction to the continuing Swords into Plowshares process. In fact, I am occasionally asked to explain how we can say that the prophecy of Swords into Plowshares is being fulfilled if there are still wars in the world. The answer to this, I believe, can be found in the prophecy itself.

If we read the prophecy carefully, we notice something surprising. First it says that the nations will beat their swords into plowshares, because, as the Radak explains, they won't need them any more after Melech HaMoshiach begins to have his effect on the nations of the world. Then it says, "nation shall not raise a sword against nation." It would seem that the order should be reversed. First it should say that, as a result of the effect of Melech HaMoshiach, nations will not raise swords against each other, then, since they won't be

fighting each other they won't need their weapons any more so they will beat them into plowshares.

From the fact that beating the swords into plowshares is stated first, we see that this process will begin even before all wars cease. Then, as a further development, "nation shall not raise a sword against nation," i.e., there will be no more war. And finally, "nor shall they learn war any more." They will not even maintain a readiness for war. There will be no "war games," no military training and not even any computer simulations of conflicts or nuclear explosions, etc.

As we have been pointing out, the Swords into Plowshares transformations is, in fact, an ongoing process globally and it is happening at a rate that is almost impossible to keep track of. Immediately, with Hashem's help, we will see its completion.

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

Van Service



שרות הסעות

15 passenger van for all your travel needs:
airports, pick ups, weddings, etc.
long distance trips, and light moving

טלפון: (718) 778-8661

פלאפון: (917) 699-3937

ביפר: (917) 491-9391

שדה תעופה ◇

חתונות ◇

הובלות קטנות ◇

Crown Travel International



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

- שירות אקספרס
- המשרד ממוחשב

331 Kingston Ave.
(2nd Flr) Brooklyn NY 11213

(718) 493-1111

Fax: (718) 493-4444

Get your tickets within minutes!

קח את הכרטיס שלך בתוך מספר דקות!

A PLACE IN THE WORLD TO COME: NOT PLACE ENOUGH

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



“These are the laws (*mishpatim*) you should place before them.” The Alter Rebbe explains this first verse of our Torah section to mean: “These are the laws you should put inside of them,” as it is possible to learn the Torah and keep it *outside* of oneself. Here is an example:

A true story is told about a famous non-religious “rabbi” called Louis Jacobs. He was a genius and even wrote several very scholarly and interesting books on the Torah. Once he was walking home after the Shabbos services with his Shabbos guest. His apartment was on the third or fourth floor and there was an elevator in his building.

“Is it permissible to use this on the Sabbath?” asked his guest innocently.

“No. According to Jewish law it is forbidden,” answered the “Rabbi.”

The guest accordingly began to ascend the stairs, when suddenly he heard the door of the elevator close a distance behind him. He looked back, and to his dismay he discovered that his host was not there; he had taken the elevator!

The amazed guest ran up the stairs just in time to greet the “Rabbi” exiting from the elevator.

“But I asked you, Rabbi, and you told me that it is forbidden!” he said

with wide questioning eyes of surprise.

“It is,” the “Rabbi” calmly answered.

“But then, why did you ride in it?!”

“Very simple,” he replied. “You asked; I didn’t ask.”

For a person to know the laws of the Torah intellectually, and for him to know (and feel) that they are the will of the Infinite King of the universe, are two very different things.

In fact, it depends on two different definitions of the word “knowledge.”

There is the traditional meaning – intellectual, cold knowledge – and there is another type of knowledge (*Tanya* chapt. 3), a complete and total connection that bears fruit, as it relates in the Torah (B’Reishis 4:1), “And the man knew his wife.”

It’s like the difference between a live person and a puppet. Both of them move, but one is animated from the outside and the other is alive and warm from the inside.

This is what the Rebbe meant when he said that you should put the laws “inside of them.” The Torah should make us warm, inspired, and alive (and we must, in turn, add life to the Torah, as it says (VaYikra 18:5), “*V’chai ba’hem*”).

But there are many types of inspiration. There are those who are

animated and inspired by the fact that the commandments will bring us great rewards and pleasures, both physical and spiritual (see also *Pirkei Avos* 1:3, and Rambam *Hil. T’shuva* 10:1). This is a very powerful motivation, for sure, but not at all what the Rebbe is speaking of here. The Rebbe is speaking about something much more real and uniquely Jewish.

I hope the following story will illustrate what I mean:

Once, everyone in the town of Berditchev was worried. It was just 12 hours before the holiday of Sukkos and they still had no *esrog*. The entire town gathered in the large *shul* to read Psalms with the hope that G-d would have mercy on them and send them a miracle, and sure enough, the miracle happened!

Into the *shul* walked a uniformed man, obviously someone’s servant, and began asking for directions to the hotel. It seems that his master, a devoutly religious and very wealthy Jew, was waiting in the carriage parked outside, and wanted to rest for a while before continuing the last leg of a long journey. Immediately Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, the holy Rabbi of Berditchev, approached the carriage and invited them both personally to his home.

Minutes later they were sitting in

the Rabbi's study. "Ahh yes, I have certainly heard of you, Rabbi," said the rich man. "And it is a true honor and privilege to be your guest. I am so grateful to Hashem for this opportunity."

"That is a beautiful silver *esrog* case you have there, Mister Goldblatt," said the Rabbi, pointing to the silver box that his guest was careful to not let out of his possession. "Surely it must house a splendid *esrog*. May I see it? Ahh, exquisite!"

The Rabbi slowly closed the lid of the silver box and looked Goldblatt squarely in the eyes. "You know, Mr. Goldblatt, you look like a very unique man, a man of principle and extreme kindness."

"Thank you, Rabbi," said the obviously flattered Goldblatt. "And I plan to give a fine donation to your wonderful community. Now, please, if you will excuse me for just half an hour, I would like to just lay down for a while. I'm very tired from the road and I have a six-hour drive ahead of me. Please excuse me, Rabbi."

"Yes, of course," said the Rabbi, "but that is exactly what I want to talk to you about. You see we need your *esrog* here in Berditchev."

"My *esrog*?" gasped the incredulous guest, "My *esrog* is the entire reason that I took this arduous five-day trip. Why, it cost me five hundred rubles, not including the time and bother. No no, Rabbi, please understand and forgive me, but I cannot be parted from this *esrog*. And my family and friends are all waiting. No, it's simply out of the question. Excuse me, Rabbi. Please forgive me, but I will be forced to leave now and forgo my rest. I am sorry, I cannot part with my *esrog*."

The Rebbe, however, was not to be discouraged so easily. "Mr. Goldblatt, how would you like half of my place in the World to Come?"

Suddenly Goldblatt forgot his dismay and snapped his mind to attention as he sat back down in his chair looking all the while into the Rabbi's holy eyes.

He was no fool, he knew a good deal when he heard it, and he knew a serious deal when he heard it, and this was probably the best and most serious deal he ever heard in his life.

The words made his mind spin. "Half of my place in the world to come!"

Goldblatt was a believer, an observant Jew. He knew very well what the Rabbi meant. He knew that after one dies he is at the mercy of the Creator, and who could describe the terrible pain and horrors of hell, whereas the pleasures of the World to Come are indescribably infinite! Especially such a Heaven as that of Rav Levi Yitzchok!

The Rebbe was not to be discouraged so easily. "Mr. Goldblatt, how would you like half of my place in the World to Come?"

"Of course I would," he answered. "But is such a thing possible?"

"If you will agree to stay here for the holiday with your *esrog*, then it is yours," answered the Rabbi.

Without hesitating he answered, "Yes, I agree!"

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok called to ten of his pupils, took out a quill and a piece of parchment, and began to write out the deed of sale. He wrote his name, Mr. Goldblatt's full name, all the conditions, had the pupils sign, and ceremoniously gave the document to the trembling hands of his new guest.

That night the *shul* was in an unusually joyous mood. First, it was the holiday of Sukkos. Secondly, G-d

did a great miracle and sent them an *esrog*. And finally, they had an honorable guest, the generous Mr. Goldblatt.

After the prayers, the entire congregation filed by Goldblatt to express their gratitude and wish him a good *yom tov*, first the Rabbi and then the people, one by one, until finally he was left standing alone in the huge *shul* with a big smile on his face after receiving hundreds of smiling handshakes.

"Hmm," he thought to himself. "They forgot to invite me to eat, I'll just sit here until they realize their mistake."

After fifteen minutes of waiting, he decided he would go outside and have a look around, maybe he would see someone. But no one was to be seen, they were all sitting in their *sukkos* enjoying their holiday meals. Melodies and laughter echoed in the emptiness of the cold, autumn night. He went arbitrarily to the first house he saw with a *mezuzah* on the door, walked to the *sukka* attached to the house, and knocked on the *sukka* door.

"Ahhh, Mr. Goldblatt. What an honor! What?! No one invited you to eat? How can that be?! Go to the home of the *shul* president, he will set this thing aright."

But when he got to the house of the president no one was home. Probably they were eating by someone else. Over an hour had passed since the end of the prayers, people were already coming out of their *sukkos* and taking strolls to settle their meals, and Goldblatt was getting desperate. "Good Yom Tov, Mr. Goldblatt!" people were calling in his direction. "Good *yom tov*," he answered trying to force a smile. "Can you tell me where the *sukka* of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok is?" he asked as good naturedly as possible.

Ten minutes later he was knocking at the door of the Rabbi's *sukka*. "Ahhh, Good Yom Tov Mr. Goldblatt! Probably you want to eat the Yom Tov meal. I have a full meal set for you in my house."

"In your house?!" asked Goldblatt incredulously. "I want to sit in a *sukka* like all the other Jews. I want to eat my meal in a *sukka*. That is the *mitzva*; not in a house!"

"Ahhh... you want to do the *mitzva*? All right, just give me back the document."

"What?!" cried Goldblatt. "My *Olam HaBa*?! No way! I'm not giving up my place in Heaven just to sit in a booth with some leaves on it. What do I need it for, I'll get heaven whether I do the *mitzva* or not. I have your promise.

And especially since you are *forcing* me not to observe the *mitzva*, for sure I have nothing to worry about. I'll eat in your house!"

"Very well," said Rabbi Levi Yitzchok as he took his guest by the arm and led him to the lavishly set table in his home, poured him a cup of wine, and opened the prayer book to the *Kiddush* blessing. Goldblatt took the cup in his hand and began to say the blessing, and then he stopped, as though he suddenly realized that he was about to make a big mistake.

He stood like that for over a minute until he made up his mind. He put down the cup, put his hand into the inside of his breast pocket and pulled out the deed which the Rabbi had earlier written for him. "Here," he said proudly. "Now let me eat in your *sukka*."

"Very good," said Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, and he took him back to the *sukka*.

This time, however, Goldblatt felt like a different man. He was no longer Goldblatt the rich businessman; he was now Goldblatt the Jew. Never ever in his life had he been so sure of himself; he was doing the commandment of G-d!

He said the *Kiddush*, drank the wine, washed his hands for bread and ate a few bites. Then he closed his eyes, began rocking back and forth in his seat, and started to sing a happy song, first quietly, then louder and louder, clapping and tapping his feet until he felt as though the whole

universe was dancing. The hand of the Rabbi of Berditchev grabbed his, and they were dancing to the song they were singing. Dancing and singing like, like Jews!

Finally, when he was out of breath and could dance and sing no more, he looked at the beaming *tzaddik* and said, "Thank you, Rebbe. Thank you! You have given me a new soul! Who cares about the afterlife! Now I am really alive! For the first time in my life I am feeling what it means to do a commandment."

Thus, the Rebbe succeeded in putting the commandment "inside" his guest.

* * *

My teacher, Rabbi Mendel Futerfas,

***He was no fool, he
knew a good deal
when he heard it, and
this was probably the
best deal he ever
heard in his life.***

of blessed memory, told me that once, when he was in the Siberian Correction Camps of Stalin, may his name be blotted out, he had nothing to eat for the full eight days of Pesach. The package his wife sent from home didn't arrive, and he refused to eat anything cooked in a not Kosher-for-Pesach vessel, so he drank water with cubes of sugar for eight days. Miraculously he did not die. When his package did arrive a week late, the first thing that he did was take a *matza*, break it into several pieces, and wrap it well in newspaper. "This *matza*," said Reb Mendel, "I kept with me at all times; I never let it out of my possession. I was always afraid that next Pesach I might be without *matza*,

and I couldn't get over the trauma of that Pesach when I was not able to do the commandment of eating *matza*." The only thing that really bothered him was the commandment.

This could be one of the reasons that our section about *mishpatim* (laws) begins with the commandment of a Jewish servant and comes immediately after the commandment in last week's *parsha* about the altar in the *Beis HaMikdash*.

A Jewish servant refers to every Jew. The purpose of the laws is that we be Jewish servants of Hashem. Just as a servant owns nothing of his own and all he does is only for his master (although a faithful servant also enjoys his work), so too, the laws of the Torah enable us to be the servants of – and connected to – the Alm-ghty. (In fact, the word "commandment" – "*mitzva*" is similar to the word meaning "connection" – "*tzavsa*").

The altar upon which the sacrifices were burned, must be built on or filled with earth. Similarly the performance of the commandments must be like the altar, completely for the sake of serving the King of the universe, and yet filled with humility, which is reminiscent of the commandments themselves: they are the will of G-d, but they are performed with physical and mundane items.

Moshiach will be the one to join and activate all these ideas in the Jewish people. This is hinted at in the second verse of our Torah section; "When you (singular) take possession of a Jewish servant." The Alter Rebbe informs us (*Torah Or*, pg. 148) that this refers to the Moshe Rabbeinu of every generation, and it especially refers to Moshiach, who will gather all the Jews. He will make the Torah warm and alive within us, i.e., he will put the Torah "inside" us all and teach us to be servants of the King of the universe. Moshiach now! Long live the king!

For more articles from Rabbi Bolton visit:
www.ohrtmimim.org/torah



PARALLEL

LINES

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

This is the story of two brothers, each of whom found Torah and chassidus on his own, yet in a remarkably similar way. Without knowing what the other was doing, each one of them set up a t'fillin stand, one at his army base and the other at a university.

Ayal and Nitzan Chalak were raised in a *dati* (religious) family in Beer Sheva, but they never felt obligated to keep Torah and *mitzvos*. Life was wild and excited, and they were distant from *Yiddishkeit*. This was reinforced when the family moved to Yishuv Omar, where most of the people were not religious.

"I remember telling Nitzan, 'Now that we've moved to Omar, a *chiloni* (secular) place, we'll have fun,'" says Ayal sheepishly.

You wouldn't think they would return to lives of Torah and *mitzvos* so readily. They appeared to be happy as they were. It was an *is'arusa d'l'eila* (arousal from Above) and a series of providential incidents that brought them to where they are today.

Nitzan was drafted at age 18, and he continued leading the "good life," without overly exerting himself. He ran the SheKem (Army Canteen Organization) on the air force base in Chatzerim. He spent a week on base and a week at home, and even the week on base he spent most of his time watching movies.

"One day, while watching a movie, I felt a sudden inner pull to get up and go to the *shul* on base. There was no logical reason for me to do so, but I got up and told the other guys that I was going to the *beit kneset*. When I got there, I began reading the first book that came to hand. It was a Zohar. I read the introduction of the Sulam commentary, and realized this wasn't for me. It was too lofty.

"I began participating in the evening classes on base that were given by a *rav* from the Litvishe community in Ofakim. His classes were in the *mussar* style, and one day I told him that instead of frightening us by describing the severe punishments of Gehinom, he should tell us the positive side of Torah."

Nitzan's initial enthusiasm for study waned, yet he continued searching for something that would slake his soul's thirst. That's when he came across *Shiurim B'Seifer HaTanya (Lessons in Tanya)*, and he became enthusiastic all over again.

"I found what I was looking for, the *toras ha'sod* with a positive message; the antithesis to the *mussar* classes I had heard. I began studying this book in all my free time, and the wellsprings of *chassidus* were opened before me."

This was during the Gulf War, and the Rebbe's prophetic words, "my children, I did this for you," were publicized in various places. Nitzan was moved, and he felt that only a prophet could say this.



Ayal with Rabbi Leibel Groner, who came for the *chanukas ha'bayis*

One day, Nitzan heard a tape about the four groups that stood before the Yam Suf, as the Rebbe explains it. "The Rebbe shed such a positive light on the story (contrary to the way I had learned it in my youth) that what he said at the end of the *sicha* about *Mivtza T'fillin*, made me resolve to do something about it.

"I took out a table from the base's mess hall, where thousands of soldiers

eat every day, and I simply asked soldiers on their way out, to put on *t'fillin*. At first I was nervous about the reactions I'd get, but the fact that the head cook was interested in putting on *t'fillin*, led to positive reactions all around. The head cook was respected by the soldiers."

The *t'fillin* stand at the base in Chatzerim was very successful. On the first day, ten soldiers put on *t'fillin*. The

next day, the number doubled. After a while, some of those who put on *t'fillin* regularly, began helping Nitzan put *t'fillin* on others. He also set up another *t'fillin* stand near the officers' mess hall. Over one hundred soldiers put on *t'fillin* every day!

* * *

Meanwhile, Nitzan's brother, Ayal,

Ayal wanted to attract more students to the shul in order to protect it, and he set up a t'fillin stand and was pleasantly surprised. Many students began putting on t'fillin. The negative reactions came from the religious students! But the stand didn't last long because the university's security told him to leave.

was undergoing similar experiences. After doing his army service, Ayal began attending Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva to pursue a career in electrical engineering. Doubts began to plague him, though he didn't know why.

He got to know Rabbi Yosef Simcha Ginsberg, the *rav* of Yishuv Omar



R' Zalman Garelik – *shliach* in Beer Sheva, Ayal Chalak, R' Yehuda Dery – *rav* of Beer Sheva shaking hands with Nitzan Chalak

where he lived, and began spending a good deal of time with him. He liked the fact that the *rav* taught Judaism in a pleasant way.

“One time they needed a *minyán* at the *shul*, and my father called me at home and asked me to come. They were all waiting for me, and when I got there, I was sure I was going to get it over the head. R’ Ginsberg stood in the entrance to the *shul*, and when he saw me his face lit up and he said, “*ha’asiri yihiyeh kodesh*” (the tenth shall be holy), and this won me over completely.”

Ayal slowly got more involved in *Yiddishkeit*, and began studying the Rebbe’s *sichos*. He also got excited as he read the Rebbe’s prophetic statements about Hashem’s promise to the Jewish

We had the sense that we had to do what the Rebbe wanted. So when we heard what the Rebbe said at a farbrengen at the Chabad house, that every Jew must do all he can to bring Moshiach, we decided to do all we could.

people, “my children, do not fear!”

Ayal’s enthusiasm for *chassidus* was boundless. In the university’s *shul*, which was in an abandoned shelter, he came across some pamphlets which were none other than the Rebbe’s *sichos*. “Each *sicha* I found was a great treasure,” he reminisces.

One day the brothers met. Nitzan told Ayal excitedly about his *t’fillin* stand at the army base, and he suggested that his brother set up a

t’fillin stand at the university.

“A university is different than a SheKem,” Ayal told him. “At the university everybody is into himself

YOU DON’T LOSE OUT BECAUSE OF A MITZVA

The brothers underwent similar experiences which is what this article is about. It’s fascinating how the two of them devoted themselves to *Mivtza T’fillin* at the expense of their work, and both of them nearly lost out because of this, but it all worked out in the end.

STORY #1: “When I was in the army,” says Nitzan, “I had a *t’fillin* stand every day. The stand was active primarily during lunch, even though I was supposed to be working at the SheKem. As you know, lunchtime is the busiest time at the SheKem, since every soldier on base buys what he needs at that time. The one in charge of the SheKem was angry at my regular absences, but he kept quiet about it and didn’t complain about me to the higher-ups.

“One day somebody came huffing and puffing to me, reporting from my boss, ‘Any minute now, a senior officer is going to show up in order to check out the SheKem, and you, who are supposed to run the SheKem today, aren’t there!’

“I ignored the warning since I felt that it was a big *mitzva* to put *t’fillin* on with the soldiers. When I got back to the SheKem, it turned out that the officer had shown up and was shocked to see that it was locked. He said I needed to stand military trial for shirking my duty.

“I wasn’t bothered by this, and I told my friends that in Chabad the motto is, ‘think good and it will be good.’ ‘I’m sure that because of the big *mitzva*, nothing will happen,’ I said.

“I arrived at the trial cool as a cucumber, and the sentence didn’t surprise me. The judge just gave me a warning, something almost incomprehensible.”

STORY #2: At the same time, Ayal stood at his *t’fillin* stand at the university, and put *t’fillin* on many students, even when he was supposed to be attending class. He made up the work he missed at night.

“The university was highly disciplined. We had to give our work in on time and do well on our tests, etc. I was in the middle of a course which is very hard and complicated, especially since the teacher was considered the toughest on campus. When he announced a midterm, everybody withdrew into their corners and cracked the books. I stood outside and invited people to put on *t’fillin*. I told myself, ‘*mitzva ha’baa liyodecha, al tachmitzena*’ (don’t forego a *mitzva* that comes your way).

“A student who knew me expressed his amazement over my not preparing for the test while my classmates weren’t sleeping nights. I told him that I needed to pass with a 65, and if I got one point higher but one Jew did not put on *t’fillin*, it would prick my conscience for the rest of my life.

“The end of the story was that I got a better mark than the others, even though I was considered an average student.”



Residents of Neve Zeev at the *chanukas ha'bayis* and *hachnasas Seifer Torah*

and his studies, and other things don't interest them." By way of proof he told his brother that the *shul* at the university had a hard time getting a *minyan* together despite the thousands of Jewish students' right there.

Here too, something happened that motivated Ayal to take action. One day he was sitting in the *shul* at the university, deeply involved in a *sicha*,

when a member of the university's staff came in along with the manager of a pub which was near the *shul*. They were discussing expanding the pub after clearing out the *shul*.

"This angered me, though I realized that it was happening because of the minimal interest the students took in the *shul*."



Residents of Neve Zeev at the *chanukas ha'bayis* and *hachnasas Seifer Torah*

Ayal wanted to attract more students to the *shul* in order to protect it, and he set up a *t'fillin* stand and was pleasantly surprised. Many students began putting on *t'fillin*. The negative reactions came from the religious students! But the stand didn't last long because the university's security told him to leave. Ayal didn't give up. He began standing near the main entrance to the campus of the university. Things worked out even better than before and the number of people putting on *t'fillin* tripled.

Mivtza T'fillin was naturally *mekarev* the two brothers to *Yiddishkeit* and *chassidus*. They returned to their roots and began leading religious lives.

What did family and friends think about the change in you?

Nitzan: The soldiers felt as though they lost a buddy. There was a group of *chozrim b't'shuva* on base, and I joined them. So I had new friends who understood what I was going through.

Ayal: Nobody cared at the university. The students didn't care if one of their friends decided to join a Buddhist cult or learn Japanese. Only my closest friends pitied me for becoming "super *dati*." They asked questions, and by way of answering them, I invited them to put on *t'fillin*. After they did so, they felt closer and there were fewer questions.

On the other hand, our family wasn't thrilled with the changes. We had to overcome many challenges, but we did it all in "ways of pleasantness." They didn't like the fact that we ate only *mehadrin*, or that we wore two head coverings during *davening*, and this led to many arguments.

Whatever we learned, we did. When I learned about *iskafia*, I began to only eat to sustain myself, and not to derive pleasure. I began to do this until my mother complained to R' Ginsberg that I was losing a lot of weight.

Today, *baruch Hashem*, although

our parents aren't *chareidim*, their kitchen is *kosher l'mehadrin*, and they have taken on many *mitzvos*, including various *chumros*. Nitzan is the "revolutionary" who kept pushing them to make the kitchen *mehadrin*.

* * *

After Nitzan married a religious girl, he studied computer science at the university. Many of the students raised an eyebrow at the sight of a student wearing a hat and suit. Nitzan didn't care.

Now the paths of the two brothers merged. They both grew beards and dressed in a *chassidische* manner. The two of them sat for hours in the university's *shul*, where they studied *sichos*. They invited many other students to lectures by Rabbi Sofer, who served as *rav* of the university at that time.

The enthusiasm that consumed them was channeled into the university's hallways. They began organizing *minyanim* three times a day, and so you could have seen the two of them running in the halls after students, asking them to complete a *minyan* or to join a class at the *shul*.

"We were suddenly well-known faces at the university," says Nitzan with a smile, as he describes the revolution they made.

Every Shabbos Nitzan invited students to his home in the students' quarters. Dozens of students came. "There was tremendous crowding but the atmosphere was fantastic," he recalls. "We sang *niggunim*, and in between I reviewed *sichos* of the Rebbe that I had learned that week."

What motivated you to work with such excitement?

Ayal: We had the sense that we had to do what the Rebbe wanted. So when we heard what the Rebbe said at a *farbrengen* at the Chabad house, that every Jew must do all he can to bring Moshiach, we decided to do all we could.

THE LETTER ARRIVED ON TIME

Six years passed since Nitzan got married and the couple still had no children. They went to the best doctors who suggested a course of treatments. Nitzan decided that before doing anything, he would go to 770 to daven.

He went to N.Y. and davened with copious tears, and then returned home, anticipating a *yeshua*.

A few weeks went by and R' Ginsberg called him and said that he had gotten a letter for Nitzan when he married, but for some reason it had disappeared and he had just found it. Nitzan got the letter on his anniversary, 9 Elul.

"I felt as though the Rebbe was blessing us on our anniversary so our request would be answered."

The couple felt that if the Rebbe MH"M had sent the letter at just the right time, that it indicated that this was a time of blessing. Sure enough, one year later their daughter was born on 6 Elul.



Nitzan with students he was *mekarev* at the university

CHANUKAS HA'BAYIS

Neve Zeev is a new community in Beer Sheva. The Chalak brothers decided to take advantage of the fact that the community is growing, by instituting *Mivtza Chanukas HaBayis*. People know to tell newcomers that whoever wants an authentic *chanukas ha'bayis* should contact the Chalak brothers. They come to the new house with some friends and they make a party (*farbrengen*) where they sing *niggunim* and are *mechazek* the participants with *divrei Torah*.

This is an unusual way of establishing a connection with a new family that just moved in.



Nitzan on his way to becoming *frum*



Nitzan before he became a *baal t'shuva*

This was during the “*hichonu l'bias ha'Moshiach*” (prepare for Moshiach's coming) campaign. We took lots of brochures and gave them out to the students at the university.

Nitzan: At the meals I had in my apartment, I spoke about the imminent coming of Moshiach. In *shul*, I hung up a copy of the famous *sicha*, “do all that you can.”

* * *

Nitzan became *frum* faster than his brother Ayal. What finally pushed Ayal was a visit he made to the Rebbe in Tishrei 5754.

“I went with a strange feeling, although they told me the situation wasn't simple. When I saw the Rebbe for the first time, I was very moved. I stood there and began to cry. In 770 I felt for the first time, what *chassidus Chabad* is, and who the Rebbe is, and I decided to become a Lubavitcher *chassid*. I returned home wearing a hat and suit, having resolved to be a *chassid*.”

Both Nitzan and Ayal have since established beautiful *chassidic* homes, and continued working with students even after they left the university. Today they help Rabbi Gil Blesovsky, the *rav* of the university.

When the brothers moved to Neve Zeev in Beer Sheva five years ago, they stepped up their activities. 15,000 Jews live in Neve Zeev, and Ayal and Nitzan resolved to “conquer” the place.

It began with a public *menora* which they set up in the center of the community, house calls, and *Mivtza T'fillin*, *Mivtza Mezuza*, and other seasonal *mivtzaim*. They were *mekarev* many residents of the neighborhood.

As always, they were pushed from Above to keep up the work and to intensify it. One day a local contractor by the name of Yigal Dimari, saw them at work. He was touched and decided to donate a large building which was located in the center of the community. The building became a Chabad center which operates day and night. There are *minyanei t'filla* throughout the day, *shiurim* in *nigleh* and *chassidus*, as well as classes in *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*. They produce a weekly brochure which contains *chassidus* and miracle stories of the Rebbe. Every house in the community gets one. The children are targeted through the Tzivos Hashem club and Friday nights. In short, the brothers are the ones to contact for anything Jewish, from a *bris mila* to a *levaya l'a*.

They put most of their efforts into

being *mekarev* families to *Yiddishkeit* and Chabad, and in registering children for Chabad schools. “Our success is only thanks to the Rebbe,” explains Nitzan. Here's an example:

“A few months ago, on Motzaei Shabbos, I stayed in *shul* after Maariv and spoke to someone. I tried to convince him to transfer his children to Chabad schools, but he refused with the excuse that his children wouldn't agree.

“We spoke for so long that his wife got worried and sent the kids to see why he was so late. I suggested that he ask his children what they think about a Chabad school. We were surprised to hear the kids speak enthusiastically about the Chabad school and that they were very interested in switching there.

“A few days later they were registered in Chabad schools, and their father helped us finish the new building complex.”

The Chalak brothers have a stunning building which contains a *shul*, classrooms, lecture halls, etc. About one thousand residents of Neve Zeev participated in the opening celebration, thus saluting the brothers' efforts in bringing *Yiddishkeit* to the community.

“RELIGIOUS PARTIES” VERSUS PARTIES THAT ADHERE TO HALACHA

*Recently, a number of advertisements appeared in various publications, claiming to represent the Rebbe's position on elections in Eretz Yisroel. The problem is that these were put out by different interest groups, who presented only a portion of the Rebbe's statements on the subject. This was clearly done to adapt the statements to their self-serving positions. * As a rule, Beis Moshiach avoids any involvement in issues relating to the elections, and even now we intend to abide by that position. However, we found it necessary to present a more comprehensive treatment of the Rebbe's approach to the topic – particularly regarding the points in which there have been attempts to cloud and confuse – to provide the tools for each individual who holds the words of the Rebbe sacred and dear, to draw their own conclusions.*

Before the elections for the second Knesset (the first elections during the Rebbe's leadership), on 24 Sivan 5711, the Rebbe said (*Igros Kodesh*, vol. 4, p. 345 cit. loc.): “I have now come to stress ... the obligation and holy *z'chus* for all those who fear the word of Hashem to participate in the elections, by [voting] himself and by influencing others *to vote for the most religious lists*, so that not even one vote is wasted.

“And I grant permission and empowerment to publicize my opinion with full force and strength that every man and woman who is G-d fearing

and loyal to His name do all they can to increase the number of voters for the most religious lists.”

Similarly, before the elections for the third Knesset, the Rebbe sent a telegram (ibid p. 279) in which he clearly reiterated his view: “...every man and woman of the *chareidim* is obligated to participate in the elections to the Knesset ... and to vote for the most *chareidi* list.”

Later however, the Rebbe made certain conditions and additions in describing which party to vote for. These parameters clarified that the phrase “the most *chareidi* party” did not mean that which is such in name only, but the party which acted on behalf of those things which the Rebbe considered fundamental for *Toras Yisroel* and the state of Judaism in the Holy Land.

Let us take for example, a religious front. The Rebbe worked for years to establish a united religious front (see for example *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 18, p. 290-291 cit. loc.). It should be noted that indeed, before the fourth round of elections there was a narrow front (of *Agudas Yisroel* and *Poalei Agudas Yisroel*) and the Rebbe reacted with heartfelt thanks to this (*Igros Kodesh*, vol. 18, p. 554).

Before the elections for the sixth Knesset, at the beginning of 5723, the

Rebbe initiated a broad public campaign to “establish a united front of the religious parties.” In a long and explanatory letter the Rebbe dissected the subject (“the advantages and disadvantages,” “the claims against a religious front,” “why there are those who are against a religious front,” “strategies to make the establishment of a religious front fail”), and said (at the end of the letter printed in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 21, p. 420):

“All these parties or groups or people who will prevent the establishment of a technical united religious front – is placing the gains of the party, group etc., before and above gains for the general religious situation in *Eretz HaKodesh*, which affects thousands and tens of thousands of our brothers *B'nei Yisroel* in *Eretz HaKodesh*.

In a letter written “in answer to many” the day after Yom Kippur 5726 (ibid p. 424-427), the Rebbe reiterated his position, and in the same letter, the Rebbe called to all the religious parties to publicize their position in detail regarding a front, so that the voters could take it into consideration.

Before the elections for the seventh Knesset, the Rebbe reiterated his position: to favor the religious parties that support the establishment of a religious front:

“In answer to those who ask about my position regarding elections to the Knesset, and whether there’s a change in my views since the previous elections, my views about the previous elections in my letter of the day after Yom Kippur 5726 explains my reasons, which are still in force now, and even more so. Thus, my positions remain in force.”

The Rebbe’s letter of 5726 said that the voter should vote for those religious parties whose platforms expressed a position regarding the establishment of a technical religious front in the future. This went on until the matter was no longer possible to implement.

CHAREIDIM RE SHLEIMUS HA’ARETZ AND MIHU YEHUDI

Before the elections in 5734, an announcement from the Rebbe was publicized which called on people to vote “for the *chareidim b’d’var Hashem zu halacha*” (in the words of Havaya – namely *halacha*) and not support those “who registered *goyim* as Jews and those like them,” and to quote:

“In answer to their question in connection with the elections to the Knesset – as per the clear *p’sak din* in our Torah, whoever votes for those who registered *goyim* as Jews and on behalf of those like them, the terrible pitfall and the noose [i.e. culpability] of all those registered, is hanging on his neck, and you should not vote for any except those who are *chareidim l’d’var Hashem zu halacha*.”

Before the elections of 5741 the Rebbe reiterated the connection between how to vote and *Mihu Yehudi*. This is what the Rebbe wrote in a telegram of Motzaei Shabbos Mevarchim Tammuz 5741:

“In answer to your question in connection with the elections to the Knesset, you should vote for those who are more *chareidim l’d’var Hashem*, in accordance with the clear

p’sak din of our Torah.

“Whoever votes for those who registered *goyim* as Jews and on behalf of their friends, the terrible pitfall and noose [i.e. culpability] of all those registered, is hanging on his neck.

“Vote for those *chareidim l’d’var Hashem*.”

“With Blessing,

“Menachem Schneerson”

Indeed, in the 70’s and 80’s, Lubavitchers voted as the *rabbanei Chabad* advised, for the party which was strong about *Mihu Yehudi*, and not for the party that was commonly

The Rebbe said that returning land was in the category of “raising a hand against Hashem and His Torah,” and that it was forbidden for believing Jews to support this in any manner whatsoever.

known as “the most *chareidi*,” in order to follow the Rebbe’s directive.

So too with *shleimus ha’Aretz*. In a *sicha* of Gimmel Tammuz 5742, the Rebbe said to publicize which parties supported returning land so that *people should not vote for them*.

The sharpest comment was said in the *sicha* of Yud Shevat 5752 (to Mr. Katzav) when the Rebbe said that returning land was in the category of “raising a hand against Hashem and His Torah,” and that it was forbidden for believing Jews to support this in any manner whatsoever.

THE HONOR OF THE REBBE AND CHASSIDUS

Before the elections of 5749, the Rebbe abandoned his usual custom and instructed “*b’ofen yotzei min ha’klal*” (in an exception to the rule) that people support and work on behalf of Agudas Yisroel’s list (which had united at the time with Poelei Agudas Yisroel and had to face off against the *misnagdim*). This followed attempts to excommunicate *chassidus Chabad* and it was actually a battle against those who waged war on the Rebbeim and *chassidus*.

But, as the Rebbe pointed out as soon as he gave the order to work on behalf of Agudas Yisroel’s list, that this was the exception to the rule for that time, and the Rebbe said that the involvement ended with placing the vote in the box.

Immediately after the elections, Rabbi Aharonov received an order from the Rebbe to inform all Chabad houses that from then on, they had to revert back to the traditional apolitical position that Chabad held, and to working on *hafatzas ha’Torah* and *chassidus*, and no longer to be involved in parties. This order was put to the test that very year with elections for local municipalities.

Concurrently it was noted that on other occasions, any collaboration with the party that fought against *chassidus* (and that broke off from Agudas Yisroel) was out of the question. For example, we know the sharp reaction when *mosdos Chabad* acquiesced to the requests for help from the leaders of that other party, which resulted in the Rebbe’s removing his titular leadership from a number of *mosdos*.

Another fact. In the 70’s, one of the Knesset members of Mafdal said something disparaging about the Chafetz Chaim and the Rebbe, following the Rebbe’s war about *Mihu Yehudi*. The Rebbe cried out: Where are the *talmidim* of the Chafetz Chaim? Why aren’t they standing up for his

honor?

Lubavitchers understand that the Rebbe was directing his remarks towards them too, and they publicized their disapproval of the man's comments about the Rebbe in all the media, and with signatures of hundreds of people.

So too now, when we go to vote, in addition to all the Rebbe's instructions, we also have to think about not giving voice to a party that provides a platform in its official publication for disparaging the *nasi ha'dor*.

PRINCIPLES ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE

In Nissan 5750, due to unusual circumstances, the Rebbe's view was the deciding factor in whether the government would be one of the Left or the Right. As a result, the Rebbe publicized his view and prevented a Leftist government from forming and was instrumental in the formation of a narrow government of the Right.

The Rebbe stressed that he did not mix into politics, but he made it clear that a strong government had to be established, led by Shamir, which would not give in to demands of the Arabs.

Even in this instance, it was made exceedingly clear that this was a matter of principle which was not up for sale in exchange for "religious attainments," and not even in exchange for other

In the 70's, one of the Knesset members of Mafdal said something disparaging about the Chafetz Chaim and the Rebbe, following the Rebbe's war about MiHu Yehudi. The Rebbe cried out: Where are the talmidim of the Chafetz Chaim? Why aren't they standing up for his honor?

matters of principle. This became abundantly clear, when Peres himself called the secretaries and asked them to tell the Rebbe that if the Rebbe stopped opposing a government led by him, *he promised to amend the law of MiHu Yehudi!*

The Rebbe's

response was, "Nit Peres un nit MiHu Yehudi" (not Peres and not MiHu Yehudi)!

In connection with this, we know the Rebbe's view about parties that said they had to remain in a Coalition because by doing so they got money for *yeshivos*, etc. The Rebbe screamed that this was a laughable attempt to "bribe" Hashem, but it was forbidden to forego one *mitzva* (*Mihu Yehudi* or *shleimus ha'Aretz*) for another *mitzva*. This was in addition to the idea of education being supported by money with Jewish blood flowing from it.

This position makes it absolutely clear that when going to elect a party, it's not enough to attain "*chareidi*" advantages, but the party has to be one whose platform clearly states that it absolutely does not support compromises when it comes to *shleimus ha'Aretz* (which includes negotiations with Arabs), and does not agree on compromises in *Mihu Yehudi*. Obviously parties and people with a record of supporting positions that oppose *Shulchan Aruch* are out of the question. The Rebbe wrote, "Whoever votes for those that registered *goyim* as Jews and on behalf of their friends, the terrible pitfall and noose [i.e. culpability] of all those registered, is hanging on his neck."

B.H

LUXURIOUS EFFICIENCY ACCOMMODATIONS

RECOMMENDED

FOR THE UPSCALE GUEST VISITING
CROWN HEIGHTS

WITH VERY DISCRIMINATING TASTE

FOR RESERVATIONS PLEASE CALL
(718) 774-0088



Aviv
Rent A Car

Los Angeles • Hollywood • Beverly Hills

310 859-9660, 323 930-9660
Fax: 310 859-0116

8946 W. Pico Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90035
www.aviventacar.com

Owner:
Yoram Cohen

Fleet includes:

- Subcompact to full size and our specialty "minivans".
- Centrally located in Los Angeles,
- Close to Freeways, Hollywood and Beverly Hills
- Service, Value, Convenience.



**Get Shabbos for FREE
& FREE airport pick-up
on weekly rentals**

יחי אדונו פורנו ורבינו
פלך המשיח לעולם ועד

EVENTS FOR CHAF-BEIS SHVAT HELD AROUND THE WORLD

This week, events marking the fifteenth Yahrzeit of Rebbitzin Chaya Mushka, a”h, on 22nd Shevat have been taking place throughout the world. Women and girls took part in many activities that focused upon the Jewish woman’s special role in bringing the Geulah. The World Shluchos Conference also took place at this time in Crown Heights. It was attended by hundreds of shluchos from all over the world, who enjoyed a varied program centered around the challenges faced by Chabad women who are on shlichus, and how we can fulfill the Rebbe’s directive to prepare the world for the coming of Moshiach.

At the same time, the World Organization of Nshei and Bnos Chabad arranged a series of special activities in preparation for Chof-Beis Shevat, which also marked the hundredth year since the birth of the Rebbe Melech haMoshiach.

A study program, which included various mitzvot activities, was arranged for Nshei Chabad between Yud and Chof-Beis Shevat. A special booklet, entitled, “VahaChai Yiten el Libo” (And the living shall take to heart) was published, which contained excerpts from sichos about Moshiach and Geulah, and various other concepts relating to Jewish women.

The Women’s Beis haMidrash, which is situated in the women’s section of 770, ran a program of study sessions and farbrengens for local women and girls, as well as for visitors. It included separate sessions in Hebrew and English, which were

given by topnotch mashpi’im and lecturers. Hundreds of women and girls attended this very successful program.

On Shabbos, which was the actual Yahrzeit, separate farbrengens for men, women, and children were held throughout the neighborhood.

On the days preceding the Yahrzeit, many women and girls visited the Rebbitzin’s gravesite, where they davened for the sake of the Jewish nation and for the immediate revelation of Melech haMoshiach.

On Motzoei Shabbos the main session of the World Shluchos Conference was held. Thousands of women, including many Nshei Chabad representatives and shluchos from around the world, took part. The evening concluded with lively singing and dancing.

Bnos Chabad, in conjunction with the Beis Rivka School of Crown Heights, prepared an artistic performance, which was presented over four nights. Thousands of women from the surrounding neighborhoods watched the shows. The program was called “Harmony,” and it focused upon the Rebbe’s hundredth birthday and the year of Hakhel. It included many songs and dances illustrating our lives as Chassidim and our desire for Moshiach and the Redemption.

The shows were extremely successful and its audience was very impressed with the education of the girls of Crown Heights. In total around five thousand women and girls watched the performances.

At the same time, the yearly congress of students from Chabad girls’ high schools was held. It was attended by representatives from schools throughout America, Canada, England, and France. The themes of the congress were the Rebbe’s hundredth birthday and Hakhel. It included a series of seminars and farbrengens, as well as a quiz on the subjects of Moshiach and Geulah. Previously each of the participating schools had held a quiz in three rounds, at the end of which a representative was chosen for the main quiz in Crown Heights. On Friday night, the girls ate their Shabbos meal together at the large hall in Beis Rivka. On Motzoei Shabbos around 1000 participants enjoyed the main session of the congress in the same venue.

During this time there was also a special program for seminary students from all over the United States.

Seminary graduates were also not left out. Today many of them are either teachers or shluchos throughout the world, and they were very happy to be reunited in Crown Heights for a series of special seminars and discussion groups at which ideas on how to improve their work were exchanged.

Even the daughters of the shluchos who attended the World Shluchos Conference enjoyed a special program. Activities in honor of the Rebbitzin’s yahrzeit were held for them in educational institutions throughout Crown Heights.

TWO THOUSAND ATTEND PROTEST RALLY

Last Sunday around two thousand people attended a protest rally in Manhattan that was organized by the Campaign to Save the Nation and the Land. The demonstrators carried banners with slogans protesting the neglect of Jewish security by the current Israeli government. Before the

demonstration, leading rabbis had called upon the community to attend, and this appeal was very definitely answered. Many hundreds of people lined the streets of Manhattan, where the protest took place, and the demonstration lasted several hours. Rabbi Yaakov Schwei of the Beis Din

of Crown Heights read out the halachic ruling forbidding the transfer of territory into the hands of the enemy, while the son of Rabbi Yekutiel Rapp, who organized this event, recited the twelve pesukim.

Photos by Eli Yonah



Jews protesting in Manhattan



Rabbi Yaakov Schwei



Rabbi Yekutiel Rapp

GOOD NEWS FOR ANASH: NEW CHABAD SECTION IN BEIT SHEMESH

Anash have been waiting a long time for this – the founding of Kiryat Chabad in Beit Shemesh which will be called “Kiryat HaRebbe MiLubavitch. With construction underway, the new kirya should be dedicated, b’ezerat Hashem, by Pesach 5764. Apartments at reasonable prices will be made available, like a five room spacious apartment, 125 square meters, fully constructed, which will sell for only 615,000 shekel!

For the average growing family, this is a unique opportunity to own an apartment, as local grants can total 46,000 shekel, in addition to whatever entitlements one is qualified

for from the Misrad HaShikun.

A special loan will also be given the first 36 families to buy in the Kirya, to the tune of 46,000 additional shekel, interest free and without being linked to the dollar rate, for 46 months.

The Kirya will be located in the heart of an area full of schools for all ages, which also has everything one could possibly need in one’s religious life. All this, aside from its proximity to Kfar Chabad (only 25 minutes away) and Yerushalayim (20 minutes away). Many Lubavitchers already live in the area. All this, in addition to mountain views and Yerushalmi air, giving one the feeling of living

out in the country.

Rents in the area are \$400 a month for a typical apartment, and this can go towards paying for one’s own apartment, with the appropriate loans and mortgages.

Rabbanei and askanei Chabad have already expressed their satisfaction over this new project, and everybody looks forward to the completion of the Kirya. The great interest people have expressed in the project ensures, with G-d’s help, its ultimate success.

For more information call Rabbi Yisroel Dubrunskin at: 03-960-6950 or 05-580-1022.

YESHIVA TIFERES MENACHEM OF SEAGATE, NY HOSTS YUD-YUD-ALEF SHVAT FARBRENGEN

A much larger than anticipated gathering took place to honor the eighth *yahrtzeit* of the renowned teacher and *mashpia*, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok "Fitzy" Lipskier, *a"h* (see last week's editorial for further description of the *farbrengen*). Alumni drove in from various points in New Jersey to join a sizable contingent from Crown Heights and local Seagate residents.

Speakers included members of the faculty of the *yeshiva*, Rabbi Avrohom Lipskier, and Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Greenberg, as well as several esteemed guests, including Rabbi Beryl Lipskier, Rabbi Shloma Majeski, Rabbi Shalom Baras, and Rabbi Dovid Pape. Several times mention was made of the incredible attention to detail and vitality with which Rabbi "Fitzy" Lipskier infused his classes, to the extent that often students would emerge from his *shiurim* beaming with pleasure. Rabbi Greenberg brought out a link to the name of the distinguished *mashpia*, whose first name was Yosef, which indicates, as Rashi states in *Chumash*, the desire to add another son, and as explained in *chassidus*, the ability to make a "son" out of an "*achur*" (someone distant or estranged). The *baal ha'yahrtzeit* had the ability to take someone who



was estranged from *Yiddishkeit*, and to make him a "son," a part of the family. Likewise, he had the ability to take a student who had pre-conceived notions of *Yiddishkeit*, someone who felt that they were already a "son," and show them that they were in fact an "*achur*," that their impressions were false or misguided.

In honor of the *yahrtzeit*, a special audio CD was compiled based on the beloved seider *niggunim* that he taught for several years. Several of the *niggunim* were played between speakers, and the intricate, exacting notes as sung by the *baal ha'yahrtzeit* brought an emotion-laden silence over the crowd. One of the *niggunim*, which was adopted by

chassidim for the Rebbe MH"m's eighty-sixth chapter of *T'hillim*, was actually composed by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Lipskier, *a"h*, himself. The CD contains seventeen *niggunim*, many of them elaborate and meditative, and is currently available by calling 718-613-1101. A percentage of the proceeds of the CD goes to help support the *yeshiva*.

"Those who dwell in the dust will arise and sing." May this happen immediately.

For more information contact the *yeshiva* at: Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem. 4823 Beach 48th Street. Sea Gate, NY. 11224. Tel.: (718) 265-1437. Or contact Rabbi Lipskier at 4811 Beach 48th Street. Sea Gate, NY. 11224. Tel.: (718) 373-1556.



DOUBLE SIMCHA IN HUNGARY

For the first time since the tragic days of the Holocaust which decimated Hungarian Jewry, Hungarian-born Shlomo Kovesh was appointed rabbi. The moving ceremony took place in the Chevra Shas-Chabad *shul* in Budapest, and was followed by a gala dinner at the Marriot Hotel which marked 13 years of Chabad activity in the country.

Rabbanim and public figures participated in these events, foremost among them, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, Rishon L'Tziyon; Rabbi Yitzchok Yehuda Yaroslavsky – secretary of the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad; heads of the Jewish community in Hungary, the president of Hungary – Professor Franz Madl, the mayor of Budapest – Gabor Demski, ministers, distinguished guests and many representatives of the media who came in order to report this historic event.

“Before World War II there was a beautiful Jewish community in Hungary, but most of the Jews were killed in the war and the community

was almost annihilated. Today marks a new beginning with the appointment of a young Jewish rabbi who was born in Hungary,” said Rabbi Boruch Oberlander to the journalists shortly before the event.

The ceremony began with Rabbi Oberlander, *shliach* of the Rebbe in Hungary, describing the development of Chabad activity in the country from the day he arrived. “It is only because of the Rebbe’s *kochos* that we’ve managed to revive Judaism in Hungary, a country whose Jews were almost completely annihilated by the Nazis and their eager followers.”

Rabbi Shlomo Kovesh was born to and raised in a communist family. When he was eleven and the communist dictators fell one after another, including the communist government in Hungary, he felt an attraction towards a more meaningful life. He studied with a Neologian “Rabbi” and before his *bar mitzva* he underwent a *bris* with a Jewish doctor.

He went to Eretz Yisroel to join a *bar mitzva* preparatory camp under the auspices of B’nei Akiva. While in Eretz Yisroel, he found out that a religious Jew, a *shliach* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, had arrived in Hungary. This was Rabbi Boruch Oberlander.

He met with R’ Oberlander upon his return to Hungary. His parents looked askance at this, but Shlomo continued to meet regularly with the Lubavitcher Rabbi, taking step after step towards a more committed Jewish life. Shlomo was the first boy registered in Tzivos Hashem in Budapest. After his *bar mitzva* celebration, he went to learn in the Chabad *yeshiva* in Tzfaz, and from there he went to learn in other *yeshivos* in Eretz Yisroel, France, and Pittsburgh.

A year ago he married the daughter of Rabbi Nosson Oirechman, *shliach* in Acco, and he has learned to be a *mohel* and *sofer* in preparation for his *shlichus* to his birthplace.



The coronation ceremony at Rabbi Oberlander’s Center, with Rabbi Raskin on the left



Rabbi Kovesh with Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu

Raskin's
“if it grows we have it”

Consistently
Superior

Fruit and Produce Emporium WHOLESALE & RETAIL

Michal & Aaron Raskin

335 Kingston Ave. Brooklyn NY 11213 * Tel: (718) 756-3888 756-2221 * Fax: 756-2440

