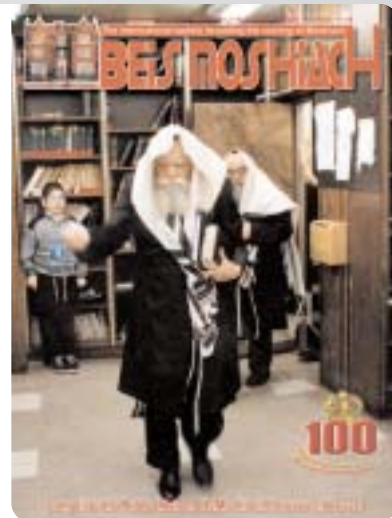


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101: EQUAL TO THEM ALL AND GREATER

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS TAZRIA; 3RD DAY OF NISSAN, 5749

1. The Torah describes the month of Nissan as: “The head of the months, the first of the months of the year.” From this, we can conclude that the month of Nissan contains unique and fundamental lessons relevant to a Jew’s service of G-d throughout the entire year.

A basic lesson can be learned from the name, Nissan. Our Sages explain that a word which contains two Nuns indicates that “wondrous miracles (Nisei Nissim) will be performed.” This is appropriate to the nature of the month of Nissan, the month in which G-d redeemed the Jews from Egypt with miracles and wonders, causing the month to be designated as “the month of redemption.”

The description of Nissan as “the head of the months” implies that the relationship between Nissan and the other months of the year resembles that of a head and the other limbs of the body. Though Rosh HaShana is also described as “the head of the year,” this refers to the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people within the context of nature. In contrast, Nissan serves as “the head of the months” in regard to the aspects of

that relationship that transcend nature and its rules.

This is alluded to in our Sages’ statement: “When G-d chose His world, He established Roshei Chadoshim and years. When He chose Jacob and his sons, He established for them a Rosh Chodesh of redemption.” G-d’s “choice of the world” refers to the establishment of the laws of nature and His “choice of Yaakov and his sons,” the establishment of a relationship with the Jews which transcends nature.

This relationship can be seen in the exodus from Egypt which was totally impossible according to natural law. In that sense, the exodus from Egypt symbolizes the process in which the Jewish people as a whole and each individual Jew becomes free and rises above the limits of the worlds. [Indeed, the very name Egypt, Mitzrayim, is related to the word meitzarim, meaning “boundaries” or “limitations.”]

This process parallels the exodus when the Jews were freed from Egypt with many miracles and wonders. There were a large number of miracles, including all the possible types of miracles. Also, the nature of these miracles were unique, a miracle within

a miracle.

To explain the above: The difference between nature and miracles can be understood through an analysis of the Hebrew terms for these concepts: Teva which means “nature” also means “sunk” as in the verse, “her gates sunk into the earth.” Thus, it implies that the G-dly-energy invested in the world is hidden, “sunken,” and on the surface, it appears that the world follows its own pattern.

The word neis is associated with an uplifted and elevated state. Thus, we find the expressions: “I will lift up my banner,” and “A banner upon the mountains.” This refers to a miraculous order in which the G-dly-energy is in open revelation. (The mountains are above the earth and the neis-banner-is lifted upon the mountains. This implies miracles which transcend a miraculous order.)

These two approaches are reflected in our service of G-d. There is one approach that follows according to a person’s nature. One studies because he is by nature diligent. One gives charity because he is by nature generous. Such a person’s service is “sunken in the earth” for it is limited by his natural tendencies. Therefore, Tanya refers to such a person as “one

who does not serve G-d.”

In contrast, true service, being “a servant of G-d,” involves changing and surpassing one’s nature (not only one’s innate tendencies, but also those habits which one has adopted), without any consideration for the limits of the world (a miraculous approach within one’s own context of existence). To quote the Tanya:

A “servant of G-d” is one who studies his portion one hundred and one times, while “one who does not serve Him” is one who studies [his portion] only one hundred times.

[The Sages made this distinction] because, in their time, it was customary to review each portion one hundred times...Therefore, this extra one hundred and first time above the regular pattern to which he had become accustomed from his youth is equal to all of them and surpasses them with greater power and strength, warranting him the title, “a servant of G-d.”

From this, it can be understood that after one becomes accustomed to studying each portion one hundred and one times, it is necessary to study each portion one hundred and two times in order to be called “a servant of G-d” for the level that was previously considered above one’s natural limits is now contained within them. Just as there are a number of levels of miracles which transcend the limits of nature, similarly, a person must continually rise above his own individual limits.

This relates to the Baal Shem Tov’s teaching that, after a miracle is repeated, it is considered as nature and an even greater wonder must be performed to be considered a miracle. Similarly, after transcending one’s nature once, one must proceed to even greater heights in the service of G-d.

The month of Nissan begins a new year and a new order in the relationship with G-d that transcends nature. Each year, in the month of Nissan, a new dimension is added that

surpasses the miracles of the previous years and transcends the way in which the Jew rose above his nature in that time. In this month, a Jew receives new energies which transcend nature that allow him to free himself and rise above the limitations of nature and his own personal habits and limitations, even those natural patterns and habits that stem from holiness. He has the potential to reach an entirely new plain and enjoy success that transcends nature entirely. He has the potential to

This extra one hundred and first time above the regular pattern to which he had become accustomed from his youth is equal to all of them and surpasses them with greater power and strength, warranting him the title, “a servant of G-d.”

carry out tasks that until this month of Nissan would have been considered as “miracles.”

Nissan also serves as “the head of the months” and allows for this approach to be continued throughout the entire year. Not only is Nissan a wondrous month in its own right, it gives the potential for this miraculous approach to be continued until it becomes one’s nature.

This concept is implied by our

Sages’ expression quoted above, “when the Holy One, Blessed be He, chose Yaakov and his sons.” This choice-at the time of the exodus and in a more complete way, at the time of the giving of the Torah-effected the nature of the Jews, lifting them above the limits of creation. When He gave the Torah to the Jews, G-d “chose us from among the nations and lifted us above all tongues,” establishing us as “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

The word “priest” means “servant.” Our Sages taught, “the servant of a king is a king.” A king stands above the limits of nature and “a servant of a king” is endowed with similar qualities. Surely, this applies in regard to the Jews who are servants of G-d for He is not bound by any of the limitations of nature or miracles. Thus, G-d’s choice of the Jews at the giving of the Torah established them as His servants and transformed their nature to be above the limits of nature.

How is this possible? Because the conception of nature and miracles as two different approaches is only from man’s perspective [whether the G-dly-energy is revealed (miracles) or hidden (nature)]. G-d created both nature and miracles and, therefore, from His perspective, there is no difference between them.

When a Jew establishes a connection with G-d, his nature becomes above the limits of nature. Therefore, miracles and service above the limits of nature are not considered wondrous by him, just as they are not considered wondrous by G-d.

The intent is that a Jew reveal this concept through his service. While he is living in a physical body in this material world, with both his body and the world under the dominion of the rules of nature, he can show how his service of G-d is not limited by those restrictions and transcends nature. Furthermore, this approach should not be considered as a wondrous matter, but rather as his nature. Since he is a Jew, he can depend on miracles.

Though our Sages taught: “Do not rely on miracles.” This refers to something which he, himself, would consider a miracle. However, after miracles have become one’s nature, one can rely on such miracles in the future. Furthermore, one can proceed to even higher and more miraculous levels.

Each year, a new dimension of this service is revealed. This means that those matters which previously, one felt could only be accomplished by miracles are now normal matters of course which one can accomplish without being phased (even though others may wonder). This pattern rouses one to summon his energies to rise above this level and reach an even higher level of service. From the month of Nissan, this approach can be continued throughout the months that follow.

The lesson to be taken from the above is: Every Jew must proclaim to the entire world that he is beginning a new approach that he carries out his everyday affairs in a miraculous manner. The entire world will look on in amazement, observing how the natural behavior of a Jew transcends nature and how the Jew is not excited by this, on the contrary, he regards it is normal.

When one asks a Jew: “How is it possible that a flesh and blood human being, living in a physical body that is apparently bound by the rules of nature, can rise above nature’s limits?”, the Jew answers that he was born a Jew a member of “a kingdom of priests.” This is not only a point of past history associated with the giving of the Torah, but rather, a constant and eternal fact effecting all the Jews in all times. Thus, he is “a servant of a king,” who is “a king.” “The Holy One, Blessed be He, and Israel are one.” Therefore, he has the potential for the above service.

This applies even in the time of exile and in the Diaspora. Though G-d’s wonders are not openly revealed

as they were during the time of the Temple, there are, nevertheless, greater miracles revealed now than were revealed at that time for there is a connection between the highest levels and the lowest levels. Thus, one can appreciate the great powers which are granted to a Jew in exile, in the age directly preceding the coming of the Moshiach. The service of the Jews over the course of the previous generations has refined and elevated the world. Hence, it is much easier for a Jew to perform his service above the limits of nature.

To state the above in simple terms: A Jew must declare by showing a personal example (in addition to speaking about the matter), that because he is a Jew, his normal pattern of behavior is above the norm, beyond the limits of nature. Due to the influence of the month of Nissan, he will be able to rise even higher above those limits.

Each person has certain goals in the study of Torah, in gifts to charity, or in the service of prayer which he did not want to accept upon himself because he did not think that he had the potential to accept. Now is the best time to accept these goals. Surely, one will succeed in these endeavors.

Based on the principle, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” it is proper that, in addition to applying oneself to the above-mentioned service, one should influence others to adopt a similar approach. Our concern for our fellow man must also motivate us-for it is within two weeks of Pesach-to give and influence others to give Maos Chittim and provide others with all their Pesach needs. (In particular, attention should be paid to the poor found in one’s own community.)

The above is related to the weekly portion which begins: “If a woman conceives and gives birth to a male....” The relationship between G-d and the Jews, not only the Jewish people as a whole, but also each individual Jew, is

compared to that of a husband and a wife. Thus, G-d provides each Jew with all his needs and gives him the potential for many types of positive and holy services. Furthermore, the two-G-d and the Jews-join in a dynamic union-“the Holy One, Blessed be He, and Israel are one”-which resembles the marriage bond.

This allows each Jew to “conceive and give birth”-as our Sages declared: “The progeny of the righteous are good deeds.” Furthermore, the offspring will be “male,” as our Sages stated, “the tendency of a male is to conquer.” With this service, one can conquer and transform the nature of the entire world.

2. The above receives greater emphasis on the third of Nissan which is associated with the Nasi of the tribe of Z’vulun.

[Originally, the Alter Rebbe did not mention the custom of reciting this passage in his Siddur. However, afterwards, it was added to the different Lubavitch Siddurim. The omission of this custom in the Siddur should not weaken its observance. On the contrary, emphasis should be placed on its performance.]

In general, the Jews are divided into two groupings, Yisachar, those who study Torah (and whose behavior is thus associated with the miraculous order described above) and Z’vulun, those who are involved with business (and thus, are involved with the natural order).

In a larger sense, the entire Jewish people are associated with Z’vulun because even those whose main occupation is Torah study are also obligated to give charity and perform deeds of kindness. Furthermore, since the ultimate level of Torah study will be realized only in the Messianic age, at present, the Torah study of all Jews can be considered as that of Z’vulun. Particularly, on the day when the portion of the Nasi of Z’vulun is read, emphasis must be placed on the

relevance of Z'vulun's service to all Jews and the positive qualities of this service.

In a larger sense, Z'vulun's business activity can be seen as a metaphor for a Jew's service in the world in which he acquires the elements of the world for G-d. Similarly, he makes the public domain-the place where business is carried out-a private domain for G-d. This service generates a profit, i.e., the descent of his soul to this world causes it to rise to an even higher level of holiness.

Even though today is Shabbos, a day when business activity in the simple sense is forbidden, the business we undertake for G-d, involving our activity in holy matters, Torah study, and prayer is permitted on Shabbos. Indeed, it is desirable.

The month of Nissan contributes an added dimension to this service. Though one is involved with worldly things that are governed by the rules of nature, because one is "doing business for G-d," one is given the potential to transcend those natural limits. This will bring profits, "The L-rd, your G-d, will bless you in all that you do." This is particularly true when everything that you do is done in G-d's service.

3. Another aspect of this Shabbos is that it is the day following the second of Nissan, the yahrtzeit of the Rebbe Rashab and the day on which the Previous Rebbe began his Nesius.

Among the important contributions of the Rebbe Rashab was the founding of the Yeshiva Tomchei T'mimim. Ultimately, branches of this Yeshiva have spread throughout the world.

The unique aspect of Tomchei T'mimim is that both Nigleh (the halachic dimension of Torah study) and P'nimius HaTorah (the teachings of Chassidus) are studied in a unified manner. Furthermore, this study is carried out in a settled (hisyashvus-the Hebrew for "settled" shares the same root as the word, Yeshiva) and

permanent manner. This study was able to motivate the students of this Yeshiva, their families, and the people they influenced, to make a commitment to the study of Torah, the performance of mitzvos in the most complete manner, and also service within the world in a manner of "all your deeds will be for the sake of heaven," with an approach of mesirus

"As in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders." This verse can be interpreted to mean that G-d will reveal the wonders each Jew accomplishes in His service, and also that the miracles of the Messianic Redemption will be considered as miracles even in regard to the miracles of the exodus from Egypt.

nefesh, self-sacrifice.

Though there were times when this service was involved with difficulty and challenge, particularly when the Yeshiva was located in Russia, at present, there are no obstacles. It is much easier to fulfill the desires of the founder of the

Yeshiva in all areas in which the Yeshiva was intended to have an effect. Indeed, there is the possibility to increase and add to these goals which are, in general, the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkeit, and, in particular, the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward.

It is worthwhile for all those who studied in the Yeshiva-or even if they did not study in the Yeshiva themselves, but sent their children to study there-to meditate on the effect the Yeshiva had upon them and the effect it must continue to have in regard to the strengthening of Torah study (both Nigleh and P'nimius HaTorah), fulfilling the mitzvos in the fullest manner possible, serving G-d through prayer, and performing "all one's deeds for the sake of Heaven," and "Knowing Him in all your ways."

This is particularly true since this is the seventieth year following the passing of the Rebbe Rashab and the fortieth year after the Previous Rebbe's passing. This will add more to the service of the Jewish people over the course of the generations-the service of the previous generations having paved the way for our service. In particular, spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward-which was strengthened by the founding of Tomchei T'mimim-will bring about the coming of Moshiach and the ultimate and complete redemption.

Then, "as in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders." This verse can be interpreted to mean that G-d will reveal the wonders each Jew accomplishes in His service and also that the miracles of the Messianic redemption will be considered as miracles even in regard to the miracles of the exodus from Egypt. We will proceed together to Eretz Yisroel, to Jerusalem and to the Temple, where "we will eat from the sacrifices and the Paschal offerings.

SADDAM, BUSH, AND THE REBBE: THE KABBALA OF BASRA

BY YOSEF Y. JACOBSON



THE CRISIS BEGINS

Twelve years ago, about a month after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, as the U.S. began building a coalition of nations against Saddam Hussein, one of the foremost religious voices of our generation began quoting an ancient passage of the *Midrash*, foretelling the events of the day.

It was Sabbath afternoon, Aug. 18, 1990, when the Rebbe addressed thousands of disciples at his headquarters in Brooklyn (1). The mood in the Jewish world was stern, as Saddam pledged war against Israel if he were attacked. The Rebbe quoted words of the Sages dating back some 1,500 years.

"The leader of Persia," states the *Midrash*, "will attack an Arab nation and the Arab king will go to Aram for advice. The leader of Persia will bring destruction to the entire world, and all of the nations will be struck by panic and fear ... Israel will also be overtaken by panic and fear, and they will cry, 'Where shall we go? Where shall we go?'"

"Moshiach will then tell them: 'My children, fear not. Everything I have done, I have done for you. Why are you afraid? Do not fear! The time of your liberation has arrived.'"(2)

WHO IS PERSIA?

WHO IS ARAM?

A few weeks later, during the holiday of Sukkos (3) in October 1990, the Rebbe went on to explain that the *Midrashic* words "the leader of Persia" may be understood as "the leader of Iraq," since ancient Persia included the territory of present-day Iraq. "Aram," which in Hebrew means "exalted," or "powerful," refers to the world's superpower. Thus, "the Arab king going to Aram for advice" may represent an Arab country, Kuwait, coming to the U.S. for help.(4)

"Despite the ominous situation," the Rebbe declared, "there was no reason to become confounded or fearful." On the contrary, this confrontation was heralding the time of our redemption, that moment in history when the authentic spiritual and moral core of humanity will emerge in its full splendor and heaven will become one with earth.

During the next months, the Rebbe reiterated these *Midrashic* words numerous times, as he called on the Jewish people and the world to replace fear with courage and confusion with determination. We ought to prepare ourselves and the world at large, the Rebbe said, for the great spiritual revolution that will engulf the globe, by

increasing in the study of Torah, the observance of *mitzvos*, and acts of goodness and kindness. Each and every one of us, the Rebbe suggested, should be teaching himself and the surrounding world about a higher way of living – a life of ethics, honesty, goodness and peace. A life of Moshiach.

THE WAR BEGINS

The war began on Wednesday, Jan. 16, 1991. A tremendous part of the fighting was concentrated in Basra, that ancient port city off the Persian Gulf in southern Iraq, home to the Republican Guard and, according to many, the location of the dictator himself.

Three days later, on Sabbath, Jan. 19 (4 Shvat 5750), the Rebbe devoted a large part of his public address to the war against Saddam Hussein. The Rebbe viewed Saddam – a person who chopped off the ears and noses of dissidents, tortured children in front of their parents, gassed thousands to death, and craved the death of Israel – as a truly evil person.

The Rebbe saw him as a scion of the great anti-Semites of old, professing the legendary brutality and Jew-hatred of Nebuchadnezzar (ancient king of Iraq and Babylonia, arch-hero of Saddam), Amalek, Haman, and

Pharaoh.

The Rebbe knew very well of the ulterior motives accompanying so many American foreign-policy decisions. Yet he felt America and its values of freedom and individual liberty were a blessing for mankind, and that its war against a monstrous tyrant was a moral act, one that would save and liberate countless innocent lives.

I recall vividly how during his address on that Sabbath, the Rebbe encouraged the American armed forces to finish the job they had successfully begun. "Seventy or 80 percent of the work has been accomplished already," the Rebbe stated. "The job should be concluded 100 percent."

MOSES' FEAR

In a fascinating discussion about fear and courage, the Rebbe discussed the opening verse of that week's Torah portion (the portion of Bo), where "G-d said to Moses: 'Come to Pharaoh (5).'"

The Zohar, one of the foundational texts of *kabbala*, writes on this passage (6):

"Now it is time to reveal secrets that are bound above and below. Why does it say, 'Come to Pharaoh'? It should have said, 'Go to Pharaoh!' But G-d brought Moses into a chamber within a chamber, to the supernal and mighty serpent from which many levels of evil evolve... Moses feared the great serpent. Moses was ready to confront the manifestations of this serpent, but not to its core. Moses was afraid to come close to its essence, because he saw that it was grounded in supernal roots."

In other words, Moses was ready to confront Pharaoh in his many forms and manifestations, but when the moment came and Moses was called to face that ruler's core-evil in his innermost chamber, even the great Moses was overtaken by fear. Thus, G-d needed to reassure Moses and say to him, "Come to Pharaoh." You are not going alone, I am coming with you.

G-D IN BASRA

As the address continued, the Rebbe went on to discuss the

tremendous significance of the fact that the center of the fighting took place in southern Iraq, in the city of Basra. He quoted a verse from the Prophet Isaiah, foretelling the events of the ultimate redemption:(7)

"Who is this coming from Edom, with sullied garments from Basra?" is the question an anonymous onlooker asks G-d when he sees G-d returning as a warrior from the battlefield of Basra.

"I soiled my garments [in My war against evil in Basra]," G-d responds, "for a day of vengeance is in My heart and the year of my redemption has come."

According to many Talmudic

***"I soiled my garments
[in My war against
evil in Basra],"
G-d responds, "for a
day of vengeance is in
My heart and the
year of my
redemption has
come."***

sources, the city discussed by Isaiah in this prophecy is located in Babylonia, or present-day Iraq.(8) This means G-d was saying that He Himself will be confronting the evil in Basra, just as G-d promised Moses that He Himself would join Him in confronting the evil of Pharaoh.(9)

The Rebbe, apparently comparing Saddam to Pharaoh, was speaking of the courage required to confront the tyrant of Iraq face-to-face and subdue him.

The Rebbe concluded by assuring the Jews living in Eretz Yisroel that they would be safe and secure. "There will be no war in Eretz Yisroel," the Rebbe

stated. "Eretz Yisroel is the safest place in the world."

Indeed, despite Iraq launching 39 Scud missiles at Israel, not one death could be contributed directly to those attacks.

A STRANGE INSTRUCTION

During that time, I had the privilege of working as one of the oral scribes of the Rebbe, reviewing and transcribing his public talks for publication. That night, I received a telephone call from one of the Rebbe's secretaries, Rabbi Laibel Groner, who instructed me, in the name of the Rebbe, not to publish the segment of the talk that dealt with the U.S. war against Iraq.

The Rebbe had told his secretary at the time, that "these words will be applicable at a future time."(10)

As we all remember, the first Persian Gulf war ended only a few weeks after it began. On Thursday, Feb. 28, 1991, Saddam withdrew completely from Kuwait and a ceasefire was declared. The end of the war coincided with Purim, the day in which we celebrate the victory of the Jewish people against another tyrant and mass killer by the name of Haman who lived in that region some 2,400 years ago.

Two days later, on Sabbath, the 16th day of Adar 5751 (March 2, 1991) the Rebbe blessed the American government and its armed forces. He spoke of the U.S. as "a nation of generosity," allowing and encouraging Jews to live Jewishly in full freedom and prosperity. The Rebbe expressed a heartfelt prayer "that the American troops succeed in their mission in Basra."(11)

This last statement at the time was extremely perplexing. Did the Rebbe not know that the war had ended? Was the Rebbe unaware of the fact that the troops had withdrawn from Basra and from the rest of Iraq? After all, the Rebbe himself had predicted that the war would be over by Purim! Why, two days later, was the Rebbe praying for the success of an American campaign in Basra?

12 YEARS LATER...

The answer to this question I received this week.

Twelve years later to the day the Rebbe delivered that prayer on the 16th of Adar 5763, the U.S. and its allies declared war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. By the end of the day, our troops were at the outskirts of Basra.

That night, I received a telephone call from one of the Rebbe's secretaries, Rabbi Laibel Groner, who instructed me, in the name of the Rebbe, not to publish the segment of the talk that dealt with the U.S. war against Iraq. The Rebbe had told his secretary at the time, that "these words will be applicable at a future time."

Forty-eight hours earlier, on the eve of Purim, the same night in which the first Persian Gulf war ended, President Bush declared:

"Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them: If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed

against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you. As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In free Iraq there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms.

"The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near."

The day of our liberation, too, is near.

Notes:

1) The address is published in Seifer HaSichos 5750 vol. 2 pp. 631-641.

2) Yalkut Shimoni Isaiah, remez 499 (Yalkut Shimoni is a 14th century anthology of Midrashic literature). The same Midrash is found also in an older Midrashic text, Pesikta Rabsi section 36.

3) Talk, second night of Sukkos, 5751 (Oct. 4, 1990.)

4) In fact, in Pesikta referenced in footnote #2, the word Edom is used instead of Aram (this change is mentioned in Seifer HaSichos 5750 vol. 2 p. 692). Edom represents the West, an heir to the Roman Empire, founded by the descendants of Esau who lived in the ancient country of Edom, or Idumaea, southeast of Israel.

5) Exodus 10:1.

6) Zohar, part II, 34a.

7) Isaiah 63:1. Cf. Ibid. 34: 6.

8) See Talmud Shabbos 29b; Avoda Zara 58b; Yerushalmi: Kilayim 7:1; 3:1; Shviis 6:2; Midrash Eicha Rabba section 3; Shir HaShirim Rabba section 7; Midrash Shmuel chapter 25. It is clear from many of the above sources that many of the Talmudic sages resided in this Babylonian city and that Jewish life in Basra was vibrant. Cf. Otzar Yisroel (Eisenstein) under the entry of Botzrah.

9) Cf. Zohar VaEira p. 32a concerning a major war that will take place at the end of days with the children of Ishmael, in which Basra is also mentioned (Quoted in the edited version of the Rebbe's talk that Sabbath, Seifer HaSichos 5751 p. 280).

10) The Rebbe used the famous biblical expression, "Od Chazon la'moed."

11) The Rebbe stated that they should not confuse Botzrah (Basra) with another city that

has a similar name, Betzer. This enigmatic comment was apparently referring to a fascinating Talmudic teaching in which the spiritual angel of Edom will, at the end of days, run to Bozrah thinking that it is a city of refuge. In truth, he will mistake Bozrah with Betzer – Makos 12a, quoted in Rashi to Isaiah 63:1. Cf. Gitin 58b for an interesting exchange

This last statement at the time was extremely perplexing. Did the Rebbe not know that the war had ended? Was the Rebbe unaware of the fact that the troops had withdrawn from Basra and from the rest of Iraq? After all, the Rebbe himself had predicted that the war would be over by Purim! Why, two days later, was the Rebbe praying for the success of an American campaign in Basra?

between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish on the location of Bozrah.

My thanks to Shmuel Levin, a writer and editor in Pittsburgh, for his editorial assistance in both essays. –YYJ

TO LOOK AT THE WORLD THROUGH CLEAR LENSES

BY RABBI SHLOMO ZALMAN LEVKIVKER
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In order to rise above all the doubts, we must look into the Rebbe's holy sichos from 5751-5752. The Rebbe introduced into these sichos the proper observations according to Torah, and not as the world may appear. In these sichos, we find the true metzius! Presented as part of a chassidic farbrengen.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE REDEMPTION – CONNECTING THE LOWER WITH THE HIGHER

As the Rebbe has explained many times, one of the main innovations of the future Redemption is that the high and exalted Divine revelation will not negate or nullify the world's existence. On the contrary, since this revelation will be of an unlimited nature, it will possess the strength to permeate every aspect of the Creation, to the point that there will not be a single detail of the Creation that will not recognize this revelation. It will even penetrate the lowest levels of darkness and concealment, revealing their positive qualities.

This matter is best expressed by the word “*Geula*,” which contains the word “*Gola*” (exile). Moshiach reveals

in the *Gola*, the *Alef* – *Alufo shel Olam* (Master of the Universe) – introducing light into the exile and darkness, and revealing their inner essence.

This connection is possible since the darkness is from the very outset on the level of, “He put an end to the darkness.” It is by its very nature limited until the time when *Melech HaMoshiach* comes and reveals the inner essence of the Exile, as the darkness is an inseparable part of the Redemption.

In this light, the Rebbe MHTM once said that we have to explain to the animal soul, which is concerned that when Moshiach comes it will lose all that it has acquired for itself during the Exile, that it has nothing to worry about. “On the contrary,” the Rebbe says, “we must also explain to the animal soul that it can relax and be calm, since the revelation at

Moshiach's coming will not nullify it. It will remain unchanged, as it was in the time of the Exile, and all its desires will be satisfied, and not nullified at all. If up until now, it was accustomed to enjoy itself, when Moshiach comes, it will enjoy all delicacies in the greatest abundance. However, through this enjoyment, it will come to realize its ultimate truth: the “*Alef*” of “*Alufo shel olam*.”

In this regard, as a taste of this future revelation, the teachings of *chassidus* were revealed. The whole purpose of *chassidus* is to give clear expression to the loftiest and most G-dly matters (the “*Alef*” of “*Alufo shel olam*”) within coarse and physical intellect, to the point that even the animal soul will recognize it. With the revelation of the teachings of *chassidus* and the imminent coming of Moshiach, *chassidus* permeates every corner of the world. Today, we find that there is nothing that prevents a Jew from learning *chassidus*. The situation in the world is such that it provides everyone with the clearest and most hidden wellsprings of the teachings of *chassidus*.

At one time, the limitations upon learning *chassidus* were many and varied. At the start of the path of *chassidus*, there was fierce opposition.

Today, it has been completely removed. Until a few years ago, anyone could learn *chassidus*, except for the blind. Now, even this limitation has been removed (as the Rebbe MH" M spoke about in a special *sicha*), and today, even the visually impaired learn *Tanya* and other *chassidic* texts printed in Braille. And even if *chassidus* is still lacking in the world's most remote locations, the age of Internet has even removed this limitation, and brings *chassidus* to every corner of the world. Today, no matter how far away a Jew may be, he can enjoy a wide selection from the wellsprings of *chassidus* at the click of a button, faster than it would take us to get up, walk to our bookshelves, and open a *seifer*...

In connection with this, I heard a very interesting episode that illustrates the great pleasure that the Rebbe has from all the worldwide technological developments in this direction. One of the members of our community in Tzfas told me that in 5751, when the Rebbe came out with his instruction to learn about Moshiach and the Redemption, he prepared for himself a floppy disk with a comprehensive collection of learning material on Moshiach and the Redemption. He was staying in Crown Heights at the time, and on one occasion, when he went to *daven Mincha* with the Rebbe, he came in carrying a briefcase, containing this computer disk. He placed the briefcase near him, and then prepared to *daven*. When he finished, he stood together with everyone else and sang the *niggun* that everyone sang when the Rebbe left the *beis midrash*. Suddenly, the Rebbe stopped near him, looked for a few moments at his briefcase, and then immediately continued walking in the direction of *Gan Eden HaTachtan*. Soon afterwards, everyone gathered around him in order to find out what was in the briefcase and understand what brought the Rebbe to look at it. For his part, he immediately got the hint,

and the next day, he had all the material printed, submitted it to the Rebbe, and subsequently was privileged to receive a very warm response.

All the more so today, when we are in the days of Moshiach, just a few moments before the complete *hisgalus* of the Rebbe MH" M, we can see the tremendous progress and the revolution that has occurred in our time. Namely, that the wellsprings of *chassidus* reaches the "outside of the outside." This technological development has advanced the world several giant steps forward, so that *chassidus* can reach even the most distant corner, and enable the entire world to quench its thirst from the waters of the wellsprings.

THE GENERAL INFLUENCE OF A CHASSID

In the *Shacharis* prayers, we say, "give our portion in Your Torah." *Chassidus* explains that this refers to the portion that every Jew has in the Torah. Thus, since the entire world derives from the Torah, every Jew also has a portion in the world. (Accordingly, the Rebbe explains that even the "new heavens" and the "new earth" that will be in the Future to Come will be a result of the "new Torah that will come out from Me," a practical expression of how things will be in the world.)

However, in relation to the leaders of the Jewish people (in every generation), they don't have only a single portion in the world, but the entire world. This is because the general role of the *nasi* is to teach Torah to all the people. Furthermore, even when the people reveal new innovations in Torah, they do not do so as a result of their own strengths, but as a direct continuation of the strength bestowed upon the people by the *nasi*, who teaches them the Torah. In other words, there is no such thing as a Jew who learns Torah without the strength of the leader of the

generation.

We can understand from this that the Torah study of every Jew of the generation, which acquires for him his portion in the world, is possible only with the strength of the leader of that generation, since the influence of Torah derives directly from him. Similarly, every Jew possesses the power of influence upon other Jews, and the greater his influence, the greater is his portion in the Torah.

Therefore, as *chassidim* of the Rebbe, who placed into our hands the power to influence the other Jews of our generation, we must know that the strength of every *chassid* and Tamim in Torah is unique.

This influence upon others can be seen every Friday afternoon on city sidewalks, as thousands of T'mimim help their fellow Jews put on *t'fillin* and speak to them on all matters connected with the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*. This can also be seen through the tireless work of thousands of *shluchim* throughout the world, and countless Jews who would have no idea what Judaism is were it not for the Rebbe's *chassidim*.

As a result, we have an obligation to influence our outside surroundings, our animal soul, and to add in the study of *chassidus*, to the point that even the animal soul will derive pleasure from it. Since the influence is meant for that which is "outside" of us, it has relevance to a greater part in the general "outside" of the world at-large. The Rebbe MH" M explains the great qualitative strength of the influence upon another Jew, who himself has great influence. In practice, we see that this has great influence upon all Jews who have been influenced and affected by him.

Similarly, in our discussion, there exists a preferential need to influence our animal soul, as through this influence, we affect not only ourselves, but upon all Jews who have been affected by us in matters of *Yiddishkeit*.

And although the animal soul may try to prevent this, we must not allow this to confuse us. We simply have to explain in a language that it understands that this will be good for it in the physical sense. If it wants to have delicacies to no end, then it must invest now in all “our work and our service,” upon which the coming of Moshiach depends. Then, it will soon merit all the physical pleasures it wants. As a result, the animal soul itself will assist us to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* as is required.

PROPERLY RELATING TO THE WORLD

The way of the world is to give precedence to material matters over spiritual, G-dly matters. For some reason, the ingrained observation among people on every issue is that spiritual matters always come after material needs. The person is accustomed to relate to worldly matters with great consideration, whereas the subject of Torah and *mitzvos* always comes later. Such is human nature and this is how a person tends to conduct himself in this world.

However, G-d, Who created the world this way, also created *tzaddikim* and placed them in this world. *Tzaddikim* see the world as it was truly meant to be, in order that the limited created being can relate to the world based upon a truer understanding, stemming from his connection to the *tzaddik*.

If such things can be said in reference to every *tzaddik* in every generation, then all the more so does this apply when the *tzaddik* is *Melech HaMoshiach*, the leader of our generation, the Rebbe *shlita*. His task is to bring the whole world to the complete Redemption, at which time we will see the true (G-dly) existence of every created being, as is written, “And the glory of G-d will be revealed and all flesh together will see that the mouth of G-d has spoken.” In the

commentaries’ explanation of this verse, we find that this revelation will be of the highest level, “and the glory of G-d will be revealed.” In addition, it will even penetrate all earthly limitations, to the point that “All flesh together will see that the mouth of G-d has spoken.” As a preparation for this imminent revelation, we have seen the path taken by the Rebbe, the Torah approach, in seeing the world properly.

Once, someone wrote to the Rebbe regarding a medical problem with one of his legs. The Rebbe responded that he has to be much stronger in his faith, as a person’s legs allude to his

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faith. As such, something lacking in a person’s physical legs is an indication of something lacking in their spiritual source. Therefore, the remedy for this is to heal the spiritual source.

This exemplifies the true observation of a *tzaddik*. An average person would say that first of all, you have to do something about the leg. Go to the doctor, follow his instructions, and then afterwards, to “supplement” the need, you can turn to spiritual remedies. The *tzaddik* says the exact opposite. Since he sees the leg in its truest sense, he places priority on a strengthening of faith as

the source of the cure. In order to enclothe the remedy in the ways of nature, it would be appropriate to consult a physician as well and to follow his advice. This is the right way to look at it.

Here’s a story to which I can testify personally which clearly illustrates to what extent *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe MH”M and his instructions can bring a person to a proper observation on what is happening.

One day, a new Jewish immigrant from Russia, who had recently become a *baal t’shuva* through the study of *chassidus*, entered the offices of one of the local neighborhood *shluchim* in Tzfas, and began to explain why he has come to him:

“When I was in Russia, I studied in one of the country’s leading universities, majoring in medicine. Upon my arrival in Eretz Yisroel, I discovered that in order to receive certification as a doctor, I had to pass a series of examinations that would take a number of years to complete. Since I wanted very much to realize my dream to be a doctor, and since I was not new to the profession, I agreed to begin the examination process.

“The medical profession is not a simple one. It demands an extensive period of study. Success in these exams is also not an easy task, and it absorbed my every waking moment – day and night. I devoted myself totally to my studies with the goal of achieving 100% success.

“As it turned out, despite my tremendous investment, I did not attain the level of success that I had sought. On a number of examinations, I did not receive the number of points required to pass. In each case, I fell just a few points short of the passing grade. I reached a point that I had already started to consider leaving the profession. However, before making such a critical decision, I wrote to the Rebbe about everything that had

happened so far, and my plans to leave the medical profession. I added in my letter that it appeared to me that this was a sign from Heaven that this is not my purpose in life.”

“I placed the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. From the answer I received from the Rebbe, I understood that I should continue in this profession. However, with regard to the exams, I must totally devote myself to the study of *p’nimius ha’Torah*, and only afterwards, I should make the ‘vessel’ to receive G-d’s blessing for success.”

He concluded his story to this *shliach* by saying, “I have come here now to ask for the rabbi’s advice. Have I understood the answer correctly?”

The *shliach* apparently did not want to bear such a heavy responsibility, so he sent him to me. After I perused the Rebbe’s answer, I saw that there were no two ways about it. It was clear that this is what he should do. “You will need a lot of faith that it will all work out,” I said, “but you can never go wrong by following the Rebbe’s words.”

And that’s what he did. Despite tremendous pressure from his friends, family, and fellow colleagues not to take any chances, he devoted himself completely to the study of *chassidus*. When the day of the exam came, he made a proper “vessel,” according to the Rebbe’s instructions, and reviewed the study material, but without investing too much effort and thought into it.

The time of the examination had arrived, and he sat down and got prepared. As he began answering the questions, he went almost completely blank. This exam was much harder than any exam he had previously taken. However, as a *chassid* who believes in the Rebbe’s words, he answered every question in the hope that he will have much success.

Not long afterwards, he was informed that not only did he pass the

exam, but he received a grade far above average!

This Jew also had the choice between the two approaches we mentioned earlier: the world’s view and the view of the Torah. From the point of view of “worldly assumptions,” he had to invest all his efforts in studying the subject material in order to ensure success. However, from the Torah’s point of view, the true source of the world’s existence: if that’s what the Rebbe said then that’s the only way to guarantee success on the exam. All of his study and effort was nothing more than a mere reflection of the study of *p’nimius ha’Torah*, and true success is to be found specifically according to how the *tzaddik* sees things. This Jew withstood the test, and his *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe is what brought him that true success.

OPENING THE EYES WITH “D’VAR MALCHUS”

As we find ourselves in the final moments of *Galus*, when darkness covers the earth and the nations of the world are in a fog, we can sometimes be influenced by this darkness, which hides the true *metzius* from our eyes. The only way that we can possibly overcome this frightening darkness is to contemplate the holy words of the Rebbe MH”M. He consistently demands that we raise ourselves from the ground, open our eyes, which have been tainted by the *Galus* and the effects of nature, and recognize the true *metzius* as the Torah shows us. The table is set for the *seuda* of *Dovid Malka Meshicha*, with the *Leviyanan*, *Shor HaBar*, and the *Yayin HaMeshumar* – everything is ready and we are on the threshold of the true and complete Redemption. The time has come for us to arouse ourselves from the slumber of the Exile and to start breathing the air of the Redemption.

As the world sees things, we’ll never reach such a conclusion. It’s now been several years that we haven’t seen the Rebbe. As a result, we can be

plagued by doubts that whisper in our ears about the false perceptions from the point of view of the *olam* (from the same root as *helem* [concealment], which hides the light of truth). The only advice to help us rise above all the doubts is to look into the Rebbe’s holy *sichos* from 5751-5752. The Rebbe introduced into these *sichos* the proper observations according to Torah, and not as the world shows us. In these *sichos*, we find the true *metzius*!

In order to relate as we should to the menacing situation of the *Galus* in which we find ourselves, we must carefully study the *sichos* in *D’var Malchus*. When we delve deeply into these *sichos*, constantly reviewing them until they are engraved in our beings, there is no chance of any foreign thoughts prevailing over our resolve and focus. From now on, our approach to the world’s existence will be the Torah’s, since “He looked into the Torah, and created the world.” The world behaves according to the dictates of Torah, not *ch”v*, the opposite.

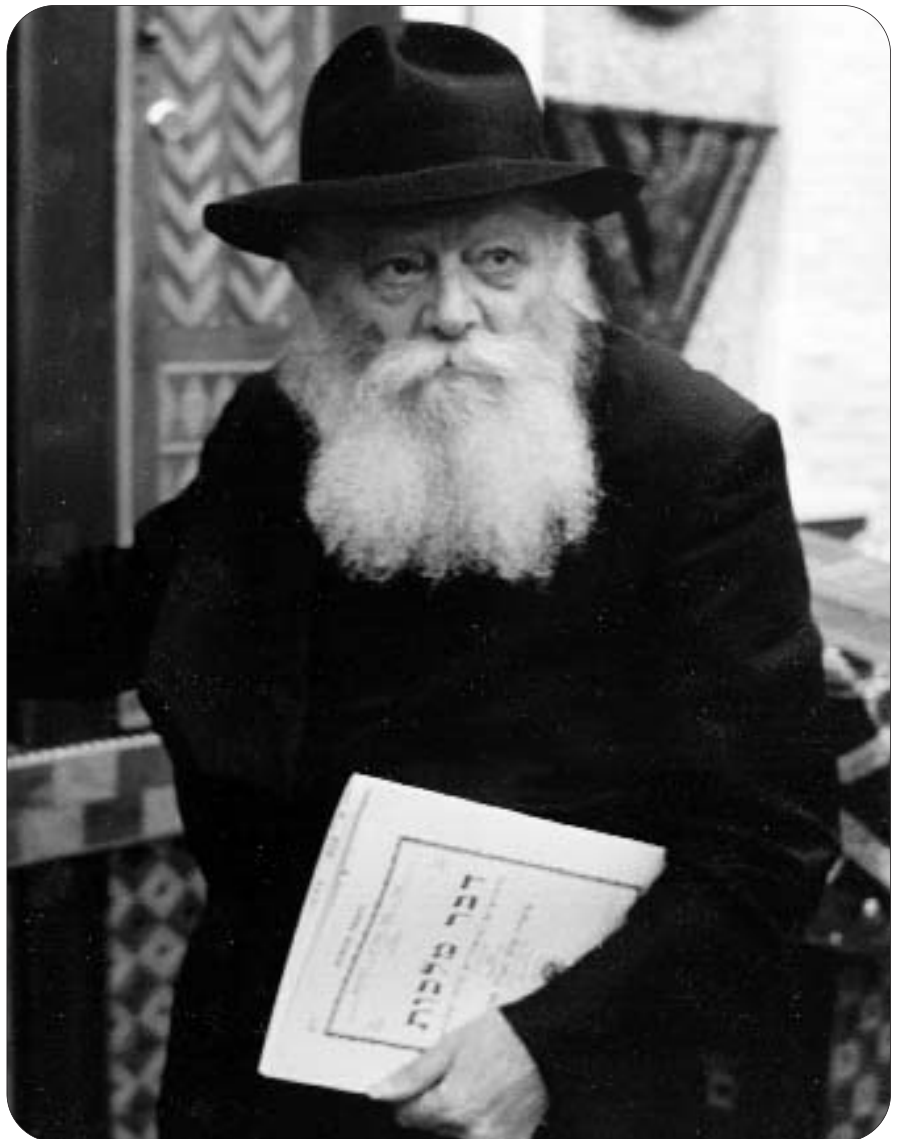
Therefore, as created beings in a situation of “He created the world,” it is within our power to rise above the “world” through, “He looked into the Torah,” i.e., Torah study that helps us determine the correct way to look at the world and the events occurring around us. When we have such an approach, then there will no longer be a need to fight the battle of the G-dly soul on every detail of our lives, as everything will be much simpler.

This is similar to what happens when an atomic bomb is used against an enemy in war. From that moment on, there is no need to fight over every house or every scrap of terrain, since the enemy’s territory has been completely annihilated. Similarly, with regard to our animal soul, it also can wage war with us over every little detail. However, when our approach is a healthy one from the very outset, an approach based upon adopting the

perspective of Torah which the Rebbe taught us, then even the animal soul will finally come to understand where it is and where it's going. Everything will appear in a different light, and the animal soul will also begin to experience the special taste of the Redemption.

There is no question that through the study of *D'var Malchus* our situation in the *Galus* appears radically different. Every moment that Moshiach doesn't come is totally unacceptable. This is how Torah sees the situation. If we don't adhere to the Rebbe's words, then we can expect a situation, as the Rebbe said in his famous *sicha*, that we don't consider it a virtual impossibility that Moshiach won't come today, and Moshiach won't come tomorrow, and Moshiach won't come the next day *r"l*. Such an observation can stem only from "worldly assumptions." The only advice to lift us from these assumptions and to release us from our inner *Galus* is to fully absorb the Rebbe's holy words, as expressed repeatedly in the last *sichos*, of "*Hinei Hinei Moshiach Ba*," and we shall immediately merit to see our King, our Moshiach, our Redeemer, with the true and complete Redemption.

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!



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MOSHIACH: SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT AGAIN

*Once again, the z'chus belongs to radio talk show host, Zev Brenner, who invited two distinguished Mashpiim to clarify the Torah's position on Moshiach and his eternal life. **

*The following is Part 4 of a transcript of the program, which aired Motzaei Shabbos, Parshas Ki Sisa, on "Talk-line With Zev Brenner – America's Leading Jewish Program," WMCA 570AM in New York; WAXY 790AM in Miami. "Talk-line with Zev Brenner" airs every Motzaei Shabbos, midnight to 2:00 am. * Transcript: Alexander Zushe Kohn*

Zev Brenner: You say that in every generation there's someone who has the potential to be Moshiach, but unless that person actualizes the goal he's not Moshiach!

Rabbi Greenberg: There are different stages in the process of Redemption. But, if you know who Moshiach is, then you know who he is. Let's say Eliyahu HaNavi would come and say "this individual is Moshiach," then even though he didn't do the things [that Moshiach does], he is still the person who is the redeemer.

Zev Brenner: If Eliyahu HaNavi comes and says that the Rebbe is Moshiach – I'm a believer. But I haven't heard Eliyahu HaNavi come and say the Rebbe is Moshiach.

Rabbi Greenberg: You don't need Eliyahu HaNavi to determine who Moshiach is. The Rebbe himself has

the status of a *navi* (prophet). In addition to having the status of a *navi*, the Rebbe also did the things that the Rambam says Moshiach has to do in order to be the presumed Moshiach.

Zev Brenner: But you yourself gave the example of somebody proclaiming Moshiach. Moshiach doesn't come and proclaim himself to be Moshiach; Eliyahu HaNavi proclaims it, right?

Rabbi Greenberg: No. You don't need anyone to "proclaim" it. Moshiach is determined either by his actions, or by a *navi*, even if the *navi* is Moshiach himself. If the *navi* says that Moshiach is now revealed, and that he is the Moshiach of the generation – that means that he is Moshiach. [And the Rebbe did say that.] The Rebbe said that the *Nasi HaDor*, the leader of the generation,

is the Moshiach of the generation.

Zev Brenner: But there was Gimmel Tammuz! So, what might have been is not the case right now! How can somebody lead us—

Rabbi Greenberg: Zev, we cannot answer five questions in one instant. The caller's original question was why do we have to say that the Rebbe is Moshiach – why is that important. And I'm trying to answer that. It's important because part of the process of the *Geula* is recognizing when something *Geuladik* happens. Just like the Rebbe said when miraculous things were happening in the Soviet Union – that we have to recognize that those miracles are part of the process of *Geula*. People have to acknowledge what is happening.

Zev Brenner: But as of right now, nothing has changed. We're still in terrible shape. We're in worse shape even than we were eight years ago, when Gimmel Tammuz happened.

Rabbi Greenberg: You can't say nothing changed. The Soviet Union *doesn't exist*. The biggest obstacle to the Jewish people being free has been taken away.

Zev Brenner: That's been taken away, but look at the big threat to Jews that exists now – the threat of Islamic terrorism. You're facing it in Israel, you're facing it in America, you're facing it *worldwide*.

Rabbi Greenberg: That threat is not a new threat. That threat was always there, and it is the *last* threat. There are many sources that say that after the destruction of all the different empires, we will still have *tzaros* from Yishmoel. That's the very last obstacle that we have before the *Geula*. And that obstacle will be removed imminently, and Moshiach will *finish* the process of *Geula*.

We all believe that. But to say "nothing happened"? The whole problem is that people are looking with *Galus*-tainted eyes. The whole

world turns upside-down and they say, “Nothing happened.” That’s not true. Tremendous things happened. Except we got so used to them, we’re so inured, that we don’t get excited about it anymore, and we look at the negative.

At any rate, why is it important that Moshiach is the Rebbe? The answer, again, is that if the Rebbe is Moshiach, as many people do believe, then it’s not enough to say, “Well, if

years until he was accepted, until he became a *melech* in the full sense of the word. The same thing is true about Moshiach: a *melech* is someone whom the people have to accept. That’s part of the process. And therefore, if you know that an individual is Moshiach, you have to accept it.

Zev Brenner: But he has to be proclaimed by everybody, not just by a particular group.

it all depends on the scenario for Moshiach. In certain scenarios Eliyahu HaNavi does *not* have to come before Moshiach; Moshiach will be identified without Eliyahu HaNavi.

Zev Brenner: Let’s go to Binyamin in Flatbush.

Binyomin: Hi. I have some serious problems, but I also want to give these gentlemen some very strong compliments. Let me first state the problems.

You say that every Lubavitcher Rebbe is the *nasi* of his generation. I want to know who decreed this? I also have some serious problems with the comparison of a person of this century to Eliyahu HaNavi and Moshe Rabbeinu. And then I want to give some serious compliments to these people – but first, if you can please address the questions.

Rabbi Majeski: Regarding the question of comparing someone in this generation to Eliyahu HaNavi, Moshe Rabbeinu, Rabbeinu HaKadosh and so on. First of all, it is true that, in general, every generation is weaker than the preceding generation. Nevertheless, we *chassidim* have heard from the Rebbe many, many times, based on many sources [that there are exceptions to this rule]. The Rebbe always brings a *Midrash* that says, “*Ein dor she’ein bo k’Avrohom, k’Moshec*” (“There is no generation that does not possess someone like Avrohom, like Moshe...”).

[Comment: *The Rebbe cites this Midrash as a source in nigla. As a source in p’nimiyus ha’Torah, the Rebbe cites the Zohar (vol. 3, p. 273; Tikkunei Zohar, tikkun 469), which speaks of “an extension of Moshe in every generation”.* –Z.K.]

Every generation has someone like Moshe Rabbeinu. When it says in *Chumash* that “*lo kam k’Moshe*” (“Never again did one rise like Moshe”), it means that in *nevua* (prophecy) Moshe was the greatest. Moshe Rabbeinu’s level of *nevua* is greater



RABBI HESCHEL GREENBERG

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he proves himself more, if he’ll do more things, I’ll be very happy to accept it. Part of the process is *kabalas hamalchus* (acceptance of the kingship).

When Dovid HaMelech was anointed by a *navi*, which means that the *Oibershter*, G-d, declared Dovid HaMelech to be the leader of the Jewish people – it wasn’t enough. The Jewish people had to accept him; they had to coronate him. It took

Rabbi Greenberg: Where does it say that Moshiach has to be proclaimed? The Rambam does not say that.

Zev Brenner: Doesn’t it say that Eliyahu is going to herald him?

Rabbi Greenberg: The Rambam says that that’s not necessarily true. The Rambam says that we don’t know the details of whether Eliyahu HaNavi has to come *before* Moshiach or *after* Moshiach. The *Achronim* explain that

than anyone else's.

[**Comment:** The Rebbe points out that the pasuk itself suggests this, for it states, "Lo kam k'Moshe od navi..." ("Never again did there rise a prophet like Moshe..."). Furthermore, says the Rebbe, perhaps Moshiach will exceed Moshe even in certain aspects of prophecy, for the pasuk says "Lo kam K'Moshe od navi b'Yisroel *asher yedao Hashem panim el panim,*" ("Never again did there rise amongst the Jewish people a prophet like Moshe, whom Hashem had known face to face...") which means, perhaps, that only in the "face to face" aspect of prophecy was Moshe the greatest. This interpretation of the pasuk, says the Rebbe, explains how the Midrash Tanchuma, which says that Moshiach will be greater than Moshe, fits in with the Rambam, who says that Moshiach will be second to Moshe in prophecy –Z.K.]

Binyomin: I want to point out one very important thing, and I'll be as short as I can about it: There's one specific guideline for matters pertaining to Moshiach, and that is the Rambam, Maimonides. In Maimonides, it clearly says that one of the main things through which you can tell that someone is Moshiach is if he wages wars for G-d. Many things that the Lubavitcher Rebbe did revolved around military things. There's Tzivos Hashem, i.e., the Army of G-d. There's a *Neiros Shabbos Kodesh* campaign [which Lubavitchers refer to by the acronym "Neshek," i.e., weaponry]. Some children even refer to the Lubavitcher Rebbe as their general, so to speak. You have Lag B'Omer, military-style parades. If anyone believes that this [belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach] came through a vacuum, that Lubavitcher *chassidim's* belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach just happened out of the blue, they're making a major mistake. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, over the course of his leadership, clearly cultivated this idea and reinforced it time and time again.



RABBI SHLOMA MAJESKI

Every generation has someone like Moshe Rabbeinu. When it says in Chumash that "lo kam k'Moshe" ("Never again did one rise like Moshe"), it means that in nevu'a (prophecy) Moshe was the greatest. Moshe Rabbeinu's level of nevu'a is greater than anyone else's. But [as far as righteousness is concerned], in every generation there is a tzaddik on the level of Moshe Rabbeinu.

Zev Brenner: I think he's saying that the Rebbe cultivated the idea that he is Moshiach. I remember when I was a little boy, too, the whisper [in Lubavitch] was that the Rebbe is Moshiach. Then it was whispers; now it's volumes, it's much louder—

Binyomin: Before Gimmel Tammuz – and there's a video tape of this – N'shei Chabad, Lubavitch Women's Organization, which is considered mainstream Lubavitch, had a petition drive, where people signed petitions. And I have a copy of such a petition right here, saying that the Rebbe is Moshiach. The Lubavitcher Rebbe welcomed the petitions, he took the boxes [of petitions], and he encouraged further behavior of this kind. This is why I'm saying that these fellows over here are being honest. I wish more

Every generation has someone like Moshe Rabbeinu. When it says in Chumash that "lo kam k'Moshe" ("Never again did one rise like

Moshe"), it means

that in nevu'a (prophecy) Moshe was the greatest. Moshe Rabbeinu's level of nevu'a is greater than anyone else's. But [as far as righteousness is concerned], in every generation there is a tzaddik on the level of Moshe Rabbeinu.

Lubavitchers would be as honest as these two are. There's this view people have that half of Lubavitch believes one way, and the other half believes the other way. It's not so. They all believe the same way.

Zev Brenner: So you're saying that all Lubavitchers are *Meshichistin*?!

Binyomin: A hundred percent! Every single one of them!

Rabbi Greenberg: There's one misconception – I appreciate the compliments [by the way], although I don't know if it was intended—

Binyomin: It was intended!

Rabbi Greenberg: Okay. I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. But let me just clarify something. When Tzivos Hashem came about – and I don't remember which year it was, but I was a child way before there was a Tzivos Hashem. My father, who was a *talmid* in *Yeshiva Torah V'Daas*,

a Lubavitcher – and he was one of the *g'dolim*, and recognized even in the *Litvishe* circle – taught me and raised me with the belief that Rebbe is Moshiach. I was probably five or six years old when I first heard that. And my father believed that about the previous Rebbe, as did the *chassidim* of the Rebbe Rashab [about the Rebbe Rashab], and the *chassidim* of all the other Rebbeim. It was obviously not as pronounced. Do you know why it wasn't as pronounced? Because the whole process of Moshiach is a process that grows with time.

Zev Greenberg: Rabbi Greenberg, you made a very good point. You said that each generation believed that the Rebbe [of that generation] was Moshiach. Yet, they were not Moshiach! They didn't lead the people out of *Galus*, and—

Binyomin: It's cultivation. He's saying that when he was a young a child he was taught this [belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach.] As the generations, and the Rebbe's leadership progressed it became more pronounced.

Rabbi Greenberg: Absolutely.

Binyomin: A hundred percent.

Rabbi Greenberg: You're definitely right.

Zev Brenner: We're going to try to squeeze in a few more phone calls. Please try to keep it brief and to the point. Let's go to Rivki in Kensigton. Go ahead Rivki.

Rivki: First of all, who proclaimed the Rebbe to be Moshiach? I'm just curious to know. Also I have a comment. My father always says that a famous *rav* said that those who know don't say, and those who say don't know.

Rabbi Greenberg: Let me respond to, "Who proclaimed the Rebbe to be Moshiach?" Even though I said before that it's based to a great extent on what the Rebbe himself said, there are also hundreds of *rabbanim*, all

over the world, *g'dolei Yisroel*, who have also proclaimed the Rebbe to be Moshiach. Rabbi Yaakov Yosef, one of Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef's sons, also signed the proclamation, and many others who are not known as Lubavitchers.

[Comment: It is worth noting that Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef himself wrote a beautiful and elaborate approbation to the seifer Yechi HaMelech (on the Rambam's halachos concerning Moshiach), and later gave the author

Binyomin: These fellows over here are being honest. I wish more Lubavitchers would be as honest as these two are. There's this view people have that half of Lubavitch believes one way, and the other half believes the other way. It's not so. They all believe the same way.

permission to include the same approbation in his seifer Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach (on how the Rebbe has met the criteria for Moshiach set forth by the Rambam and the Chabad Rebbeim – 1993). Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach also includes approbations from several other g'dolei Yisroel. –Z.K.]

So if you ask, "Who proclaimed the Rebbe to be Moshiach?" the answer is that it's not just the Rebbe's words alone, which are good enough

for me, but others have also proclaimed this – and there are tens of thousands, if not hundred's of thousands of Jews who believe it.

Now if you'll ask how come all of the *g'dolei Yisroel* didn't recognize the Rebbe as Moshiach, how come all of the world didn't give the Rebbe the *kavod* that he deserved, and so on and so forth – this is not a difficulty. There were people who complained years ago already, decades ago, saying, "Why doesn't the Rebbe consult with other *g'dolei Yisroel* about this, and about that?" That was the same type of complaint that we are hearing today. The answer to the complaint is that the Rebbe as the leader of the generation—

[Comment: At this point Rabbi Greenberg is interrupted with a question from left field. Apparently he was going to make the same point that the legendary chassid, the late Reb Mendel Futerfas, once made at a farbrengen in Kfar Chabad, where a non-Lubavitcher chassid challenged him with the question, "Why doesn't the Rebbe consult with other g'dolei Yisroel?"

Reb Mendel replied: "If there is a crisis among the housecats of the world, and they simply cannot figure out what to do, they go to the Persian cat for advice. If the Persian cat does not have a solution, they all proceed to the bobcat. If the bobcat cannot solve the matter, they all approach the king himself, the lion. Even the dumbest person, however, would never seek the advice of the most intelligent of cats!"

Reb Mendel is saying, in other words, that there exists an infinite gap between the Rebbe's level and the level of other g'dolei Yisroel, as chassidus explains regarding the difference between Yosef and his brothers. Interestingly even in connection with the brothers, the Tribes of G-d, the holy sons of Yaakov, the Torah says, "Va'yekanu bo echav" ("His brothers envied him"). –Z.K.]

(To be continued.)

NESHAMOS HEAR ABOUT IT AND GATHER ROUND

PRESENTED BY RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER REICHMAN

*What did the Rebbe Rashab's mother know about her son, and how did she react to the idea of opening Tomchei T'mimim? * To whom did the Rebbe say, "I despise your silver and gold; the House of Hashem will be built without you" * Who was the man to whom the Rebbe Rashab gave inordinate honor? * Why did the Rebbe Rashab chop wood together with the servant, and why did he stop? * We present to you a compilation of stories in honor of Beis Nissan, the yom hilula of the Rebbe Rashab.*

NESHAMOS DRAWN TO CHASSIDUS

When the Rebbe Rashab decided to found Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, he told his mother Rebbetzin Rivka about it. His mother said, "*Meila, mit essen, vos vet zain? Nu, vos mir vellen essen – vellen zei essen ... ober fun vanet vest nemen inglach?*" (Regarding the food, okay – what we eat, they'll eat ... but where will you get boys [who will want to learn in a *chassidic yeshiva*]?)

The Rebbe answered, "*Az s'iz da ort vos m'lernt dorten chassidus, heren di neshamos, un zei klaiben zich tzu*" (when there's a place where you learn *chassidus*, *neshamos* hear about it and gather round).

I DESPISE YOUR SILVER AND GOLD

At first the material conditions in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch were not firmly established. Because of this,

the *hanhala* had to turn away many students who did not meet the high standards of the *yeshiva*.

A letter from a wealthy man arrived at the *yeshiva* one day. He offered significant monetary aid, but he made it conditional on certain details that he wanted implemented in the *yeshiva* (for example, he wanted a bell to ring at the end of *s'darim*).

The Rebbe Rashab's response was, "I despise your silver and gold. The *Beis Elokim* will be built without you!"

(As told by R' L. Zalmanov. These two stories were often retold by R' Pinye Altheus.)

WHAT A MOTHER KNOWS ABOUT HER SON

Once, after a *farbrengen* with the Rebbe Rashab that took place on some happy occasion (Yud-Tes Kislev or Purim) the *chassidim* were particularly exuberant. One of the *chassidim* (it may have been R' Moshe of Zemin, who was known as Moshe Zemin) met Rebbetzin Rivka, a^h,

the Rebbe Rashab's mother, and the *chassid*, being drunk, candidly said to her, "*Ir veist nit vos far a sun ir farmogt*" (you don't know what kind of son you have).

The Rebbetzin, who was known for her *chassidic* shrewdness, answered him with charming humility, "*Far mir iz genug vos ich veis...*" (for me it's enough what I already know).

(Told by *mashpia* R' Chaim Shaul Bruk)

THE REBBE WROTE HIS PROPHECY

When the Rebbe Rashab founded Yeshivas Toras Emes in Chevron, he sent the *mashpia* R' Zalman Havlin there, as well as some *shluchim*-T'mimim. One of those *talmidim* was R' Alter Simchovitz, a^h.

As time passed, R' Alter yearned to see the Rebbe and he returned to Lubavitch. Later on, R' Zalman had to return to Lubavitch in order to take care of matters concerning the military for the *shluchim*-T'mimim.

While R' Zalman was in Lubavitch, World War I broke out. He was told that his family would be returning to Russia, since they were expelled by the Turks, who were then fighting the Russians.

One day, R' Zalman met R' Alter and suggested that he marry his eldest daughter, Rivka, saying: You know she's a *yerei Shamayim*, etc. R' Alter did nothing on his own, and so they went to the Rebbe Rashab to ask for his advice and to receive his *bracha* for the *shidduch*.

When they left the Rebbe Rashab, they met the Rebbe Rayatz, the Rebbe's son. R' Zalman told him he "got a *mazal tov*," and told him about the Rebbe's *bracha* for the *shidduch*.

The Rebbe Rayatz said: "If Father said it, then I won't say a word, but it's a wonder that you are making a *shidduch* without knowing where the *kalla* is!"

Some time later the family arrived in Lubavitch. Before the wedding R' Alter went to ask for a *bracha* and the Rebbe wrote his *bracha* on a piece of paper.

Ten years later R' Alter's wife suddenly died. At that point R' Alter showed his brother-in-law, R' Yitzchok Lifschitz, *a"h*, the note the Rebbe had written, and said to him: "Back then I had the feeling that we wouldn't live together long, for against his usual custom, the Rebbe did not write, "*bracha l'arichus yamim*" (a blessing for long life) on the note."

(I heard this from R' Yitzchok Lifschitz)

ON THE CONTRARY

The *chassid*, R' Yitzchok Michael Alperowitz, who lived in Moscow (I was with him for *Kiddush* on Shabbos a number of times, and the great *chassid*, R' Mendel Abramson, *a"h*, was there too), sent his son, Leibke, to learn with the Tamim, Rabbi Ben-Tzion Maroz, *a"h*.

R' Yitzchok Michael once came to the Rebbe Rashab complaining that his son had asked a question, but the *melamed's* answer hadn't satisfied his son.

His son's question was: It says "*Adon olam asher malach b'terem kol yetzur nivra*" (the Master of the world Who ruled [the world] before anything was created). How did He rule before there were creations, i.e., who did He rule over? Since the *melamed* didn't fully answer the question, he deserved to be fired or to have his salary reduced!

The Rebbe Rashab listened and smiled throughout. He finally said, "On the contrary, if Leibke can ask a question like that, you should

increase the *melamed's* salary!"

(I heard this from the chassid R' Zalman Leib Estulin)

THE REBBE RASHAB AND THE CHAFETZ CHAIM

The Tamim R' Ben-Tzion Maroz aided the Rebbe Rashab when he was



"When there's a place where you learn chassidus, neshamos hear about it and gather round."

at the convention of *g'dolei Yisroel* in Moscow in 5677 (1917). One day, the Chafetz Chaim came and asked whether he could speak with the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe was living on the second floor at the time, and when he heard the Chafetz Chaim

speaking, he came down the steps, went over to the Chafetz Chaim, and linked arms with him, and thus, arm in arm, they went up the stairs to the Rebbe's room, where they spoke.

At the end of the conversation the Rebbe once again linked arms with the Chafetz Chaim, and went down the stairs with him.

When R' Ben-Tzion Maroz described this, he concluded by saying, "I never saw the Rebbe Rashab give such a great honor to anyone but the Chafetz Chaim."

THE REBBE'S "CHOCHMA"

The *mashpia*, R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman once spoke of the simplicity (and ignorance) of the Rebbe's aides. (It was a known thing that the Rebbe purposely used such aides so that they wouldn't comprehend, and thus wouldn't relate much about what they saw.)

Once, one of them asked the Rebbe a question: "In my courtyard there is a garden in which my wife grows vegetables and fruit. She's getting on in years and doesn't have the strength to continue doing this. What should we do?"

The Rebbe advised him to hire a *goy* to do the work.

The aide said in wonderment, "Oy Rebbe, you are so wise! My wife said the same thing!"

(I heard this from R' Zalman Leib Estulin)

THE REBBE AT WORK WITH A SAW

The *mashpia*, R' Chaim Shaul Brook, related (when he was in Moscow on his way to Eretz Yisroel) that the Rebbe Rashab had to do

physical exercise at the behest of his doctors. He would go to a certain spot in Lubavitch (or nearby) accompanied by his servant, where they would grasp a large saw from both ends, and saw through a thick tree, work that requires much exertion.

The Rebbe once asked his servant to go with him, but the servant refused. The Rebbe asked: Why? The servant answered: "Rebbe, when you get there, you suddenly delve deeply into your thoughts and in the end, I have to return home and take both the saw and you. I don't have the strength!"

(I heard this from R' Zalman Leib Estulin)

THE BACHUR THE REBBE WAS MEKAREV

The *meshpia*, R' Mendel Futerfas, related: "I once went to the Tamim, R' Mordechai Aharon Friedman, *a"n*, when he was an old man (when he lived in Kfar Chabad), over eighty years old. I saw how he ate, cutting his food into very little pieces.

"I asked him about it and he told me that when he learned in Lubavitch they nicknamed him the Malach (angel). You see, in his childhood he had suffered a severe hernia. The T'mimim who were supposed to present themselves to the draft board in the various cities would send him instead of them, and the doctors would dismiss him/them because of the hernia. Naturally this was done with the blessing of the Rebbe Rashab.

The Rebbe highly esteemed R' Mordechai Aharon's *mesirus nefesh*, and was greatly *mekarev* him. When he wanted to see the Rebbe he would knock on the door, and when he heard the Rebbe say, "*arain*" (enter), he would do so.

One day he went to the Rebbe and complained that he could not refrain from eating because of his weak health, "but what should I do about the *avoda* of *iskafia*? How can one be a *chassid* without it?"

The Rebbe listened and told him that his *avodas iskafia* should be that when he ate, it should be in tiny pieces.

NO VACATION FROM THE YOKE OF HEAVEN

The Rebbe Rashab would travel to the country every summer. A group of wealthy men, grandsons of *Anash*, once came to visit him. Wealthy people are known to be somewhat impertinent as they feel close to the Rebbe because of their involvement with the *Klal*. In their impudence they inquired of the Rebbe, "How does the Rebbe feel on vacation?"

The Rebbe answered, "The yoke of Heaven is always present, so what's the difference [whether I'm in Lubavitch or over here]?"

(I heard this from R' Mendel Futerfas)

THE STRAPS OF THE T'FILLIN ARE LIKE THE T'FILLIN

The Tamim, R' Moshe Chaim Dubrawsky, *a"n*, related that the Rebbe Rashab once saw a Jew's *t'fillin* straps dragging on the floor. The Rebbe was perturbed and he said, "*Vos valgeren zich di t'fillin oif der erd?*" (Why are the *t'fillin* "wandering" on the floor?), using the word "*t'fillin*" to indicate that the law concerning the *t'fillin* straps is identical with the laws concerning the *t'fillin* proper.

(I heard this from R' Mendel Futerfas who heard it from R' Moshe Chaim who was a student in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch)

"POURING" SO MUCH ON THE T'MIMIM

The Rebbe Rashab once saw a Tamim bounding up the steps, taking them two at a time (this took place in Rostov where the *yeshiva* and the Rebbe's apartment were in buildings with a number of floors, while the buildings in Lubavitch were one storey.)

The Rebbe was bothered by this

for he regarded it as *chitzonius* and the opposite of a Chabad-settled mind, and said, "*Men gist oif zei azoifil un es poel't gornit*" (we pour so much on the T'mimim yet it accomplishes nothing [in terms of changing the nature of their *middos*]).

(Heard from R' Mendel)

ISKAFIA IS A MUST

R' Mendel Futerfas related: One of the principles of *chinuch* that they gave in Lubavitch was that you must do *iskafia*, whether in great measure or small, for without *iskafia* you can make no progress.

Some took this to an extreme, like the Tamim who reached the point where eating became loathsome to him, resulting in the endangering of his life. The Rebbe told him to stop this sort of *avoda*. The Rebbe Rashab told him, "*Az er zol tzu trogen zich tzu taam achila*" (he should bring himself to feeling some sort of taste in food so that he would be able to eat).

I did not see any *hiddurim* in eating amongst the Tamim, the incredible *oveid*, R' Dovid Horodoker (Kievman), *a"n*, but in other things like *netilas yodayim* (i.e., examining the cup and hands before washing). I once asked him about this and he told me that at first he was extremely particular about eating, and didn't even drink the milk the T'mimim drank in the morning. This was because the milk was watered down and was put in a metal container, and since the Alter Rebbe writes, in his *Shulchan Aruch*, to be careful about water in a metal container that remained in it overnight, he was stringent about the milk mixed with water.

He continued with his stringencies until his health was affected and the Rebbe found out about it. The next time he had *yechidus*, the Rebbe told him to stop: "*Genug hiddurim in achila; m'darf unhoiben oisnitzen l'sheim Shamayim*" (enough with the *hiddurim* in eating; you have to start using food for the sake of Heaven).

THE KNIFE THAT WAS CHECKED DURING A YECHIDUS

BY A. MICHAELI



Rabbi Menachem Mendel Alperin

*I entered the Rebbe's room again. The Rebbe took the knife from me, got up, and went to the window. * A rare description of a yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz.*

On a gorgeous day, the likes of which you don't often see in wintry New York, I went up to the apartment of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Alperin, one of the *zikei chassidei Chabad* and distinguished residents of Crown Heights, in order to hear his firsthand account of a *yechidus* he had with the Rebbe Rayatz.

Here is what he told me:

The *rav* of the town of Krivitz in the Vilna district had died young and had left little orphans. Rabbi Shabsi Alperin, his wife, and eight children lived in the same town. R' Shabsi, *a"h* served as *shochet* and *bodek* for the townspeople, and they showed him respect for his *yiras Shamayim* and for being a Torah scholar.

When the *rav* died, they asked R' Shabsi to take over his position. R' Shabsi accepted the offer, and served as *rav* for twenty years. This was a tiny town where most of the Jews *davened* in the same *shul*.

As a Chabad *chassid* who was *mekushar* heart and soul to the Rebbe

Rashab, R' Shabsi tried to provide a bit of *chassidic* ambiance to the *shul*. Every Shabbos between *Mincha* and *Maariv*, he reviewed a *maamer chassidus*.

R' Shabsi didn't earn a great deal as a *shochet* as his services weren't in much demand, and so Mrs. Alperin opened a tiny grocery store. Her customers were primarily gentiles, yet the other Jewish shopkeepers said that her store infringed on their business. Although they were very upset, the storm died down after a short while and life went back to normal with R' Shabsi shechting and his wife running the store.

Years passed, and one day R' Shabsi fell ill, after which he felt *sh'chita* was too hard for him. His wife begged their son, Menachem Mendel, to learn the craft and to replace his father as *shochet*. He acceded to her request and went to another town to learn *sh'chita*. In the meantime his father passed away and the town buzzed about the anticipated change. There was opposition from the townspeople who insisted that they would not agree to

the appointment of R' Shabsi's son. Their reason? They said that a wealthy person could not serve in a position of "*klei kodesh*," because it was the job for the poor and modest.

This was actually a ploy to mask the anger that hadn't dissipated ever since the wife had opened her business. "We didn't know what to do," said R' Alperin. "Naturally my mother opposed the development of a new *machlokes*, yet as the wife of a *shochet* and a descendent of a family of *shochetim* from generations back, she really wanted the tradition to carry on."

Mrs. Alperin advised her son to go to the Rebbe Rayatz and tell him the story, and to do as the Rebbe instructed him. She told him to take his knife along. Menachem Mendel wondered about that suggestion, but his mother insisted that it was important. He dutifully listened to her and took his knife along with him.

This took place in 5698 (1938) when the Rebbe Rayatz was at the other end of Poland, and the trip to get there was very long. R' Menachem Mendel finally arrived at the hotel where the Rebbe was staying late in the morning. That same day the *chassid* and *mashpia*, R' Shmuel Levitin, arrived from Russia, and it was

announced that only R' Levitin would be seen in *yechidus* that day. R' Alperin's *yechidus* was arranged for the next day.

"I fearfully entered the Rebbe's room," recounts R' Alperin, "and the Rebbe greeted me warmly. I told the Rebbe about my father, who was the town *shochet*. The Rebbe asked me a number of questions, and after I had answered them I described the current situation regarding the unjustified opposition to my becoming the town *shochet*."

"The Rebbe asked me, 'Do you have your *chalef* (the ritual slaughtering knife)? I was astounded by the question. I didn't think the Rebbe would ask to see it. I told the Rebbe I had it in my room and the Rebbe told me to go and get it."

"I entered the Rebbe's room once again, this time with the knife. The Rebbe took the knife from me, got up, and went to the window. The Rebbe moved the curtain and examined the knife by daylight (many people don't know that the knife is checked by daylight before it's examined with the fingernail). Then he ran his nail down the blade and then told me to check the knife myself."

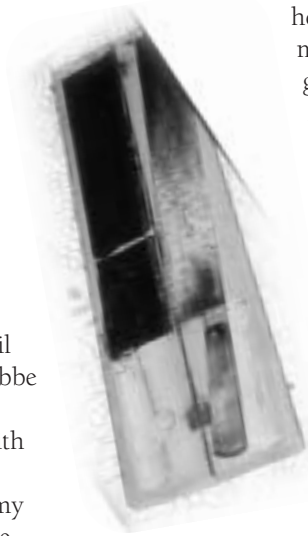
"I didn't go over to the window after the Rebbe had just done so, but I passed my nail down the blade. I didn't say a word. The Rebbe didn't say anything about the *kashrus* of the knife. He just said he would send a letter with me to the Lubavitcher minister in Vilna (the Rebbe's representative in that city), and on my way home I should stop off and give him the letter."

"I realized the *yechidus* had ended. I began to say some words in parting when the Rebbe said, 'Why are you rushing to return?' I said that my mother was yearning to see me and asked me to return as soon as possible. The Rebbe told me to stay for a few days, and said, 'There are two *bachurim* from the *yeshiva* and they'll learn *chassidus* with you.' (One of them was R' Shneur Zalman Gurary.)"

"I listened to the Rebbe and remained another few days in which I learned *chassidus* with enthusiasm, and then I went home. I stopped off in Vilna and gave the letter to the "minister." I had no idea of the contents of the letter, and naturally he did not ask me. It was enough that the letter had reached its intended destination."

"In the meantime news had spread in my hometown that the Rebbe had sent a special messenger to the area, and they were all asked to gather in *shul* after *davening* to listen to him. After *Maariv*, everybody surrounded the *shliach* who stood on the *bima* ready to transmit the Rebbe's message to the Jews of Krivitz. He began by saying that he had a letter to the community from the Rebbe, and he read the letter in which the Rebbe said R' Shabsi's son, Menachem Mendel, should take over his father's position."

"A great tumult broke out, for the townspeople did not agree to end their opposition. After all, they were not *chassidim*, although they respected the Rebbe, and the appointment did not take place. Yet this was a moving experience for me which illustrated for me, in the most unusual way, how the shepherd cares for his flock and a Rebbe for his *chassid*."



The knife that was examined by the Rebbe

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“I ALWAYS BELONGED TO THE REBBE”

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

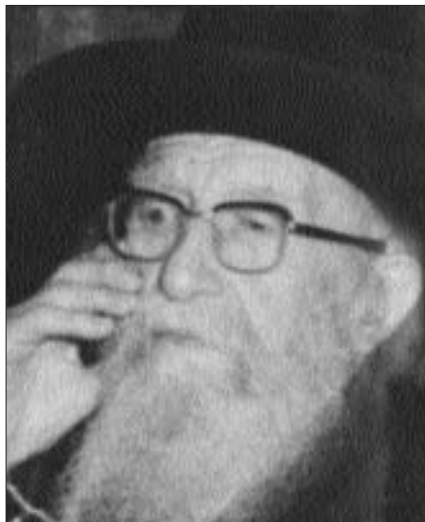
In honor of Beis Nissan, yom hilula of the Rebbe Rashab, we present a compilation of stories told by Rabbi Yaakov Landau, z”l, rav of B’nei Brak and ben bayis of the Rebbe Rashab. The stories were recorded by a chassid who wishes to remain anonymous, who attended Rabbi Landau’s shiurim and heard these stories from him. Taken from the archives of Rabbi Ben-Tzion Grossman.

TZADDIKIM ARE CALLED “ALIVE”

When Rabbi Yaakov Landau, z”l, was a *talmid* in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in Lubavitch, he was very close with the Rebbe Rashab. This is why he had a particularly difficult time dealing with the Rebbe Rashab’s passing.

Being broken, he would read a *pa”n* at the *Ohel*, saying that he no longer desired to remain in this world, and that he asked to be buried within fifty cubits of the *Ohel*, even though he was a young man. The Rebbe Rashab appeared to his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, and told him to tell R’ Yaakov not to write nonsense.

R’ Landau himself described this period in a *Tanya* class he gave. “I was extremely attached to the Rebbe, and *histalkus* was something impossible to describe in words. At that time I was poverty-stricken, literally lacking bread and needing shoes. I decided to go to the *Ohel* without saying *T’hillim*, etc., but just like when he was alive, and to give a *kvittel* and leave.



“I went to buy two small *challos l’kavod Shabbos*. I met someone who suggested I buy some merchandise, a pair of earrings, to sell at a profit. I told him I had no money, but I would go to the *rav* of Kremenchug, z”l, with whom I was good friends, and I would ask him for a loan.

“I asked the *rav* of Kremenchug if he had money, but he told me he did not. Instead he offered to send a *shliach* to the Rebbe Rayatz, for

perhaps he had. I figured I could do that myself.

“I went and knocked on the door of the Rebbe Rayatz, and he opened the door and heard my request, and said he too had no money, but down below lived a Jew named Zalman Yudel, and perhaps he had. Zalman Yudel did have, and he loaned me money, and I bought the earrings and made a large profit, and then I bought shoes and other merchandise, etc.

“I told the Rebbe Rayatz that I had made a profit, and he told me, ‘This gives me great joy, and now I will tell you that when you knocked at my door I heard a voice saying, ‘R’ Yaakov came to me today. It’s a great *rachmanus* (pity) on him. See to it that you help him.’

“I didn’t know if I was awake when I heard it or it was in a dream, and I had no money, but I thought of asking R’ Zalman Yudel and baruch Hashem that he helped out.”

That’s what the Rebbe Rayatz said to me, and I had not said a word to him about being at his father’s *Ohel*.

“We see the greatness of *tzaddikim* that even in their passing they are called ‘alive,’ for they help and rescue us.”

EXONERATED AFTER DAVENING AT THE OHEL

R’ Landau said at one of his *shiurim*: “When I was in Moscow I could not be a *rav*, so I worked as a bookkeeper. A householder once asked me to do something fraudulent for him, aside from his official accounting.

“One day, an inspector caught me with the documents. I was subpoenaed to be in court Friday night. I was extremely fearful. I consulted with some friends, and they all said that there was no way I would be declared innocent.

“The custom was that every year they made a lottery for the trip to the

Rebbe Rashab's *Ohel*. One of my *talmidim* won the lottery. I urged him to let me go in his stead, and he agreed.

"I went to the *Ohel* and poured out my heart. Later at the trial, the prosecutor went over to the judge to give him all the details of the accusation with the documents, etc., and suddenly the judge yelled at him, 'Why are you bothering me with this foolishness?' and shamed him. Then the judge went to his room for two hours and finally emerged with the declaration that I was completely innocent of any crime! The room was full of lawyers and they all shook my hand in congratulations and couldn't believe how I had been exonerated."

THE REBBE TREATED ME LIKE A SON

R' Landau arrived in Lubavitch at the age of fifteen or sixteen in the year 5668 (1908). Generally, when a new *bachur* arrived in Lubavitch, the Rebbe Rayatz was the one who accepted him into the *yeshiva*. When R' Landau came, the Rebbe Rayatz wasn't in the *yeshiva* and the Rebbe Rashab himself greeted him and was *mekarev* him with great affection.

R' Landau once said, "*Ich bin alle mul geven der Rebbe'ns*" (I was always the Rebbe's). On another occasion he said, "Because of Hashem's kindness, the Rebbe was *mekarev* me like a son."

R' Landau once related that he was such a *mekurav* of the Rebbe Rashab that the Rebbe made a *hoshana* for him as well as for other family members, and every year he gave it to him and said, "*Na dir a hoshana*" (here's a *hoshana* for you).

R' LANDAU DARED TO TELL THE REBBE

The Rebbe Rashab was not particular about the *z'man t'filla* and often *davened* after *chatzos*. On Shabbos he would finish *davening* at five in the afternoon (he began at

BRIEF STORIES AND QUOTES FROM THE REBBE RASHAB AS TOLD BY R' LANDAU

*When the Rebbe Rashab heard a child cry, he would cry along with him in empathy. He said that really his nature was such that he didn't care about others, but he worked on himself, "*Er ot zich oisge'arbet yeder shtikel fleish, afilu a nogel iz bai im nisht gebliben nisht oisge'arbet*" (he worked on every bit of flesh, even a nail did not remain that was not worked on).

*The Rebbe Rashab taught us not to say, "*echeta v'ashuv*" (I will sin and repent), but "*yecheta v'ashuv*" (he will sin and repent) so as not to say, "I will sin," about oneself.

*The Rebbe Rashab once told me that when he sat alone in his room and learned *Likkutei Torah*, he had a *hasaga b'Atzmus* (grasp of the Divine Essence).

*I once heard the Rebbe Rashab say the *bracha* of "*al netilas yodayim*" in the morning, when my room in the summer home was adjacent to his, and all my limbs trembled; he uttered each word with great difficulty.

*There's a tradition that if you hold something handwritten by the Rebbe and along with that you read a *pa'n* or say it by heart, then for those who have great *hiskashrus* it is effective. This was accepted practice by *nu'ente* (those *chassidim* who were particularly close to the Rebbe), and not everyone knew of this. I did this too on more than one occasion.

*The Rebbe Rashab said that learning *Igeres HaT'shuva* is a *tikkun*, and he told those who had sinned to learn *Igeres HaT'shuva* eighteen times (before dawn).

*The Rebbe Rashab was told everything in *yechidus* (i.e., sins too), but even without telling the Rebbe, he knew the state of the person coming before him, whether in spiritual matters or in health matters and the like.

*The Rebbe Rashab fasted a lot, but he hid this from the Rebbetzin, and he asked the servant to eat instead of him without letting on that he was the one who ate.

*The Rebbe Rayatz once went to his father on Tisha B'Av morning (when *t'fillin* are not worn) and saw him in *t'fillin*. The Rebbe Rashab said, "What should I do when my soul doesn't allow me to do otherwise?"

*The Rebbe Rashab would say *chassidus* loudly, to the extent that even when the church bells rang – *l'havdil elef alfei havdalos* – his voice was louder and drowned it out.

*Rabbi Landau once related that he still remembered the second night of Rosh HaShana 5680 (1919) when the Rebbe Rashab said a *maamer* after *Maariv*, and everybody who heard it went crazy over it, since the Rebbe had offered a particularly brilliant novel insight. When the *maamer* was over, all of them, on their own, got up to dance with great enthusiasm.

*He once heard Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah say about the Rebbe Rashab that if his *tzitzis* became folded while he was asleep, he woke up immediately.

*He once related that the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Rayatz urged him to take on the burden of *rabbanus*.

*Regarding the position of *rav* which Rabbi Landau served in for many years, he once said: "You've got to be jealous of the real *ovdim* among the *chassidim*, who are completely devoted to *iyun* and *avoda*; *rabbanus* is a much lower level" (i.e., he was referring to himself, meaning that he couldn't devote himself to *avoda* as much since he was a *rav*).

nine in the morning). He would *daven* alone in his room.

R' Landau once peeked through the keyhole and saw the Rebbe Rashab saying, "*kulam ahuvim, kulam berurim*" with tears running down his cheeks.

R' Landau would wait until the Rebbe finished *davening* and then he made *Kiddush* and ate the Shabbos meal with the Rebbe. He described how one time he ate the meal with the Rebbe without any other guests present. R' Landau asked the Rebbe

about what it says in the *Tanya*, that the revelation of G-dliness is through the *tzaddikim*, yet in our generation we don't see this, he asked. The Rebbe Rashab answered that there's a difference between *neshamos* of Atzilus and our generation.

R' Landau replied (after great internal effort and with his eyes downward and his face aflame in embarrassment), "But today we also have *neshamos* of Atzilus," referring to the Rebbe Rashab.

The Rebbe looked at him and

said, "Even within Atzilus there are levels. When R' Pinchas of Koritz moved his hand from one place to another, it was not done without a specific intent," and as he said this, the Rebbe moved his hand, and R' Landau said one could see that he did this with *kavana*.

In order to show R' Landau that he didn't mind his question, the Rebbe honored him with the *zimun* at *Birkas HaMazon*, which he didn't usually do.

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HOW DOES THE REBBE'S ANSWER APPLY?

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

Every Tuesday a *shiur* for women takes place at the home of the Entizadeh family in Netanya. The *chassidus shiur* is given by the *rav* for Iranian Jews living in Netanya, Rabbi Moshe Entizadeh. A mixed crowd attends, with some women who are not yet observant, old and young, women of all backgrounds who come together to learn *chassidus*.

At one of these classes there was a knock at the door. Somebody opened the door to see an older couple standing there looking sad.

"I heard a lot about miracles the Lubavitcher Rebbe does through the *Igros Kodesh*," said the man, as though wanting to verify that he had arrived at the right place.

Rabbi Entizadeh shook his hand and asked the couple to come in and sit down until the end of the class. When the class was over and people had left, Rabbi Entizadeh sat down to hear the couple's story.

They poured out their hearts and told him that due to a fight with a friend, the man had fallen into deep depression, and found it hard to function. "I suffer from fear and depression," said the man. "I have visited the best doctors, but they haven't helped me. They all promised a quick change, but nothing has changed, and my condition is only getting worse. I would like to write to the Rebbe and be helped," the man concluded sorrowfully.

Rabbi Entizadeh explained what writing to the Rebbe entails. He added that they should resolve to take on a

good deed in order to be "vessels" for a *bracha*. The couple committed to a certain *mitzva* and then the man sat down to write his letter. He concluded it by saying, "Rebbe, save me. I can't go on."

Rabbi Entizadeh handed him a volume of *Igros Kodesh* (volume 15) and the man put his letter into it.

Photo for purpose of illustration only. People in picture are not those mentioned in story.



When the volume was opened they read a letter (p. 343) that had been written to Rabbi Yehoshua Yosevitz from Yerushalayim (the *menahel* of Yeshivas Toras Emes). The Rebbe wrote about *bris mila* for adults: **In answer to your letter in which you write that you had the opportunity to help bring someone into the covenant of Avrohom Avinu, etc., it's surprising that apparently it took some time until the money had been raised ... By the way, since you write that the man who was circumcised was over bar mitzva, they gave him anesthesia, meaning**

general anesthesia, this should have been clarified with a *rav moreh horaa* ...

"I was taken aback," admits Rabbi Entizadeh. "The answer had nothing to do with what the man had written. Even if I suspected that the man wasn't circumcised, when he told me he was from Libya, I knew he had been circumcised on the eighth day. I didn't know what to tell him. I finally halfheartedly told him that the letter was about a *bris mila* for an adult.

The couple rose in astonishment. "How did the Rebbe know?" they cried out together, as a chill went up my spine.

It turned out, that the man's *bris* had been performed by a doctor who was not a *mohel*, and certainly no expert in the *halachos*. The couple didn't know that the *bris* hadn't been done properly, and they were shocked by the Rebbe's answer. It was open *ruach ha'kodesh*.

On the spot the couple agreed to do whatever was necessary *al pi halacha*. Rabbi Moshe Entizadeh referred them to Bris Yosef Yitzchok, directed by Rabbi Yaron Amit. No further connection was maintained between the couple and Rabbi Entizadeh.

At the *Kinus HaShluchim* 5763, Rabbi Entizadeh was in 770. One evening he was *farbrenging* with the T'mimim, in the course of which he related some miracle stories with the *Igros Kodesh*. One of the stories he told was about this couple.

By amazing *hashgacha pratis*, Rabbi Yaron Amit was sitting there at the time. He got up and provided the postscript to the story. He said the couple had contacted him and he did what had to be done *al pi halacha*. He said he continued to be in touch with the man and one day the man told him that his fear and depression had disappeared!

ONLY FOR YOUR SAKES

BY SHAI GEFEN

THE “SLAUGHTER IN BASRA” IS TAKING PLACE

Gulf War II is a continuation of the war that did not fully end. We don't know when and how this war will end but the Jewish people feel that this is a “heavenly war,” a war that is not a natural one, and that the *Midrash* in which Hashem tells the Jewish people, “Everything I've done, I did for your sakes,” is happening before our very eyes.

The last time around, the Rebbe MH”M said that Eretz Yisroel is the safest place, and today everybody has adopted those prophetic words. Today it seems there's not one *rav* who does not repeat those words. That's good, because the Rebbe spoke sharply about all those who sowed fear and who spoke negatively of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel.

When we reread the Rebbe's *sichos* from that period of time, we see that the war was no simple matter. The Rebbe firmly stated that the war with Iraq is a stage in the revelation of *Melech HaMoshiach*. The first battle did not end, and today we see quite clearly that from Heaven, as it were, they are making an effort to conclude this war with the annihilation of the dictator.

One cannot help but be astonished by the open prophecy of the Rebbe in his reference to the verse in Yeshaya, “*zevach l'Hashem b'Batzra*.” Two days **after the end of the first Gulf War**, on Shabbos Parshas Ki Sisa, 16 Adar 5751, the

Rebbe spoke about the war in Basra: “May it be that Hashem will help them succeed in their war in Basra – not the Betzer in the desert (“*es Betzer BaMidbar*”) but “*Batzra*” in Edom about which it says, “*hinei zeh ba mei'Edom chamutz begadim mi'Batzra*” “*asid sar shel Edom lit'os k'savur sh'Batzra hi Betzer ba'midbar*.” (In the future, the guardian angel of Edom will err, thinking that Basra is Betzer in the desert.)”

The amazing thing is that the Rebbe spoke about the war in Basra, but at that time the American forces had not conquered Basra! Furthermore, this was after the ceasefire and Iraq's unconditional surrender, yet the Rebbe spoke about “succeeding in the war in Basra,” in the present and future tense!

On Shabbos Parshas Bo 5751, the Rebbe said a *sicha* about the prophecy of, “*zevach l'Hashem b'Batzra*,” but afterwards he said the

sicha should not be publicized. Yet in the *D'var Malchus* in footnote 121 of the edited *sicha*, the Rebbe broadly hinted to that prophecy and even connected it to the Shabbos in which we read of the *para aduma* (red heifer).

This is what the Rebbe wrote in the footnote: “**Note that the Sages say that ‘para’ (heifer) is Egypt ... ‘aduma’ (red) is Bavel ... ‘t'mima’ (perfect) is Modai ... ‘asher ein ba mum’ (that is unblemished) is Yavan ... ‘asher lo ala oleha ol’ (that had no yoke placed upon it) is Edom ... ‘v'shochat osa lifanav’ (and it should be slaughtered before him), as it says, “ki zevach l'Hashem b'Batzra,” etc. – and note the emphasis on Batzra.**” (Hisvaaduyos 5751, vol. 2 p. 186, footnote 121).

Here we are twelve years later, and we're seeing how the Rebbe's prophecies are being fulfilled before our very eyes. **On Shabbos Parshas Para 5763**, the Coalition forces attacked Batzra!

“*Od chazon la'moed*” – “it will yet come to pass,” said the Rebbe to those who wrote up the *sichos* about publicizing the prophecy about “*zevach l'Hashem b'Batzra*.” Now we are seeing it happen in a way of “*chazon*.” “*Ata sakum terachem Tziyon, ki eis l'chenina ki va moed*”:





humble ones, the time for your redemption has arrived!”

“EVERYTHING I DID I DID FOR YOUR SAKES”

The Rebbe quoted the *Midrash* in *Yalkut Shimon* regarding the Gulf War in which Hashem says to the Jewish people, “Everything that I did, I did for your sakes.” Perhaps we can add that the previous war was supposed to teach us how to deal with a cruel enemy, and to know what the consequences are when the snake’s head isn’t cut off.

The U.S. today is more determined than ever to eradicate the evil government in Iraq. Remember now that Iraq does not border on the U.S. but is quite far off, yet to protect its interests and the security of its citizens, the U.S. has sent off half a million troops and is spending billions of dollars to protect itself.

We have an enemy no less dangerous than Saddam Hussein right here in our own country, yet we haven’t dealt with him as one ought to deal with one’s enemy. The Israeli government has allowed terrorism to reign for ten years now. Israel has given up land vital to its security and in exchange has gotten its citizens murdered. No other country in the world would tolerate this. The time has come to learn the lesson and to resolve to deal with our enemy as our enemy deserves. No compromising with evil. This is what the U.S. did in Afghanistan and what’s it doing now in Iraq.

Hashem showed the U.S. the evil and horror of terrorism, and how it can sow fear and panic within an entire nation. “Everything I did, I did for your sakes,” in order that we Jews, the wise and understanding nation, would know to find our way with *chochma*, *bina*, and *daas*, and not be drawn into the terror that is the Palestinian Evil Authority.

There’s even more incredible *hashgacha pratis* concerning this present war in the Gulf. In the previous war the Coalition included Arab nations, too. Because of that Coalition, the U.S. felt responsible to its allies, and after the war it began pressuring Israel who had to pay the price for that war and forced it into the conference in Madrid.

This time, the U.S. went to war almost entirely alone, with most of Europe opposed to the war, as well as the Arab nations. The U.S. itself doesn’t understand how it ended up in a situation where most of the world is against it, but as the *Midrash* says, “everything I did, I did for your sakes,” and we can understand it. The point is that at the end of this war, the Jewish people will be able to dwell securely in its land. We just have to take advantage of the opportunities and *chassadim* that Hashem is providing for us; to contemplate the miracles and wonders taking place on every side.

We can learn another amazing thing from the war. One of our primary claims is, “what will the *goyim* say? The world will be against us!”

This claim is ridiculous when our lives are at stake, yet over the years they accustomed us to this claim, with many good people falling into its trap. Yet the U.S., for matters far less crucial to its survival, goes to war despite what anybody thinks.

The Rebbe often made this point when people said that we cannot oppose the U.S. on political matters. The Rebbe told Elyakim Rubinstein that the success the U.S. has enjoyed has resulted from the U.S. doing what it has to do despite what others think.

In Cheshvan 5750 the Rebbe told Rubinstein: “The solution to the

The United States is determined to eradicate the evil government of Iraq. Iraq is far away, yet to protect the interests of the U.S. and the security of its citizens it sent half a million soldiers over there and is spending billions on this war. We have an enemy as great as Saddam Houssein living in our very own country, yet we aren't treating him as such.

political situation is the opposite of what they've done in the past, because in the past they took the position that you have to concede – and not only on little things but on basic principles – in order to get something. This is the opposite of the nature of the U.S. The U.S. was founded on the strong position that you cannot concede on critical matters. And despite the fact that England yelled and France was against them, and the entire world was against the U.S. – since they stood by their position they succeeded then and continue to succeed till this day.”

There's a way to subdue the enemy and that is to take an uncompromising stand against it. This approach has proven itself, no matter how bitter an enemy it is. When the U.S. did not respond to terror under Clinton, it paid the price. Now they're teaching us the proper way to respond to terrorism, and we'd better learn it once and for all, even if it's temporarily uncomfortable.

THE REBBE WAS RIGHT

On Purim there was a lovely meeting between the heads of Agudas Chassidei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel and the Prime Minister. The *chassidim* came to read the *Megilla* and Sharon reminisced about his encounters with the Rebbe and how the Rebbe was right about the Bar Lev Line. Sharon even had his secretary bring him the famous letter from the Rebbe from 12 Elul 5728 and quoted what the Rebbe said in it, **“If there will be an argument between an Israeli boy and an Arab boy in Chevron, where there are more Arab boys than Jewish boys, and the Israeli boy is hit, etc. ... who do you think the Israeli military police there will side with?”** “I didn't understand what the Rebbe meant at the time, but today we all see he was right,” said Sharon.

That's all very nice. Recalling the memories of previous years and the Rebbe's prophecies from thirty- five years ago coming true are definitely refreshing, but how come Sharon is not listening to the Rebbe?

Sharon himself heard the Rebbe speak about the danger to millions of Jews if land is given up. This is the same Rebbe who wrote to Sharon about Chevron and the same Sharon who received the letter – the same Rebbe who wrote to Sharon when the latter was a general, describing the dangers and terrible consequences that the Bar Lev Line in Sinai would cause (and we saw those consequences during the Yom Kippur War when the Bar Lev Line crumbled like a house of cards). The same Rebbe warned that the smallest concession to the Arabs would bring on more terrorism and endanger millions of Jews living in the Holy Land.

Sadly, history is full of prophets that warned the leaders of the nation, but these leaders didn't listen because they thought they were smart enough to make their own decisions. The time has come for Sharon, who himself saw the Rebbe's prophecies come true, to acknowledge that what the Rebbe said applies to Sharon's own abysmal leadership, for example, his putting the establishment of a Palestinian state into the protocols of his government. The point is to carry out the Rebbe's directives, not to, *chalila*, wait for the Rebbe to be proven right, causing us all to suffer.

Standing strong by the Rebbe's directives is the only guarantee we have for a life of security in Eretz Yisroel.

“REMEMBERED FOR GENERATIONS”

About twenty years ago, during *Slichos* of 5743, the Rebbe sent a letter to Mr. Shamir for the new year. In the margin of the letter the

Rebbe added a few comments regarding his opposition to the Camp David agreement. This is what the Rebbe wrote: “You will certainly be remembered for generations for your courage and strength in openly voting against the Camp David Sadat contract, and my wishes that in the future you will stand with this strength to defend the Pride of Yaakov, in addition to a strong stand for principles which you fought for, for many years.”

This excerpt shows us how important it is to strongly oppose dangerous political agreements, and negate any participation in such agreements. Although the Camp David agreements had already passed the Knesset at that time, the Rebbe still praised his opposition, and saw it as a great *z'chus*, to the point of using the unusual expression, “*zachur l'doros*” about his voting against the agreement.

“Who is wise – he who envisions the future.” Now, even before the conclusion of the war with Iraq, we must do all we can to prevent the establishment of an enemy state. Right now we all need to stand strong and do all we can so that not one inch of land is given away, and all the talk about a “Roadmap” is forgotten.

We call upon all those *chareidi* parties and the parties on the Right: Do not support, even indirectly, any concession of land, even if by doing so you personally lose out. You must do what you have to do to prevent any withdrawal or concession to our bloodthirsty enemy. If you don't, then as Mordechai told Esther, “respite and salvation will stand by the Jews from some other source...” Don't be remembered in infamy! Protest! Fight against concessions, even *talking* about concessions! In the merit of this, you will be privileged to receive the *bracha* the Rebbe gave, “to be remembered for generations.”

THE MONTH OF NISSAN

MONTH OF MIRACLES

*From the outset of the month of Nissan – the beginning of a New Year – every Jew must cry out to the world through his deeds, and of course in speech¹, that from now on he is going to conduct his daily life in a miraculous manner.²

*Simply put, we all have goals that until now we have been hesitant to undertake, thinking that we lack the natural strength required to complete them – whether in Torah study, *tz'daka*, prayer or in conducting our daily life in a more holy manner. Now is the time to take on these matters that until now we quite possibly did not have the strength to accomplish without a miracle.³

*In the spirit of the major rule of Torah, “Love your fellow as yourself,” not only should we take on new resolutions for ourselves, but also encourage other Jews to do so as well.⁴

SAYING THE NASI

*There has been a weakening, may the Merciful One protect us, in the reading of the *Nasi*, and specifically the “*Yehi Ratzon*” which follows [in the *siddur*]. It is a *mitzva* to re-strengthen this custom, primarily because through adherence to this custom we hasten and speed the dedication of the *Beis HaMikdash*.⁵

LEARNING BEFORE PESACH

LAWS OF PESACH

*On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, “two Shabbasos” before Pesach, we must increase in learning the laws of Pesach. This should be both in the quantity and quality of study, in such a way that befits the general theme of the month of Nissan – miraculous

conduct.⁶

A SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

*Studying for Pesach also means that we bring out the idea of destroying *chametz* on a spiritual level – that is, to be free from the one whom our Sages call *chametz*, the Evil Inclination.⁷

EDUCATING THE CHILDREN

*Children in age, and those who are children in knowledge, should be educated prior to Pesach not just so they will not fall asleep at the Seder, but so that they themselves will even add a great deal to the Seder by asking the Four Questions.⁸

MO'OS CHITIM

WHAT DOES ONE GIVE?

*Giving *Mo'os Chitim* includes everything one needs for all eight days of Pesach, all requirements for the Seder (e.g. matzos, wine for the Four Cups), and everything necessary for the Yom Tov in general such as new clothes, special foods and so on.⁹

Mo'os Chitim* must be from the best and the “sweetest” of our own possessions, as we see by the very name *Mo'os Chitim* – money for **wheat. Even though one may fulfill the requirement for eating matza on Pesach by eating matzos of any of the five species of grain, wheat is the choicest of them all.¹⁰

*In keeping with the command, “Love your fellow as yourself,” we should see to it that our fellow Jew has just as much of what he needs for the Holiday as we ourselves have.¹¹

*We must attempt to see to it that all Jews – including children in both literal and spiritual senses of the word¹² – not only have what they

need for themselves on Yom Tov, but that they, too, should be able to cry out and invite others [in the words of the Hagada] “*Kol Dichfin!* Whoever is hungry let him come and eat!”¹³

IS THERE A LIMIT?

*After giving away a tenth or even a fifth of our income for supporting others' holiday needs, we will need to re-adjust our calculation since our earnings will have also increased through the blessings bestowed to us for the *tz'daka* we have already given. Thus, the amount equal to a tenth or a fifth will have also grown and we will need to give even more.¹⁴

*All those who increase in providing others with Yom Tov needs, increase for themselves G-d's blessing for tremendous wealth.¹⁵

*When Rosh Chodesh Nissan arrives, we give even more *Mo'os Chitim* with an increase reflecting the special power granted in the month of Nissan for miraculous conduct exceeding one's nature and habit. This means giving more than a tenth and more than a fifth of one's earnings, and even giving without any limits at all.¹⁶

WHEN?

*We should start the excitement about *Mo'os Chitim* while there is still ample time. Immediately after Purim¹⁷ we should have already begun, and from then on we continue to increase as the holiday draws near.¹⁸

*We don't have to wait until the official collector comes around asking for money. We should all be running to find a place where we can give *Mo'os Chitim* – in addition to the sum we will anyway give to the official collector when he comes around.¹⁹

*Providing another Jew with what is needed for his Yom Tov comes even before arranging for our own needs.²⁰

*Even in the last minutes before Pesach, we can still keep giving more and more, finishing off our last minute contributions in a speedy, "Pesach-like" manner just like we speedily bake the matzos before they can rise.²¹

ROLE OF WOMEN

*It must be emphasized that women, too, have a role in providing tz'daka for others' Pesach needs. More than this, the tz'daka that women give possesses a special quality even beyond that given by men.²²

NOTES:

1. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas Tazria 5749 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 528) See p. 533 Ibid.: "[With each day] he needs to make a new announcement about this exceedingly miraculous conduct. And when people ask him, 'Why are you screaming? You already screamed about this yesterday.' He will answer, 'This is not yesterday's scream. Because the miraculous conduct I was screaming about yesterday is natural today!'"
2. Ibid. p. 527: "It should be so until all of the nations of the world look at him with their physical eyes and are enthralled to behold this Jew whose "natural" conduct is above nature; while, the Jew himself is quite unimpressed by all of this, as for him it has become normal. ...He even bases his behavior on miracles from the very outset since, being a Jew, these miracles themselves are natural. And though we generally say 'One should not rely upon a miracle,' this refers to that which constitutes a miracle for the one who is relying upon it.

When miracles have become his nature, however – since we are speaking about a Jew, particularly in the month of Nissan, who is dealing with matters of holiness and Divine service and Torah and mitzvos, and the miracle is only in the eyes of the non-Jews and in context of the world at large – then, to the contrary, he should absolutely rely upon a miracle."

3. Ibid. p. 529.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. p. 354.
6. Sicha Shabbos Parshas VaYikra 5751 (Hisvaaduyos, pp. 414 - 415): "The established halacha follows the Mishnaic opinion that we begin reviewing the laws of Pesach thirty days beforehand. However, it is possible to also uphold the dissenting view of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel who holds that we begin reviewing its laws 'two Shabbasos' before Pesach. We begin learning the laws thirty days before Pesach, and as the holiday approaches, we intensify two weeks before Pesach."
7. Sicha 26 Adar 5751 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 402).
8. Sicha Shabbos Parshas VaYikra 5748 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 444).
9. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas Tzav 5751 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 443).
10. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas VaYikra 5748 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 444).
11. Sicha of Erev Pesach 5750 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 51).
12. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas Shaman 5749 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 512 footnote 80).

13. Sicha of 16 Adar 5750 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 399).

14. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas VaYikra 5751 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 415).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid. "And although Our Sages say 'Do not squander more than a fifth [of your earnings on tz'daka],' the Alter Rebbe explains that 'In these generations we must ever increase in tz'daka without concern for the limit of one fifth.' How much more so in our generation, so many generations after the Alter Rebbe made this statement, and especially in the generation of our Nasi, the Alter Rebbe's successor, whose name is Yosef – which means to increase – and Yitzchok – with happiness and joy of heart."

17. Sicha of Motzaei Shushan Purim 5749 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 464).

18. Sicha of Erev Pesach 5750 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 51).

19. Sicha Shabbos Parshas Sisa 5750 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 417).

20. Sicha of Erev Pesach 5750 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 51).

21. Sicha of 11 Nissan 5748 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 50).

22. Sicha of Shabbos Parshas VaYikra 5751 (Hisvaaduyos, p. 419): "As explained in Talmud, Taanis 23b, 'A woman is the one at home [when the pauper comes to the door]. She gives him his bread and thus benefits him most closely.'"

B.H

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