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WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR DIFFERENCES

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS EMOR; 8TH DAY OF IYAR, 5749

1. This Shabbos falls in the midst of the counting of the Omer and is the third Shabbos after the holiday of Pesach. The number three shares a unique connection to the giving of the Torah. Our Sages emphasize how the Torah, “a threefold light”, was given to the Jews, “a threefold people” in “the third month” by third [of Amram’s children, Moshe].

Three is associated with the concept of peace. The number one refers to a state of unity above division. Thus, our Sages note that, in the narrative of creation, the Torah states “one day,” rather than “the first day” to emphasize how then, “G-d was at one in His world.”

Two reflects a state of division, the opposite of unity. Thus, our Sages state that division was created on the second day and therefore, the expression “And G-d saw that it was good” is not mentioned on that day.

Three refers to the potential to establish unity within the context of the division brought about by the number two. This is a higher level of unity. The unity associated

with the number one refers to a unity that exists before individual existence (which allows for division). Therefore, it does not represent complete unity (since it is not known what will happen after entities take on their own individual existence). In contrast, the number three refers to unity as it is established within the context of division. Because this is an expression of true unity, the statement “And G-d saw that it was good” is repeated twice on that day.

This concept is exemplified in the principle:

When two Biblical passages contradict each other, the meaning can be determined by a third Biblical text which reconciles them.

The intent is not that the third text supports one of the two positions and thus, outweighs the other, but rather that the third text will reconcile the two and bring out a new perspective which is acceptable to both positions.

There is a parallel to the above concepts in our service of G-d. G-d is essentially one. This unity was revealed on the first day of creation. However, since G-d desired “a dwelling place in the

lower worlds,” He created a world (the Hebrew for “world”—*olam*—is related to the word “*helam*”—concealment) which appears to be separate from G-d (division as symbolized by the second day). The purpose of such a creation was that a Jew will become “a partner with G-d in creation” and establish unity between the creation and G-d. This unity comes, not through nullifying the existence of the world, but rather through fusing the world—as it exists within its own context—with G-dliness.

This represents true unity, the unity expressed by the third day. Our Sages associated the contribution of the third day with the expression: “Good for the heavens and good for the creatures.” This unity brings together “the heavens” and “the creatures,” fusing them into a single entity.

On the basis of the above, we can appreciate the connection between the Torah and the number three. Our Sages state: “The entire Torah was given only to establish peace in the world,” i.e., peace and unity between the world and G-d.

Before the giving of the Torah,

there was a decree separating the higher spiritual realms from our physical world. At the giving of the Torah, G-d nullified that decree. He “descended on Mount Sinai” and also gave the potential for the Jews to elevate the physical world and impart holiness to material objects. Similarly, before the giving of the Torah, the Torah’s place was in the spiritual worlds. After the giving of the Torah, the Torah “is not in the heavens,” but rather, its permanent place is in this world [and halachic decisions are determined by men].

On the basis of the above, we can understand why the giving of the Torah did not come immediately after the exodus from Egypt, but rather was preceded by the counting of the Omer. This service was necessary because the intent of the giving of the Torah was to establish the Torah within this world in a permanent manner and thus, establish peace (in the fullest sense of the world without either entity sacrificing its qualities as explained above) between the spiritual and physical realms.

The exodus from Egypt (which took place in the first month) is insufficient. Though “the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them,” this was a revelation from above which did not permeate the nature of the world itself and, therefore, was only temporary in nature. The world itself remained as it was, an entity separate from the Divine revelation.

Only after the service within the world itself—although this came about through the arousal from above associated with the exodus—was the world ready to receive the Torah in a manner in which it could be internalized and thus effect the world in a permanent manner.

This is the contribution of the days of the counting of the Omer

which connect Pesach to the giving of the Torah. Thus, the Omer offering was of barley, described by our Sages as “animal food,” indicating that the service during this period revolves around refining the emotional qualities of the animal soul.

Even though this service is not as elevated as the revelation of “the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He,” it is precisely this service which allows for the giving of the Torah. At that time, the fiftieth gate of understanding, a level which surpasses those revealed in the exodus, is drawn

When people with different opinions work together, they develop a multitude of different perspectives which brings about a clearer and better solution.

down. Furthermore, because this revelation is preceded by the service of the Jews, it can be internalized to the extent that it becomes a permanent part of their beings.

2. The concept explained above is also related to the customs which the Shulchan Aruch associates with the counting of the Omer, the atmosphere of semi-mourning that is associated with the death of Rabbi Akiva’s students.

The Talmud explains that these students died because they did not show appropriate respect to each

other. These laws are part of the Torah—which is the “Torah of kindness.” Thus, it follows that they teach us an important lesson; not only to observe the customs of semi-mourning, but also to correct the cause of this tragedy, the lack of respect for one’s fellowman by increasing our ahavas Yisroel. This is associated with the service mentioned above, refining the emotional qualities of the animal soul.

Why won’t a person show proper respect for a colleague? Because G-d created each person with different thinking processes. However, G-d did not intend that these differences cause division or strife. His intent was to allow for the higher level of peace and unity that can be established within a place where there is the potential for difference (as explained above). When people with different opinions work together, they develop a multitude of different perspectives which brings about a clearer and better solution. Reaching such a solution requires each person to forego his natural tendency to adhere to his own viewpoint and consider the matter from other perspectives, showing respect for the other people.

This is the service appropriate during the counting of the Omer, it requires a person to work on himself and change his nature—his intellect and emotions—which were he not to work on, might cause him to show a lack of respect for others similar to that shown by Rabbi Akiva’s students. He must refine and develop these qualities to the extent that they will help bring out the advantage that can come from different people having a variety of perspectives.

Even if strife and discord have already arisen, efforts must be made to correct the situation by overextending oneself in the

direction of peace.[75] This approach will ultimately bring about a higher level of peace than existed before the outbreak of strife.[76]

[In this context, we can understand the unique importance of Lag B'Omer. Lag B'Omer is the yahrtzeit of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. He was one of the students of Rabbi Akiva who remained alive. As evident from a number of Talmudic passages, he expressed the principle of ahavas Yisroel, which his teacher, Rabbi Akiva, considered “a great principle of the Torah,” in a complete manner. Therefore, Lag B'Omer, his yahrtzeit, is a day of celebration, not only when compared to the days of the counting of the Omer, but also to the entire year.][77]

Similarly, this is also a proper preparation for the giving of the Torah. Our Sages note that when the Torah describes the camping of the Jewish people before Mount Sinai, it uses the verb va'yichan, a singular conjugation. They comment that this shows that the people camped “as one man, with one heart.” This unity was one of the necessary steps in preparation for the giving of the Torah.

The above is also related to the custom of studying Pirkei Avos on the Shabbasos between Pesach and Shavuos. Pirkei Avos focuses on the refinement of our ethical behavior.[78] This concept is emphasized by a teaching contained in the first Mishna: “Make a fence around the Torah.” The Sages appreciated the tendencies of our animal souls and found it necessary to impose new restrictions to curb those tendencies.

To explain in greater detail: The Torah was given in our material world in order to establish peace and unity between the Creator and the creation. Furthermore, as explained above, this unity is intended to encompass the creations as they are within the context of their own existence. This also involves taking into consideration the changes people will undergo over the passage of time, when, with each generation, the concealment of G-dliness in the world has increased. To prevent this from weakening our observance of Torah, the Sages “made a fence around the Torah,” i.e., established safeguards—restrictions which were themselves not commanded by the Torah—to ensure the continued observance of Torah.

This week, we study the third chapter of Pirkei Avos, which also begins in a manner that emphasizes the concept of three, “Reflect on three things and you will not come to sin.” In addition to the three concepts mentioned specifically in the Mishna, the Mishna is also teaching us to reflect on the concept of three and that this reflection will prevent one from sinning. From the standpoint of one, there is a possibility of sin—for there is still the possibility of the existence of other entities. Surely, this is true from the perspective of two. However, when a person reflects on three, i.e., realizes how unity can be established within the context of division, he will not sin.

This is also associated with the week's Torah portion which begins: “Say unto the priests... and you shall say unto them...” Our Sages explain that this apparent redundancy teaches

the obligation “to make the adults responsible for the children.” They cannot remain satisfied with their own service, but must teach others. Furthermore, the verb, l'hazhir also has the meaning “to make shine.” The adults must teach the children in a manner which makes them shine.

This, in turn, will bring advantages to the adults as well as our Sages explain, “I received more from my students than from others” and thus, establish unity between the adults and the children.

3. The above is also connected to the daily portion of Rambam, the conclusion of the study of Hilchos Shmita V'Yovel. The latter is also connected to Parshas B'har whose reading is begun in today's Mincha service. Many of the laws of Shmita are contained in this Torah portion. (These laws are also connected to the present year whose Hebrew letters form the word Tishmat, “release,” the mitzvah associated with Shmita).

In today's portion of study, the Rambam discusses the laws of a Pruzbol:

When Hillel, the Elder, saw that people hesitated to lend to each other and thus, transgressed the Torah's admonition: “Take great care lest you will have an unworthy [thought in your heart.... ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is coming.’ And you will look unkindly at your poor brother and will not give him.]”

Therefore, he instituted the practice of a Pruzbol so that a debt would not be released and people would lend one to each other.

Thus, a Pruzbol is one of the practices instituted by the Sages as “a

75. In particular, the way to bring out peace when a dispute has arisen is to bring the matter to a Rabbinic court for judgment. Their decision should—as the third passage mentioned above—be rendered in a manner that will reconcile the differences between the parties involved. Should a dispute arise between members of one community, they should present the matter to the community's Rabbis for arbitration.

76. We see a parallel to this concept in halacha. A shtar (legal document) whose validity has been questioned and later affirmed has greater legal power than a shtar about which a question has never arisen.

77. Thus, HaYom Yom relates that “in regard to the Mittlerer Rebbe, Lag B'Omer was one of the special holidays.... Then, we witnessed many miracles, particularly, in regard to

children.... Throughout the entire year, we would wait for Lag B'Omer.”

78. Pirkei Avos includes statements authored by the Sages. Thus, it represents the aspect of Torah which is the contribution of man in contrast to that which is revealed from above. Hence, its study parallels the service of the month of Iyar which is associated with man's efforts.

fence around the Torah.” Originally, there was no need for such a safeguard. However, with the descent of the ethical level of the Jewish people, the practice was necessary to ensure the observance of Torah law. Nevertheless, once this practice was instituted, it led to an increase in generosity.

The practice of writing a Pruzbol also brings out another positive dimension. A Pruzbol is only effective when the borrower owns land. Nevertheless, our Rabbis explain that we can assume that every Jew possesses land. Furthermore, some authorities explain that a Pruzbol is effective for everyone, for “every Jew possesses a portion of land in Eretz Yisroel.” Thus, the practice of Pruzbol reveals how each Jew has a portion of Eretz Yisroel even during the time of exile.

The Rambam concludes these Halachos with a description of the positive qualities of the tribe of Levi:

Why didn't Levi merit a portion of Eretz Yisroel?... Because he was distinguished to serve G-d... and to teach His straight ways and righteous judgments to the masses... Therefore, he was set above the ways of the world.

The Rambam continues, explaining how this concept is relevant to every Jew:

Not only the tribe of Levi, but each and every person... whose generous spirit motivated him...to set himself apart and to stand before G-d to serve Him,...removing from himself the yoke of the different [worldly] concerns which are sought by people. He is sanctified as the holiest of the holy. G-d will be his portion and inheritance forever.

The Torah itself mentions the potential for such service only in

regard to the tribe of Levi. Nevertheless, “the Torah was given together with its explanation,” i.e. the oral tradition. That tradition taught by our Sages[79] reveals how every Jew has the potential to become “the holiest of the holy,” i.e., to reach the level of the High Priest on Yom Kippur. Each Jew, no matter where he is or what age he is living in, can make an unbounded commitment to the service of G-d and thus, reach the highest levels of holiness.

This is also related to the next

Each Jew, no matter where he is or what age he is living in, can make an unbounded commitment to the service of G-d and thus, reach the highest levels of holiness.

order of Halachos in the Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Beis HaBechira, The Laws of [G-d's] Chosen House. Those laws begin stating, “It is a positive commandment to construct a house for G-d which is prepared for sacrifices to be offered within.” By building a Beis HaMikdash (“a house for G-d”) in this world, we fulfill the intention of creation, that this lowly world should be transformed into a dwelling place for Him. The ultimate revelation of this intent will be in the

construction of the Third Temple. This, in turn, is dependent on our work and service in the time of exile, being “motivated by a generous spirit, removing from himself the yoke of the different [worldly] concerns.”

In this light, we can understand the verse chosen by the Rambam as an introduction to Seifer Avoda (The Book of [G-d's] Service) and in particular, Hilchos Beis HaBechira, “Seek out the welfare of Jerusalem. Those who love her shall prosper.” A Jew must long for Jerusalem[80] and seek out her welfare. This service will bring about prosperity, not only the ultimate prosperity we will enjoy in the Messianic age, but even at present, in the time of exile, we will be blessed with prosperity.

To summarize with practical directives, efforts must be made:

To spread ahavas Yisroel and thus, correct the reason for the mourning practices observed during this period. These practices indicate that this is an appropriate time to increase this service and correct any inadequacies.

To spread Torah study, particular public study, putting special stress on studying Pirkei Avos.

To make siyumim, including siyumim of the Halachos in the Mishneh Torah.

To prepare for Lag B'Omer, the yahrtzeit of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. In regard to P'nimius HaTorah (Torah's mystic teachings), Lag B'Omer is “the day of the giving of the Torah.” Hence, in this context, special emphasis should be placed on the study of P'nimius HaTorah.

May these efforts hasten the time when the Third Temple will be built and then we will offer sacrifices to G-d. May the time come immediately.

79. The fact it is the oral tradition which brings out this teaching is similar to the concept explained above, that the decrees of the Sages, e.g., Pruzbol, can bring out a higher

dimension of Torah observance.

80. The longing for Jerusalem also has a parallel in our service of G-d. Yerushalayim—

Hebrew for Jerusalem—can be divided into two words, Yira Shaleim—complete fear. A Jew must yearn to have complete fear of G-d.

THE FINAL MISSION TO BRING MOSHIACH

PREPARED BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



*On Isru Chag HaShavuos 5751, dozens of Chabad rabbanim gathered together in 770. At the conclusion of a lengthy meeting, they all signed the p'sak din that established that the Rebbe is Moshiach, and that G-d must complete the process of the Redemption, as it were. As a further step, the rabbanim appointed Rabbi Dovid Nachshon and R. Avi Taub as their emissaries to read the p'sak din at the gravesites of the Rebbeim. Rabbi Dovid Nachshon continues his story of the "early days" of the Moshiach Campaign and his secret mission to Russia. * Part 2.*



HOLD-UPS, DELAYS, AND A BRACHA FROM THE REBBE

From the very first moment, we encountered obstacles. We landed on a stopover in Frankfurt, Germany, where we were informed that out of the seven suitcases that we took with us, we were now traveling with only three..

This had never happened to us before. We had traveled on numerous missions in the past, but for almost all of our supplies to disappear – this was a new one.

food in every place we were.

In addition, and this was the main thing, while in New York, we had prepared copies of the *p'sak din* in sufficient quantity to read at each of the *Ohelim* and leave them there. Among the missing suitcases was the one containing these copies. Thus, another task was imposed upon us: to get another copy of the *p'sak din* via fax from New York and to make additional copies. We succeeded in getting the fax, and we found a copier. After two copies, the machine started to billow smoke, as if to say,

The Rebbe's emphasis on the matter's success, as with all the many delays we had encountered, gave us the feeling that the matter was most urgent and critical, and it was forbidden for us to tarry in its fulfillment.

We got to work right away. Upon arrival in Moscow on Monday afternoon, the 14th of Sivan, we immediately set out that night for Lubavitch. Since the suitcases with our clothes had been lost en route, I borrowed a *kapote* from someone and we were on our way.



Besides our clothes, we had come equipped for our trip to Russia with enough kosher food to sustain us for the duration of our stay in the country. This represented a critical necessity, as food in general, particularly kosher food, is something not so easily accessible in Russia, certainly not in those remote areas where the gravesites were located. In short, we were left without clothes or food, something that turned this difficult trek into almost impossible. We simply had to start and fend for ourselves in search of clothes and

“Job done.” We felt totally helpless. Something so simple in New York had turned into a huge production, especially in 5751 Russia, which seemed like two hundred years ago.

However, as soon as we arrived in Moscow, we received encouragement. An answer had arrived from the Rebbe to the letter we had sent in connection with our journey. It came out on that Erev Shabbos, the same day that we submitted the letter: “I will mention it at the *Tzion* for good news and the matter [is at hand], etc.”

We traveled all night, and we arrived in Lubavitch in the wee hours of Tuesday morning. HaTamim Nachum Tamarin accompanied us on our trip. He was at our right-hand side on previous missions for the building of the *Ohelim*, and worked with complete devotion and dedication to the matter, with the Rebbe's permission and *bracha*.

Everything in Lubavitch went relatively smooth. As is known, there is a Chabad House there, where we could sit and prepare ourselves before going to the *Ohel* of the Tzemach

Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, write *panim*, etc. At the *Ohel*, we fulfilled our task, as per the instructions of the *rabbanim*. We read the *Mayne Lashonand* afterwards, we read the letter of appointment, saying that we had come as *shluchim*. We then read the *p'sak din*, and left a copy on the *Ohel*.

Once we finished, we immediately headed back to Moscow. We spent most of that Tuesday on our return journey, arriving towards the evening. We again decided not to wait, and set out that night via train to Kiev, and from there to the *Ohel* of the Mittlerer Rebbe in Niezhin. We arrived on Wednesday evening. After visiting the *Ohel*, we paid a call on our friend in Niezhin, R. Yisroel Noach, of blessed memory, great-grandson of the Tzemach Tzedek. This Jew had a few recollections of “Zeide Mendel” (the Tzemach Tzedek).

“TRAVEL TO MEZHIBUZH NOW”

When we returned to Kiev, at the home of the *shliach*, R. Dov Karasik, we had a number of tasks still ahead of us. First, we had to make all the physical preparations for the continuation of our trip: food supplies, organization, etc. Secondly, all of our copies of the *p'sak din* had been used up, and we didn't know if we should head straight for the *Ohel* of the Baal Shem Tov in Mezhibuzh and just read the *p'sak din* or wait until we had more copies to leave there. At this point, we called our offices in New York and reported to the office manager, R. Akiva Marshall, on everything that had transpired until now and regarding our doubts as to what to do next.

As we discovered later, Akiva submitted a note in English to the Rebbe, detailing all the points we had indicated, including our doubts regarding whether or not to travel immediately to Mezhibuzh. The Rebbe responded by drawing an

arrow and a circle on Akiva's note around the words “Travel to Mezhibuzh now.”

We received this answer upon our return from Mezhibuzh. We had never considered asking, and we certainly didn't expect such an answer. For our part, we spent all our efforts that Wednesday night in search of a copy machine. Finally, well after midnight, we succeeded in finding one in a Kiev hotel. Thanks to a Russian-style “anonymous gift,” we

were allowed to make as many copies as we wanted...

In any event, this answer demonstrated how important this *shlichus* was to the Rebbe, and how urgently he wanted to be done.

We had set out for Mezhibuzh very early Thursday morning, and arrived that afternoon. From Mezhibuzh, we proceeded to the *Ohel* of the Maggid in Anipoli, arriving on Friday at one in the morning.

WHO SAID TO STOP?

In our conversation with Rabbi Nachshon, we raised the issue of the different rumors about how the Rebbe related to the activities surrounding the *Kabbalas HaMalchus* petitions. Rabbi Nachshon smiled. He had also heard the rumors, however, the answers he received left no room for doubt. “The Rebbe encouraged this activity, organized in the name of Matteh Moshiach, then based in New York, from the first stage, without reservations. We saw this from the first answer we received, regarding the first 250 signatures we brought in to the Rebbe (Iyar 4): **Received with much appreciation. It should be a continuing and increasing activity, as the time has come. I will mention it at the Tzion.**”

“This was not only permission, but a continuing demand. Over the time that passed, there were additional answers of a similar vein. There was no answer that touched upon this issue in a negative light. Despite this, since that rumors had been swirling around from people who “knew how to quote,” so to speak, we decided to call a meeting of Matteh Moshiach's Mashpiim Committee in response. We submitted a note to the Rebbe, in which we wrote that in accordance with the Rebbe's answer, we are continuing with this activity with full force, unless we receive instructions to the contrary. The Rebbe's response: ‘I will mention it at the Tzion, and it should bring good news.’”

“Thus, the Rebbe gave us a ‘green light’ for continuing the activities. Yet, for some reason, the persistent rumors had an effect on public opinion. Some of them were simply tall tales. Others, at best, were twisted statements taken completely out of context. No need to elaborate. To those ‘familiar’ with all these different fabricated versions, I will be happy to let them know the answer that I received from the Rebbe in Kislev 5752 to a letter entirely devoted to the activities on publicizing the identity of Melech HaMoshiach to Jews from all walks of life. ‘And there should be fulfilled in them “He who has two hundred, wants four hundred, etc.” I will mention it at the Tzion.’ And in a further answer from Chaf-Zayin Adar Rishon 5752(!) about the ‘order of the day’ that I composed for the Tzivos Hashem magazine regarding Moshiach activities: ‘Received with much appreciation. I will mention it at the Tzion.’”

“Nu, so what's all this talk about stopping [our activities]?”

We came back to Kiev early Friday morning, and to our surprise, we found the above-mentioned answer from the Rebbe. Based on this answer, we made the decision that we must be at the *Ohel* of the Alter Rebbe in Haditch that same day. Rabbi Karasik tried to convince us to give up on the idea (and in truth, there were good reasons for it). However, the urgency of the matter was so great that we felt that it could not wait, and off we went.

When we finished reading the *p'sak din*, etc., in Haditch, we saw that it was only three and a-half hours before Shabbos. We were most anxious to get moving so we could reach Dnepropetrovsk for Shabbos, and from there to Rostov on Motzaei Shabbos. A trip from Haditch to Dnepropetrovsk usually took about five hours. Fact. We asked the driver what he thought, and he said that he would try. Needless to say, we were in Dnepropetrovsk for Shabbos. We entered the city just before sundown, and proceeded by foot to the house where we stayed.

The *shliach*, HaRav Yitzchak Gansburg, a native of Dnepropetrovsk, was there that Shabbos. He took us on a tour near the house where the Rebbe lived in his youth and the *shul* where he davened.

The trip to Rostov was a tale unto itself. First of all, it was a whole story just getting a car. And when the car finally came, there were a variety of technical problems until we could actually set out and until the Gentile driver could understand what we wanted. The journey itself was plagued with hitches. At one point, the driver suddenly stopped when he encountered a large gentile woman lying in the middle of the road, and a man waving for us to stop and take her to the hospital. With no alternative, we placed the woman in the car.

This whole story – the trip to the

hospital, getting the woman out until the doctor determined that she had died hours earlier – took several hours. We had never encountered such a strange and bizarre set of circumstances before. Not that we had never faced difficulties in the past (we had, and how) – suspicion by the authorities, car breakdowns, blasting summer heat, frigid winter cold, etc. – but all these were standard problems, yet when the

Rabbi Gutnick spoke very strongly about Moshiach. His father was also there, and he told us that he had received an answer on Moshiach that, “one may not judge except according to what his eyes see.” He said that he saw that the whole subject of Moshiach has created great enthusiasm.

satan stands in front of you to turn you away... I saw all these trials on our *shlichus* as something most unusual, something wasn't letting us go...

In Rostov, apart from our main *shlichus*, we had some leftovers from our previous *shlichus*. We had to affix a sign on the outer wall of the *Ohel*. The job was also completed to success, thus leaving us with our final

mission: to get to Alma Ata and the *Ohel* of R. Leivik, the Rebbe's father.

AN EMOTIONAL MOMENT AT THE TZION OF HA'RAV R. LEVI YITZCHAK

We succeeded in getting plane tickets to Alma Ata, and got on our flight. Just as the plane's wheels began to move, another plane crashed on the runway. The Rostov airport immediately closed down – no incoming or outgoing flights...

Everyone got off the plane, and we immediately started running around to see what we could do. We were most anxious to head towards Alma Ata that night before going to sleep, since there was no *mikveh* there and we wanted to get to the *Ohel* while we still ritually pure from the Rostov *mikveh*, where we had immersed ourselves that morning.

We eventually found a flight to Alma Ata, however, the check-in clerk would not let us board the plane. Faced with no alternative, we turned to one of the baggage porters, who agreed to get us aboard – for a price. He simply brought us from the terminal to the runway via the conveyor that loaded the luggage on the plane. The porter made certain to open the plane door and get us in. The problem was that there was no available room to sit. At first, they pushed us into a small cubicle at the front of the plane, but with passing a few *grushim* to the appropriate individuals on board, we managed to arrange places to sit.

Early in the morning, the pilot came by, and it turned out that he was “one of us.” We helped him roll up his sleeve and did *Mivtza T'fillin*, as is fitting. Naturally, we said “*Lchaim*,” gave out some *mezonos*, and made a small *farbrengen*.

The flight took us to Moscow, and from there we got on a plane to Alma Ata. The plane contained hundreds of passengers, among them many Jews,

with whom we also did *Mivtza T'fillin*. We arrived in Alma Ata on Tuesday at three o'clock in the morning. We recited our prayers at the *Ohel* by flashlight, and called at the *Tzion* of HaRav R. Levi Yitzchak for his first-born son, "who is the final Redeemer...to reveal himself as *Melech HaMoshiach* and reveal his sovereignty to the whole world."

THE REBBE SPEAKS ABOUT THE TWO DEAF SPIES

We arrived back in Moscow that night, boarded a plane the next day to New York, and Wednesday night we were already back in *Beis Chayeinu*. When the Rebbe came out for *Maariv*, he passed by us and made an encouraging motion with his hand as he continued walking. He immediately turned back and gestured surprisingly as if to say,

"Finished so soon?" then went back with another strong encouraging gesture. Mission accomplished.

* * *

That Shabbos, the Rebbe spoke in depth in a special *sicha* about the uniqueness of the two deaf spies sent by Yehoshua, and the crowning success of their *shlichus*.

On Monday, the 28th of Sivan, the Rebbe delivered the well-known *sicha*, which later served as the foundation for the *kuntres* "*Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel*." This was after a lengthy interval during which the Rebbe did not speak publicly about Moshiach, and this *sicha* was filled with special "revelations."

In the days that followed, we continued to arouse the interest of *Anash* regarding Moshiach activities. At this same time, R. Yosef Gutnick

arrived in the United States for business negotiations on his father's investments in Australia. We joined him to the cause, and he submitted an advertisement to the Rebbe that he wanted to publicize in the newspapers on the subject of "The time of your redemption has arrived." The Rebbe edited the ad.

We called a meeting in 770, and Rabbi Gutnick spoke very strongly about Moshiach. His father was also there, and he told us that he had received an answer on Moshiach that, "one may not judge except according to what his eyes see." He said that he saw that the whole subject of Moshiach has created great enthusiasm.

In fact, it could be said that the interruption had come to an end, and the excitement over Moshiach had resumed. Of course, this began with



the Rebbe, and continued with the *chassidim*.

MAY IT BE HIS WILL THAT THEY WILL CARRY OUR ALL THEIR ACTIONS, ETC.

At the beginning of Tammuz, we returned to Eretz Yisroel and continued to awaken *Anash* and the *T'mimim*.

As the month drew to a close and the Rebbe had not yet revealed himself as Moshiach, the feeling was very difficult. Gloomy. I thought about perhaps traveling to the Rebbe for my birthday, on the 2nd of Menachem Av. But just then, I received an invitation from the Lubavitch Women's Organization in Yerushalayim to give them a lecture on *Kabbalas HaMalchus*. I wrote to the Rebbe, and I received a *bracha* for the trip to Yerushalayim. Needless to say, the lecture was a smashing success. Dozens of women came who wanted

to know what the Rebbe says. The atmosphere was electric.

The overall feeling was still rather despondent. I thought that we had not done enough regarding the *p'sak din*, and I wrote to the Rebbe that perhaps we should go with the *p'sak din* to the gravesite of the Holy Arizal on his *hilula*, the 5th of Menachem Av. I received an answer shortly thereafter: I will mention it at the *Tzion*.

I went together with Avi Taub to Tzfas. We made certain that a *minyán* of *chassidim* came with us, and we read the *p'sak din* exactly as we had done at the gravesites of the Rebbeim in Russia. Since this was a secret mission, we didn't show the *p'sak din* to anyone, not even the *minyán* of *chassidim* who accompanied us. They had no idea what exactly we were about to read at the gravesite of the Holy Arizal.

We reported that same day to the

Rebbe, describing in detail the *davening* and reading of the *p'sak din* at the *Tzion* of the Arizal. The letter elicited a special response: **And may it be His will that they will carry out all their actions, etc., and the time has come, etc., I will mention it at the *Tzion*.**

The day of the postponed fast of Tisha B'Av marked the final stage. Towards the end of the fast, we were at M'aras HaMachpella, where we made a *minyán*. Naturally, those assembled were unaware of the reason they were gathering together, as we read the *p'sak din*. From there, we traveled to Kever Rochel and then to the Kosel.

Later, we heard about the unexpected *sicha* that the Rebbe said at the same time, in which he mentioned these three places. "May they carry out all their actions," the Rebbe said. Who knows what action had been carried out at that time.

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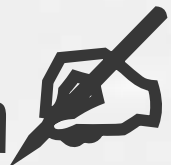
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VAAD HANACHOS HA'T'MIMIM FROM THE INSIDE TO THE OUTSIDE

INTERVIEW BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

*When was the Vaad Hanachos HaT'mimim founded and what did the Rebbe have to say about it? Which sichos did the Rebbe edit and which sichos went out in a separate kuntres? What was the chazara system, and what was considered a good chazara? When did they leave out paragraphs and when did they add them? * Rabbi Simon Jacobson, director of Vaad Hanachos HaT'mimim, and one of the main chozrim, in an interview with Beis Moshiach. **

Part 1

“The great yearning for *hiskashrus*,” writes the Rebbe MH”M in the *HaYom Yom*, “can only be satisfied when one learns the *maamarei chassidus* which the Rebbe says and writes, for just seeing him is not enough.” Indeed, since the founding of the *chassidic* movement, the *chassidim* craved the Rebbe’s teachings, knowing that they were “*divrei Elokim chayim*” (words of the Living G-d) which connected them and their *neshamos* with the *neshama klalis* (comprehensive soul) of the generation.

Most of the Chabad Rebbeim wrote their teachings and gave them to the *chassidim* for them to copy. Most of the *maamarim* (aside from the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe) were published from original manuscripts or copies, whereas those

maamarim that were written as someone’s private notes, i.e., *hanachos*, were only published as *hosafos* (appendices).

With the Rebbe, a new system began. Nearly all the Rebbe’s *maamarim* and *sichos* were written by various *manichim*, and the Rebbe edited only a few of those. And often this editing consisted of just a few comments or corrections. In these instances, the Rebbe would instruct the publishers to “publish it as *bilti muga*” (unedited). Sometimes the Rebbe edited the material once thoroughly, or even twice and even three times, allowing it to be printed as “*muga*” (edited).

The *chozrim* (those who reviewed the *sichos*) of the Seventh Generation had to contend with yet another change. In the past, after *chozrim* had

learned the *maamer* well, they would enter the Rebbe’s room (whichever Rebbe it was at that time) and would repeat the *maamer* in his presence. The Rebbe would correct their mistakes and explain things they didn’t understand. This too was discontinued with the Rebbe MH”M. Thus, the *chozrim* had to review the material and try to understand it on their own.

The main difference in the Seventh Generation, however, was in terms of content and style. The teachings of the earlier Rebbeim were mostly transmitted in the form of *maamarim*, and were delivered on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Thus we have *Seifer HaMaamarim* from all the years of Chabad *chassidus* which contain the *maamarim* of that year. The Rebbe MH”M, however, held lengthy *farbrengens* consisting mostly of *sichos* explaining topics in *nigleh* and *chassidus* in tremendous depth and detail. The *farbrengens* lasted five or six hours, and sometimes even longer, which included many *sichos* and a *maamer*. And in the early years the Rebbe sometimes said a *maamer* (in his office) on Shabbos morning. If it was a combination Shabbos and Yom Tov, imagine how difficult it was for the *chozrim* to record all the material after Yom Tov!

In the early years of the *nesiv* there was no *mosad* responsible for writing *hanachos* of *farbrengens*. There were *chozrim* and *manichim* who devoted themselves to the work for years, but it wasn’t in an organized fashion, resulting in a lack of uniformity in style and fluency in the writing. In the early *Chaf’s* (1960’s) for example, there were many *farbrengens* for which we don’t have any organized *hanacha*. In 5725 (1965), after the passing of Rebbetzin Chana, *a”h*, the Rebbe did begin editing many of the *sichos*, however, this practice stopped a year later.

In 5726, a number of T’mimim

got together and decided to institutionalize the writing of *hanachos* under the name Vaad Hanachos HaT'mimim. The main *chozer* of the early years, Rabbi Yoel Kahn, headed the team of *chozrim* with a number of talented *bachurim* (Efraim Piekarski, Leibel Shapiro, Sholom Ber Levitin, Avrohom Gerlitzky, Shlomo Zarchi in the early years, and Nachman Shapiro, Leibel Altein, Yosef Hecht, Aharon Goldstein and others in the later years) to help him with all aspects of the work, i.e., participating in *chazara*, etc., as well as actually printing the *sichos* and disseminating them among *Anash*.

In the early years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe strongly objected to the unedited *hanachos* being printed

The Rebbe's point was: the sichos are meant to spread the wellsprings outward. What would people's reaction be to a miracle story like this? How could we begin the sicha with such a shocking story?

regularly. Only something edited or at least previewed by the Rebbe was approved for printing (and even this wasn't a common occurrence). The Rebbe allowed the unedited *sichos* to be disseminated by "copier" (stencils), as it was called then, or by mimeograph, which used an alcohol based ink and came out blue. The *hanachos* were for "insiders" only, and they were personally distributed in very limited numbers.

Over time a new generation of *chozrim* and *manichim* were raised on the Rebbe's unique style, and they received instructions from the Rebbe about the proper way of writing *sichos*. The quality of the unedited *sichos* improved, enabling them to be printed in the normal fashion, though every page had the disclaimer "*bilti muga*" on it.

At the end of the *Lamed's* (1970's), a young *bachur* by the name of Simon Jacobson joined the Vaad. He quickly acquired a reputation as an excellent *chozer* of the Rebbe's *farbrengens* and – no less important – as a writer of the *farbrengens*, as well, in *hanachos* that were fit to print. Within a few years, Simon became one of the main *chozrim*, and from the beginning of the *Mem's* (1980's), after R' Dovid Feldman went to Eretz Yisroel, Simon began running Vaad Hanachos HaT'mimim.

R' Simon Jacobson allowed *Beis Moshiach* to interview him. He takes us behind the scenes and tells us what *chazara* was like, how *sichos* were prepared for print, as well as special instructions he got from the Rebbe.

We prefaced the interview with a brief history of the Vaad. What did the Rebbe have to say about the Vaad?

When the Vaad was formed in the *Chaf's*, I was still a young boy, and I have no idea what answers the Rebbe gave in the early stages. What's clear to all is that on many occasions the



Rebbe expressed his great dissatisfaction to private individuals in *yechiduyos* over the fact that the *sichos* were not written down. The Rebbe had *agmas nefesh* from this. When they finally began writing down the *sichos* in an orderly way, the Rebbe was quite pleased. What we know for sure is that the Rebbe acknowledged the *chozrim* in a special way, and when the Vaad was first formed he motioned to them to say *l'chaim*.

So establishing the Vaad improved matters...

No doubt about it. You can see this in the *sifrei Sichos Kodesh* of those years. Generally speaking, since the Vaad was formed there were *hanachos* from every *farbrengen*, but the fact that the Vaad was comprised of *bachurim* was a minus, since *bachurim* get married, and every year or two there was a vacancy that needed to be filled. For this reason, even once the Vaad was formed, some years were better than others.

At the end of 5734, a number of particularly talented *bachurim* joined the Vaad (the T'mimim, Dovid Feldman, Dovid Olidort, Tzvi Greenblatt, Yaakov Moshe Wolberg, Sholom Charitonov, Tzvi Hirsch Notik, and others) and really got things rolling. From 5735 and on you can really see a difference in the Vaad's work. The *sichos* went out each week, on a regular basis. In those years the *sichos* were still printed in the old format, the large size, on folded pages. That year there were an estimated 500 subscribers who received the *sichos* in the mail.

When did you get involved?

In 5737. I started helping by looking up sources. Just at that time, they changed the approach regarding annotating sources. Until then, they would mark the sources in the *sicha* itself, in parentheses. In the winter of 5738 they changed this and began using footnotes. This was evidently

with the Rebbe's approval, for once, after he edited a *sicha* which was printed by copier, the Rebbe said to print the footnotes on the bottom. They asked the Rebbe whether to do this with all the unedited *sichos* too, and the Rebbe gave his approval.

From 5738 and on there was an increase in *farbrengens* and *sichos*. You have to understand that until then there wasn't a *farbrengen* every single Shabbos. Generally there were *farbrengens* on Shabbos Mevarchim and *Yomei D'Pagra* (*chassidic* holidays).

After the Rebbe's heart attack in 5738, since the doctors had asked that the Rebbe not exert himself to *farbreng* on Shabbos, the Rebbe began

farbrenging on Motzaei Shabbos using a microphone. From then until 5740, most of the *sichos* were on Motzaei Shabbos.

Around Chanuka 5740 the Rebbe went back to the old *farbrengen* schedule, and began *farbrenging* on Shabbos again. It was then that R' Dovid Feldman, who had run the Vaad Hanachos HaT'mimim in those years, left for Eretz Yisroel and *shlichus* in Eilat. I replaced him.

I was familiar with the work, as over the years I had also joined those who reviewed the *farbrengens*, but since at that time the Rebbe went back to *farbrenging* on Shabbos, the work was that much harder. As long as the Rebbe *farbrenged* on Motzaei

BIRTH OF THE WEEK IN REVIEW

In open Divine providence, says R' Jacobson, at the very same time that I began reviewing the Rebbe's *sichos*, I began giving a weekly class to people who are not yet religious. Over the years, I gained great experience in how to convey deep topics in *chassidus* to the "man on the street."

When the idea of putting out *The Week in Review* came up, I knew from experience that you can definitely take lofty topics in *chassidus* and present them to non-religious people. I wrote to the Rebbe about the idea, and I emphasized that this was not about translating *sichos*, but about taking the general idea and writing it so that everybody could understand it. After the Rebbe gave us the green light, the first issue was published. Over time, we received the Rebbe's encouragement for this project.

The editors of the pamphlet would sit with us at *chazara*, would make sure they understood what the Rebbe had said, and then write it in English. Over the years we had a number of very talented people who worked on this, primarily Yanky Tauber, who did superb work. I only provided guidance and made sure the content remained faithful to the original.

I told you that I think the purpose of the Vaad is to disseminate the Rebbe's words. It is those who worked on the Rebbe's *sichos* for years who can transform what the Rebbe said without losing the content. When those who are not proficient in the Rebbe's *sichos* translate *sichos*, they stick closely to the Rebbe's words, and rightly so, because they can't take the responsibility. This has an advantage and a disadvantage, because "outsiders" don't understand the Rebbe's style. On the other hand, when you work for years on the inside, you know how to present things to the world in free translation, enabling anybody to understand the deepest ideas.

Shabbos, we could tape the *farbrengens*, and the work was simply to prepare the *sicha* for printing. Once the Rebbe went back to *farbrenging* on Shabbos, we had to get used to the earlier system of reviewing the *farbrengens*. If that wasn't enough, the Rebbe began *farbrenging* at length, two hours longer than usual, and the *farbrengens* in the summer months ended at six or seven in the evening. A typical *farbrengen* at that time lasted five hours!

And you remembered the entire *farbrengen*?

We tried to remember as much as possible. After all, we are limited human beings, and I can't say we remembered everything word for word, but I estimate that we were able to reconstruct 90% of it accurately.

I know from experience that when you type the Rebbe's words as he said them (from a tape), every hour of talking fills twenty double-spaced pages. So if we remembered a five-hour *farbrengen* perfectly, we would need one hundred pages. We generally came up with eighty pages in a good *chazara*, and on rare occasions we had ninety pages. This was a way for us to measure if the *chazara* was good.

When you did a *chazara*, did you yourself remember the entire *farbrengen* or did you divide the *farbrengen* amongst yourselves, with each of you concentrating on remembering one part?

The human mind is not limited, as a computer is. If you can remember an hour's worth of material, you can remember ten hours, too.

Each of the *chozrim* would listen to the entire *farbrengen* and review the entire *farbrengen*. Naturally, each of the *chozrim* had his own unique abilities. Some remembered the words well, word by word; others

remembered special terms with the intonation in which they were said; others remembered the structure of the *sicha*; and others remembered the content of the *farbrengen*. In order to write up a complete *sicha* we needed all these abilities. We sat together Motzaei Shabbos and each person contributed his share to the review.

And you sat together Motzaei Shabbos and reviewed the *sicha*?

Actually, the *chazara* began in the middle of the *farbrengen*. Between *sichos*, while the crowd sang *niggunim*, I would summarize the main points of the *sicha* in my mind, as well as the structure of the *sicha* and the

The human mind is not limited, as a computer is. If you can remember an hour's worth of material, you can remember ten hours, too.

Rebbe's *chiddushim*.

Right after the *farbrengen*, before Shabbos was over, I would hurry home together with some of the others I worked with, and we reviewed the entire *farbrengen*. We had to do this, for if we waited until Motzaei Shabbos, things would be forgotten. R' Yoel would also go home right after the *farbrengen* and make a *chazara*.

We had an official *chazara* in 770 after Shabbos. R' Yoel and the group of *chozrim*, along with dozens of T'mimim, would sit in 770 and review the *sicha*. As mentioned earlier, you need many components

for a proper *chazara* – memory, structure, words, comprehension, and the ability to write – and other *chozrim* joined in the *chazara*, each one contributing his share towards the *hanacha*.

Notes were taken during the *chazara*, and Sunday morning I would begin the big task of arranging it all. Sundays were completely devoted to learning the topics the Rebbe spoke about in the *sicha* and understanding them. Throughout the day I would look up various sources in both *nigleh* and *chassidus* which the Rebbe had cited (some of which the Rebbe quoted himself), and I would call many people in order to clarify certain points.

When you sit down to write you notice details that you missed during the *chazara*. You suddenly see that you don't have a full picture and you need to review the Rebbe's words once again. I didn't actually write anything until late Sunday night.

When did you give the *hanacha* to the Rebbe to be edited?

Until the beginning of the *Mem's* the Rebbe almost never edited the *sichos*. When we had questions, we submitted them to the Rebbe and received answers, some brief, some lengthy, sometimes entire paragraphs. We put these paragraphs into the margins of the *hanacha*.

Every so often, the Rebbe edited parts of *sichos*. In the beginning of the winter of 5738, the Rebbe edited all the *sichos*. This picked up even more in the *Mem's*. In 5741, *Shnas Hakhel*, we had an enormous number of *sichos*, and the Rebbe began *farbrenging* nearly every Shabbos. This was not done in the early years. That year the Rebbe also began saying *sichos* every night of Sukkos.

Obviously, when the Rebbe edited part of a *sicha* or an entire *sicha*, our work was doubled. In addition to preparing a *hanacha* of the unedited parts, we also had to prepare

selections from the *sicha* to be submitted for editing.

What parts were given in for editing?

We generally knew that when the Rebbe gave special instructions, like a new *mivtza*, that the Rebbe wanted us to prepare the *sicha* for editing. On those occasions we would extract the relevant passage from the *hanacha* and prepare it for editing.

These edited portions were later printed as *hosafos* (additions) to *Likkutei Sichos*. For example, the *sichos* of winter 5738 which the Rebbe edited, are printed in volumes 20 and 21 of *Likkutei Sichos*.

On Parshas Bo 5740, there were *horaos* for a children's rally in Eretz Yisroel, and we knew that the Rebbe wanted us to prepare this *sicha* for editing so that Eretz Yisroel would see the official version.

Special *sichos*, like the *sichos* to Tzivos Hashem, were mostly edited by the Rebbe. The *sicha* about learning the daily *shiur* in Rambam in 5744 was very unusual, and the Rebbe edited it. So too, all the *brachos* that the Rebbe gave to the *k'vutzos* (*talmidim* from Eretz Yisroel who learn in 770 for a year) throughout the year or to all *Anash* on special occasions like Erev Rosh HaShana and Erev Yom Kippur, were given to the Rebbe for editing, and the Rebbe edited a large portion of them. We submitted *sichos* for editing whenever we had the opportunity and hoped the Rebbe would edit them.

Sometimes we had many questions on the Rashi *sichos* and similar *sichos*. We presented them to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would edit entire portions of *hanachos*. We would print these edited paragraphs within the *hanacha*, noting that the Rebbe had edited them.

Generally speaking, when a *sicha* doesn't say "*bilti muga*" on the bottom of the page, this indicates that a *sicha*



was edited by the Rebbe, because when the Rebbe did not edit a *sicha*, we were careful to make a note of this. The Rebbe was particular about this, both because *chozrim* can misunderstand the Rebbe, and because of the responsibility involved in something that is printed, which lasts for generations to come.

Can you tell us specific instructions you received from the Rebbe regarding preparing the *sichos*?

There were many instructions that were incorporated within the Rebbe's

edited remarks. I'm talking about hundreds of instructions. But there were also special instructions that taught us lessons about how to structure the *sichos*. One of the best examples is the *sicha* of Chai Elul 5747.

That year marked fifty years since Chai Elul 5697, the day on which the Rebbe Rayatz revealed the story about the seven teachings the Rebbe Rashab had heard from the Baal Shem Tov on Shabbos Ki Savo 5652 in Gan Eden. The Rebbe began the *farbrengen* with a question. Miracles and supernatural

means were not emphasized in Chabad, so why did the Rebbe Rayatz relate something so incredible?

The Rebbe explains this in an amazing fashion. He said that the Rebbe Rashab's revelation of the heavenly teachings and their explanations combines *Toras ha'chassidus* in general, with *Toras Chabad*. The Rebbe explains that Chabad doesn't negate miracles, but enclothes G-dliness in vessels, connecting G-dliness, which is above the world, with the world. After a lengthy explanation, the Rebbe connected this to Chai Elul and the month of Tishrei.

When we gave the *sicha* in for editing, we wrote up the *farbrengen* in the same order that the Rebbe had said it. We began with the question, continued with the explanation, and concluded with the connection to the month of Tishrei.

The Rebbe returned the *sicha* to us with a very long comment entirely filling the margins of the first page and continuing on the other side of the page. The Rebbe's point was: the *sichos* are meant to spread the wellsprings outward. What would people's reaction be to a miracle story like this? How could we begin the *sicha* with such a shocking story?

I had thought of this myself, but I came to the conclusion that there's a difference between beginning a *sicha* with a story, or a question about a story. When you begin with a question on the story, even an outsider can relate to it. But the Rebbe didn't want the *sicha* to be structured in this way, and he himself set up the structure of the *sicha*. This was the only time, in the course of my work, that the Rebbe himself presented an outline of the *sicha*.

The Rebbe wrote that we should begin with the *inyan* of the month of Elul, which is the *cheshbon ha'nefesh* (spiritual accounting) for the previous year and the preparation for the new year. Then we should continue with

the five acronyms for Elul, the most famous one being "*Ani l'dodi, v'dodi li*," the concept of an "arousal from below and above," and to connect this with Chai Elul, the month in which the two great luminaries were born: the Baal Shem Tov, who represents "*dodi li*," and the Alter Rebbe, who represents "*ani l'dodi*." Only then, and based on all this, to explain the amazing story that the Rebbe Rayatz revealed.

From the Rebbe's notes on that *sicha*, I learned many principles in writing, especially how to build a *sicha*. The point is not to concede even one word of the content of the *sicha*, yet at the same time, to think of all the possible ways of getting a potential reader to continue learning the *sicha*. When you write a *sicha* in such a way that readers stop at the beginning, you lose an opportunity to convey the message.

From then on there were many *sichos* I prepared completely differently, according to the instructions the Rebbe had conveyed.

When did the Rebbe begin editing the Shabbos *sichos* on a regular basis?

In 5742-3, we began submitting entire *sichos* to the Rebbe for editing. From time to time the Rebbe would edit the *sichos*, but not on a regular basis. I think that the reason was that we weren't sufficiently polished, according to the Rebbe's standards.

Sometimes the Rebbe returned a *sicha* to us and wrote: "This is verbatim," but occasionally we managed to produce *sichos* to the Rebbe's satisfaction, and the Rebbe edited them.

In addition to the fact that the Rebbe's editing of the *sichos* indicated a new spiritual stage in "spreading the wellsprings," there was also the more mundane aspect. The Rebbe once told us that he had limited time for editing. So when we submitted unpolished *sichos*, the Rebbe didn't even begin to work on them.

On the other hand, when we submitted a good piece of work, the Rebbe edited it quickly and gave it to be printed as an edited *sicha*. After years of receiving instructions from the Rebbe, our work reached the point that nearly every *sicha* was edited by the Rebbe.

It also seems that the main reason was that in these years they began distributing the *sichos* more widely thanks to advances in the publishing industry, etc., and this is why the Rebbe edited them.

The system generally was that I began writing the *sicha* on Sunday night. I finished it by Tuesday night, and around ten o'clock, before the Rebbe went home, we handed in the *sicha* through the secretary, who went in last to the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe took the *sicha* home, where he worked on it, and in the morning I got the edited remarks.

In 5748, when the Rebbe stayed in his home, we would bring the *sicha* to R' Leibel Groner or to the, R' Sholom Dovber Gansburg, and generally, at three in the morning, the Rebbe would give the edited remarks to the *shamash*.

From 5749 and on, when the Rebbe resided full-time in 770, the Rebbe himself would bring out the *sicha* after editing it, and place it on the table in "Gan Eden HaTachton" (the hallway outside his office). One of the secretaries would call us to let us know the *sicha* was ready, and we arrived soon thereafter to take it, make the corrections, and send it out to the world.

We had to take care of the corrections immediately because the *sichos* were printed in the *Algemeiner Journal* and *Kfar Chabad Magazine*, and the deadlines were on Wednesday. The *sichos* went to the printer Wednesday morning and from there, they were sent throughout the world.

(To be continued.)

YOU SAY IT, BUT I KNOW...

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



The story is told about the Alter Rebbe, who was so impressed with the personality and *chassidic* teachings of the Maggid of Mezritch that he remained to learn by him for several years, although the *chassidim* were not popular in those days and even falsely suspected of heresy.

When he returned home after his first year, he was greeted by his irate father in law:

“What have you been doing for the last year? What have you accomplished wasting your time with those wildmen?”

“I learned that G-d creates the world,” answered the Rebbe calmly.

“That’s what you learned?!” He screamed, “That is what you learned?! Why, even our washing lady knows that, and she never learned Torah in her life! Zelda! come here!”

The washing lady appeared from the next room drying her hands saying, “Yes sir, what do you want, sir.”

“Tell us, please, Zelda,” he was trying to be as calm as possible, “Who creates the world?”

“Why, the *Oibershter* sir!

“You see!?” He turned to his son-in-law and shouted with rage, “Even she says so!”

Rav Shneur Zalman calmly replied, “She says it, but I know it.”

* * *

We can understand this story better by looking at one of the sixty-three commandments in this week’s section, Counting the Omer. The *mitzva* of Counting of the Omer means that each Jew must count aloud at the beginning of each of the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuos, “Today is the first day of the Omer,” etc. The term “*omer*” refers to a certain measure (*omer*) of barley that was offered in the Holy Temple following the first day of Pesach.

One of the deeper meanings for this is that barley, unlike wheat, was typically used for animal fodder.

Similarly each person has (or rather is composed of) natural drives and tendencies, called, “the animal soul” (because, like an animal, it has no sense of the Creator, only of Creation).

The *mitzva* of Counting the Omer gives us power to tame and even train this natural soul (i.e., ourselves) to serve G-d with all our abilities, especially our emotions, somewhat as the Jews did in the seven weeks after leaving Egypt in order to prepare themselves to receive the Holy Torah.

That is the reason that nowadays we learn the “Ethics of the Fathers” (*Pirkei Avos*) in these seven weeks, because these teachings are designed to refine one’s personality (animal soul) to be more sensitive to the will of Hashem.

But there is something even deeper going on here.

In most ordinary prayer books the names of two mystical *s’firos* are printed next to each of the 49 days.

This is based on the mystical idea that G-d’s personality, as it were, is mirrored in man’s soul, and that both can be divided into seven aspects, or *s’firos*.

Loosely translated these seven *s’firos* are: (in descending order): Kindness (or love), Severity (or fear), Balance (or purpose), Victory (certainty), Surrender (praise), connection (interest), and finalization (kingship).

Counting the Omer entails each day thinking about the appropriate attribute of Hashem (G-d’s kindness, severity, etc., or more exactly; seven ways G-d expresses each emotion, for instance, express kindness in a kind way or in a severe way, etc.) and how that same aspect appears in our soul.

Then we begin to feel that the only real love, victory, etc., is Hashem’s – i.e., according to His Torah – and act accordingly.

This is even a more thorough way to fix up our animal soul: from the inside out.

Even deeper: Let’s understand the idea of counting time.

What is time? The Mitteler Rebbe

explained in one of his masterpieces called *Ateres Rosh* that time is the result of how the spiritual enlivens the physical, namely the entire physical universe in all its details.

The spiritual strikes the physical (so to speak), gives it a bit of life, and instantly returns to its source. This pulsation is what we call time. But this is a natural process; spiritual doesn't necessary mean G-dly, per se.

The commandment of counting time implies that we try to feel that it is Hashem that is creating and controlling all this life pulsation every instant in every way.

When one feels that all life and all time comes only from the Living G-d, it inspires a great love and fear in our hearts for the Creator, and complete negation or sublimation of our animal souls (something like the angels – who are also called *chayos*, lit. animals – that we read about in the first blessing of *Shma*, who praise Hashem because they sense that He and only He is the source of all life).

It also, of course, reminds us how precious time is. Each minute, each day is a gift from G-d not to be treated lightly, as well as an infinite opportunity to change oneself and the world for better.

But all this is still not the main message of *S'firas HaOmer*.

The Talmud tells us that in these seven weeks of *S'firas HaOmer*, almost 2000 years ago, occurred a terrible catastrophe – 24,000 pupils of Rabbi Akiva died from a plague because they did not properly respect one another!

Now, these pupils of Rabbi Akiva were at the highest levels of personal perfection. They all were Torah geniuses, they certainly knew the lessons of the Ethics of the Fathers, etc. Moreover, they were pupils of Rabbi Akiva, who proclaimed, "Loving your neighbor is the essence of the Torah."

What went wrong? And how can we be expected to be better than they?

The Rebbe MH"M explains that the pupils of Rabbi Akiva were so perfect

and complete through learning Torah that each could not bear, and certainly not respect, anyone who was different or did not agree with his way of serving Hashem.

G-d was very exact with them precisely because they were such great Torah Scholars, and instead of using the Torah to make peace, which is the reason it was given, they used it to strengthen and justify their inflexibility.

But five of Rabbi Akiva's pupils were different, and they did not die. The foremost of them was Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (author of the *Zohar*) and he learned this lesson the hard way.

"That's what you learned?!" He screamed, "That is what you learned?! Why, even our washing lady knows that, and she never learned Torah in her life! Zelda! come here!"

For twelve years he and his son hid in a cave from the cruel Romans, learning Torah non-stop. The Talmud tells us that they reached such levels of holiness that when they left the cave they became infuriated at the sight of Jews working in their fields and not learning Torah. Their fury actually caused fires to break out, until a voice came from heaven and announced, "Get back into the cave for another year and learn how to live in the world!" In other words, learn to accept others who differ from you.

That is what the Alter Rebbe meant by, "I know that G-d creates the world." Namely, I learned that the

main thing is that G-d creates and really desires the world with all its variations and complications, and it is my job to perfect it.

(This is supported by the story that once, the Alter Rebbe was speaking with two other *tzaddikim*, one of whom was Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, who said that if they were G-d they would create the world differently so that the Jews would have no problems. But the Alter Rebbe answered, "If I were G-d I would create the world exactly as G-d creates it.")

I want to conclude with a very beautiful and relevant story that I heard from my teacher, Rabbi Mendel Futerfas, o.b.m.

When he was age five, learning Torah in Russia, there were no ballpoint pens, rather each boy had his own little ink bottle to dip his pen into. It so happened that one of the boys forgot to bring ink and asked the boy at his side for some of his. "No" replied the latter "I haven't enough, you should have brought from home." So the first boy had to ask someone else.

The teacher noticed this and said nothing, but a half an hour later he asked the second boy if he could tell the class what an Alef, a Beis and a Gimmel are (the first three letters of the Hebrew alphabet). "Of course," answered the child as he pointed in one of his books, "This is an Alef, and this a Beis and this a Gimmel."

"No" answered the teacher. "You are wrong!"

The boy was confused, "But teacher," he said, "this is what you taught us, this is what we have been reading for the last two years!"

"No!" the teacher continued. "You are wrong!"

"Alef is: when your friend asks you for ink, you give it to him. Beis is: when your friend asks for ink, you give it to him. Gimmel is: when your friend asks for ink, you give it to him."

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

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TRANSCRIPT: ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN

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Rabbi Gold: Good evening ladies and Gentlemen, and welcome to the new weekly radio show, “Living with Moshiach.” My name is Rabbi Eliezer Gold, and I’m your host. This program is dedicated to publicizing the teachings and prophecies of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. The purpose of this show is to fulfill the Rebbe’s heartfelt request that his prophecies regarding the Redemption be publicized in the widest manner possible, so that everyone should benefit from the privilege of being informed of the coming of Redemption, and should do everything in their power to hasten this process. In fact, the Rebbe has said many times that the best way to hasten the *Geula* is to

learn the subject of Moshiach and Redemption. We invite our listening audience to call in to ask questions and seek clarification on this most vital and relevant subject.

This evening, we are going to hear, *im yirtza Hashem*, about the Rebbe’s amazing prophecies concerning the war in Iraq. The Rebbe’s prophecies were said and recorded in public, before thousands of people, over a decade ago. We will hear from Rabbi Heschel Greenberg of Buffalo, New York, who will continue his fascinating discussion of the Rebbe’s prophecies regarding Iraq, as well as other teachings of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach on Moshiach and Redemption.

We will also hear an amazing

miracle story from Rabbi Sholom Ber Volpe, of Eretz Yisroel, which happened to him personally.

We are pleased to have Rabbi Heschel Greenberg, director of the Jewish Discovery Center in Buffalo, New York, back with us tonight. Rabbi Greenberg is a prominent scholar, lecturer, and educator. Rabbi Greenberg electrified our audience last week, when he discussed the statement the Rebbe made twelve years ago, in which he foretold the events of that time, as well of the time that we are in now. At that time, Iraq had invaded Kuwait, and the United States was building a coalition against Iraq. On Shabbos Mevarchim Elul, Parshas R’ei, 5750 – August 18, 1990 – the Rebbe addressed thousands of his *chassidim* at Lubavitch World Headquarters. The Rebbe quoted a passage from *Yalkut Shimoni*, a Midrashic work containing teachings that date as far back as 1500 years. The *Yalkut Shimoni* states as follows:

The leader of Persia will attack an Arab nation, and the Arab king will go to Aram for advice.... All 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 come and where shall we go?” Hashem will then say to them, “My children, do not be afraid, for everything that I have done, I have done only for your sake. Why are you afraid? Do not be afraid. The time of your Redemption has arrived.”

A few weeks later, during Sukkos, the Rebbe went on to explain that the words of the Midrash regarding “the leader of Persia” may be understood as a reference to the leader of Iraq, since ancient Persia included the territory of present-day Iraq. “Aram,” in Hebrew, means exalted, or powerful, and refers to the world’s



RABBI ELIEZER GOLD

The Rebbe declared that despite the ominous situation there is no reason to become confounded or fearful – quite the contrary.

Over the next few months, the Rebbe repeated the words of this Midrash numerous times and pointed out that this confrontation was another signpost heralding the time of our Redemption.

superpower. Thus, the scenario described in the Midrash of an Arab king going to Aram for advice, represents an Arab country, Kuwait, going to the U.S. for help.

The Rebbe declared that despite the ominous situation there is no reason to become confounded or fearful – quite the contrary. Over the next few months, the Rebbe repeated the words of this Midrash numerous times and pointed out that this confrontation was another signpost heralding the time of our Redemption.

On Shabbos Parshas Bo, the 4th of Sh'vat, 5751 (1991), the Rebbe continued this discussion. One of the Rebbe's oral scribes, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Jacobson, received a call from Rabbi Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, who told him in the Rebbe's name not to publish the part

of the talk that dealt with the U.S. war against Iraq. In explanation, the Rebbe had told the secretary "Od Chazon Le'moed," which essentially means that these words will be applicable at a future time.

Last week, Rabbi Greenberg pointed out that this biblical verse can be found in Habakkuk 2:3. When we examine that verse, we discover the startling hidden message that the Rebbe was telling us at that time.

Welcome back, Rabbi Greenberg, to our show.

Rabbi Greenberg: Good evening. It's good to be back.

Rabbi Gold: Thank you very much. Everybody was really startled by what you revealed last week from Habakkuk. I understand that you're planning to discuss the issue of Iraq and the *sicha* of Parsha Bo that was

said in connection with the first Gulf War.

Rabbi Greenberg: Well, I wouldn't say that I revealed it; it was always there. But sometimes people have seen things and read things, yet it doesn't occur to them that it has significance until someone actually provokes the interest and makes us look further. Now, this is true about a lot of things with regard to Moshiach. These are things that were written and discussed and printed years ago, decades ago, and centuries ago. When the time comes, all of a sudden we pay attention to it. I'm sure many people studied that Midrash that you referred to before, and it didn't occur to them that it would be coming true very soon. The Rebbe is the one who realized that the events unfolding in the Gulf are the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Rabbi Gold: Rabbi Greenberg, could you repeat that Rashi that you discussed last week? Unfortunately, we had to cut you short last week because we ran out of time. Do you have a moment to discuss that?

Rabbi Greenberg: Habakkuk is one of the Prophets in the book *Trei-Asar*, known as *The Minor Prophets*. Habakkuk prophesied the destruction of Bavel, or Babylonia, and focuses a little on that exile, as opposed to other exiles. In the 2nd chapter of Habakkuk, very interestingly, he starts off by saying that he is going to stand in his place, and he is not going to budge until G-d tells him when this exile will end. This degree to which the Prophet went to make sure that the end of exile would come about is a very interesting fact in and of itself. Then, Habakkuk records that G-d responded to him. Interestingly, G-d did not rebuke him for making such demands. Then, in the 3rd verse it says, "Ki od chazon le'moed," – "There is yet going to be a time for this vision

to come true.” Then it goes on [to say] *“Veyafe’ach lekeitz velo yechazev”* – “And it shall speak of the end and it shall not lie,” *“Im yismama, chakeh lo”* – “If it tarries, wait for it,” *“Ki vo yavo”* – “Because it will surely come,” *“Lo ye’acher”* – “It will not delay.”

Now this verse, which appears in the biblical book of Habakkuk, is explained by the Gemara, Sanhedrin 97b, to be referring to the coming of Moshiach. According to the Gemara, it is not a reference to the end of the Babylonian exile, but rather, to the coming of Moshiach. There are other commentaries that say that it refers to the end of the Babylonian exile. If it refers to the end of the Babylonian exile, it has to be understood in terms of the fact that the Babylonian exile ended in stages. There was a prediction that the Babylonian exile would end seventy years after it commenced. When that date passed and the end of the exile did not occur, people were disillusioned. In that context, this verse is telling us not to worry – even though the destruction of Babylonia was foretold, there is another date for its final destruction. The verse is saying don’t worry, wait for it, it will certainly come, it will not delay.



RABBI HESCHEL GREENBERG

I’m sure many people studied that Midrash that you referred to before, and it didn’t occur to them that it would be

coming true very soon. The Rebbe is the one who realized that the events unfolding in the Gulf are the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Now, Rashi seems to be of the school of those who applied this prophecy to the past, to the Babylonian exile. Rashi says, *“Od asid lakum Navi le’keits shanim”* – “There will be another Prophet who will arise at the end of years,” *“sheyisgaleh lo Chazon le’masai*

yihyeh mo’ed mapalas Bavel u’geulas Yisroel “ – “To whom will be revealed the vision of when the time will be for the downfall of Babylonia and the Redemption of Israel.”

(To be continued.)

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FROM HODU TO KUSH

This is the first in a series of articles composed of diary entries by Mrs. Rochel Kupchik. She wrote these when she went on shlichus with her husband Betzalel and six (Shlomi, Mendy, Yinon, Avichai, Moshiach, Yigal) of her seven children to Poona, India in 5761. These letters are addressed to her students back at Beis Chana in Tzfas, where she worked until she left on shlichus. Mrs. Kupchik describes the challenges and humorous as well as poignant moments.

Boruch Hashem,
Shalom rav to the Beis Chana Family,

To the principals, teachers, the cook (I'm almost a competitor of yours), to the secretaries and all the girls!

Although the salutation took me two lines, please, each of you take this as a personal letter!

Today in *Chitas*, Yosef asks Yaakov to live in Goshen and be near him. This teaches us that it's possible to be very far away, in India, yet to be very close to you, the Beis Chana family ...

Last Shabbos, somehow we never got to writing up announcements about our Shabbos plans. Do you think nobody showed up? Over fifty people came Friday night. What's special here is not the quantity, but the quality. By that I don't mean to "measure" or judge people, for every Jew is "equal." What I mean is special people show up, "*rechokim*" yet "*krovim*." These are people that you'd never see approaching a Chabad house back home in Eretz

Yisroel, as though they are not "*shayachim*" to spirituality, yet here...

I'd like to describe who I meet here. One type is the typical tourist. These are *chevra* who come to India to tour for a few months, the usual route a kid takes when he finishes his army service, or when someone gets a degree (a B.A., etc.) or wants a break from work. Some of them even laugh at or mock the *ashrams*, though others are drawn to these things. The one thing that unites them all is that in Eretz Yisroel, generally speaking, they would have nothing to do with a Chabad house.

Here they are liberated from the hatred of religious people they were raised with back home. Over here they enter the Chabad house for Shabbos or weekday meals as though it's the most natural thing for them to do, as though they're veteran eaters of "*kasha in Tomchei T'mimim*."

It was the last night of Chanuka and very late. A few people still remained as they did each night of Chanuka. The lights had already burned out. Suddenly Inbal came in

with her brother, Shachar, and their friend, Moshe. They were dirty and their eyes were red from tiredness. What had happened? They had traveled on two motorcycles from Delhi. They were on the road for a few days, traveling the impossible roads of India.

Not far from the entrance to the city of Poona they lost touch with their friends on the other motorcycle. Naturally they were tense and somewhat worried.

"So how did you get here?"

"What do you mean?" they said as they removed Chabad house business cards from their backpacks. (Aside from the address of the Chabad house, a picture of the Rebbe, and "*Yechi*" written on them, there's nothing else, and the address had already changed, so how did you come? They knew there was a Chabad house and they came. That's that.)

"We got your business cards at the Chabad house in Delhi."

"And why did you come here?"

"Obviously, when you arrive in a city, the first thing you do is go to the Chabad house!"

"What happened to the missing motorcycle?"

"We don't know. We'll wait for them here."

Fine. Naturally we revived them with some fricassee.

Here I'll stop and explain that the branch of Angel's Bakery (a popular kosher bakery in Eretz Yisroel) in Poona was on vacation, and so we had to bake our own doughnuts. I had a Chanuka miracle and they actually came out good! When you prepare about 150 doughnuts, apparently Hashem has mercy, because generally speaking, my previous doughnut experiences were abysmal.

By the way, for some reason they

don't sell jelly with the *Badatz hechsher* at our local grocer. What did I do? I looked around in the market for some sort of fruit that would be just right, and settled on banana jelly!

Okay. This is all by way of introduction in order to explain, that after all that incredible success, you still can't host guests night after night with doughnuts, even if they are a Chanuka miracle. Fine, so you come up with some variety. One night you make Ashkenazi *latkes*, another night you make Turkish *sambusak*, fried dough filled with spicy chumus. The night the motorcyclists showed up I had tried to remember what Gila from Beis Chana had put into the fricassee (immediately followed by local substitutes ... aside from the tuna that I had ... thank you Devorah!).

They were still relaxing from the rigors of their journey, wishing each other *l'chaim* over cups of *mashkeh* at a *chassidic farbrengen*, which you know is more powerful (pardon us) than Malach Michoel. Not much time elapsed when guess who walked in? Moshe with long black hair, and Moran with his shaven head, partially covered by a bandanna, with 500 earrings in each ear, plus a nose ring and a ring on each of his ten fingers, etc., basically, the contents of your typical jewelry store.

Excitement, hugs, what happened? A truck nearly thrust the motorcycle into the depths of the wadi on the side of the road. *Baruch Hashem* it was only "nearly." A cup of coffee, and some fricassee, of course. And I can't help interrogating him. "How did you get here? When you lost your traveling companions, what made you think of coming here of all places?"

The answer was simple: "What do you mean? Obviously the first place to go to is the Chabad house!"

Great. The dough for the bread for supper was waiting. Ofer, who always comes to help (who knows to wash his hands first!), prepared a salad. The oven contains stuffed peppers (thanks to the cook at Beis Chana who taught me this one) and shakshuka was on the fire.

The *chevra* came in and I'm still writing. So as we say here "*shanti, shanti*" (i.e. tranquility and relaxation), but even that has its limits. So I'll conclude and will have to owe you a sequel. Let's see ... what was the topic? "Different types"

"We got your business cards at the Chabad house in Delhi."

"And why did you come here?"

"Obviously, when you arrive in a city, the first thing you do is go to the Chabad house!"

at the Chabad house, or more properly put – "Jewish *neshamos!*"

Lhitraot very soon with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach in Yerushalayim! Mazal tov to Mora Rochel Hendel and to me too! Write!

Rochel'e

**A HOUSE, FAMILY,
SHLICHUS**

Baruch Hashem

Tuesday, 14 Teives, 5761

Shalom to you dear girls in the

holy city!

And of course to the entire staff – *shlichei ha'Rebbe* at Beis Chana!

When many people heard of our impending trip to India with the family, they were shocked. "With all of them? How will you manage?" Remember you said to me, it's one thing India in general, but without a home for the children? Yet here we are, all of us.

Fine, the first one is "not a problem" because as is obvious to all of you _____ is my right hand, or actually two right hands which constantly hold little Yigal, who prefers her over me ... Mendy and Shlomi also lend a hand wherever necessary, going to the vegetable store, taking clothing to be pressed or to the local tailor to fix a tear in the pants (Yes, there are certain luxuries here! For ten rupees, which is equivalent to one shekel, you can have pants fixed, and for even less, a blouse can be ironed), cutting salad – the children learned how to do it – and I'm talking about large quantities here ...

As far as the others, the little ones – what do they have to do with *shlichus*? Evidently they have a special job, too!

When we asked Devorah, one of the tourists, what was special about the Chabad house in Poona, her immediate answer was: the children ... a "house" that is a "regular" house with children, and that's reason enough to come by ...

Yigal, a computer engineer, is a sweet boy who knows nothing about Judaism. He comes every evening. He also said he comes because of the kids!

Shachar, who calls himself "Zahiro," makes sure nobody calls him Shachar. Why? Because Shachar is a "*sanias*," which is someone who in a special ceremony accepts the rules of the ashram which includes taking on a new name and one is

forbidden to use one's actual name. This is just the opposite of "*lo shinu shmam*," not changing their names, which was a merit the Jews had to leave Mitzrayim. Anyway, this Shachar was asked why he comes (rather regularly too), and his answer was – because of the children. He loves playing with them, and he knows all their names, including the middle names. I'll tell you more about Shachar another time. (I told you I would write about "*neshamos*" and I haven't forgotten.)

The meal begins. "Everybody wash!" is announced. If I, or one of the adults, go to the sink to show each one how to wash, that would be "religious coercion," or at best, would be considered annoying. Our seven year old does it (and he makes sure each one says a *bracha*, and how!) then they go along with it with a smile. Who would refuse a child?

Avichai, with his big mouth, sits regularly among the *chevra* and gives lectures! Everybody laughs and enjoys it, and he is "allowed" to say what would be a problem for us to say.

At every gathering – the recitation of the *P'sukim* – and for the *chevra*, seeing the little ones saying the *P'sukim* with such sweetness, with all their might, with the right hand swinging – it just captivates them – and all of them respond, of course.

Even little Yigal has already tried his hand at public declamations. He doesn't speak clearly yet, but he knows how to wave his arm with all his might, and that's enough at this stage to illustrate the idea of "*tinok m'sh'maschil l'dabber*" – that a child from when he begins to talk must be taught words of Torah.

Today Ayal told me (I'll have to write about him, too): Your chinuch helps you a great deal now, here with the children. I told him it was

still hard. He said that relative to kids from non-religious homes (and you realize that he's quite a *mekurav* to say something like this) they are more disciplined and do as they're told.

Today Tamir came in. From the way he spoke we realized that unfortunately his head is a bit messed up from drugs (we get those types, too). When he left, he turned to Avichai and asked for five rupee for a rickshaw. "I promise to give it back to you at night," he said.

Why did he ask Avichai of all people? Because ever since receiving *Chanuka gelt*, Avichai has been going around with rupees in his hand, counting and calculating and making plans for business dealings ... In short, Avichai pulled out a bill and gave it to him ... Ayal was amazed ...

I think that the end of the story will be like that of the Rebbe Rayatz. When he was a boy he gave someone a loan and never saw the money again.

How did I forget the main thing? When you want to get them to sing proper songs (did you think that it was only on Friday nights that this was an issue?), at Shabbos meals or on other occasions, how do you do it? Through the children, of course! Those voices, which often drive me crazy ... And if you've never seen Shlomi belt out *Shabchi Yerushalayim* or Avichai using the might of his vocal cords (something he typically does – but usually when saying, "Imaaaaa!!!" he is *bothering* me!) to sing "*oseh shalom b'mromav*," and Yinon joining in with his shrieks (which he generally does when he thinks one of his brothers has insulted him) and "*HaRebbe shlita, ein kamocho b'olam*" – you've never seen full deployment of the troops in a singing endeavor in your life!

Nogah asked me, in a lengthy conversation that we had Motzaei Shabbos, and others also asked me,

if I'm not afraid that the children will be corrupted by their environment. It's true that the sights they are exposed to are not exactly *tznius* and the time-honored Jewish ways, and that's an understatement ... but we have learned that something that "gives out cannot simultaneously absorb" (a basic principle that I learned when I got involved with Chabad, and if you don't know about it – ask!).

In general, and this is the main point, we were guaranteed that the Rebbe takes responsibility for the children of *shluchim*.

True, it's not easy, not easy at all when you have to worry about:

- 1 *davening* with them every day
- 2 learning with them
- 3 occupying them (oh boy!) the entire day
- 4 getting them to be quiet when *divrei Torah* are publicly said
- 5 becoming desperate from their screaming (and do they keep quiet at home?)
- 6 feeding them (yes, over here you get up in the morning and there's no cheese to spread on a piece of bread because there's no bread and no cheese ...)

-7 putting them to sleep (a hopeless task! Every night the *chevra* sit with us until twelve, one, or two in the morning and in the tumult, in the room next door, the one bedroom for all the children, you have to make sure they fall asleep while simultaneously serving food to another guest who decided to show up at eleven o'clock at night, and while holding conversations, etc.).

But in the end it works out and you feel the Rebbe's *bracha*, how the children of *shluchim* are "on the Rebbe's shoulders," and you see how even the little ones have their role.

I must conclude since they're calling me. Be strong in your *shlichus* at Beis Chana. Perhaps it's less

exciting and unique than *shlichus* over here, but who says it's any less important?

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

L'hitraot,
Rochel'e

STORIES OF NESHAMOS

Boruch Hashem

15 Teives, 5761

Hello Beis Chana Family!

I promised I'd write you about "neshamos." Yossi. A physiotherapist. Shabbos afternoon, as we sat with some of the *chevra*, he suddenly appeared at the Chabad house and hesitantly said: I have a request that will certainly seem odd. Can I ask it?

Of course, we said. What's the problem?

Would you have a *Tanach* for me?

We didn't have a *Tanach*, but a connection was made. He kept coming for Chanuka events, and he told us that the first night of Chanuka he had been on a bus with a friend on a twelve-hour trip from Goa to Poona when he remembered that it was the first night of Chanuka. No, don't think he's overly religious, as you'll see. It's just that his mother wrote him that his grandmother's birthday fell out on the first night of Chanuka this year, and that's how he knew.

What does a Jew do when he is very far in *ruchnius* and very far *b'gashmius*, somewhere on the road in India? Well, Yossi decided he must light the first night of Chanuka! The bus stopped somewhere at a kiosk that sells tea and Yossi bought some candles and they lit them!

Of course we explained to him that for thousands of years that particular spot had waited for a Jew to come and fulfill a *mitzva* there with a *bracha*!

The following evening, Yossi

asked me if I wouldn't be insulted if he told me how he first came to us. He had been looking for a *Tanach* and someone referred him to the "guest house" where we're located. As he approached the door and saw us "religious folks" his heart sank because his last encounter with religious people was in a religious neighborhood of Yerushalayim, where he was looking for an address and a religious person had thrown him out of his store. "Yet I entered your place anyway and discovered that here it's altogether different."

Until he left Poona, Yossi came

In the end it works out and you feel the Rebbe's bracha, how the children of shluchim are "on the Rebbe's shoulders," and you see how even the little ones have their role.

by many times. Before he left, he wrote in our guest book: "I came with trepidation and left with enjoyment."

Take Tali for example, a girl crowned with plentiful braids, who's a television producer. She was already connected with the Chabad house in Bangkok. She's a happy, enthusiastic girl and she explained to us how it was *davka* in the East that she stopped using drugs. Why? In Eretz Yisroel I must constantly "make an impression," while over here I'm free to be myself. There's another reason why it's easier to be

receptive here and that's because one is free of peer pressure.

You should also get to know Devorah, a very refined girl. Tali announced that Devorah looks religious, and we all agreed. We merely added that Tali looks like a *baalas t'shuva*, which is true. Tali told us about a course on Vifsana that she took. I won't get into a description of it, but it has something to do with some sort of meditation techniques and contemplation which take place while sitting for long periods of time, for days in isolation, in utter silence, etc. It sounded like nothing more than some psychological technique. Then I asked her – when we learn about something in Judaism, we have people who exemplify what we learn about. They are role models who demonstrate the truth of what we've learned. Have you anybody who exemplifies what you described?

Yes, the B_____!

That's when we discovered that, sad to say, her study involved *avoda zara*, even if it was covered over with a veneer of psychology and meditation.

Devorah had a hard time leaving Poona and kept postponing her trip. How come? Because of the Chabad house. She told us that directly! (I think I told you already that she told us that it's the children that make it special here.)

When she finally left she gave us her e-mail address, as they all do. I sent her a *d'var Torah* on the *sidra* last Friday, and of course we'll continue to be in touch.

Okay, the couscous has to be removed from the fire, and they'll be coming in soon for supper, our regular meeting time.

L'hitraot!

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

THE NEW LIE

BY SHAI GEFEN

They want to sell us a new “man of peace” (Abu Mazen). Feels like déjà vu does it not? We’ve been there, done that, and have buried a thousand of our brethren...

“ONE WHO EXCHANGES A COW FOR A DONKEY”

The Israeli government is attempting to clear out dozens of settlements and to establish a Palestinian state. It's all quite clear. Abu Mazen is the conciliatory “man of peace.” Arafat is the “bad guy.” Abu Mazen is the man who will bring us the long-awaited peace. We can practically hear the fluttering of dove's wings...

About ten years ago we went through the identical situation. Incredibly, they're trying it again. Then, it was Arafat. They told us what a great friend of Israel he is and how it was only he, as the Palestinian leader, that we could do business with, and if we lost the momentum, who knows what would happen?

Just moments before Arafat was history, they resurrected him and gave him huge quantities of money and arms. The results were horrendous and gruesome. A thousand dead! Thousands of wounded! An economy in ruins. Arafat is laughing all the way to the bank.

Now they're telling us that we'll have a new, pragmatic leader to deal with. Once again they warn us that we'll only be able to achieve peace with him, for only he can rule the Palestinian State.

Give 'em credit. They try! And with the help of the media, corrupt leaders, and American pressure, they are prepared to sell us all.

When it came to the first Oslo Accords they could say: we want to try to make peace. We're sick of blood and war. But now, after a decade of terror, massacres, maiming, and bereavement thanks to those Accords, what can they say?

The Rebbe's clear and straightforward words to President Moshe Katzav speak for themselves: “If that's the situation, then it would be preferable – *r'l* – that they establish a government of gentiles in Eretz Yisroel who will make the decisions about what to do with Eretz Yisroel. At least then, Jews won't sign on these matters!”

This is all the more significant in light of the war in Iraq and the American insistence on fighting worldwide terrorism. The only right the government has to rule Israel is because of the security it provides its citizens, with a strong stand according to *Shulchan Aruch*. When they go from bad to worse and concede on that which is most dear to us, this government no longer has a right to exist.

The celebration over Abu Mazen reminds us all of the celebrations we made for Arafat way back when. We haven't learned our lesson.

IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE!

On Thursday, in the midst of the celebrations and blessings sent to Abu Mazen on the occasion of his new position, we were attacked in Kfar Saba as though to remind us of what the new Middle East will look

like with Abu Mazen in charge.

Who is Abu Mazen? We have learned that during the signing of the Oslo Accords, the foreign ministry, headed by Shimon Peres, instructed the Wiesenthal Center to hide Abu Mazen's doctorate that he wrote denying the Holocaust took place!

A few months ago, an I.D.F. spokesman removed an interview from his website that Abu Mazen had given to Arab newspapers in which he expressed his support of murdering the settlers. Why was this done? In order protect the position of the new prime minister of the Palestinian state.

Beilin, the architect of the Oslo Accords, can rub his hands in glee. The man who “discovered” Abu Mazen and signed agreements with him, now gets to see Mafdal and Ichud Leumi carrying out his plans: crowning him as leader of a Palestinian state. The rule is that any work is named after the person who completed it. How can we understand the fact that a government which includes the Mafdal and Ichud Leumi parties, talks about concessions to Palestinians in the form of releasing murderers, and giving millions to the P.A. to finance terror, which hasn't stopped for a moment?!

El-Aktza cells announce that they will not stop terror. The Palestinian man on the street mocks any agreements with Abu Mazen and wants terror to continue at any price, and we comfort ourselves with the thought that peace is nigh. Just this week they publicized the awful statistic that since the Oslo Accords 250 terrorists blew themselves up in the midst of civilians. This number did not include the hundreds of suicide bombers who were caught on their way to perpetrate their atrocities. All this is part of the wonderful achievements earned by the architects of Oslo.

By any account these are not rational proceedings, but a deep problem manifested by our leaders. When the Torah is not that which dictates our policies, we even lose the basic instinct to cling to life.

When they gave away half of Sinai, the Rebbe said that the only thing to do then was to pray for those leaders and to give *tz'daka* on their behalf so that they cease endangering the existence of the Jewish people.

“COMMANDO GIYUR” AND “COMMANDO ABU MAZEN”

It is not possible to remain silent about the two so-called religious parties of the Right, the Ichud Leumi and Mafdal, that continue to give the government oxygen even when the prime minister talks about an actual plan, referring to the Road Map, and the uprooting of Jews from their homes. These parties can't say that they're the “fifth wheel” of the government, because they are in the majority and provide the moral backing to carry out these plans. They are collaborators with all that is going on. The heads of those parties talk about leaving the government before the plans are carried out. In other words, they'll allow the robber to enter the house and when he does, they'll leave and let the Labor party and the *chareidi* parties finish the job.

We've experienced this lie before. They did the same thing with the Chevron and Wye agreements under Netanyahu. They did the same thing under Sharon's Unity government, and now too, under Sharon's narrow government, which is crowning a Palestinian prime minister with the support of the entire world, and with the agreement of the Israeli Right.

The parties that are ready to sell out the Jewish nation, are also ready to sell their souls. The downfall is a progressive one, as the Rebbe said when you attack *shleimus ha'Aretz* it effects and attacks *shleimus ha'Am*,

and crumbles the walls between the Jewish people and the nations of the world.

The Ichud Leumi party announced a new campaign, “Commando Giyur.” The goal is to convert hundreds of thousands of *goyim* wholesale. Knesset Member Tzvi Hendel, one of the originators of the plan, said among other things, “In the large wave of immigration in the 90's, about 300,000 immigrants came here that are not Jewish. 80% of them want to be Jews and Zionists. The other 20% are Jew-haters and are not interested in Judaism. Because of the intransigence of the religious establishment, which imposes difficulties on the majority, we must do something nationalistic-Jewish, for otherwise the current situation will rip the nation apart.”

This followed what the head of their party, Transportation Minister Avigdor Lieberman said about allowing El-Al to fly on Shabbos, and about the plan of Tourist Minister Benny Alon, to bring hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to tour Eretz Yisroel. This all fits with their remaining within a bloody government.

The Rebbe said that those parties that fought against amending *Mihu Yehudi* are those that ran to be first to announce concessions to the Arabs. We've got to know that those who fight *Mihu Yehudi* will end up giving away land, thus endangering the lives of Jews. They're interdependent. Apparently it is that very party whose slogan in the last elections was against a Palestinian state that is actually creating a Palestinian state.

At this point we must thank Hashem for saving those *mekusharim* to the “tree of life,” the Rebbe MH”M, from being enticed by the false propaganda of these and others who tried to lead us astray. *Baruch Hashem* we were not collaborators with those who endanger the lives of Jews.



El-Aktza cells announce that they will not stop terror. The Palestinian man on the street mocks any agreements with Abu Mazen and wants terror to continue at any price, and we comfort ourselves with the thought that peace is nigh.

ARE THE “G'DOLEI HA'TORAH” RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ECONOMIC CRISIS?

The economic cutbacks that the government is about to hit all of us with are terrible. Tens of thousands of large families will experience deep cuts in their income, while the same government gives hundreds of millions of shekel to the P.A. For many of these families, it's literally the bread that they eat.

Let's examine the root of the problem and try to understand why we have reached this stage, especially when the person responsible for this is our (former) good friend, Bibi.

The economic crisis did not happen because of money that went to *yeshivos*, nor did it happen because of the law which awards stipends to large families. The economic crisis is a result of the Oslo Accords, which gave us not only death and bereavement, but financial woes, as well. The two and a half years of the Oslo War have cost the government tens of billions of shekel. Each day of war costs the army millions of shekel.

Even the expenses of Bituach Leumi (the national Social Security system) skyrocketed as a direct result of the Oslo Accords: tens of thousands of wounded, physically and emotionally; a thousand dead; not to mention the death of the tourist industry, damage to property, car theft, etc., which costs the government a fortune. All that is in addition to indirect damages. No wonder leaders talk about the need to cut the budget but they forget to tell us who is to blame for this state of affairs.

Even the religious parties that scream bloody murder about the budget cuts don't acknowledge that they brought these problems upon themselves. Netanyahu, "Good for the Jews," who continued the Oslo Tragedy under false pretenses with the Chevron Accords and Wye, is the treasury minister who is bringing upon us the financial results of his mistakes.

We must remember to thank Hashem for the chain of miracles, as we watched in astonishment as Iraq crumbled with hardly any resistance, and Jewish soldiers celebrated Pesach in Saddam's palaces.

Erev Pesach, the Moetzes G'dolei HaTorah convened for a meeting in light of the financial situation and the decrees that are about to descend upon the Torah world. It's certainly touching to see the concern these *rabbanim* have – that they found the time to discuss the financial situation as opposed to other burning issues of the day such as the immigration of thousands of *goyim* to Eretz Yisroel, the registration of *goyim* as Jews, *chilul Shabbos*, etc.

It's important that they know that all this comes as a result of the Oslo Accords which they accepted (outright or silently). If they continue to remain silent in the face of the steps the government is taking these days, let them not come with complaints about the financial situation, which is only going to get worse.

DON'T BE ASHAMED TO GO OUT AND DANCE!

The victory in Iraq was an incredible miracle. Like the victory in the Yom Kippur War, this miracle is not tainted with the sentiment of "*kochi v'otzem yadi*" (my strength and the power of my hand). The Rebbe said regarding the Yom Kippur War that the miracles then were bigger than those of the Six Day War. It's just that the government didn't want to take pride in these miracles because they couldn't take the credit for them. Now too, we realize that Heaven wiped out our enemies and the evil Kingdom of Bavel, in the most astounding way.

Much was said during this war about the Rebbe's prophecy of "*zevach l'Hashem b'Batza*." Experts spoke about a protracted and difficult war and a bloody victory thanks to the might of America, but everybody saw that Iraq's defeat was so unnaturally easy, with hardly any bloodshed (relatively speaking).

We must remember to thank Hashem for the chain of miracles, as we watched in astonishment as Iraq crumbled with hardly any resistance, and Jewish soldiers celebrated Pesach in Saddam's palaces.

We can't be ungrateful. Twelve years ago the Rebbe spoke on 26 Nissan 5751 about the obligation to think about the open miracles happening before our very eyes, "to the point that he is not ashamed to go out and dance because of the open miracles."

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HA'RAV HA'GAON YONA METZGER, SHLITA, NEWLY ELECTED
TO THE CHIEF RABBINATE OF ERETZ YISROEL:

“ONLY YEARS LATER DID I UNDERSTAND THE REBBE’S BRACHA ON THE ELECTION IN THE MONTH OF SPRING”

INTERVIEWED BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

On behalf of the editorial staff of *Beis Moshiach* and its thousands of readers, let me congratulate K’vod HaRav on his election.

Thank you very much.

The Rebbe attributed great importance to the Chief Rabbis of Eretz Yisroel. What are the goals that K’vod HaRav has set for himself as Chief Rabbi of Israel?

The first and most important activity is greater outreach between all sectors of the Jewish people. There is a clear expectation for this among the people. I am discovering an exciting sense of enthusiasm. I didn’t believe that so many people were interested in every possible aspect of *Yiddishkeit*. I have yet to accustom myself to the trappings of the Chief Rabbinate. So last week, I walked to the *shul* located near my home. As I was crossing Ibn Gvirol Street, I stood for a traffic light. Passing drivers honked their horns, people from all walks of life. None of them was religious. I never imagined that such a fondness and concern for matters dealing with a rabbi and religion existed in the Tel Aviv community. You see such people in the street and you think that they are “anti-” Not the type that you would expect to go to *shul* tomorrow. This is the result of my acquaintance with them via the Tel Aviv Rabbinate. My

current goal is to continue in this direction of outreach among Jews.

Something else that must be done as soon as possible is to raise the level of *kashrus* throughout Eretz Yisroel. I don’t think that the *kashrus* standards of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel should be any less than the respectable levels of the various



HaRav Metzger at a Chabad *kinus*

Badatz systems throughout the country. Everything should be done to raise these standards. We must utilize our best efforts to bring the revolution to practical application.

I also have plans to improve the image of the rabbinical court system. Due to the heavy workload on the

shoulders of the *dayanim*, some cases are forced to take an unjustifiably long time. This must be changed.

The Chief Rabbi has a connection with the Rebbe. Can we hear about it?

In Cheshvan 5751, I was invited, together with my wife, to a *bar mitzva* of the son of one of my friends from New York, so we decided to go to the Rebbe on Sunday. My friend and his wife asked for a *bracha* for their son, then I turned to the Rebbe and asked him if it was possible to receive a *bracha* in connection to a proposal that had been made at the time regarding election to the Chief Rabbinate in Holon. The Rebbe waved his hand and said to me, “May you serve long in the land that ‘the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,’ and it should be in the month of spring, *farbunden* (connected) with the Holiday of Freedom, the Time of our Freedom, and it should be with much success.”

As I left the Rebbe, I didn’t understand what he meant. We were in the month of Cheshvan, closer to Tishrei. What was the connection to Pesach? At first, we thought it was in reference to the elections for the Tel Aviv Rabbinate, which were due to take place in the month of Nissan.

However, in the end, the elections for Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv were postponed.

In recent months, it was suggested that I become a candidate for Chief Rabbi of Israel. The elections were due to take place in the month of Adar, but due to a petition to the High Court, an extension of an additional two weeks was made. The

State Attorney General argued that the rabbis must sell the country's *chametz*. The judge accepted this argument, and ruled that the elections would be held in Nissan, the month of spring.

After the High Court deliberation, I saw the sad faces of those who were working for me, in response to the postponement. "You forgot about the

cassette?" I told them. When they asked me what cassette I was talking about, I played for them the cassette with the Rebbe's words to me, "and it should be in the month of spring, *farbunden* (connected) with the Holiday of Freedom, the Time of our Freedom, and it should be with much success." When they heard those words, everyone relaxed.

**HA'RAV HA'GAON SHLOMO AMAR, SHLITA, NEWLY ELECTED
TO THE CHIEF RABBINATE OF ERETZ YISROEL:**

"THE MAIN TASK OF MELECH HA'MOSHIACH IS TO BRING THE PEOPLE BACK TO T'SHUVA"

INTERVIEWED BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

On behalf of the editorial staff of *Beis Moshiach* and its thousands of readers, let me congratulate K'vod HaRav on his election.

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I hope and pray to G-d that He will give me the help of Heaven so that I can bring our Jewish brethren to the path of Torah with pleasantness, closeness, and in a spirit of unity. This is the main thing that is needed so much in our generation. It is my desire also to work so that the religious services that the Chief Rabbinate provides will be given in the most correct and useful manner: true *kashrus*, according to the truth of Jewish law, improvements in the procedure of marriages and conversions, and the status of the rabbinical courts.

Together with strengthening these holy institutions, I want to work also in the strengthening of outreach, in order that everything can be provided in a pleasant atmosphere, and to bring others closer to love of G-d's name. It is my fervent desire to lessen

the sense of hatred that prevails today.

Similarly, it is my plan to organize various conferences for local rabbinical authorities and to create committees comprised of *rabbanim* who are ready to take action. This is what I did in Tel Aviv on the day of my election. I gathered all the *rabbanim* in the city, and we made several meetings and conferences, each of which had the participation of many *rabbanim*. Each of them took upon himself to shoulder some of the responsibility. This has more than its share of usefulness, as is written, "for the sake of the many that were with me." The merit of the many. The advice of the many. These meetings succeeded in producing tremendous effort in a variety of areas. Much success was also generated in the field of *kashrus*, since all the *rabbanim* worked together as one in a true sense of cooperation and mutual consultation.



HaRav Amar receives a certificate of honor on behalf of the Chabad yeshiva in Ramat Aviv

The Chief Rabbi had a connection with Chabad and the Rebbe in Morocco. Can we hear about it?

The Rebbe is one of our greatest *tzaddikim*. He established Torah centers in every corner of the world. He planted seeds that today are bearing fruit. In his merit, there are hundreds of thousands of *baalei t'shuva* today.

I never had the privilege of meeting with the Rebbe personally, but before emigrating to Eretz Yisroel, I was fortunate enough to learn for two months in the Chabad *yeshiva* in Morocco, where I was first introduced to Chabad. Those two months in Morocco marked an opening of the window of my association with the unmatched teachings and activities of this movement. I do all that I can to support and assist these activities.

The Chief Rabbi recently paid a visit to Crown Heights. Some impressions?

I left there with a tremendous feeling of excitement, including my visit to the *yeshivos*, the *kollel*, and my meeting with the members of the Crown Heights Beis Din Kashrus Committee. I saw *yeshivos* filled with students learning Torah assiduously with great perseverance. But above all, there was my visit to 770, where I was privileged to *daven* and receive an *aliya* to the Torah in the Rebbe's *Daled Amos*. The feeling was most intense. I also had the privilege of going upstairs to visit the home of the Rebbe Rayatz on the second floor – a most thrilling and exciting honor.

How does the Chief Rabbi see the world's preparedness today for the Redemption?

The Rebbe's activities have clearly been directed towards hastening the Redemption. There is a great stirring of interest in Torah study and *t'shuva*, which continues to grow from the strength of the seeds that the Rebbe planted. This is the main task of Melech HaMoshiach: to bring the people back to *t'shuva*.

The holy *Ohr HaChaim* writes that the Redemption depends upon the study of Torah. And when this increases, the Redemption comes closer. Clearly, the great intensification in Torah study, together with the growth in number of *baalei t'shuva*, is a true preparation for the coming of Moshiach. We pray that his light will soon be revealed to us all.

HA'RAV R. AVROHOM HA'LEVI GOLDBERG, A"H

Deep shock and sorrow struck the Chabad community of Tzfas upon learning of the untimely passing of HaRav HaChassid R. Avrohom HaLevi Goldberg, one of the founding members and *shluchim* of the Chabad community of Tzfas, who served as one of the administrators of the Beis Chana Girls School.

Rabbi Goldberg passed away

suddenly in his sleep of cardiac arrest on the 13th of Nissan. The funeral took place that evening with the residents of Kiryat Chabad of Tzfas, led by the *mara d'asra*, HaRav Mordechai Bistritzky, the students of Beis Chana, and his many friends and acquaintances.

He is survived by his wife, Yehudis, daughter of HaRav Tuvia

Peles, of blessed memory, his eight children, and his grandchildren.

A more detailed article on the life of Rabbi Goldberg will appear, G-d willing, in next week's issue. May G-d Alm-ghty swallow forever the specter of death and wipe away our tears with the true and complete Redemption, speedily in our days.



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SEDERS FOR SOLDIERS: REPORT FROM CHEVRON

BY ALIZA KARP

As an introduction to the first Seder for the forty soldiers at the Tel Rumeida Army Base, Chabad Shliach Rabbi Danny Cohen told the famous story of simple man whose Seder was accepted 'on high' in favor of the Seder of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev. It turned out that the simple man had consumed all his vodka before Pesach because he lived a downtrodden life and wanted to fulfill the *Mitzva* of being happy on Yom Tov. When his wife managed to arouse him from his drunken stupor at the time of the Seder, he was only able to declare his sincere regret for not being learned, his sincere love for Hashem and heartfelt gratitude for being released from bondage.

Cohen then told the soldiers at the Seder: "Tonight our Seder will be cut short. You will be called to guard duty in less than two hours. You are not allowed to drink wine before you go on duty. But that does not take away the dearness that your Seder will have in the heavens. This Seder is for soldiers who have *mesiras nefesh* to guard the children of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov. Your Seder will not have all the details of the Seder of the Berditchever, but it will rise to the heights and be special in the eyes of Hashem."

Hearing this, the soldiers gave a cheer and the Seder began on a high note, despite the fact that Kiddush had to be made on grape juice. Cohen's five year old son Menachem Mendel recited the Ma Nishtana with gusto, and the Seder was put on fast forward so that everyone would have a chance to wash and eat the Matza,

Moror, Korach and Shulchan Orech.

During the meal the soldiers took turns reading from the Hagada. When they came to where it mentions Moshiach, they began singing the song made popular by Mordechai ben Dovid: Moshiach, Moshiach, Moshiach. At the end of the meal the soldiers got up to dance, gave a *yasher ko'ach* to Cohen

"Tonight our Seder will be cut short. You will be called to guard duty in less than two hours. You are not allowed to drink wine before you go on duty. But that does not take away the dearness that your Seder will have in the heavens."

and his assistants and then prepared themselves for their next shift.

Cohen then went home to make a Seder for his family, but his two assistants, Dovid Okonov from Crown Heights and Menachem Sternberg from Kiyat Malachi stayed on to make a Seder for the soldiers who just finished their guard duty. The second Seder was complete with wine. The soldiers from both Seders

thanked the Shluchim for coming and making the Chag so special. After the second Seder the *bachurim* finally came back to Cohen's apartment and made a Seder for themselves, finishing, not before Chatzos, but before 'z'man Krias Shma shel Shacharis,' sacrificing their personal Hiddur Mitzva for Z'chus of the soldiers.

Yechil Amar of Betar and his wife of just a few months, decided they wanted to do something special for Pesach. Yechiel made a Seder for the soldiers stationed near Beit Romana, on land owned by Chabad since before 1929, and then walked an hour to Harsina, to make a Seder with his wife. His Seder was also very well received. And so was the handmade Shmura Matza that was given to each soldier in the area, largely sponsored by Amar.

In the weeks preceding Pesach, Cohen was busy arranging to provide leaders for the S'darim at a dozen army bases in and around Chevron. He recruited Bachurim from Kiryat Malachi and Kfar Chabad. Reports are now in that all the S'darim were full of Chayos, and the soldiers once again benefited from the warm embrace of the Rebbe of Lubavitch. As Cohen told the soldiers at his Seder. "You have all heard on the news that the Chabad Seder in Nepal will be the world's largest Seder. The largest Seder may be the only one that makes the news, but the Rebbe sends Shluchim to make S'darim for every Jew, not forgetting the soldiers who, by remaining on base, provide security so that families in Eretz Yisroel can sit safely at their Seder tables."

SUCCESSFUL PESACH SEDERS FOR ISRAELI TOURISTS IN GREECE AND TURKEY

Rabbi **Eliyahu HaLevi Segal** of Tzfas, with help from Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, organized three Pesach *seiders* for Israelis. This marks the third year that Rabbi Segal has arranged such a program. The first year, he traveled to Anitalia, Turkey, and in the second year, to the Greek Isle of Rodus, where there had never been a communal Pesach *seider*. This year, he sent others to do the *seiders* there, while he surprised everyone again with a communal *seider* on the Greek Isle of Crete. This special *shlichus* was made in coordination with the Rebbe's *shluchim*: Rabbi **Menachem Mendel Chitrik** – Turkey, and Rabbi **Menachem Mendel Hendel** – Greece.

How did this communal *seider* on Crete actually come about?

Mr. Chaim Sapir, an official of the Legal Department of Bank Leumi Ltd., was in regular contact with Rabbi Segal. Before his trip to Athens, he asked him how to obtain kosher food. In the course of their conversation, the subject of making a communal *seider* in Crete was raised. "Why are you neglecting Crete?," Mr. Sapir asked.

"I decided to pick up the gauntlet," Rabbi Segal recalls. "So, together with Rabbi **Yosef Zelikovitz**, I arrived in Crete on Erev Pesach, equipped with a large supply of prepared food. Several days before, we had made certain that on all flights to Crete, announcements were made about the Pesach *seider* that would take place for Israelis at the "Konsus Royal" Hotel. This way, all the Israelis would know to participate in the special Pesach *seider* that had been organized for them."

In fact, about four hundred Israelis arrived to celebrate Pesach in Crete. The participants were surprised that Chabad had come all this way. Rabbi Segal and Rabbi Zelikovitz captured the interest of everyone with illustrative explanations about the holiday of Pesach. Cheerful singing and dancing swept all those assembled into an atmosphere of sheer joy. They expressed their thanks and appreciation that Chabad had come to Crete to make the *seider*.

After the first two days of Yomtov, when the two *shluchim* went around the island's streets to distribute



Rabbi Segal and Rabbi Zelikovitz during Chol HaMoed with the prison warden where two Israelis sit

matzos and informational literature to Israelis, they met Professor Ze'ev Segal, constitutional law expert and legal commentator with the "HaAretz" daily newspaper. He expressed his deep satisfaction over Chabad's Pesach activities on the island for Israelis. The *shluchim* spoke with him and his son at length about *Yiddishkeit*.

During Chol HaMoed, Rabbi Segal and Rabbi Zelikovitz visited two Israelis under incarceration in the local prison facilities. "They have been imprisoned for a number of years," said Rabbi Segal, "and they have almost no contact with either

their family or friends. We met with them in the prison offices, and were not surprised to see them come in with long faces. During the visit, we gave them words of encouragement, along with matzos, *yarmulkes*, and *pushkes* for each of them. The police dogs didn't like the matzos, though..."

"Our meeting with them was most important. As we departed, their faces shone. If we had come to Crete just for the sake of these two prisoners – *dayeinu*."

* * *

The *seider* of the Isle of Rodus was adeptly organized by Rabbi **Sholom Ber Hendel** in two separate locations – first in the large hall of the "Rodus Palace" Hotel, and afterwards, in an Israeli restaurant. Dozens of Israelis who had come to the tourist island for Pesach participated in each *seider*.

Rabbi Segal, who had organized the *seider* there last year, kept in touch throughout the year with the tour guides in Rodus. They made certain to tell all the Israeli tourists that

there would also be a Pesach *seider* this year. The participants sat around the set tables and heard about the essence of the holiday of Pesach from Rabbi Hendel.

The following day, Rabbi Hendel spent several hours going to all the local hotels. He distributed matzos, Pesach literature, and Shabbos candles to the Israelis staying there. He encountered more than a thousand Israelis who wanted to distance themselves from the holiday *mitzvos*, but in the end, the *mitzvos* caught up with them on the Isle of Rodus...