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The international weekly heralding the coming of Mashiach
BEIS MOSHIACH

U.S.A

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

ERETZ HA'KODESH

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

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

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TO BE A SHLIACH

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS CHAYEI SARA CHAF-ZAYIN MAR-CHESHVAN, 5750

1. The International Conference of *Shluchim* begins this Shabbos, Parshas Chayei Sara, and will be continued during the following days, which are associated with Parshas Toldos. Since everything is ordained by Divine providence, and since a Jew should derive a lesson in the service of G-d from everything he sees or hears, it follows that these two Torah portions contain lessons relevant to this conference and the responsibility of a *shaliach*.

Indeed, a major portion of Parshas Chayei Sara concerns a *shlichus*, Avrohom Avinu's entrusting Eliezer with finding a bride for Yitzchok Avinu, and Eliezer's execution of that mission. The following portion, Parshas Toldos, describes the offspring of Yitzchok and Rivka and thus, reveals the intent of that mission. Since Eliezer's mission is described at length in the Torah, we can conclude that it is not merely an isolated historical event, but rather, contains directives of a greater scope that apply in all times.

The lessons we can derive from this narrative can be understood on the basis of a basic question: Why is this narrative described in such great length

in the Torah? The objective of Eliezer's mission, the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivka, is described briefly while the description of the mission, the preparations for it, and the negotiations it required, is elaborate and detailed.

The concept can be explained as follows: Eliezer's mission in arranging for the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivka reflects — in microcosm — the mission of every Jew, to make a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds. Rivka was like "a rose among the brambles," living in Padan Aram together with the wicked Besuel and Lavan. Eliezer's mission involved removing her from there and bringing her to Yitzchok to become his wife. Thus, it reflects our service of refining the material nature of the world and transforming it into a dwelling for G-d.

On a very basic level, the wedding between Yitzchok and Rivka, the first Jewish wedding, is representative of the establishment of a dwelling for G-d in this world, since it represents the establishment of a Jewish home. This allows for the fulfillment of the commandment, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill up the earth and conquer it." It gave Yitzchok the opportunity to produce "offspring" (Toldos), which refers in a simple sense to Yaakov and

Eisav, and in an extended sense, to "the essential offspring of the righteous," "their good deeds."

Since Eliezer's mission reflects such an all-encompassing objective, the Torah relates all the details of the mission so that a Jew can derive lessons from it regarding his service in making a dwelling for G-d in this world.

To explain: The objective of establishing a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds involves two aspects: a) the establishment of a dwelling — i.e., that G-d will reveal Himself in this world as a person reveals his true nature in his own home. In his home, a person reveals himself without any inhibitions, so, too, in this world, G-d will reveal Himself openly, as the verse declares, "Your teacher will not conceal Himself any longer."

b) The fact that dwelling will be in the lower worlds emphasizes that it will relate to the creations of this world on their level. Not only will G-dliness be revealed from above to below, but the world as it exists within its own context will recognize G-dliness. Although the world was created in a manner that it does not appreciate G-dliness, its nature will be transformed until — within the context of its own existence — it will become G-d's dwelling.

Accordingly, these two elements must also be reflected in the service which creates the dwelling for G-d: a) Since the dwelling must be within the context of the lower worlds, it cannot be established by G-d through a revelation from above alone. Rather it must be accomplished through the service of the Jewish people, who act as G-d's *shluchim* in this world. This leads to a further point, since the Jews are creations of this world, their activity as *shluchim* is not only a preparation and a means to establish a dwelling for G-d, but it itself is a reflection of that dwelling. To elaborate, the narrative of Eliezer's mission, which serves as a paradigm for *shlichus*, describes in detail how Eliezer fulfilled the mission with which he was charged.

b) To transform the world into a dwelling for G-d, i.e., a place of Divine revelation, it is necessary for the Jewish people to recognize that they are merely *shluchim*. They must be conscious that it is the power of G-d who charged them with this mission and not their individual potential that allows the mission to be successful. To emphasize this point, our narrative elaborates on how Eliezer was charged by Avrohom with his mission, how he took an oath, stressing how the *shaliach's* activities are carried out with the power of the one who appointed him.

The latter concept can be clarified within the context of the three perspectives with which the Torah authorities of the latter generations have defined *shlichus*:

a) The *shaliach* is an independent identity and the deeds he accomplishes are recognized as his. It is merely that through the performance of these deeds, the obligations of the person who charged him with the mission are fulfilled.

b) When the *shaliach* performs a deed, it is considered as if it was performed by the person who charged him with the mission. Although in regard to his other affairs, the *shaliach* is

an independent entity, in fulfilling his *shlichus* the one who charged him is fully responsible for the deeds the *shaliach* performed.

c) The *shaliach* is considered as an extension of the one who appointed him. "A *shaliach* is considered as if he is the person who appointed him."

The relationship between a Jew (the *shaliach*) and G-d (the One who appointed him) is defined in the third manner. The Jew's establishment of a dwelling in the lower worlds is possible because he is "a part of G-d," i.e., like the one who appointed him. *Avoda* is required, however, to reveal this quality; a person must work on himself

***Not only will
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to transcend his individual self and identify with G-d's will. It is not sufficient for him to perform a G-dly act, a *mitzva*, while remaining a separate and individual identity. Rather, he must be totally given over to G-d to the extent that every aspect of his personality — even those involved with physical activities — is given over to G-d.

For this reason, the appointment of the *shaliach* by the one who sends him is of such importance. The appointment of *shluchim* implies that the person appointing them gives them power.

In terms of our fulfillment of the *shlichus* with which we have been

charged by G-d, this concept fuses two opposites. Although a Jew feels himself as an independent entity — a soul and a body, who has a personality of his own and must realize that he personally was granted unique potentials to achieve particular objectives in the service of G-d — nevertheless, while carrying out this service, his own personality must be totally nullified to the extent that he is totally unified with G-d Who appointed him as His *shaliach*.

2. The above concept provides the basis for the connection between the narrative of Eliezer's mission and the name of the *parasha*, Chayei Sara ("the life of Sara"). Though a name expresses the character of that which is named, in this instance, the connection between Sara's life and the events related in the *parasha* is difficult to understand, for all these events occurred after Sara's death.

Nevertheless, we can understand that the fullest expression of Sara's life took place after she departed from this world, as our Sages declared, "Since his descendants are alive, he is considered as if he is alive." Indeed, the heritage of goodness and holiness she had established was perpetuated through the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivka. When was Yitzchok satisfied with his bride? When "he brought her into the tent of Sara, his mother." Our Sages interpret this to mean that Rivka resembled Sara. Indeed, all the spiritual services which Sara fulfilled were carried out by Rivka. Hence, this marriage reflects the ultimate expression of "Sara's life."

In particular, the expression used by the Torah in describing Sara's age, "one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years," is significant. "One hundred" refers to the transcendent powers of will and pleasure, "twenty" refers to our intellectual powers, and "seven" to our emotions. The verse concludes, "the years of Sara's life," which our Sages interpret to mean that "all are equal for the good." This reflects how all the soul's powers are unified into a single

point, brought together through the *bittul* of *yechida*, the essence of the soul, which is above all division. Nevertheless, this essential point of the soul permeates through all the soul's powers and unites them in this all-encompassing *bittul*.

To relate this idea to the concept of *shlichus* described above: As mentioned, our fulfillment of the mission to make this world a dwelling for G-d involves the fusion of two opposites: a) the *shaliach* using all of his powers (his will and pleasure, intellect, and emotion in the fullest way possible), and b) the *shaliach* giving himself over to G-d entirely, focusing all his powers on a single goal, the fulfillment of G-d's will.

We derive the power to fuse these two opposites from Sara Imeinu. She endowed us, her descendants, with the potential for the essence of the soul to permeate every aspect of our personality ("all are equal for good") and to unify will and pleasure ("one hundred years"), intellect ("twenty years"), and emotion ("seven years") in this all encompassing *bittul*.

The dedication of our potentials to this *shlichus* with the *bittul* described above enables us to refine our world and make it a dwelling for G-d. We are able to reveal how "all the entities in the heavens and the earth...came into existence from the truth of His Being."

Based on the above, we can understand the statement that the *gematria* of "*shaliach*" plus ten (representing the ten powers of the soul) is numerically equivalent to "Moshiach." When a person dedicates all of his ten powers to the fulfillment of the mission to make this world a dwelling for G-d, he reveals the spark of Moshiach he possesses within his soul. Each entity possesses a spark of Moshiach, which represents the essence of that entity, the level of *yechida* that transcends all distinctions. Simultaneously, the level of *yechida* permeates through all of these different entities.

Through each individual revealing the aspect of Moshiach that pertains to him, the actual coming of Moshiach is hastened, as alluded to in the Rambam's statement that with one *mitzva*, each Jew has the potential to tip the balance of the entire world and bring complete salvation.

3. Based on the above, we can understand the connection between the *parshiyos* Toldos and Chayei Sara. As mentioned, Parshas Chayei Sara revolves around the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivka. The ultimate goal of that — and every other marriage — is to produce *toldos*, offspring. Chassidus explains that the birth of a child reveals "the power of *Ein Sof* [G-d's infinity]."

Similarly, the spiritual dimensions of our service represented by that marriage, the mission to make this world a dwelling for G-d, are intended to reveal "the power of *Ein Sof*" throughout the world through their *toldos* which, as our Sages state, refer to a person's "good deeds," which are "the essential offspring of the righteous."

These activities are also related to bringing about "offspring" in another context. The Rebbe Rayatz explained that the *mitzva* to "be fruitful and multiply" means that "one Jew must make another Jew," i.e., influence another Jew to express his Judaism. Furthermore, the influence one exerts on others must be complete, powerful enough to motivate that person himself to go out and spread Judaism to other people.

In this context, each word in the verse, "These are the offspring of Yitzchok the son of Avrohom," is significant. Our Sages explain that the word "these" refers to that which is openly revealed. The "offspring," referring to a new entity, "of Yitzchok," produced by Yitzchok and reflecting his nature, which is associated with producing joy and happiness, as reflected in Sara's explanation of the name she gave him, "Whoever hears

will rejoice with me."

"The son of Avrohom" implies that it is openly apparent that he is a descendant — to the extent that the facial characteristics of Yitzchok and Avrohom were identical — (and heir to the heritage of) "the father of many nations," the person who is involved with spreading the service of establishing a dwelling for G-d throughout the world at large.

The Hebrew word "*Toldos*" (offspring) is plural, referring to both Yaakov (the service of "doing good") and Eisav (the service of "turning away from evil"). The establishment of a dwelling for G-d involves both these services. And ultimately, since Eisav is also a son of Yitzchok and Rivka, the service associated with him does not involve merely the negation and rejection of evil, but its elevation and refinement. The establishment of a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds requires both the service of Yaakov, "a straightforward person, a dweller of tents" (the service of Torah and *mitzvos*), and Eisav, "a man of the field" (the service of refining and elevating the material substance of the world). This will lead to the era when, "I will come to my lord in Seir," when Eisav will be elevated and prepared to accept the Messianic Redemption.

On the basis of the above, we can understand the sequence of the *parshiyos* from Lech Lecha to Toldos. Lech Lecha refers to the *bittul* that motivates a journey from one's previous state. This prepares a person for VaYeira, a revelation of G-dliness. Chayei Sara involves the expression of this revelation through every element of our personalities which gives a person the potential to produce *Toldos*, "offspring" and establish a dwelling for G-d in this world.

4. The above concepts are fundamentally related to the International Conference of Shluchim, which begins this Shabbos. All Jews are *shluchim* of G-d to establish a dwelling

for Him in this world. Particularly, when an individual is appointed as *shaliach* of the Rebbe Rayatz, his role in fulfilling the *shlichus* with which he has been charged by G-d receives greater emphasis. Surely, this applies when *shluchim* from all over the world have gathered together. Each of their missions must relate to the two points mentioned above: a) Each *shaliach* must use his full potential (all of his ten powers) for the sake of the fulfillment of the mission, and b) each *shaliach* must be totally given over to the one who appointed him, the Rebbe Rayatz, and thus, standing in the place of the one who appointed him.

The fusion of these two contradictory points relates to a similar fusion of two opposites: a conference (unity) of *shluchim* (who are many). This is particularly relevant in regard to an international conference, where *shluchim* are gathered from all over the world for the sake of strengthening their commitment to the fulfillment of their *shlichus* to spread Yiddishkeit, Torah, and goodness throughout the world. And this is especially significant when this conference is held in a *shul* which is a house of study. The general nature of this *shlichus*, however, must be interpreted in an individual manner by each *shaliach* in order to influence his particular country and situation.

By gathering together in such a conference, all the *shluchim* receive greater strength and potential to carry out this mission. In particular, additional power is granted this year, the fortieth year after the Rebbe Rayatz's passing. Our Sages explain that after forty years, a student attains a full grasp of his teacher's knowledge. Thus, the fact that forty years have elapsed since the Rebbe Rayatz's passing implies that we are granted the potential to reach a higher rung in the fulfillment of the mission to make this world a dwelling for G-d. This must be reflected in the two aspects of *shlichus* mentioned above: The *shaliach's* *bittul* must be more complete and encompassing.

Simultaneously, that *bittul* must inspire him to dedicate all of his potentials to the fulfillment of his mission.

In application of the above: The intent of the conference of *shluchim* should be to strengthen each other to spread *ahavas Yisroel* ("the love of our fellow Jews") and *achdus Yisroel* ("the unity of the Jewish people"). The first step in accomplishing that objective is spreading love and unity among the *shluchim* themselves. Though they come from different places with different missions particular to their individual situation, they join together in one conference with a single goal.

The unity established in this conference through praying, studying,

Through each individual revealing the aspect of Moshiach that pertains to him, the actual coming of Moshiach is hastened.

and accepting resolutions together should continue to have an effect when each *shaliach* returns home. In his own individual circumstances, he should feel connected to the other *shluchim* and to the one who appointed them.

This unity will grant the *shluchim* the potential to spread unity among the Jewish people in the countries in which they dwell. Through these efforts, the entire world will become united in the fulfillment of G-d's will; the Jewish people, through the performance of the 613 *mitzvos*, and the gentiles, through the observance of the seven universal laws given to Noach and his descendants.

To strengthen the unity among the *shluchim*, it is proper to print a book to serve as a constant reminder of this conference. This book should include: pictures of all the participants in the conference including their families, new Torah concepts that were authored by the participants in the conference, and a record of the speeches and resolutions made throughout its duration. Also, Torah concepts and resolutions that emphasize the unique nature of the present year, the fortieth year after the Rebbe Rayatz's passing should also be included. When a *shaliach* returns to his own community and opens this publication, he will remember this conference. This will inspire him to further efforts in fulfilling his mission.

This is also an appropriate opportunity to reiterate the suggestion made regarding gathering people together in every community each Shabbos to study Torah and focusing that study on a common subject, the weekly Torah portion. Similarly, it is important to emphasize the study of the Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*, which was completed in the previous week. It is proper to organize *siyumim* (celebrations in honor of the summation of study) in communities throughout the world. Rabbis and community leaders should be encouraged to attend these gatherings, which will bring honor to the Rambam and honor to the Torah as a whole. Through spreading the study of the Rambam — a text which includes "the entire oral law" in a manner that can be understood by "those of lesser stature as well as those of greater stature" — throughout the world, the Jewish people become united in a bond of Torah.

May these efforts hasten the fulfillment of the prophecy with which the Rambam concludes his text, "And the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the sea covers up the ocean bed," with the coming of Moshiach. May it be now, immediately.

TAKING SIDES

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



Sometimes, when there is so much hiding and concealment, and it seems that the way of G-d, the way of Yiddishkeit and chassidus, is just one side to an argument, and that there is another side with a differing viewpoint, Jews in general, chassidim in particular, and more particularly, chassidim of the Rebbe MH”M shlita, must place themselves with all their strength on the right side, on the side of those who strive toward the way of G-d and the path of the Rebbe shlita, MH”M.

The mashpia R. Mendel Futerfas related the following:

Once there was a *chassid*, who was among the greatest of *chassidim*, serving G-d his entire life with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might. Foremost among his qualities was that he was truly connected with every fiber of his body to our Rebbeim, and especially to his Rebbe, for without this there's nothing to talk about his being a

chassid.

As has been mentioned on numerous occasions, R. Mendel would always emphasize again and again: “Everyone knows that the Rebbe *shlita* is very precise to write in his customary *bracha* to a *bar mitzva* boy that he should merit to be ‘a *chassid*, *yira Shamayim*, and *lamdan*.’ This teaches us what the most critically important point above all else is, despite the great

importance of what comes afterwards. The most vitally important and relevant point before anything else is to be a *chassid*. Being a *chassid* means first (and second, and third) that he has a Rebbe, to whom he must be connected with all his soul, to whom he travels regularly, writes letters, thinks about constantly, and does everything possible to fulfill his wishes and instructions. Similarly, a *chassid* conducts himself according to the ways of *chassidim*, learns *chassidus*, *davens* at length, participates in *farbrengens*, rubs shoulders with *chassidim*, etc. Afterwards, it is very important to be a *yira Shamayim*, and only then, after these first two qualities are met, is there the great importance and relevance of being a *lamdan*. Without this, all that he learns is of no value, and sometimes, it can serve as a stumbling block, as our Sages say, ‘If he does not merit, it becomes his poison,’ the opposite of life. The same is true regarding a *yira Shamayim* who did not become a *chassid* first.

In any event, our *chassid* was a real *chassid*, completely bound to his Rebbe, *davening* at length, striving in his *yiras Shamayim* and the

correction of his *middos*, learning assiduously both *nigleh* and *chassidus*, involving himself in acts of charity, helping those in need, and fulfilling *mitzvos b'hiddur*, etc. In this spirit, he also raised and educated his children and grandchildren to a ripe old age.

When his time had come, and he lay on his deathbed, closely surrounded by his children and grandchildren, the *chassid* suddenly turned to them in his waning strength, and spoke in a feeble voice. “That *Kluginker*, the *yetzer ha’ra*, just came to me, wrapped in a variety of garments, and he didn’t stop for a moment in trying to tempt me and take me off the path. Even in my last moments of life on earth, he wanted to overpower me with feelings of pride and haughtiness. This scoundrel, dressed up in “*zeidene zupitche*” [a silk *kapote*], came to me and said: ‘Don’t you see that your time to leave this world has come? Now you have your last chance to command your children and grandchildren on the path that they should take in their lives. Use the opportunity to the fullest. Let them see you in the last moments of your life and with your final strengths speaking to them about fear of G-d, service to G-d, and love of one’s fellow Jew. They will remember this and fulfill it for the rest of their lives, and in this merit, this will also remember you forever.’

“This sly weasel thought,” the *chassid* continued to tell his family, “that by dressing up in a ‘silk *kapote*’ and speaking words in a holy disguise, he would succeed in implanting pride and haughtiness within me, even in my waning moments. He wanted that my entire attention at such a time should be devoted to preserving my name among you, so that you should know and remember what a great *chassid* your father and grandfather was...”

“However, I didn’t fall into the trap that he had craftily laid for me. I would not use the last moments of my life to establish my name as a great *chassid*. I will confess my sins, do *t’shuva*, and I will not enter the World to Come as a ‘*v’tzidkascha’diker*’ (as a great and tremendous *chassid* and *tzaddik*, with a *Vav* preceding it...)”

The *chassid* read the long *Vidui* that is recited before one passes

It is critically important to take sides and to know that the right side is “my side.” We must not listen to the temptations of the yetzer ha’ra, telling us not to take sides in an argument, but to try to be nice, pleasant, and friendly to everyone, and to stay neutral.

away, said *Shma Yisroel*, and his pure soul departed its earthly confines. After the conclusion of the *Shiva*, *chassidim* were sitting at a *farbrengen* when they were told what this *chassid* had said just before his passing.

One of the elder *chassidim* said in response, “That *chassid* thought that he succeeded in overcoming the *yetzer ha’ra*, because he didn’t respond to its enticements and didn’t

fall into the trap of thinking about glorifying his name before his family in his life’s final moments. But he failed to notice how sly this ‘*Kluginker*’ really is, as by his own words, he fell into the trap. How? If he truly didn’t think about the glorification of his name, then why did he even have to tell them the whole story?!...”

In contrast to this explanation, there were other *chassidim* at this *farbrengen* who claimed that this *chassid* was quite aware of this. However, for the benefit of his children and grandchildren, and in order to guide them in the path of *chassidus*, he was prepared to forego his own personal good and endanger himself by thinking about his own reputation, just so his children would understand how great is the craftiness and trickery of the *yetzer ha’ra* and not to fall into his trap, even when he comes disguised in a mask of *yiras Shamayim* and *chassidus*.

It was more important to him that the main message they would get (and would remain with them) was not to be a ‘*v’tzidkascha’diker*.’ Within this message, there lies hidden the main unvarnished point of *chassidus*. A person can learn and *daven*, progress and uplift himself. But in truth, his entire time is spent enlarging his “*yeshus*” and moving further and further away from G-d, instead of closer to Him. Therefore, it was so important to this *chassid* that they always remember – above all else – the *Alef-Beis* of *chassidus*, not to be a “*Shin mit drei keplech*” (*Shin* with three heads; a common expression among *chassidim*) or in less cryptic language: Don’t be a ‘*v’tzidkascha’diker*’...

The argument about whether this *chassid* conquered the *yetzer ha’ra* or fell into its trap was not settled at this *farbrengen*, and it’s not all that relevant to us. What is relevant to us is the idea not to fall into the *yetzer*

ha'ra's trap, even when it comes to entice and remind us not to do so.

The Rebbe MH" M *shlita's* ninetieth year, which began on Yud-Alef Nissan 5751, was an extremely meaningful year in connection with the announcement of the Redemption and the true and complete Redemption. This was "the year in which Melech HaMoshiach was revealed" – "at the time that Melech HaMoshiach comes, he stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash and declares to the Jewish people, saying, 'Humble ones, the time of your Redemption has arrived!'"

During this year (on the 28th of Nissan, 5751), we were given the task of "Do everything within your ability...to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed."

During this year (on Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751), we were commanded "to publicize to the entire generation" that we have merited the prophet of our generation – "the prophecy of Melech HaMoshiach prior to the Redemption"; "not as a wise person and judge, but as a prophet, which is certain" – and the privilege, the obligation, and responsibility to listen to him, to seek his advice, and to accept his authority and sovereignty.

During this year, (on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752), we were told that "the only thing that is left in the service of *shlichus* is to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed," and (on Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752) "we already see an example and the beginning of the works of Melech HaMoshiach upon all the nations," etc., etc.

During this year, there was also the incident of Chaf-Zayin Adar Rishon 5752, which began the process of this totally unfathomable situation, where we find ourselves up to this moment.

This year has additional meaning, according to what is known and explained in the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Acharei-K'doshim 5751 (Note 126). The redemption from Egypt came when Moshe Rabbeinu was eighty years old, alluded to by the doubling of the letter *Pei* (80) in the words "*Pakod Pakadti*," while the true and complete Redemption is connected to ninety years, alluded to by the doubling of the letter *Tzaddik* (90) in the words "*Tzamach Y'tzamach*."

On numerous occasions throughout the year, the Rebbe *shlita* himself mentioned the fact that this was a year that "according to Jews is called by the name '*Shnas HaTzaddik*,'" and even connected it repeatedly to the Redemption and its eternal nature (e.g., *sicha*, Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752, where the Rebbe states that "*Netzach*" is an acronym for "*Nun*" – the fiftieth gate; "*Tzaddik*" – '*Shnas HaTzaddik*'; "*Ches*" – that Moshiach is one of the "eight princes of man."

At the *farbrengen* of Shabbos HaGadol 5751, in preparation for the ninetieth year, the Rebbe explained a number of very important points, as is known, "*der Rebbe haht altz vavahrnt*" (the Rebbe clarified and promised everything in advance).

At the beginning, the Rebbe explained at great length and with much emphasis that there must be a Moshe Rabbeinu in every generation – a Rebbe, specifically with a soul in a physical body. This is the only possible way to make a "dwelling place for Him in the lower worlds," with the strength of "Moshe, man of G-d," who contains and unites within him unlimited G-dliness together with the contractions and limitations of "man." Thus, only through him is it possible to connect and unite the absolute unlimited with this finite and lowly world.

The Rebbe continued by

concentrating on additional details, including the lesson from the Divine meaning behind the letter "*Tzaddi*" (as generally called in the writings of our Sages), which means "my side."

Despite the fact that G-dliness and Torah-*mitzvos* are seemingly a Jew's complete reality and not just his "side," i.e., an apparent emphasis that there is also another side, nevertheless, a Jew must know that the right side is his side. When the soul descends into the body, there is a world that hides and conceals G-dliness, and even a Jew's perception of reality does not compel him to conduct himself specifically according to the will of G-d, since he is, as it were, standing on the sidelines, and he doesn't have to act in a certain way. As a result, the Jew is told that he must take sides in the matter and be on the right side, the side of G-d and Torah-*mitzvos*. This will directly give him the strength to turn over the world, so that even the world itself from its vantage point will be relevant to G-d, His Torah, and His *mitzvos*.

The Rebbe *shlita* continues by explaining that a Jew can achieve this specifically through the strength of "Moshe, man of G-d," who connects and unites totally unlimited G-dliness together with worldly limitations, as a soul within a body, as mentioned earlier. This enables the Jew to take the "*Tzaddi*," "my side," bring it into the physical limited world, which seemingly has different sides, and make this G-dliness into his own side.

* * *

I see no need to spell out why it was so necessary at the start of *Shnas HaTzaddik* to explain at such great length the fact that there must specifically be a *nasi* in a physical body. Everyone understands how relevant and vitally important it was to make such an absolute clarification, especially before Chaf-

Zayin Adar Rishon and everything that followed it. Yet, together with this, the Rebbe *shlita* explained and emphasized an additional point, which is also the main point. It is critically important to take sides and to know that the right side is “my side.” We must not listen to the temptations of the *yetzer ha’ra*, which comes to warn us with claims and excuses about the greatness and importance of *ahavas Yisroel*, etc., telling us not to take sides in an argument, but to try to be nice, pleasant, and friendly to everyone, and to stay neutral.

This is despite the fact that we all know the emphasis of the Rebbeim not to give regard to the “disease of factionalism” and to know that *Yiddishkeit*, the Torah, and its *mitzvos*, as they are, without any change, belong to every Jew and is not the private property of a particular faction. We know that the Alter Rebbe said that *chassidus* is not intended just for one specific group, but for all the Jewish people. Therefore, we, Lubavitcher *chassidim*, always do our utmost not to engage in arguments over who should be placed in a position of authority, as long as matters are conducted according to G-d’s will. As a result, we have been prepared on numerous occasions to forego money and benefits, due to our refusal to identify in some form with a particular political party (except for rare instances where there was an explicit instruction issued due to unique circumstances).

Nevertheless, the Rebbe *shlita* clearly taught us, as a preparation for “*Shnas HaTzaddik*,” that sometimes, when there is so much hiding and concealment, and it seems that the way of G-d, the way of *Yiddishkeit* and *chassidus*, is just one side to an argument, and that there is another side with a differing viewpoint – Jews in general, *chassidim* in particular, and more

particularly, *chassidim* of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*, must place themselves with all their strength on the right side, on the side of those who go to the best of their ability in recognition of the way of G-d and the path of the Rebbe *shlita*, MH”M. And even when it appears to him to be just one side, i.e., that there is also a second side, he must not be afraid to take sides in the argument. He cannot run away from the battle, preferring to be nice, pleasant, and friendly to everyone, and to stay neutral on the sidelines.

All this has particular relevance to the matter that the Rebbe *shlita*

Without this, all that he learns is of no value, and sometimes, it can serve as a stumbling block, as our Sages say, ‘If he does not merit, it becomes his poison,’ the opposite of life.

categorically established as “the only thing that is left in the service of *shlichus*: to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed.”

The most important decision for all of us to make – men, women, and children – is not only to improve persistently our conduct in private and public affairs, as important as that is. The central point, without exception, is to do everything, “everything within your ability.” Everything, *mamash*, must be totally instilled with the *shlichus* of the leader of the generation, the final Redeemer, whose main purpose

is to bring the days of Moshiach, through which there will be “the *bittul* and *hiskashrus* to the leader of the generation, so that his entire existence in all matters will be sanctified for the leader of the generation” (see *sicha*, Shabbos Parshas VaEira 5752).

And if he must take sides, because it appears to him that there is also a second side, *ch”v*, he must not stand on the sidelines! He must do everything to strengthen the right side, “my side.”

Sometimes it might appear to him that not everything was exactly done as he wanted, as not everyone has the same opinion and it is perfectly natural and legitimate that there are differing approaches on how to do things. Here’s a clear and most pertinent example: Reuven claims that the message in *Sichas HaGeula* is a bit too strong, while Shimon suggests that *HaGeula*’s message is too watered-down. Levi thinks that a particular approach is too extreme and should be replaced by another method, whereas Yehuda believes just the opposite, i.e., it’s too moderate, it doesn’t express “the truth, the whole truth”; it takes opposing viewpoints too much into consideration, etc.

It is important to remember that we now find ourselves literally at the height of the final battle, and we have no idea why it continues for even one minute longer. However, it is obvious to us with absolute certainty that it is about to end at any moment. At such a time, it is clearly demanded from us to take sides, to encourage and strengthen anything that follows this proper direction in spreading the announcement of the Redemption and the Redeemer, *Dovid Melech Yisroel (Malka M’shicha)*, *chai v’kayam*, before the whole world.

This is particularly so when we are talking about a number of prominent associations that have

considerable influence over the conduct of Lubavitcher *chassidim*, e.g., the Chabad World Center To Greet Moshiach, Matteh Moshiach in Eretz HaKodesh, etc. It is critically important and most essential to strengthen these organizations in every possible way. Each and every one of us must give all that we can and more to achieve the desired objective, our lives' only true purpose – “the only thing that is left in the service of *shlichus*” – with our wealth, our bodies, and our souls. We must not be afraid of what they will say when we take sides, for this is “my side,” the side of G-d, the side of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*.

Of course, the emphasis is not limited just to these organizations, but all groups that engage in similar activities at all levels: the publishers of “*Yechi HaMelech*,” “*D’var Malchus*,” and a variety of new texts, booklets, *bentchers*, Moshiach flags, and other items which publicize and explain the announcement of the Redemption and the Redeemer in attractive formats. All these initiatives are most worthy and quite numerous, and “therefore, consider them as if I had specified them.”

Each of us should see himself as a partner in such activities, and should do everything to encourage, strengthen, and assist them – not only spiritually, but also and especially in a more simple and

material manner. Subscribe to *Beis Moshiach* and encourage others to do so, as well. Purchase a regular weekly quantity of *Sichas HaGeula* and *HaGeula* brochure for distribution. Buy books and multimedia material that have recently been produced on the subject. Make monetary contributions towards these activities, above all other programs, as important as they may be.

Naturally, it is quite clear that we must also be aware of the need to demonstrate our solidarity, to strengthen our open identification with these activities, and to participate actively in a manner of “I am a companion to all those that fear You.”

There are even more examples along these lines. We should participate in every *kinus* and *farbrengen* connected with Moshiach activities and to do our utmost to encourage others. We should actively attend Torah classes on the subject, particularly on the *D’var Malchus*, as this fulfills the Rebbe *shlita*’s instructions in actual deed to learn it with others in a public setting, which understandably gives encouragement and strength to all the participants. Each time we hear someone say “*Yechi Adoneinu*” after *davening*, even if we’re in another *minyán*, we should respond with full force. When everyone dances on

Friday night to the singing of “*Yechi*” after “*Lecha Dodi*” (as was accustomed to do before the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*, when he *davened* in his holy room at the western side of 770 during 5753-5754, and we even saw his fervent encouragement with our own eyes) or after *davening*, anyone for whom the matter means something will join in with all his strength. (It’s not that he’s waiting for everyone else and then he’ll also do a favor and come along; the participation is most important, first and foremost, because it demonstrates that those dancing and proclaiming are not just some “extreme minority”...)

Specifically when we decide that “this is my side” and we support and identify with it in all our strength, this will naturally bring additional groups to engage in such activities, out of a true sense of love, brotherhood, and unity around the one who unites all of us into one singular existence and causes us to act in fulfillment of “the only thing that is left in the service of *shlichus*.”

The essence of such a decision will already produce the result for which we are waiting, literally at any moment, the *hisgalus* of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* for all to see with the true and complete Redemption, immediately, *mamash*, NOW!

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FULFILLING HIS WILL & INTENT

*In connection with Rosh Chodesh Kislev, we bring you this compilation of stories that were written down at the time they were heard from Rabbi Leibel Groner at a family simcha. * They were recorded by someone present at the time, and most of the stories are being publicized here for the first time. * Our thanks go to the one who sent us the stories.*

IT SHOULDN'T GO LOST

The Rebbe once told R' Groner, "Why don't they do as I say?" and the Rebbe raised his hands and said, "We pour *ein Sof* (infinitely) and it goes lost. There's a barrel that is pouring, but if you put containers under it, it doesn't go lost.

[But since they don't make *keilim*] they come to me with complaints: You are the intermediary, for through you the highest *kochos* are given. But we don't make proper use of them, so you are giving too much."

IF ONLY THE QUANTITY WOULD WORK

The Rebbe told someone to learn *chassidus* for many hours. He asked the Rebbe: What about the *chassidim* who sufficed with learning short aphorisms? (The Rebbe was asking him to learn for hours!)

The Rebbe responded: That was in earlier generations. Nowadays, *halevai v'halevai* (if only, if only) that from the many things learned [they achieve the same results]. Indeed, they should also know how to learn.

NOT ONLY POLITICS

Once, when the Rebbe spoke at the *farbrengen* about politics [in Eretz Yisroel] there was a woman in the *ezras nashim* [who was not observant but she was well-educated] who asked the other women: Why does the Rebbe talk to us about politics? What does it have to do with us? You must, therefore, say that there is more to it, something that affects us, too, on a deeper plane.

R' Groner later told the Rebbe about the woman and the Rebbe said: They had to wait until a woman from such-and-such a country came, one

who is unlikely to be punctilious in *mitzvos*, and *she* needs to reveal these things?!

I WON'T LEAVE THEM

On the second day of Shavuot 5710, somebody said to the Rebbe that he ought to accept the *nesius*, and the Rebbe said: I've supported the *yungelait* (young men) until now and I'll continue to support them, but I don't know about the older ones.

The person asked the Rebbe what he meant by supporting them, and the Rebbe said: I will do for them, for the *yungelait* whatever I can do, as much as I can, and I won't leave them.

WITHOUT A "YASHAR KO'ACH"

The Rebbe once gave R' Chaim Gutnick [see article in this week's edition], *a"h*, a seemingly impossible mission to accomplish. R' Gutnick, however, was successful, and he sent in a note to the Rebbe saying that he had done what the Rebbe had asked.

Once, as he walked by the Rebbe, the Rebbe said to him: *In beis ha'ra'v git men nit kein yashar ko'ach* (the Rebbeim did not have the custom of giving thanks). [This would seem to be saying that when a Rebbe asks for something, it is a far greater favor for the one who is doing it.]

THE SOURCE OF BLESSING

Somebody asked the Rebbe for

brachos for personal matters, and the Rebbe said that he should say *l'chaim* at the *farbrengen*. The person didn't understand.

The Rebbe asked that they explain to him that when he sits at a *farbrengen* and says *l'chaim*, this is the source of heavenly flow, and every personal thing that he needs is channeled by the *farbrengen* [see further on this topic].

IT YOU WANT IT

When there was *mesirus nefesh* in publishing the *Tanya-First Edition* [something which the Rebbe urgently requested], R' Groner told the Rebbe that the men had worked non-stop on the project with no complaints from their wives. The Rebbe said: See, if you want, you can make it happen.

MAKE UP FOR IT

The Rebbe once gave R' Groner

such hard work to do that he was lucky if he got two hours of sleep a night. The Rebbe asked: Do you sleep at night? R' Groner said: A little. The Rebbe said: When you finish, you'll make up for the sleep.

RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK OF BERDITCHEV'S APPROACH

When the Rebbe gave Chanuka *gelt* to the *bachurim* he always asked for a list of *bachurim*, and the ones who had kept to the learning schedule received the *gelt*. The list was given in a few days beforehand.

R' Groner related: I once saw how the Rebbe read the list and when he finished he said to me: Apparently the *hanhala* took the approach of R' Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev.

R' Groner didn't know what the Rebbe meant by that, and the Rebbe

When someone comes here and wants to play tricks and say that his coming here doesn't harm anything over there, he should know that he harmed his mosdos, and his coming here is not desirable, and is the opposite of the kavana and ratzon. Therefore, he cannot be here. He has to sacrifice and worry about his mosdos.

looked at him in surprise. R' Groner said he didn't understand, and the Rebbe said: You know they are supposed to submit a list of *bachurim* who stick to the learning schedule, and the *hanhala* includes on the list *bachurim* who don't show up at *yeshiva* and they look upon them favorably, with *ahavas Yisroel*, which is R' Levi Yitzchok's approach.

[The Rebbe continued]: How do I know the *bachurim* don't show up? Because I went to the *zal* a few times and they weren't there! So why are



they on the list? Tell the *hanhala* I don't accept this approach. Those who weren't there, won't get, and they should tell them [those *bachurim*] ahead of time so they don't approach me, so that they won't be embarrassed.

WHY AREN'T YOU MAKING A COMMOTION?

In the early years here in New York, Polish *chassidim* lived in Crown Heights and they would give them *sichos* called, "*di griner sichos*" (the green *sichos*, because they were bound with a blue-green cover). They once told R' Zalman Butman who distributed the *sichos*: You are fools.

He asked why. They answered: By us, the *rebbe*s reflect the *chassidim*, and since there's a decline in the generations, the *rebbe*s match the *chassidim*. But with you, the Rebbe is not at all in the league of the *chassidim*. If he lived in the time of the Alter Rebbe, he would be great then, too. Yet you don't make a commotion about this!

BRIBING ONESELF

R' Groner related in the name of R' Chadakov: It says "a bribe will blind the eyes of the wise." There's the simple meaning of this, but R' Chadakov explained it differently to someone (and from the contents of what he said it was obvious that this person deserved this explanation), and said this is its true meaning: the bribe of self-esteem. For example, the Rebbe spoke about not talking during *davening*, so how come when you see someone talking you don't protest? Because they'll laugh at you for demanding something that won't help. Thus, it's your self-esteem that doesn't allow you to protest.

"HA'MAVDIL"

When they put the *mechitza* in the secretaries' office (the counter that separates those who enter and the secretaries' work area) and the Rebbe saw it for the first time, he asked the

secretary, Rabbi Quint, what the *mechitza* was for, and he explained.

The Rebbe said: "*Lhavdil bein ha'kodesh*" (to separate between the holy), the *kahal*, and "*Kodesh HaKadoshim*" (the Holy of Holies), the secretaries' area.

R' Quint said to R' Groner: You see that the Rebbe said that this is the *Kodesh HaKadoshim*, so nobody should enter here!

A LITTLE SHAS

The Rebbe once told R' Groner: R' Quint is a *baki b'Shas*. If you need to

There are those who want to teach me what I want. Tell them that they don't need to tell me what I want, and if they want to do my ratzon, they should listen and understand what I want.

ask something in *Shas*, ask him.

R' Quint once told R' Groner, after an explanation in *nigleh* that the Rebbe gave at a Simchas Beis HaShoeiva *farbrengen*: The Rebbe clarified a topic in *nigleh* from Brachos until Nida (from the beginning until the end of *Shas*).

SO THAT YOU FEEL WHAT A YECHIDUS IS LIKE

There was someone who entered for *yechidus* whenever he wanted to, not only on those nights dedicated to receiving people for *yechidus*. The Rebbe once told R' Groner that this

person should only be allowed in during official *yechidus* times. When the person wanted to see the Rebbe, R' Groner told him that the Rebbe was busy and that he couldn't go in except for the appointed time he would tell him. After the man had his *yechidus* (after everyone had left), he came out with a smile and told R' Groner that the Rebbe had said: I wanted you to feel at least once, what *yechidus* is like.

WHO IS A MASHPIA?

The Rebbe once said: A *mashpia* is someone who can be asked about his most personal faults, and he can answer.

TO HEAR THE KOL TORAH

The secretaries' room, in the time of the Rebbe Rayatz, was the *zal* of the elementary *yeshiva*. In 5706 (1946), the Rebbe Rayatz said they should close the room and move the *zal* elsewhere. Why? "Because my pen fell three times as I wrote. Once, when a boy screamed and I was afraid something had happened; once, when a table fell, etc. (the window which starts in the office continued up the Rebbe Rayatz's room on the 2nd floor, and you were able to hear everything that went on on the first floor).

The Rebbe asked the Rebbe Rayatz whether they should also close the *zal* of the large *yeshiva* and move it elsewhere. The Rebbe Rayatz said that he wanted to hear the *kol Torah*.

WHAT IS A REBBE?

Generally, on 13 Tishrei, the Rebbe spoke about *Rebbe'stve* (matters pertaining to leadership). Once, a director of a school in Eretz Yisroel came, who hadn't been in New York for Rosh HaShana or Yom Kippur. He first came for Sukkos, and the Rebbe got word that because this person had gone abroad, things were amiss at the school.

At the *farbrengen* the Rebbe said: What is a Rebbe? *Einer vos ken zain chassid durch un durch* (one who knows



his *chassid* through and through). Otherwise, he's not a Rebbe. What is meant by "through and through?" That he knows everything that's going on with the *chassid*, with all the details. Therefore, when someone comes here and wants to play tricks and say that his coming here doesn't harm anything over there, he should know that he harmed his *mosdos*, and his coming here is not desirable, and is the opposite of the *kavana* and *ratzon*. Therefore, he cannot be here. He has to sacrifice and worry about his

mosdos.

"YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME"

There was a time when the Rebbe didn't want the *shluchim* to Eretz Yisroel (who were sent there in 5736) to come to 770, but they strongly desired to come. When R' Groner went to Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe told him to tell them: Each of you certainly wants to do what I want. Nobody is, *ch*"v, interested in doing the opposite of what I want. It's just that there are

those who want to teach me what I want. Tell them that they don't need to tell me what I want, and if they want to do my *ratzon*, they should *tzuheren* (listen and understand) what I want.

A few days later, two of these families came to the Rebbe. R' Chadakov asked them whether they heard what R' Groner had said, and they said they had heard but presumably the Rebbe meant so and so, and so and so, but not them.

R' Chadakov told them they would not have *yechidus*. He went on to say, "I would order you to return home for Pesach, except I don't know whether you can make Pesach at home, so stay here but it's doubtful whether you'll have a *yechidus*."

Then they came to R' Groner to ask for a *yechidus*. R' Groner tried to persuade R' Chadakov to let them in, but it didn't help, and they did not have a *yechidus*. It was considered as though they hadn't come.

L'CHAIM AND YECHIDUS

The Rebbe said, "Saying *l'chaim* at a *farbrengen* is greater than a *bracha* at a *yechidus*."

Someone wrote to the Rebbe, saying that he had spent a lot of money to have a *yechidus*, and in the end he didn't have a *yechidus*. The Rebbe said: You were at a number of *farbrengens* and also said *l'chaim* – what more do you want?

A PITY

Once, when the Rebbe wrote notes on a *maamer*, he put down the pen, looked up, and said to R' Groner: Tell me, who am I writing these notes for? Does anybody look at them? It's a pity that I take the time to sit and write, and a pity for reader who won't look them up anyway.

THAT'S MY LOT

The Rebbe once demanded something at a *farbrengen*. When R' Groner saw the Rebbe on Sunday, the Rebbe asked whether a report could be

given in about what had been spoken about the day before.

R' Groner said a report would be written up the next day. The Rebbe said: It says, "His word runs swiftly," but I have *chassidim* who have time; everything is slow, and the *inyan* of "His word runs swiftly" doesn't apply to them. That is my lot.

EVERYTHING IN GOOD TIME

In the early years, the Rebbe didn't want tapes made of his *sichos*, and he told R' Groner that if he finds a tape he should take it away.

Even in the early years, the secretary R' Moshe Leib Rodstein wanted to arrange for *farbrengens* to be heard on short wave radio, and he went to Washington to arrange it (because the short wave frequencies belonged to the military. It's interesting to note that R' Rodstein's room in 770 later became the broadcasting room). However, the Rebbe told him the time wasn't right yet, and he explained:

It is told that the Mittlerer Rebbe once said (in a *maamer*), "Better is one hour in the World to Come than all of life in the World to Come," and the *chassidim* didn't understand what he meant. Somebody asked the Mittlerer Rebbe who answered: I meant the famous Mishna, "Better is one hour in *this world* than all of life in the World to Come" ...

However, you must understand, why did the Mittlerer Rebbe say "World to Come" twice in the *maamer*? Because this is "*nevias ha'mochin*" (flooding of the intellect), and from the aspect of *nevias ha'mochin* there can be a *plitas peh* (a slip of the tongue) and the like. But since I don't have this level, *darf zain genoi vos ich red* (what I say must be precise). Therefore, no communications media should be brought in, lest I say... – and the Rebbe refused to allow taping.



THE CLOCK

Before 5710, the Rebbe's room didn't have the royal appearance it came to have. After the Rebbe accepted the Chabad leadership, they wanted to change the room to reflect his new role, and so they removed some items from the room, and the Rebbe didn't say a word. Among the things they removed was an old clock which had been on the Rebbe's desk since he arrived in New York until this day. When they removed this clock and replaced it with a new and much

fancier clock, at first the Rebbe didn't say anything, but then he asked why they had switched clocks.

When they answered that it had to look "*malchus'dik*," the Rebbe said: What is *kabbalas ol*? Is it only when you tear someone else's nose off? [i.e., one-upmanship] Tearing off a nose may be a great thing ... When you do something different than what is wanted, this is a lack in *kabbalas ol*. And the Rebbe said they should put back the old clock.

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THE SECRET OF THE CANDLE

BY G. LIFSCHITZ

The Rebbe requests of us: “Every one of you must ask and influence your relatives, friends and acquaintances, and through them, all Jewish women throughout the entire world, so that they too fulfill the mitzva of lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov candles.”

At the end of Galus the darkness becomes thicker. Then suddenly, a match is lit and a tiny flame goes up from a candle. Rays of light begin to infiltrate the darkness. Then, as though with a magician’s wand, additional lights are ignited, one from another, and they join together in a camp of light which begins to fill the horizon, like a long, endless chain.

It was 24 Elul 5734 when the Rebbe initiated *Mivtza Neshek*, and the matches and flames began to slowly but determinedly, chase away the darkness, and the dawn began to break. The statement of *Chazal* in *Yalkut Shimoni*, “If you observe the Shabbos candles, I will show you the candles of Tziyon,” became more tangible than ever.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE MITZVA

It says, “*Ki ner mitzva v’Torah ohr*”

(for a *mitzva* is a candle and the Torah is a light). If so, then all the *mitzvos* are candles. What makes Shabbos candles stand out?

“*Ohr*” (light) is numerically equivalent to “*raz*” (secret). The light reveals that which is in front of us, as well as the secret it contains, which is hidden within. What is the secret of the world? It is the secret that is concealed within the wonders of Creation, which hides in the drabness of daily living. That is where the inner essence lies, with which the Creator sustains the world every moment.

Who will reveal this lofty secret of existence?

A *mitzva* in its simplicity and with its power screams its secret to the world: there is a Creator of this world!

The Jew, who stops in the flow of life and stands in silent prayer, is the

one who shouts out this secret to the world.

Yet there is one *mitzva*, says the Rebbe, whose light illuminates the palpable darkness. Its light illuminates the physical home and ensures that its inhabitants will not stumble, thus ensuring peace. It says in the *Zohar*, “*Ner mitzva* is the light of Shabbos,” in which both the spiritual and physical light stands out in an obvious way.

The Tzemach Tzedek told us that the Baal Shem Tov loved light, and this is because “*ohr*” is numerically equivalent to “*raz*.” Everything in the world contains a secret. The one who knows the secret can illuminate the world.

Chazal said candles should be lit before Shabbos so that people don’t trip over wood or stone. The stone that *Chazal* refer to, aside from obstacles in the home, represent the many mishaps that we encounter in life, including the greatest concealment of the “secret of the world.” “Those who call wood their father, and tell the stone: you created me” – this refers to those who take a superficial glance at the branches of trees, without seeing the roots, which are the source of the trees’ existence, and those who look at the inanimate rock and don’t see G-dliness, the source of its existence. The light of

the Shabbos candles say, "Look at the inner workings of things, at the source of their existence, so that you don't stumble, *ch"v*, in the world-view of "wood and stone."

IN THE MOTHER'S HANDS

The *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*, to illuminate the house, to light the way, to remove obstacles and smooth the path is the responsibility of the woman of the house. She is responsible for the atmosphere of the home and for the children who follow her. She is told to light the way so they can discern between good and evil, and can choose the right way: to reveal the secret of the world.

Avrohom, who fulfilled the entire Torah, certainly lit Shabbos candles after Sara's passing. Yet despite his greatness, we don't find that his candles remained lit from one Erev Shabbos to the next, as Sara's did. It was Rivka, who reinstated that miracle.

It was the candles of the Mothers of our people, which remained lit from Shabbos to Shabbos. This is the pinnacle of the *mitzva* that reveals the secret of Creation: when it doesn't allow even one moment of darkness all week, from Shabbos to Shabbos. Then life is completely illuminated with the light of a *mitzva*, the light of *emuna*.

"EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL"

The Rebbe MH"M called upon us to renew the custom of every Jewish girl lighting Shabbos candles:

"As the time for the complete Redemption approaches speedily in our time, the difficulties increase and many homes are in darkness and ignorance regarding our Jewish origins. We cannot stand by [and do nothing].

"We must react in the spirit of Yisroel Saba: 'a little bit of light pushes away a great deal of darkness.' We must increase the light of Judaism in every Jewish home, the light of trust in Hashem and joy in the fulfillment of *mitzvos*."

As a result of this call to action, thousands of new, pure flames were



ignited in thousands of homes around the world. Countless *inyanei Galus* began to disappear one after another. This *ko'ach* was endowed by Rivka Imeinu, for Rivka's entry into Avrohom's family was confirmed when it was seen "that she was like Sara," as Rashi says, "for as long as Sara was alive, the candle was lit from Erev Shabbos to Erev Shabbos. It stopped when she [Sara] died but returned with the arrival of Rivka."

Rivka was three years old and she lit candles even before she married.

This is what connects a Jewish daughter, from her youth, to her Jewish home. This *mitzva* becomes a part of her childhood. And just as light is something that attracts a baby, so too, this first *mitzva* of a girl is done with light, the light of a *mitzva*.

THE NESHEK CAMPAIGN

The Rebbe requests of us: "Each one of you must ask of and influence your relatives, friends, and acquaintances – and through them all Jewish women throughout the entire world – to also fulfill the *mitzva* of lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov candles.

The Rebbe sees in this a "praiseworthy means" of being *mekarev* people, because the light they ignite will also ignite the light of their *neshamos* and put them in an "illuminated place."

At a Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen*, the Rebbe told a story that illustrates the power of this *mitzva*. "There is a Jewish girl whose father has a beard and holds a sacred position, and whose mother is punctilious about *mitzvos*. There was no Jewish school in their neighborhood, however, so the girl went to public school. She would return home early on Friday in honor of Shabbos.

"It happened once that after lighting candles, the mother went into her daughter's room, where she saw her daughter doing homework,

drawing, and writing. The mother was shocked, but the daughter simply said, 'Now is when I have free time!'

"Seeing this, the mother decided that the girl would light Shabbos candles, and when she would understand the *bracha*, 'to kindle the lights of Shabbos Kodesh,' that she herself was saying, the mother would thus be obviated of the need to explain and cajole."

To those who were involved in spreading awareness of this *mitzva*,

Avrohom, who fulfilled the entire Torah, certainly lit Shabbos candles after Sara's passing. Yet despite his greatness, we don't find that his candles remained lit from one Erev Shabbos to the next, as Sara's did. It was Rivka, who reinstated that miracle.

the Rebbe wrote: "Whoever merits to be involved in all the *mitvtzaim*, including the *mitzva* of *Neiros Shabbos Kodesh*, will stand in the front to greet Moshiach. Fortunate is their lot and great is their merit."

Chazal say, "A candle for one, a candle for one hundred" (the same light that allows one person to see, allows a hundred people to see – a term used in the laws of Shabbos) – this is the nature of light, that one who lights a candle for himself

illuminates his entire surroundings.

Another characteristic is that there is no limit to the number of candles you can light from a single candle without diminishing the one candle. This is the power of this *mitzva* in its ability to spread out and expand, to reach everyone.

This is also true of *Mivtza Neshek* that the Rebbe MH" M initiated. The idea has penetrated so deeply that every Erev Shabbos, women of all backgrounds (not necessarily Lubavitch) go out to do *Mivtza Neshek*, and they all come back amazed. This is so because the candle is lit and there are infinite candles that can be ignited from the one candle. The flame was ignited in 770, and from there it has spread to the entire world.

THE CANDLES OF ICE

It once happened that the *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov had only one candle, and they were expecting the arrival of the Baal Shem Tov, who loved light. They didn't know what to do until the Baal Shem Tov came in and said, "Where there are Jews, there must be light. That is my *avoda*: to bring illumination to Jews."

The *talmidim* sadly said, "Rebbe! We couldn't get more than this one candle!"

The Baal Shem Tov told them to take icicles from the roof and to light them. They did so.

Who is the one in our generation that lit the "candles of ice" in the spiritual cold? The Rebbe! He is the leader who knows the secret of the world, including the secret of the candle and the secret of frost. He is the one who ignited a fire, setting the walls of *Galus* ablaze. We all eagerly await to behold the light of Hashem, speedily in our time.

Sources: sichos Kodesh 5734, 5735, Likkutei Sichos, vol. 15, Parshas Chayei Sara, 3, vol. 17, Parshas Tazria-Metzora, 3.

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THE CHASSID WHO FOUGHT TO BRING THE GEULA

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN LEVIN



*He epitomized “swimming against the current,” from early childhood to his ceaseless struggle to proclaim the Rebbe as Melech HaMoshiach – stories and remembrances from the colorful mosaic of the life of the chassid, Rabbi Avrohom Pariz, a”h. * Part 3 of 3.*

THE EPISODE OF THE FLYERS THAT IDENTIFIED MOSHIACH

The story about how R' Avrohom publicized the identity of Moshiach back in 5725 is well-known. R' Hartman accompanied him in those days:

“R' Avrohom was the first to raise the banner about the Rebbe being Moshiach. During the hundreds of hours that I was in his presence, I saw that he lived with this *inyan* with all 248 limbs and 365 sinews. At every opportunity, he repeated this before anyone who was willing to listen to him. This activity reached a new level with the famous flyers, as I wrote in my diary.

This is what I wrote in Sivan 5725:

“By Divine providence I was with my father-in-law in Petach Tikva. Grandfather, R' Avrohom, saw me and asked me to accompany him to the printer in order to be able to help him schlep packages.

“I didn't know what this was about, and of course I accompanied him to the printer, which was on a nearby street. He asked me to carry some packages wrapped in brown paper to his house. On the way, he told me that he had printed thousands of flyers announcing that our righteous redeemer is none other than the Lubavitcher Rebbe, using his full name.

“He explained it to me thus,

‘Just as the Rebbe strongly refused to accept the Chabad leadership from 5710 until Yud Shvat 5711, and only when a large number of *Anash* in Eretz Yisroel and abroad sent him *kisvei hiskashrus* expressing their utter *bittul* and *hiskashrus* to him, did he agree to accept the *nesius* – the same is true with the coronation of the Rebbe as Moshiach. It has to come as a “*hisorerus milmata*” (arousal from below). If *Anash* demand it and request it of the Rebbe – that he be revealed as Moshiach – he would do so.’

“On Friday, 18 Sivan 5725, he gave thousands of flyers to his good friend, R' Yisroel Kook, who was the driver for Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim and was devoted to *Mivtza T'fillin* in Tel Aviv. R' Yisroel distributed the flyers at the old central bus station, a place where thousands of people from all over the country pass through on Erev Shabbos.

“In the meantime, some Lubavitchers who lived in Kfar Chabad and worked in Tel Aviv saw the flyers, and when they returned to Kfar Chabad they went directly to the *mara d'asra*, Rabbi Shneur

Zalman Gorelik, and told him about them. Was it permissible and necessary to distribute these flyers or not? There were some in favor, and some opposed, and things got lively.

“Monday, 21 Sivan 5725. R’ Avrohom’s flyer was published in the famous paper *Davar* (belonging to Mapai), as a result of which the tumult in Kfar Chabad grew stronger. Apparently they had called the Rebbe’s secretaries to report about the flyers, for that week, on Thursday 24 Sivan, R’ Avrohom received a telegram from the secretariat that said he should immediately stop distributing the flyers and he should send the remainder to the secretariat.

“The precise wording of the telegram was:

“He wasn’t fazed by anyone. He said to me and others, ‘Baruch Hashem, I have lived to see Moshiach.’”

“24.6.65

“We were shocked by his letter, and please stop disseminating the letter and announcement, and collect and send the remainder, down to the last one, to the secretariat. Please immediately ratify the fulfillment of this *horaa*.

“The Secretariat

“I met him afterwards and he

told me about it, and he looked at me with big, dark, burning eyes, and sadly said, ‘He (meaning the Rebbe) doesn’t want it. Maybe the time isn’t right.’

“As a loyal soldier and *chassid*, he submitted to the Rebbe and followed instructions. He couldn’t distribute the flyers anymore and he collected them and sent them to the secretariat.

“R’ Avrohom didn’t distribute them anymore, but he continued to announce the message they contained at every opportunity, at meetings of teachers of the Reshet, at the Chabad *shul* in Petach Tikva, at family *simchos*, and at every event. He repeatedly said that the true *goel* of the Jewish people is the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

“There were those who understood him. Many just shook their heads, but he wasn’t fazed by anyone. He said to me and others, ‘*Baruch Hashem, ich hub derlebt Moshiach’n* (I have lived to see Moshiach).’

“He would always tell me, ‘Publicize the awesome greatness of the Rebbe. Tell about his incredible *b’kius* in all parts of Torah; tell about his worldwide leadership; tell about his *ahavas Yisroel*. When men and women, children and old people, hear about the Rebbe, they will become *mekushar* to him, they’ll write him letters, and will consult with him. They’ll be *mekushar* to the Rebbe, and then the Rebbe will be revealed as Moshiach of our generation.’

“This is what he constantly told me. Every telegram that he sent to the Rebbe began with the words, ‘*U’chvod HaRebbe M’Lubavitch – Melech HaMoshiach*.’

“Remember, this was in the 60’s, when people weren’t ready to digest this. A fellow supporter of his

EVERYTHING YOU HAVE IS THE REBBE’S!

At a certain point, R’ Avrohom’s *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe reached unfamiliar heights. He demanded that his acquaintances devote themselves to the Rebbe in a boundless way: When you receive your monthly salary – he would demand – you have to give it to the Rebbe. Then ask the Rebbe, “Rebbe, I need bread. Rebbe, I need milk. I need fish,” and the Rebbe will give you all your needs. This way – said R’ Avrohom – first of all, the meaning of *hiskashrus* will penetrate your emotions and mind. We have to achieve the awareness that everything we have is the Rebbe’s. Second of all, if we do this, we’ll be embarrassed to ask for extras.

R’ Avrohom did as he demanded. Despite his difficult financial situation, when there was no bread in his own home, he scrounged from his meager rations and gave the money to R’ Yehuda Shmotkin so that he could buy *s’farim* for the Rebbe’s library.

R’ Leibel Bistritzky relates:

“After the Rebbe arrived in the U.S., I became *mekurav* to him, and I began to learn in Tomchei T’mimim and became a Lubavitcher *chassid*. My father had some complaints about me and where I was learning. He wasn’t happy that I was not going in the ways of *zain tatte un zain mamma* (his father and mother).

“When R’ Avrohom heard about this, he went over to him and said: *Vos tatte? Vos mamma? Der Rebbe iz der tatte un der Rebbe is der mamma!* (What father? What mother? The Rebbe is the father and the Rebbe is the mother.)

views, he found in the Partisan, R' Zushe Wilimovsky.

"I always heard him say, 'You must unite all schools (of the Reshet) into one school and all the classes into one class and all the lessons into one lesson, and only one teacher is needed to instill in the children that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is Melech HaMoshiach.'"

ONE SHABBOS AND THREE LESSONS

"I learned three important things from Grandfather, *a"n*, during a

meal at our house in Kfar Chabad," continues R' Hartman. "It took place one Shabbos in 5728, and sadly, it was the first and last time we hosted him in our house.

"The first lesson: on Friday night we honored him with the making of *Kiddush* first, but to our great surprise he strongly refused and said that the *balabus* ought to make *Kiddush* first. My wife and I said: But you're the grandfather, an older man and a *chassid*, and we are your grandchildren! You deserve to make *Kiddush* first. But he insisted that I

make *Kiddush* first.

"The second lesson: When I honored him with sitting at the head of the table, he strongly refused, even though we had other guests, and he heatedly maintained that the *balabus* must sit at his regular seat at the head of the table.

The third lesson: At the end of the meal we honored him with leading the *bentching*, but he maintained that it was received in the name of the Baal Shem Tov that the *balabus* leads the *bentching* on Friday night, and once again I had

WHY DIDN'T YOU PUBLICIZE IT? BECAUSE EMUNA IN THIS IS LACKING.

In a letter that R' Avrohom wrote to a friend, he responded to his complaint about why the Rebbe had written a letter to him in which he thanked him for publicizing "*L'Alter LT'shuva*," but the Rebbe did not mention "*L'Alter L'Geula*." This friend hinted that perhaps the reason was because the Rebbe had dropped this idea. This is what R' Avrohom wrote back:

"I received your letter that you wrote on Yud Shvat 5704, and I read that you wrote, 'there's a coldness in everyone unfortunately,' especially that you write, 'please don't hold anything back.' Being that I am an emotional person, I was greatly affected and I saw the truth of the words, 'and You are a Righteous One over all that comes upon us, etc.' We must merely ask with tears and pleading, for a free gift, merciful Father, stop punishing Your children.

"In Lubavitch, in the kitchen, there was a cook named Moshe Shlomo. He would say: 'I don't need to go out to the world to see how things are going downhill. All I need to do is look around the kitchen, at the T'mimim, to see the deterioration of the world.' I say the same thing. When I look at our *avreichim* – after all, you're *shpitz Chabad* – you can understand what the situation out in the world is.

"In your very words, in my opinion, lies the answer to your questions. You ask: 'Why did the Rebbe thank your branch of Machne Yisroel for publicizing *L'Alter LT'shuva* without mentioning all the publicity of *L'Alter L'Geula*? The answer as I see it is that this is a sign that you didn't publicize it. Why didn't you publicize it? Since your *emuna* in this is weak.

"You yourself write that you became cold about this,

which means that you didn't have the *emuna* in it to begin with. *Emuna* is not subject to changes, obstacles, or reasons. Even when a person is faced with something contrary to it, the *emuna* stands strong and doesn't budge an inch. And with you, there's a change (as you wrote), and therefore, you didn't have the *emuna* beforehand (it was just "maybe"). And something that you don't have, you can't bring out in someone else. Therefore, you don't deserve thanks for merely hanging up signs.

"I myself heard a few times in *sichos*, and this appears many times in *HaKria V'HaK'dusha* and in the *Kol Korei's*: "We mustn't despair." Though you can understand what is meant as it appears in its context, but I sensed in the words – when I heard them again in 5701 – that even if it seems the opposite, *ch"v*, even at a time like this, 'we mustn't despair.'

"What *kavana* can be hidden in *avoda* like this? The point is that the *avoda* demanded of us is that we choose to believe in the actual *emuna* itself. Not that we should believe things because we believe the one who said them, who certainly knows what's what, because of the facts, because he is told this from Above.

"The truth is that he knows the precise day, and as he noted in the fourth *Kol Korei* that 'a *ben Torah* knows the day...' Take the fourth *Kol Korei*, learn it properly, and many things will become clear to you and many contradictions will be cleared up and you'll understand the whole approach of *HaKria V'HaKedusha*.

"I'd like to write to you another thing, hoping you won't be angry and have complaints about me. You don't know our holy father, anointed one of G-d, the Rebbe

to concede to him.

“On 15 Tammuz 5728 R’ Avrohom visited us in honor of our oldest son’s *upsheren*. It was the last family *simcha* he participated in, for thereafter his health deteriorated till the day of his passing on 22 Elul. Throughout the *upsheren* he sat as he usually did, humbly and quietly.

“My wife, his granddaughter, asked him to have his picture taken with our son and us. It was only on rare occasions that he agreed to do so. He stood behind our son and

“I met him afterwards and he told me about it, and he looked at me with big, dark, burning eyes, and sadly said, ‘He (meaning the Rebbe) doesn’t want it. Maybe the time isn’t right.’”

had his picture taken, and he blessed him to grow up to be a *chassid*, *yerei Shamayim*, and *lamdan*.

“After he cut one curl he went to wash his hands alternately, and he told us that this is what you should do after cutting a child’s hair at an *upsheren*. Did he sense that this was the last picture? Who knows.

“In general, at every family *simcha*, whether at a wedding of a grandchild, a *bar mitzva*, or *bris*, Grandfather would glow with joy. You could see a special light on his furrowed face. He smiled with a

shlita. You write to me, ‘please don’t withhold anything.’ These words reveal what is hidden within your heart – that you think it’s possible and realistic that the Rebbe would say something else. You should be ashamed of the Rebbe you have in your heart! What kind of Rebbe do you have in your heart?

“It says, ‘*lo ish Keil vi’chazev u’ben adam v’yisnecham*,’ ‘not a man is G-d to falsify, nor a son-of-man to regret.’ I learn *p’shat* like this: One would think it should have said, ‘G-d is not a man,’ instead of the reverse order? But the hint in this is that we must know that even, the ‘*ish Keil*’ (man of G-d) like it says that Moshe Rabbeinu was an *Ish Elokim*, he too ‘will not falsify,’ because Moshe Rabbeinu doesn’t say things on his own. What G-d tells him that is what he says. This is an *Ish Elokim*, and the Rebbe *shlita* is Moshe Rabbeinu, and is an *Ish Elokim* (see *HaKria V’HaKedusha*). Therefore, if he said something, he won’t say differently. And that’s the way it will be, the word of G-d endures forever. It’s just that the means can be easier, through *chesed* and *rachamim*.

“Our holy father, anointed one of G-d, the Rebbe *shlita*, once told me in *yechidus*, when I showed him a letter from my daughter [a telegram to the Rebbe with a request for a *bracha* for his daughter who was bedridden for a long time because of a difficult pregnancy]. I said: ‘Rebbe, *ayare ah vort vert nit farfalen* (a word of yours does not go to waste).’

“You can imagine how I said it, in a low voice and with a red and shamed face.

“The Rebbe turned to me and with a serious look he said: ‘*Mayner a vort vert nit farfalen nit l’maaleh un nit l’mata, un m’darf es zogen mit a dagesh un nit mit a raf’e* (no word of mine goes to waste, not Above and not below, and this needs to be said with a “*dagesh*” (with emphasis), not with a “*raf’e*” (softly)).’

“And the Rebbe repeated this a number of times so that I’d hear it well and absorb every single word. From these words we can take a lot. It was apparent that he knows that even Above, his word is accorded great and important significance, and we also understand from this that we must see to it to disseminate to the world, meaning – to proclaim loudly and confidently – who he is. This affects the good of *Klal Yisroel*.

“I can tell you another thing, something I heard on a *yoma d’pagra* (*chassidic* holiday) about the year 5701 – I’m not sure which *sicha*, but I heard these words myself from his holy mouth – ‘that he was chosen to be the *shliach*.’ The Rebbe was speaking about *shlichus* not being one of the easy things, and he told a story of the Tzemach Tzedek regarding this. At that time he said how he wallows in tears over each word and he became sick from it, and he said as follows: *Mi shteit un mi shtupt mich, az ich zol dos reden* (they stand and push me (coerce me) to say this).

“He said harsh words then about *chevlei Moshiach*. I looked at either side of him and didn’t see anyone pushing him...”

The word of G-d endures forever. It’s just that the means can be easier, through *chesed* and *rachamim*.

goodhearted, tender, loving smile. His eyes always spoke volumes and he took an interest and loved every grandchild and every great-grandchild, and they reciprocated his love.

“He merited to have dozens of great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren who bear his name.”

With the passing of R' Avrohom Pariz, an enormous void was formed within his own family and within the extended Lubavitch family. The glory of the family and its crown had been taken to the heavenly *yeshiva*, but there's no doubt that there he continues to demand the immediate *hisgalus* of the Rebbe MH" M!

(In preparing this article we were assisted by Rabbi Dovid Hartman and with material that appeared in *t'shuuros* for weddings in the Wolf family – many thanks.)

PRECISION COPYING

Concerning R' Avrohom's copying of *sichos* of the Rebbe, there's a saying from the Rebbe Rayatz, “*Oif Avrohom Pariz's a grayz meg men oich horoven un lernen*” (you can work on and learn from R' Avrohom's mistake, too).

The story is that R' Avrohom would type up the Rebbe Rayatz's *maamarim*. After the Rebbe wrote the *maamer* by hand, he would go to the Rebbe and get the *maamer*, or the Rebbe would give it to the secretary to give to R' Avrohom, and he would print it on the stencil machine and then it would be published.

Once, when the Rebbe prepared a *maamer* for Shavuos, he noted that certain paragraphs from his father's *maamer* should be quoted, and he indicated from where to where should be copied (page w, line x until page y, line z).

R' Avrohom, who considered every word of the Rebbe to be precious, printed the *maamer* with the Rebbe's notes – copy page ... line ... – and copied the *maamer* that way.

When people began learning the *maamer*, they didn't understand what these notes were about, and they told the Rebbe MH" M that something wasn't right. The Rebbe MH" M told the Rebbe Rayatz that R' Avrohom had apparently forgotten to delete the instructions regarding the *maamer* that had been noted.

On the second day of Shavuos, during the *seuda*, the Rebbe Rayatz said, “*Oif Avrohom Pariz's a grayz meg men oich horoven.*”

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*When the Yetzer HaRa heard that the only remaining shlichus is preparing the world to greet Moshiach, he decided to do everything in his power to prevent this from happening, ch”v. * To accomplish this goal, he is even ready to help the avoda of shlichus, as long as it keeps the shliach from focusing on the goal. * In preparation for the upcoming Kinus HaShluchim.*

The Rebbe Maharash told his son – later to be known as the Rebbe Rashab – “The *yetzer ha’ra* is called the *nefesh ha’bahamis* (the animal soul), not because it’s necessarily a *beheima*. Sometimes he’s a fox, the most shrewd of all the beasts, and you need to be exceedingly clever to outwit him; and sometimes he dresses up as a *tzaddik*, a Tamim, an *anav* and *baal middos tovos*.

“Every single person’s animal soul is tailored to him personally. A person might have a great desire to learn *chassidus* or to contemplate something [in *chassidus*], when in

truth this is only the *yetzer’s* counsel and one of the wiles of the animal soul to prevent him from doing *avodas ha’t’filla*, etc.

“Take this rule in hand, and remember it constantly: anything that helps or leads towards actual *avoda* – any obstacle to it, no matter what it is, even the most lofty matter, is only the wiles of the animal soul.”

When the Rebbe Rashab related this he concluded, “Until then I didn’t know that it’s possible for the animal soul to dress up as someone religious, not to mention *chassidic*!”

* * *

Consider the enormous difference between the concept of “animal soul” and “*chassid*.” How is it possible for the animal soul, which has seven derogatory names – the Nachash HaKadmoni (Primordial Serpent), the Satan, the Angel of Death, the Yetzer HaRa, the animal soul, the ego, the feeling of ego – to be called “*frumer nefesh ha’bahamis*” (religious animal soul) or even “*chassid*?” There is no greater title of honor than “*chassid*.” In the Gemara, the name “*chassid*” is greater than “*tzaddik*”: “A *tzaddik* throws them [fingernails] away, whereas a *chassid* burns them, etc.” How can we call the Primordial Serpent a *chassid*?!

It is simply not possible to have a *kilayim* (forbidden mixture) like this of “animal soul” and “*chassid*,” but it’s certainly possible for the animal soul to be *dressed up* as a *chassid*. The *yetzer ha’ra* knew, way back when it was created, that a *chassid* cannot sin. The heart of a *chassid* does not veer after the vanities of the world, and he is not enticed to sin. The *yetzer ha’ra* understood that the only way to catch the *chassid* in his net is to disguise himself as a *chassid*. When he masquerades as a *chassid*,

the *chassid* is not aware of him, and doesn't sense when the *yetzer ha'ra* is tripping him up.

This is why the *yetzer ha'ra* is called "*Der Kluginker*" (the Clever One). Hashem gave it tremendous powers of "*chochma of klipa*" to best determine how to approach every individual. And we need exceedingly great *kochos* and wisdom in order to detect his tricks, to the point that, "if not for Hashem helping him, one would not withstand him [the *yetzer ha'ra*]."

Before the *yetzer ha'ra* goes to work, he checks out the territory and determines which activity is most important for the Jew to do at that time. After sighting his goal, he does all in his power so that the Jew does not realize his purpose. The *yetzer ha'ra* can convince a Jew to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* to the letter if by doing so it detracts him from accomplishing his primary goal at that specific time.

When the *yetzer ha'ra* heard at the *Kinus HaShluchim 5752* that the *avoda* of *shlichus* is over and the only remaining *shlichus* is to prepare the world to greet Moshiach, he determined to do all in his power to prevent the realization of the "*avoda ha'yechida*."

In order to succeed, the *yetzer ha'ra* is prepared to lose on all fronts. He's even ready to help in the *avoda* of *shlichus* if it will help him keep the *shliach* from fulfilling the Rebbe's *horaa* to focus on the "only *shlichus*." The *yetzer ha'ra* has made a calculation that it is worth it to him to lose the side battles if he's guaranteed victory in the war at large.

The *yetzer ha'ra* cannot convince the *lamdan* (scholar) that the Rebbe never said what he said, for a *lamdan* is learned and he'll immediately realize that the *yetzer ha'ra* is after him. The results will be the opposite of what the *yetzer ha'ra* is trying to

accomplish, for the *lamdan* will be insulted by suggestions like that and will say to himself: I'm a *lamdan*, and he thinks I'm an *am ha'aretz* and that I don't know the Rebbe's *sichos*!?

So when the *yetzer ha'ra* wants to push the *lamdan* off the right path he comes dressed as a *lamdan* and convinces him to sit and learn day and night. He explains to him with *lamdus* how important it is to study Torah, especially now when you can conquer the world with Torah study – the main thing being that the *lamdan* doesn't work on preparing himself and his surroundings to greet Moshiach.

The *yetzer ha'ra* won't convince the *maskil* (intellectual) with *tzukerkes* (candies) since it doesn't interest the *maskil*. The *yetzer ha'ra* approaches him with other blandishments. He'll convince the *maskil* to continue giving *shiurim* on *chassidus*, to hold *farbrengens* at every opportunity, but will be sure to divert him from talking about *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*. To accomplish this, he has to help him learn various topics in *chassidus*, but it's all worthwhile if thereby he succeeds in making him forget that the *ikar avoda* today is preparing the world to greet Moshiach.

The *yetzer ha'ra* cannot convince the *chassid* to refrain from fulfilling the Rebbe's directives. A *chassid* knows that the *ikar avoda* today is to prepare the world to greet Moshiach, and if he is approached with ideas that will divert him from this mission, he won't listen.

When the *yetzer ha'ra* approaches a *chassid*, he enlists all his *kochos* and with "*mesirus nefesh*," he dresses *mit zaydene zupitze* (in a silk kapote), and plays on the deepest feelings a *chassid* has:

"*Hiskashrus*" (learn lots of *divrei Torah*, lots of *chassidus*, so long as it is not *inyanei Geula* and *Moshiach*)

"*Alte Chassidishkeit*" (don't forget

In order to succeed, the yetzer ha'ra is prepared to lose on all fronts. He's even ready to help in the avoda of shlichus if it will help him keep the shliach from fulfilling the Rebbe's horaa to focus on the "only shlichus." The yetzer ha'ra has made a calculation that it is worth it to him to lose the side battles if he's guaranteed victory in the war at large.

to learn the "*chassidische parsha*," and learn it in depth so you won't have time to learn the *D'var Malchus* from 5751-2)

"*Shlichus*" (the main thing, of course, is to be *mekarev* more Jews, but don't mention the word "Moshiach" because that will be *merachek* them)

"*Leben mit'n Rebbe'n*" – live with the Rebbe (until 5746 of course, live with the good years when the crowd was small and you could feel close

to the Rebbe), etc.

These are fundamental *inyanim* for every *chassid*, the most lofty *inyanim*, the Holy of Holies! But the Satan succeeds in penetrating the Holy of Holies, “they saw a fox (the *Kluginker*) coming out of the Holy of Holies”... He uses *inyanei k’dusha* in order to fight *k’dusha* (see the *Maamer* “*V’iyhiyu Chayei Sara*” 5713 at the end; shocking words).

This is how the *Nachash HaKadmoni*, in his various disguises, manages to entrap *lamdanim*, *maskilim*, and even *chassidim*, telling them that *kabbalas p’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu* is not meant literally, *r”l* ... He manages to convince them that the *ikar* is to protect the rest of the things and *mivtzaim*, which are actually the means to reach the goal, but as far as the goal – *kabbalas p’nei Moshiach* – that needs study and clarification. Did the Rebbe mean it literally or maybe only in the spiritual sense? Until these matters are clarified, we are forbidden to be involved with these things lest they interfere with the Rebbe’s other *mivtzaim*.

(For the sake of *hafatza*, the *chassid* R’ Avrohom Pariz [see article in this issue] distributed brochures stating, “*hinei zeh* (pointing with a finger and saying “this”) *Melech HaMoshiach ba*.” He continued to do so until he received a message from the Rebbe to stop. One of the people who helped him sell *sifrei Kehos* and arrange *Tanya* classes complained, “You’re destroying all the *Tanya* classes you’ve built up until now!” R’ Avrohom responded, “Fool! What are we organizing the *Tanya* classes for, if not for *kabbalas p’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*?!”)

This is how the *Kluginker* manages to convince all those who listen to him, regarding the other special phrases we heard in 5751-5752. He developed an entire “Torah” according to which every special thing the Rebbe said prefaced

by the words “*yehi ratzon*” is merely a prayer that it actually happen (the fact that it says that a request of a *tzaddik* must be fulfilled, and therefore the request that it be “*teikef u’miyad mamash*” and “*kvar ba*” is seemingly fulfilled, the *Kluginker* says this is not “*k’p’shuto*,” not literal). And even expressions that are not prefaced with the words “*yehi ratzon*” you have to say that what the Rebbe meant was: “*yehi ratzon*” that it be like this. For after all, we have seen that these promises were not fulfilled!

The *Kluginker* is so clever that he can dress in any costume he

The yetzer ha’ra can convince a Jew to fulfill Torah and mitzvos to the letter if by doing so it detracts him from accomplishing his primary goal at that specific time.

chooses. The Rebbe once brought an example to illustrate the cleverness of the *Kluginker*:

“A Jew stood up in public to announce, before quite a few dozen Jews who came to hear Torah, that the existence of the Jewish people depends on the *goyim*!” (*Seifer HaSichos* 5752, p. 55).

Today, unfortunately, the *Kluginker* has succeeded in enlisting even *shluchim* and great *chassidim* to his aid, who say that *Mivtza Moshiach* must be adapted to the world. Their premise is that the world cannot accept it (as opposed

to acknowledging that the world *can* accept it and we must simply determine how to present it) and only that which has been proven not to frighten people off can be told to *mekuravim*.

According to the *Kluginker*, what the Rebbe said on Gimmel Tammuz 5751 (*Seifer HaSichos* 5751, p. 663), “*Di velt iz shoin tzugegreit, fartik!*” (the world is already ready, *finis*), and in the *sicha* of VaYeishev 5752 (*Seifer HaSichos* 5752, p. 174) in response to a question the Rebbe explains at length that the world is ready – is not *k’p’shuto* (to be taken literally).

That’s also how the *Kluginker* interprets the Rebbe’s statement made in 5752; “it does not depend on *t’shuva*,” and “they’ve already done *t’shuva*, and now it only depends on Moshiach himself” (*Seifer HaSichos* 5752, p. 66), as well as the Rebbe statement that, “according to all signs, our generation is the last generation of *Galus*, and therefore, the first of *Geula*” (*Sicha Lech Lecha* 5752, *Seifer HaSichos* p. 75, VaYeishev 5752, *s’if Alef* at the beginning, p. 174, and many other places). All of these, he cynically dismisses with: it’s not meant literally.

So goes it, until even explicit *sichos* – not isolated phrases – get these cheap interpretations. The best example is the *sicha* of Parshas Chayei Sara 5752 at the opening of the *Kinus HaShluchim*: “According to the announcement of the Rebbe Rayatz, *nasi doreinu*, the only *shliach* of our generation, the only Moshiach of our generation, that everything is finished, it’s understood that the ‘send, please, through the one You will send’ has begun to be fulfilled, i.e., the *shlichus* of my father-in-law, the Rebbe. And from this it is understood that the only thing that remains now in the *avoda* of *shlichus* is: *l’kabel p’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu b’poel mamash*, in order that he be

able to actually fulfill his *shlichus* and take all Jews out of *Galus!*"

Here, even the *Kluginker* has a hard time giving a new meaning to the words, but with his remaining strength, he manages to muster all his cleverness and wily tactics together and says: It can't be that the Rebbe literally means that only thing is to be *mekabel p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu!* We have to say that here also the Rebbe didn't mean it literally.

When the *yetzer ha'ra* sees that there are still a few hundred *shluchim* who don't buy this nonsense, he comes up with something new in the guise of *ahavas Yisroel* and denouncing *machlokes*. This works beautifully, and the *Kluginker* has succeeded in ensnaring many good ones with it, convincing them that the "wars of Hashem" are the most despicable thing, for war is the opposite of peace and the opposite of *ahavas Yisroel*.

The *Kluginker* doesn't care that his customers are called "*chassid*," "*shliach*," "*ohev yisroel*," or "*ish shalom*." Although normally, the

The heart of a chassid does not veer after the vanities of the world, and he is not enticed to sin. The yetzer ha'ra understood that the only way to catch the chassid in his net is to disguise himself as a chassid.

yetzer ha'ra is opposed to these things, he has *mesirus nefesh* – the main thing being to prevent the *Geula* at all costs. He reaches new heights for not only is there a "*chassidische nefesh ha'bahamis*," but even an "*ohev Yisroel!*"

And so goes it. At first the *Kluginker* rushes to his regular

customers, and incites them to do everything forbidden. From there he rushes to the *chassidim* and *shluchim* who are not prepared to listen to him and convinces them: at least don't interfere and don't protest and go with the flow, because you need to have *ahavas Yisroel*, especially now when you need to beware of *machlokes* like you beware of fire!

Now we can really understand the one who gave the Satan the distinguished title of "*Kluginker*" because he really is as clever as a fox, a great *chacham*, who succeeds in trapping many good ones in his net.

* * *

May the fox immediately leave the Holy of Holies, and "may a spirit from Above pour forth over them." After all, we are all the sons of one father, and may we greet the *meshaleiach*, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach *shlita* at the real *kinus* of all the Jewish people with the *shluchim* leading the way, *teikef u'miyad mamash*.

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach Lolam Va'ed!



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DUTCH SHLICHUS

BY C. NUSSBAUM



Across the sea in the city of Utrecht, Holland, lives a couple and their ten children, on shlichus. Mrs. Bracha Heintz shares with readers of Beis Moshiach, details of life far from any center of Yiddishkeit, of her children who leave home so young, as well as the challenges and successes.

Holland is a European country known for its decadence. Coldness and alienation are prevalent. Rabbi Aryeh Leib and Bracha Heintz live in Utrecht, with their ten children. In this city, far from any Jewish center, the Heintz family battles to preserve the little bit of light that remains. This *shlichus* is quite a challenge.

Mrs. Heintz herself was born in Holland. Her father came from Hamburg, Germany, which he fled in 5693 (1933) after the Nazis rose to power. After the war, he married a Jewish girl in Holland and raised a traditional family.

“My parents sent me to Jewish classes once a week, which were organized by the local *k'hilla*. They were given by Rabbi Binyamin Jacobs, a *shliach* in Holland. The classes were interesting and I had many questions,

which he answered convincingly. He later invited me to visit on Shabbos.”

Bracha quickly adopted a religious life and went to Beis Rivka in Paris. After marrying her husband, Aryeh Leib, they lived in New York, where he learned for two and a half years. They were on *shlichus* for a few years in Albany, and fifteen years ago, they left America for Holland. The Chabad *rabbanim* in Holland recommended that they go on *shlichus* to Utrecht, and they have been there ever since.

How many Jews live in Holland?

40,000 Jews live in Holland, only 1000 of whom reside in Utrecht. Most of the Jews live in Amsterdam or Amstulfan. Before the Holocaust wiped out the Jewish community of Holland there were about 100,000 Jews living in Amsterdam alone! Unfortunately the Jews in Holland are very far from

Yiddishkeit. Most Jews in Holland had assimilated even before the war, not to mention after the war. Interestingly the Dutch language includes a few Hebrew words, like *mazal*, *meshuga*, *maaseir*. They were absorbed into the language because there were so many Jews living there.

After the war only a few returned, those who managed to survive the horrors. Those who, despite everything, wanted to live true Jewish lives, moved to Eretz Yisroel. Those who live in Holland today are Jews who were born during the war or following the war. There are also quite a few Israelis who emigrated here, as they have to many places around the world.

How often do you have a minyan in Utrecht?

“Once a week, on Shabbos.”

Obviously, the spiritual situation in Utrecht leaves the *shluchim* a lot to do. Mrs. Heintz’s work covers a wide spectrum of activities:

“I teach Judaism to children ages 4-6 every Sunday while my husband teaches the older children. We also have classes for adults. I’m in charge of arranging *mesibos* for children and adults. Every time there’s a *Kiddush* I bake the cakes for *shul*. I’m also responsible for the *mikva* even though we don’t have too many people who

are interested, due to the assimilation.

All that in addition to being Mommy to ten children. The *chinuch* of our children is the most important *shlichus*.

How are you *mechanech* them in a place like Utrecht?

(sighs) It's hard. Four children left Holland. My oldest daughter finished seminary and works as a *shlucha* in the U.S. My son is in *yeshiva* and another daughter is in seminary now. The fourth is in Bais Yaakov of Antwerp. The rest of the children go to school in Amsterdam. They travel two and a half hours every day to get to school. No wonder they are exhausted when they return home. There aren't too many *chassidische* children in the school there, which definitely makes it harder for them.

When they come home they have hardly anybody to play with. During the long summers, they can't play with other children their age. This is why we sent our daughter to Antwerp, but this isn't easy either. Aside from missing each other, it's difficult for her socially since the girls there are reluctant to welcome a new girl in their group. Anyway, Moshiach is about to arrive and everything will work out.

I'm sure you don't have kosher food in your local supermarket!

We buy kosher food in Antwerp and sometimes in Paris. The *sh'chita* is Lubavitch *sh'chita*, of course. Until a year ago, there was a kosher bakery in Utrecht, but the woman's husband died and it closed. Now we have to buy bread in Amsterdam or bake it ourselves in our bread machine, which definitely makes an already busy day even more hectic.

* * *

Success is relative. Success in a city like Utrecht is also relative.

"If Jews here are still Jewish, that in itself is a big miracle. Naturally, everything that we have here is only in the *z'chus*

of the *kochos* of the *meshaleiach*, the Rebbe. The very fact that Jews here do more *mitzvos* than they used to do and are making progress in little ways towards a more Jewish life is a great miracle.

"There was a Jewish boy from Rotterdam who finished high school and went to Utrecht to attend the local university. He decided to visit our *shul*, where he met my husband, who invited him for Shabbos. He loved it, and began coming every Shabbos and became fully observant. The residents of a certain neighborhood in a city in Eretz Yisroel would not believe it if they knew that the *rav* of their neighborhood was that *bachur*.

"Another Jew, a Holocaust survivor who was born during the war and lived in Utrecht, grew up in an orphanage since his parents were left incapacitated after the war. A Jewish girl was in the orphanage as well, but he chose to ignore her. He ended up marrying a gentile woman, *r'l*, whom he came to despise in his heart, thus reflecting the battle that raged in his Jewish heart.

"On Rosh HaShana he came to *shul* for the first time. He became friendly with my husband and gradually became more and more involved in *Yiddishkeit*. Every Shabbos he walked for two hours to come to *shul*. He even started going to the *mikva* Erev Shabbos.

"When we made a Chanuka party for the children of the *k'hilla*, his children weren't invited. He was insulted, but he realized that they weren't invited because they aren't Jewish. Six months later he divorced his wife and decided to marry that same Jewish girl he had known in the orphanage. They are happily married and have built a beautiful Jewish home."

Do you have a message for your fellow *shluchos*?

"Yes. Despite all the jobs we have to do on *shlichus*, we cannot forget our first *shlichus*, which is to be *mekarev* our own children, today, more than ever.

We have to do our *shlichus* but not at the expense of our children. If we educate our children properly, and they are role models of happy, content, *chassidische* children, this gives our *mushpaim* far more than a lot of *shiurim*."

What are your plans for the future?

"Our plan is to do more each day than the day before. This is what *shlichus* is all about: hastening the *Geula* and the *hisgalus* of Melech HaMoshiach!"

"If we educate our children properly, and they are role models of happy, content, chassidische children, this gives our mushpaim far more than a lot of shiurim."



WHAT DOES THE REBBE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT PRISONER EXCHANGES?

BY SHAI GEFEN

The entire world is watching a country continue to abase itself, this time regarding the captives. The dilemma is certainly a tough one, with a captive Jew on the one hand (in addition to the bodies of three Jews), but the release of 400 terrorists and criminals on the other hand. We know from bitter experience that the Arab prisoners will go back to perpetrating acts of terror.

Israel has done this before in the Jibaril deal, when they released over 1000 terrorists in exchange for some captives. The results were disastrous. Most of them returned to doing terrorist acts and killing Jews.

Furthermore, if we look closely, we'll notice that the principle which guides our leaders is capitulation. There's no backbone, no red lines. It's all about pressure. One capitulation follows another. This sums up the political concessions that have been made: when temporary, imagined, pressure is what determines the most delicate and important issues.

This is what impelled our ignominious flight from Lebanon, the result of which is the Oslo War, which was initiated against us after Arafat learned from Nasrallah how to expel the Zionist enemy. Now he's doing the same thing while we capitulate to the pressure of the murderer from Lebanon.

The politics that are handling the captives issue fit well with the

politics of concessions that the Israeli government has used the past thirty years. Each time, the enemy degrades Israel more and more.

25 years ago, Israel released 76 terrorists, including murderers, to get back one Jewish captive, the soldier Amram Avrohom, who was returned to Eretz Yisroel a year after he fell into enemy hands in Lebanon. The Rebbe said a *sicha* that addressed this (BaMidbar 5739):

Another shocking thing that we see ... but it shows how far things have gone. There was a Jew who was being held captive, and they didn't want to free him (from enemy captivity) until they exchanged him for more than 70 of the enemy.

This took place at a time when the U.S. signed a similar agreement with the Soviet Union, with Russia, and exchanged 5 captives for two captives – yet here it was one for 70 plus.

It is true that *halachically* there is room to debate, since this is about the *pikuach nefesh* of a Jew, and if you have to give up quite a number then there's room to discuss what the *halacha* ought to be. But this incorporates another important issue, in that they openly said that since there's no other choice, and since he's a family man, they could not figure how many they needed to release from jail for him, and so they did it.

They asked him: but there were many occasions when they took hostages and the terrorists expected that so-and-so would be released, with equal numbers or double the number, but never seventy times the number! You yourselves announced that this is a principle of yours, not to submit to threats – with a reason offered, a reason that has both a *halachic* and a logical basis, and even a diplomatic basis (which is what they're building on now). Namely, that if they show the way, that threats will result in release [of prisoners] or anything else, this will stimulate them to run after hostages. Therefore there's no choice but to show them it won't help.

And they stuck to this principle for many years running, even though it led to the deaths of Jews, whose names are recorded, for these are open matters. However, now they suddenly had a change of heart, and in a shocking way, as said before, one in exchange for seventy! ...

Among the seventy plus nearly half were in jail not for inconsequential reasons. Even if it was for inconsequential reasons, they had maintained a position for years of not submitting to terrorist threats. In addition, nearly half (over 30) were involved in terrorist activity, to the point of actual terrorism and the loss of Jewish lives.

This is something that cannot be retracted! Over 70 are living in



freedom and in such a situation that, *r"l*, may it not happen, there's no reason why they shouldn't try again!

As said before, this is not solely a matter unto itself. We see an approach, *r"l*, they have adopted ... Those who threaten and pressure – there's nothing they won't do, *r"l*, proof being that there is no greater issue, no greater concession, no greater withdrawal than the fact that for years they insisted on this position, and *r"l*, they lost lives for this position, and suddenly they released over thirty!

This is part of the general approach, the approach that is the opposite of, "and I will lead you upright."

As I said at the previous *farbrengen*, when they spit, *r"l*, and he knows he has been spat in the face, he fools the other one into thinking it was "rains of blessing!" He tells him to say the "*HaTov V'HaMeitiv*" blessing – not an actual *bracha*, but the making of a *seuda* and wishing *mazal tov*, and dancing in the street and waving the flag, with everything associated with it.

In light of this, it's frightening to think that they voted to release 400 prisoners, among them, murderers with Jewish blood on their hands, in exchange for one captive citizen and three bodies. By doing this, Israel conveys a clear message to all terror organizations the world over: snatch Israeli hostages, and don't forget to present a bill so they know how much to pay.

When the government negotiates deals with lands and territories that are integral to the strategic security of the people of Israel, and concedes these possessions with the wave of a hand, in the end they deal in lives, thus putting all Jews, wherever they are, in danger.

CHEAP DEMAGOGUERY

The negotiations over captives, as we noted, is a consequence of the mindset that has become standard among Israelis. Prime Minister Sharon explained at a government session why we need to release hundreds of prisoners, saying it will save a man's life. This is the same reason they give us for why they want to shut down settlements or build fences. It's always couched in terms of saving lives.

Nobody has arisen yet to ask: It will likely save someone's life at the moment, but at the same time it opens the door to the murder of many more, along with the undermining of the security situation of all Israel!

Take for example the Left's wanting to clear out Netzarim or other *yishuvim*, which are in the midst of Arab settlements. They claim it's because of *pikuach nefesh*, but they intentionally ignore the immediate and long-term ramifications of those withdrawals. It always turns out that the terrorists' appetite for murder only grows as a result of evacuations, and the danger to life grows ever greater.

Experiments in the past thirty years have proven this point with every political agreement or withdrawal that was made. The agreement to have a UN buffer zone is what led to the Yom Kippur War. The Camp David Accords are what led Egypt to arming themselves to unprecedented levels. It's also why weapons are transferred to the arch-terrorist Arafat through the tunnels of Rafiach. The Oslo Accords turned the territories into cities of refuge for terrorists and turned Israel into a battleground. The Chevron, Wye, and second Camp David Accords

*"If they show the way, that threats will result in release [of prisoners] or anything else, this will stimulate them to run after hostages. Therefore there's no choice but to show them it won't help." * Nobody has arisen yet to ask: It will likely save someone's life at the moment, but at the same time it opens the door to the murder of many more, along with the undermining of the security situation of all Israel!*

led to the present war.

All those who justify the withdrawals and concessions have failed the test of results. The facts won't change even if they yell and the media will sing and dance while hiding the truth. Everybody knows that the various agreements to capitulate led Israel to the most dire of situations.

Now they add insult to injury and free terrorists, opening the door to future kidnappings (may Hashem have mercy).

THE CRY OF JEWISH PRISONERS

We Jews (including religious ones) like to ignore it. It's not appropriate to talk about it, but we would be remiss if we didn't cry their cry. A loud and bitter cry.

While murderers are set free and the murderers of an Israeli minister laugh all the way to Yericho, our security forces arrest a Jew for no reason, with no trial and no justice. It's euphemistically called "administrative detention." They couldn't care less about the family. The father is put behind bars while his cell-mates are the lowest types of criminals.

Noam Federman of Chevron has been treated like this for weeks now, while the country is preoccupied with the release of murderers. This maltreatment of a Jew, while they deal with the release of murderers, demands answers. What is with this rotten, corrupt government of ours?

They scare us by saying: who knows what Federman can do to affect public security. Yet they have no problem releasing hundreds of despicable murderers when everybody knows what these lowlives will do upon release.

The Torah commands us not to

stand by our brother's blood, even if the media calls him a rightwing fanatic. As Jews and brothers, we must work and cry out and turn to whoever might be able to help, so that they stop cruelly maltreating Jews whose only crime is that they live on the frontlines. It's hard to believe that Jews treat one another in this way, while treating our murderers with kid gloves.

On second thought, it is worse here than in Russia in its darkest days, for Russia brought to justice those who spoke against the government whereas here they are bringing a Jew to trial who spoke against our bitter enemies who massacre us mercilessly.

RUSSIA IS HERE

The case of Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburg started last week, and has led many Jews to having second thoughts about our justice system. While the justice system and prosecutors try to cover up crimes of policemen and public figures on the right side of the political map, when it comes to freedom of speech they do as they please. They are

very particular about freedom of speech when it comes to denouncing settlers and *chareidim*, which on more than one occasion led to incitement to murder and violence. But when the person in question is Rabbi Ginsburg, he is immediately accused of incitement to racism, because of a few sentences in a book of his about the lowliness of Arabs. Even the judge on the case, Noam Solberg, said at the opening session that this was an unusual case.

What should we say? Jews who were in Russia experienced trials such as this quite often. It was a way of life there. The Israeli government has been persecuting Rabbi Ginsburg for years. Eight years ago, they arrested him and put him under administrative detention, communist style, under orders from then Prime Minister Peres. Now, the prosecutors' office (the daily scandals coming out of there, demonstrate the moral level of those people) presents a case based on some phrases this *rav* wrote, naturally taking things out of context.

On second thought, it is worse here than in Russia in its darkest days, for Russia brought to justice those who spoke against the government whereas here they are bringing a Jew to trial who spoke against our bitter enemies who massacre us mercilessly.

When the Jewish people decline, they descend to the abyss. Even Soviet Russia didn't descend to such abysmal moral depths. Can you imagine Russia putting on trial someone who spoke against the Chechen rebels? Who would believe that a court case like this would take place in the democracy called Israel? At this rate, they'll arrest those who own a *siddur* which says, "You have chosen us from all the nations." Prepare for your trials!

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RABBI SHNEUR CHAIM GUTNICK, A”H

(Continued from last week.)

In another story which demonstrates the Rebbe’s spiritually attuned vision, Rabbi Zalman Serebryanski, an elder *chassid* once brought a girl to Rabbi Chaim Gutnick and asked him to convert her. She lived in Balaclava, and felt a strong attraction to

Judaism. Whenever she heard stories of the Holocaust, she was deeply touched. She had been reading and studying about Judaism for a long time, and now she wanted to convert.

Rabbi Gutnick was moved by her sincerity but he did not want to perform the conversion. The girl was still living at home with her non-Jewish parents. Would she be able to practice Judaism in her parents’ home? Would her interest continue as she matured into adulthood? Since he could not answer these questions, he decided to let time take its course. If the girl was still interested when she was older, she could convert then.

Rabbi Gutnick’s refusal to convert her made the girl so depressed that she had to be hospitalized. Reb Zalman continued to visit her from time to time.

Some weeks later he called Rabbi Gutnick, and described the girl’s condition and asked him whether he could change his mind because of the strength of her feelings.

Rabbi Gutnick answered that the reasons which had dissuaded him from performing the conversion were still valid, but he promised to write to the Rebbe describing the situation. If the Rebbe told him to convert her, he would certainly do so.

Reb Zalman told the girl that the Rebbe was being consulted, and her condition improved immediately.

Rabbi Gutnick did not receive an immediate reply to his letter. But at a later date, at the end of a reply to another issue, the Rebbe added: “What’s happening with the Jewish girl from Balaclava?”

Rabbi Gutnick was surprised. The girl and Reb Zalman had both made it clear that her family was Anglican!

He and Reb Zalman went to confront the girl’s mother. At first, she continued to insist that she was Anglican, but then she broke down and told her story. She had been raised in an Orthodox Jewish home in England. As a young girl, she had rebelled against her parents and abandoned Jewish life entirely, marrying a gentile and moving to Australia. She had not given Judaism a thought since. She loved her daughter, however, and would not oppose her if she wished to live a Jewish life.

Once the girl’s Jewishness was established, Rabbi Serebryanski and Rabbi Gutnick helped her feel at home in Melbourne’s Lubavitch community. She continued to make progress in her Jewish commitment, and today is a teacher in a Lubavitch school.

But Rabbi Gutnick still had a question: How did the Rebbe know she was Jewish? At his next *yechidus* (audience with the Rebbe) he mustered the *chutzpa* to ask.

The Rebbe replied that, at Reb Zalman’s urging, the girl had also written him a letter. “Such a letter,” the Rebbe declared, “could only have been written by a Jewish girl.”

* * *

In yet another story in which the Rebbe guided R’ Gutnick to save *Yiddishe neshamos*, Raquel E. HaSofer describes how her father grew up in

Alexandria, Egypt, an avowed Communist and atheist. In 1949, when he was expelled from Egypt for illegal political activities, he moved to Eretz Yisroel, became an officer in the army and met her mother. Together they became members of a non-religious *kibbutz*.

In 1954 they moved to Tasmania, Australia, where the small Jewish community was totally assimilated. The president of the community approached her father and said that since he was the only Jew in the community who knew Hebrew, would he please lead the services in the synagogue?

Her father was shocked and said, “Are you absolutely crazy? I am an atheist. I know nothing about religion or G-d, nor do I believe in any of it!” Nevertheless, to his own amazement, the community won him over, and he took on the job of leading the services.

Her father’s belief in Communism had already been severely shaken years before when it became clear to him that the Communist “show trials” in Czechoslovakia were a sham. As a result, he and her mother started looking into Judaism and their feelings towards G-dliness gradually grew. They began to be attracted to the Torah and *mitzvos* and wished to abide by at least some of them.

Her mother remembered some of the laws of Shabbat and *kashrus* from her parents’ home, so they kept whatever they could and thirsted for more. Yet this was not enough. Each day they prayed their own private prayers to G-d – that He should somehow send them some kind of information about Judaism.

Her mother, in particular, became

convinced that since every generation in Jewish history always had a leader, anointed by G-d, to lead the Jewish people, there must be a leader assigned to lead and help the Jews of this generation, too.

At that point she felt an urgency, and from the depth of her being cried out: "G-d, if there is a leader of this generation who has the absolute responsibility to help every Jew, then I demand of him, from this remote corner of the world, to reach out to us and help us, too!"

Soon after this, Rabbi Chaim Gutnick unexpectedly received a letter from the Rebbe, telling him to go to Tasmania. Although he had no idea why he was going, Rabbi Gutnick

organized a visit to Tasmania.

The moment he arrived in Tasmania, he was accosted by the Sofers who triumphantly announced to him: "Rabbi! You are the answer to our prayers! We have begged G-d to send us some information about how to be Jewish, and finally you are here. You must come to our house immediately and show us the ways of a Jew."

So Rabbi Gutnick helped them and came back the following year, too. The Rebbe had stretched out his hand to a small island in distant Australia to answer the call of two lone Jews.

* * *

R' Gutnick was offered a position

as *rav* in Adelaide and on 2 Kislev 5717 (1956) he wrote about it to the Rebbe. On Yud-Tes Kislev the Rebbe told him to take the job.

For certain reasons it didn't work out, and on Shvii Shel Pesach 5718 R' Gutnick was appointed *rav* of the Elwood Talmud Torah synagogue in Melbourne, where he served for 45 years. There, he embraced a community of Eastern European refugees, and spoke on behalf of a community who survived but lost almost everything in the process, including, in many cases, their faith. As he put it, "Even though I was married and well to do and beginning to build a family, when the call came from a congregation here in Melbourne, where most of its



members were survivors, I decided to throw everything overboard and to give my life and service to them.”

R' Gutnick was a *rav* and a superb orator who always injected humor into his speeches. In acknowledgment of his scholarship and devotion to his congregation, he was appointed in 5727 (1967) to be the President of the Orthodox Rabbinical Association of Australia and was awarded a Centenary Medal in recognition of his religious and spiritual work for the Jewish community.

As chaplain in the Australian army he did a great deal for the Jewish soldiers. He made sure they had kosher food, *tashmishei k'dusha*, etc. Every day he searched for more Jewish soldiers who hadn't requested kosher food and a synagogue, and he was *mekarev* them. Thanks to him, many soldiers strengthened their commitment to *mitzva* observance.

In more than six decades in Australia, R' Chaim Gutnick was able to connect with Jew and non-Jew, Holocaust survivors and Zionists, those whose Jewish spark was dormant and those whose faith – especially in the Lubavitch and Adas Israel communities – was unshakeable.

Rabbi Chaim Gutnick once told about a couple who came to him for marriage counseling. Among other pieces of advice he suggested they commit to some specifically Jewish practices, for example Shabbos meals. Frustrated by his old-fashioned viewpoint they dumped him and sought professional help.

A few weeks later he was at home and answered the door to find the couple carrying a bottle of wine and bouquet of flowers as a peace offering. Their explanation for their change in attitude: Their (highly-paid, thoroughly modern) therapist had recommended that they bring some warmth and caring back into the marriage. “Once a week, turn off the



Rabbi Chaim Gutnick (center)

TV, disconnect the phone and make a commitment to sit down together for a quiet, candle-lit dinner...”

R' Gutnick devoted his life and soul to the two events which he himself said, “shaped my thoughts and [have] been the impetus behind practically everything I've done in my lifetime”: the Holocaust and its survivors, and the State of Israel.

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

R' Gutnick was utterly devoted to the Chabad *mosdos* in his city as he himself testified in a letter to the Rebbe. When he visited the Rebbe, R' Gutnick enjoyed a special show of affection from him. For example, the Rebbe once invited him to stand on the platform dressed in his Australian army uniform during a Lag B'Omer parade. His *mekuravim* say that the Rebbe even paid for his first ticket from Australia to New York.

R' Gutnick received numerous letters and had many *yechidusin* in which he received many detailed

instructions from the Rebbe. In 5728 the Rebbe gave him 101 dollars to print the *Tanya* in Melbourne for the second time. When he wrote to the Rebbe that he was afraid to undertake Moshiach projects lest the Rebbe not approve, the Rebbe answered: “It has already been said about this: A judge can only decide based on what his eyes see.”

HIS PASSING

In recent years he headed the Machon HaSmicha which his son R' Yosef Yitzchok opened. In Sivan 5763 R' Gutnick announced his retirement from his position as *rav* in Elwood, surprising the community. His son, Mordechai, replaced him.

R' Gutnick's wife died in a car accident in New York over ten years ago, and he later remarried.

Over recent weeks R' Gutnick had been hospitalized on a number of occasions. He passed away on Motzaei Shabbos B'Reishis of a stroke, and is survived by four sons and two daughters.

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