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BEIS MOSHIACH

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MIRACLES WITHIN NATURE AND BEYOND

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS MIKEITZ; ZOS CHANUKA, 2ND OF TEIVES, 5750

1. This year, the unique aspect of Chanuka is that it contains two Shabbasos; both the first and the last day of the holiday fall on this holy day. These Shabbasos are special in that they possess a dimension that includes all the other days of Chanuka. In potential, all the days of the festival are included within the first day, as reflected by the fact that on this day the cruse of oil, which burned for eight days, was found. The eighth day contains the influence of all eight days as they have already been celebrated. This dimension receives greater emphasis according to our practice of lighting eight candles on the eighth day, each candle representing one of the days that has been celebrated.

Similarly, the Torah readings of these two days reflect their all-inclusive nature. The Torah reading of the first day of Chanuka describes the princes' decision to bring the sacrifices, thus containing the potential for all the further readings. The Torah reading of the final day describes the sum total of those sacrifices after they had been offered. The all-encompassing aspect of these two days is emphasized by the Midrash stating that it is considered as if "all the

princes offered their sacrifices on the first day" and as if they "all offered their sacrifices on the final day."

Since the first and final days of Chanuka include within themselves the entire holiday, the fact that they fall on Shabbos implies that there is a Shabbos-like quality to the entire festival. The lessons derived from this fact are generally relevant to the totality of our service of Torah and *mitzvos* throughout the year.

Our Sages state: What is Chanuka (i.e., in commemoration of which miracle was the holiday instituted)?...They searched and were able to find only one cruse with the seal of the High Priest. It contained enough to burn for only a single day. [Yet,] a miracle occurred with it and it burned for eight days.

The Beis Yosef asks: Since there was enough oil in the cruse for the *menora* to burn for a single day, the miracle lasted only for seven days. Why then is the holiday celebrated for eight days?

Among the resolutions offered is that the discovery of the oil was itself a miracle. Nevertheless, other commentaries object to this answer, explaining that the discovery of the oil cannot be compared to the miracle of the oil's burning. The latter miracle

transcended the laws of nature. In contrast, the discovery of the oil could be described as a natural occurrence. It was hidden, buried in the ground, and hence, overlooked by the Greeks. When, however, the Jews needed oil desperately, they searched carefully and found it.

Despite this objection, the resolution offered is not rejected. Accordingly, we must understand this sequence: Why is it that the miracle of the first day of Chanuka is one that took place within the natural order, whereas the following seven days saw a miracle that transcends nature? If G-d wanted the miracles of the holiday to transcend nature, the oil could have become available in a totally miraculous way (descending from heaven or the like). If He wanted the miracles to be within the laws of nature, He could have enabled the Jews to find an amount of pure oil sufficient to burn eight days.

This concept can be explained on the basis of the following story. Once during the imprisonment of the Alter Rebbe, before his redemption on Yud-Tes Kislev, he was being taken by ship from one prison to another. In the process of the journey, he asked the ship's captain to stop the ship so that he could recite the prayers connected

with the Sanctification of the Moon.

The captain refused to comply with the Alter Rebbe's request. The Alter Rebbe told him that if he continued to refuse, the ship would stop by itself, but the captain would not listen. Subsequently, the ship stopped and the Alter Rebbe recited the Psalm introducing this prayer. The Alter Rebbe then allowed the ship to continue and asked the captain to stop it. Realizing that he had no alternative, the captain agreed to stop the ship, and the Alter Rebbe recited the appropriate prayers.

A question can be asked that is similar to the question raised above regarding Chanuka: Since the Alter Rebbe was capable of having the ship stop through a miracle, why did he ask the captain to stop it? Furthermore, having performed the miracle, why did he recite only the introductory Psalm? Why did he allow the ship to continue only to ask the captain to stop it again?

The explanation for the above is that *mitzvos* must be performed within the context of the natural order and not through miracles which transcend that order. The preparation for the fulfillment of the *mitzvos* should also be carried out within the context of the natural order. Therefore, the Alter Rebbe wanted the captain to stop the ship on his own volition so that even the preparatory steps for the fulfillment of the *mitzva* would have been carried out in this manner. Even when he was forced to perform a miracle to stop the ship, he allowed it to proceed so that the captain would stop it on his own volition.

A similar concept can be explained in regard to the Chanuka miracles. The entire miracle of the *menora* was not absolutely necessary; according to Torah law, it was permissible to light the *menora* with impure oil, for when there is no alternative, the laws of ritual impurity are waived regarding communal offerings. The miracle was thus an expression of the dearness with which G-d holds the Jewish

people, allowing them to fulfill the *mitzvos* with pure oil for the rededication of the Temple after it had been recovered from the enemy.

Therefore, even when G-d performs a miracle to show the dearness with which He holds the Jewish people, He performs a miracle in a manner that allows the *mitzvos* to be fulfilled in the fullest manner, i.e., within the context of the natural order. That is why the oil did not descend from heaven and was found buried in the ground. Even when it continued to burn for eight days, which was an outright miracle, that miracle involved natural oil.

2. This principle relates to the totality of Torah and *mitzvos*, whose

Material wealth and affluence is granted to Jews to be used for the sake of spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward.

connection to Chanuka is emphasized by the expression, "the candle of *mitzva* and the Torah of light." G-d created nature in a manner that is appropriate for the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*.

To explain: It is written, "If you follow My statutes, observe My commandments, and fulfill them, I will provide you with rain in its season and the land will bear its crops." The Rambam interprets this and the other promises of material success in the Torah as follows: "[G-d] promised us in the Torah...that He would remove all factors preventing us from observing it...and provide us with all the benefits that will strengthen our

fulfillment of the Torah, e.g., plenty and peace, and an abundance of silver and gold, so that...we can be free to study wisdom and observe the *mitzvos*."

This passage indicates that the nature of the world itself facilitates the Jewish people's performance of Torah and *mitzvos*. This concept applies even in times when the world is characterized by darkness and concealment. Thus, even when "the wicked Greek kingdom rose up against Your people, Yisroel, to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will," and the Greeks entered the *Beis HaMikdash* itself and made the oil impure — i.e., the situation in the world appeared to oppose Torah and *mitzvos* — it was revealed that these negative aspects were only superficial. The Chashmonaim conquered the Greeks, negating all conflicting influences. Furthermore, the miracle of the oil openly revealed how the very nature of the world allows for the performance of Torah and *mitzvos*, since, as explained above, the oil was found in a natural manner and even continued to burn in a manner which did not alter its basic nature.

The association of this lesson with Chanuka teaches a further concept. As mentioned above, it was not absolutely necessary to kindle the *menora* with pure oil. Thus, the use of such oil can be considered a *hiddur mitzva*, the fulfillment of the *mitzva* in the most complete and perfect fashion. Thus, we see that the natural order permits even this level of fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos*.

This does not apply only to a person who is on a high rung of Torah observance. Chanuka is associated with the word *chinuch* (education). This implies that even one who is at the initial stages of the service of G-d, merely being educated, still has the potential not only to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* according to the law's minimum requirements, but even to

reach the level of *hiddur mitzva*.

The above relates to our service in Exile. Despite the darkness of exile, G-d gives every Jew the opportunity to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* in a manner of *hiddur*. What is more, the nature of the world leads toward this goal. G-d grants every Jew all that he requires in the realms of children, health, and earning a livelihood so that he can fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* in a state of both spiritual and physical composure.

3. The above also relates to the Messianic age, when we will have the opportunity of fulfilling Torah and *mitzvos* in a complete fashion. At present, because we are in exile and living in the Diaspora, there are many *mitzvos* that cannot be fulfilled. These circumstances, however, do not contradict the principle that the nature of the world is structured in a manner that enables a Jew to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* easily.

Exile is an abnormal situation for the world and for the Jewish people. The world was created “for the sake of Yisroel and for the sake of the Torah,” i.e., to enable the Jews to fulfill all 613 *mitzvos*. “Because of our sins” — acts that run contrary to a Jew’s very nature (as the Rambam states, each Jew, “desires to be part of Yisroel...to observe all the *mitzvos* and separate himself from all the transgressions”) — “we were exiled from our land.”

This change in nature on the part of the Jewish people effects a change in the nature of the world at large. Temporarily, rather than fulfill the *mitzvos* that revolve around *Eretz Yisroel* and the *Beis HaMikdash* in actual deed, it is sufficient that “We will render [the prayers of] our lips in place of [sacrificial] cattle.” Through prayer and study, we can compensate for our inability to perform these *mitzvos*. This compensation fulfills our obligations in regard to these *mitzvos* in the fullest manner possible.

The miracle of Chanuka, however, teaches a further concept — that ultimately, the nature of the world will

be elevated to a level of perfection in the Messianic age. To explain:

Rashi states that the portion of the Torah describing the *menora* was placed next to the portion describing the princes’ sacrifices (as was read in today’s Torah reading) because: When Aharon saw the dedication [of the altar] by the princes, he was shaken that neither he nor his tribe were included....The Holy One, blessed be He, told him, “Rest assured. Your portion is greater. You will light...the candles.”

The Midrash explains that the kindling of the *menora* is on a higher level than the sacrifices because the sacrifices will be offered only during the time the *Beis HaMikdash* is

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business.*

standing, while the candles will always light up the *menora*.

The Ramban questions the latter statement, noting that, in a simple sense, the kindling of the *menora* is — like the sacrifices — dependent on the existence of the *Beis HaMikdash*. When there is no *Beis HaMikdash*, the *menora* also may not be kindled. Accordingly, he explains that the Midrash is alluding to the candles of Chanuka, which are kindled even in the time of exile.

Furthermore, the candles of Chanuka do more than compensate for the kindling of the *menora* in the *Beis HaMikdash*, as “[the prayers] of our lips” compensate for the sacrifices; they allude to and reflect the kindling

of the *menora* which will take place in the Messianic age. Our Sages associate the number eight — the number of candles lit for Chanuka — with the Messianic age. In that era, we will kindle the *menora* in the *Beis HaMikdash* in a manner which will never be nullified.

Thus, the miracle of Chanuka — a miracle of eight days — reflects how, and contains the potential for, the era when the world will be elevated to its ultimate level of perfection in the Messianic age. At present, the natural order is represented by the number seven, reflecting the seven days of creation. In the Messianic age, the nature of the world will be lifted to a higher level, eight, which is symbolized by the Chanuka festival.

The effect of the Chanuka miracle is to elevate the nature of the world to the level of perfection it will reach in the Messianic age. This is accomplished by “spreading the wellsprings of Torah” — the aspect of Torah related to oil — “outward.”

The latter service is required in the present age. The Arizal states that “in these later generations, it is permitted and it is a *mitzva* to reveal this wisdom (the teachings of *P’nimius HaTorah*).” This certainly applies to the revelation of the teachings of Chassidus by the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, and the revelation of Chabad Chassidus by the Alter Rebbe, particularly after the redemption of Yud-Tes Kislev. It also surely applies to the Rebbeim who followed him, including the Rebbe Rayatz, who declared that the “spreading of the wellsprings outward” is the “obligation of the moment” in the present age.

Conversely, the service of “spreading the wellsprings outward” will bring the coming of Moshiach. The “spreading of the wellsprings outward” is itself a beginning and a reflection of the revelation of *P’nimius HaTorah* which will accompany the Messianic redemption.

These qualities are reflected in the

Chanuka lights, which we are commanded to place “at the entrance to our homes, facing outward” and shine “until the feet of the Tarmudites (representative of the quality of rebellion) disappear from the street;” i.e., they effect the lowest levels of existence and prepare them for the revelations of the Messianic age.

4. The preparation of the world for the Messianic era through the service of spreading the wellsprings outward shares a particular connection with the arrival of the Rebbe Rayatz in America. America is referred to as “the lower half of the world.” The Torah was given in “the upper half of the world.” Through the efforts of the Rebbe Rayatz after coming to America, the wellsprings of Torah were spread in such a manner that the entire world, even those portions in which “the Torah was not given,” becomes a fit receptacle for “the wellsprings of Torah.”

There is a further point to the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus in this country. In America, in contrast to the situation of the Jewish people in Eastern Europe, Jews live, by G-d’s grace, in affluence. Indeed, this situation has become accepted as natural to the extent that in all aspects — food, clothing, and accommodations — we have become accustomed not to be content with the minimum, but rather to expect comfort.

The reason G-d has granted such affluence is to facilitate the service of Torah and *mitzvos*, to allow for the fulfillment of *mitzvos b’hiddur* and the study of Torah with a broad-minded perspective, so that one can “know the G-d of your fathers and serve Him with a full heart.”

In the previous generations, the Chassidim were involved in the study of Chassidus and the spreading of the wellsprings outward, while living in a state of poverty. Thus, the Alter Rebbe writes, “It is not hidden from me the difficult times when your livelihood has become constrained...”

Nevertheless, he charged his Chassidim not to cut back their gifts to *tz’daka*. In the Mittlerer Rebbe’s time, the situation of the Chassidim was even more hard-pressed, to the extent that some of his Chassidic teachings were not printed in their entirety in a single cover. If they had been, the Chassidim would not have been able to purchase them. Despite these difficulties, Chassidus was revealed in a manner of “the broadening of the river.”

In these later years, beginning from the time the Rebbe Rayatz came to America, the study of Chassidus and the spreading of the wellsprings outward has been carried out amidst

...G-d, in turn, will surely shower him with all the wealth he needs. Indeed, this money already exists. All that is necessary is to go and get it.

affluence. As we draw closer to the coming of Moshiach, the wellsprings have become spread out to further frontiers than ever before. The affluence of our environment has enabled us to spread the wellsprings further and to do so with a broadminded perspective, which is also one of the new dimensions of service expressed by the Rebbe Rayatz.

This condition of affluence reveals how the world itself has become prepared for the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward. Thus, material wealth and affluence is granted to Jews to be used for the sake of spreading the wellsprings of

Chassidus outward.

The latter concept is also connected with the fact that the first and last days of Chanuka fall on the Shabbos. Shabbos is a day when “all your work is completed,” i.e., the work which involves the refinement and elevation of the nature of the world. Accordingly, the nature of the world is on a higher plane.

The influence of Chanuka — and its connection with Shabbos — has an effect on all the days that follow, elevating them to a higher level, a rung on which all matters associated with “the candle of *mitzva* and the light of Torah” can be fulfilled in the fullest degree possible. This will lead to Messianic age, “the era which is all Shabbos and rest for eternity.”

Added influence for all the above is granted this year, 5750, “A Year Of Miracles.” To summarize, these are days when each Jew should take on resolutions to increase his involvement with “the candle of *mitzva* and the light of Torah.” Specifically, he should study Chassidus in abundance, stealing from the time he would devote to his business. G-d, in turn, will surely shower him with all the wealth he needs. Indeed, this money already exists. All that is necessary is to go and get it.

In this context, it is worthy to hold a *farbrengen* after the *Mincha* prayers and another one at night, as a *Melaveh Malka*, to influence people to accept good resolutions in regard to the study of *P’nimius HaTorah*, the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward, and all other matters of Torah and *mitzvos*. Also, at this time, it is worthy to mention that all those who have not fulfilled the custom of giving Chanuka gelt to the extent desired should compensate for this in the days that follow.

May all these activities hasten the coming of the time when we will dedicate the *menora* in the third *Beis HaMikdash*. May it be now, immediately!

...THEN YOU WILL SUCCEED

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



Let's state matters explicitly in the clearest and simplest manner possible, and "the simpler, the better." We are not talking about signs or lots, but about Jews who come with questions and requests for advice and *brachos* from the Rebbe MH" M *shlita*. It was always quite common and most elementary to turn to the Rebbe with questions on any subject, and not to move a muscle without his instructions. Furthermore, we have been ordered, as mentioned earlier, to do everything possible to connect more and more Jews to the Rebbe, to write to him and to ask him questions, especially regarding material matters. All this continues today in exactly the same fashion.

For this reason, we need not have any fear or reservations about the use of *Igros Kodesh* on everyday matters. We never had any such concerns over the years, and we were even instructed to engage the Rebbe himself, the Holy of Holies, in connection with our mundane affairs, and not to take any step without his advice and *bracha*.

There is a famous *chassidic* story about a simple Jew who was asked why he is traveling to Lubavitch to trouble the Rebbe with common

materialistic questions, such as "Should I sell the cow or not?" The *chassid* responded, "I am going in order to know what the Divine Will is – whether it is the Divine Will that I should sell the cow or not..."

In other words, a *chassid* does not travel to the Rebbe to ask him a question in order to use the Rebbe "to solve my little problems." On the contrary, since he wants that everything should be given over completely to G-dliness, completely to the Rebbe, he understands that he cannot do anything (including "to sell the cow") without asking the Rebbe.

Even if a person is not on such a level, and he thinks (primarily) about "the solution of his problems," we have been commanded with special emphasis "to pursue him" and to do everything possible that especially such a person will ask the Rebbe and do nothing without his advice and consent. It is clear and obvious that especially such a person is in need of *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe, and through the Rebbe's miraculous answers, he will connect to the Rebbe with ever-greater strength and fortitude.

In fact, especially during recent years, the Rebbe issued numerous

instructions on how "to solve problems" and remove all doubts even without a direct and explicit answer from the Rebbe, whether through "friends who understand," "a doctor acquaintance," "*askanim*," "an authoritative *rav*," etc. First and foremost, we must remember that even then, this was not to be interpreted as "it's possible to manage without the Rebbe," *ch*"v. Quite the opposite is true. The Rebbe emphasized on many occasions that even then this was the Rebbe's answer – it simply had to be channeled through "acquaintances" or "*askanim*," etc.

About twenty-five years ago, a *baal t'shuva* submitted a note to the Rebbe with various questions, and received an answer: Regarding the first matter, consult a *mashpia*. Regarding the second matter, speak to friends. Regarding the third matter, ask a rabbinical authority, etc. He then re-wrote the Rebbe, saying that he didn't understand anything or know anyone, the Rebbe is the best *rav*, *mashpia*, and friend that he has, and he fervently asks for a clear answer on his questions.

The Rebbe answered: "If so, *darf er fahlg*n (he must obey), and I hereby repeat the clear answer again:

Regarding the first matter, consult a *mashpia*. Regarding the second matter, speak to friends. Regarding the third matter, ask a rabbinical authority, etc.”

To another Jew who complained when he received a similar answer, the Rebbe responded, “What does he care that my answer passes through so-and-so?” In other words, the Rebbe wants (“for his reasons”) that his answer should pass through certain people. However, it is clear that from our point-of-view that we never do anything without the Rebbe’s instructions, whether as particular individuals or as *chassidim* in general, on how to act in certain circumstances.

There were *chassidim* who explained (as much as one can “explain” the Rebbe) that this was simply in accordance with the Rebbe’s general conduct in the latter years to demand that the *avoda* be done with more and more of our own efforts. Similarly, in more recent times, the Rebbe (usually) did not call upon *shluchim* with explicit instructions on where to go out on *shlichus* (as he had done in the early years). Instead, they were specifically expected to inquire and clarify repeatedly on their own, and only then, would they ask for the Rebbe’s instructions and his *bracha*.

The reason for this, as it were, is that at the conclusion and fulfillment of the “clarity of the lower [realm],” it is important that “the lower [realm] on its own” should understand, recognize, and conduct itself as is fitting, and not just due to “orders from above.” Similarly, in our discussion, the Rebbe also wants that things should come through proper contemplation and recognition on the part of “the lower [realm] on its own” – he should understand and feel what the Rebbe wants from him.

Chassidim never stopped asking the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* questions on all matters of concern – not even

after Gimmel Tammuz – and the Rebbe answers as only he understands and knows when to answer, to whom to answer, how to answer, who needs an explicit response, and who needs to understand things from a general answer.

It’s true that we shouldn’t ask nonsense, or as the Rebbe once said that *hiskashrus* doesn’t have to express itself in a question whether to sneeze to the right side or to the left... We’re talking here about the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach *shlita*, the Holy of Holies, and it’s quite obvious and clearly understood that we must ask questions with the utmost seriousness and responsibility, exactly as we did before Gimmel Tammuz. But it must also be clear that we are connected to the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* in every detail, and we do not make a move without the Rebbe’s advice and *bracha*. However, there are times that the Rebbe wants us to contemplate and understand on our own what he wants, or to consult with friends, *askanim*, a doctor, etc.

When the answer in *Igros Kodesh* is not sufficiently clear, even after a second look and deeper study, it stands to reason that the Rebbe does not want to give an explicit answer at this time. This is exactly as it was on many occasions before Gimmel Tammuz, when the Rebbe simply did not give an answer and all the “nudging” in the world would not help, because only the Rebbe himself decides when, how, and to whom to give an answer, and in what manner it will be received. It has been said that this usually proves to be true as specifically the simple people, who ask rather simple questions, have received answers from the Rebbe in the past and continue to receive such answers today in greater measure.

In any event, we must publicize this in every way possible, so that every Jew will know that “Israel is

First and foremost, we must remember that even then, this was not to be interpreted as “it’s possible to manage without the Rebbe,” ch”v. Quite the opposite is true. The Rebbe emphasized on many occasions that even then this was the Rebbe’s answer – it simply had to be channeled through “acquaintances” or “askanim,” etc.

not a widower,” *ch”v*. “There is a Rebbe in Israel” and “there is someone to ask,” and thus, we must not take any action without the advice and *bracha* of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*.

Quite simply, this is part of the “acceptance of his sovereignty” and the fulfillment of *hiskashrus* with him, as the Rebbe said in a *sicha*

from Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5751, “The appointment of Dovid Malka M’shicha has already taken place – as is written (Psalm 89, the Rebbe’s *perek T’hillim* of that year), ‘I have found Dovid, My servant, and have anointed him with holy oil,’ and all that is demanded is the acceptance of his sovereignty through the people and the revelation of *hiskashrus* between the king and people with the true and complete Redemption.”

While this matter is eternal, bearing relevance every day, every hour, and at every moment, it has a particularly unique emphasis, in accordance with the instructions of the Rebbe *shlita* in the weekly *D’var Malchus*, during the days of Chanuka, when there is a special need to publicize the miracles that are occurring in our times. This is especially true as we approach the day of Zos Chanuka, a day which not only signifies the conclusion and closing seal of Chanuka, as “everything goes after the sealing,” but is also a day when we have seen the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* reveal very special affection through a very special look – “*a kuk fun Moshiach*” – at the Chanuka lights that burned on Motzaei Zos Chanuka into the late hours of the night. The Rebbe also always wanted a special *shturem* in connection with this day and the Chanuka Campaign, together with instructions on producing photos, albums, etc., as the Rebbe noted with much emphasis that this day includes all the days of Chanuka, as we see from the burning of all eight lights together. There is, of course, also the fact that while *chassidim* celebrated on Rosh Chodesh Kislev in the aftermath of the events of Shmini Atzeres 5738, the Rebbe *shlita* himself held a special *seudas hodaas* that year on Motzaei Zos Chanuka with the distribution of “*kos shel bracha*.”

“And these days are remembered

and done,” as has been written in this column in past years (even if it is said that this is merely a feeling among *chassidim*) about the basis for what is meant in numerous places on the special connection between Chanuka and Sukkos (the number eight, the opinion of Beis Shammai that “it goes in descending order as with the bullocks of the holiday [of Sukkos], as is explained in *Torah Or.*) Thus, there is also a connection between Chanuka and the *Ushpizin*, with our Rebbeim as the “*chassidishe ushpizin*,” starting with the Baal Shem Tov and culminating with the Rebbe *shlita* MH”M, whose day is Motzaei Zos Chanuka, “*dem rebbin’s tahg*.”

In particular, according to what the Rebbe explained at the *seudas hodaas* in 5738, specifically due to the fact that there is not even a custom to increase in joy on Motzaei Zos Chanuka, this demonstrates that this is truly a most high and lofty concept, to the point that it is beyond description and limitation, even as a custom. This is because *S’firas HaMalchus* prevails specifically when the light has seemingly finished. Yet, it reaches there, and has an effect upon the lower realm itself. Subsequently, from the darkness itself, the call will burst forth, “Everything is G-dliness, and G-dliness is everything.”

We have seen on numerous occasions how the Rebbe *shlita* encouraged the singing of the congregation (at the conclusion of the melody of “*HaAderes V’HaEmuna*,” “*Al Nisecha*,” “*Shuva, Shuva, Hashem, Ad Masai*,” “*Lecha Dodi*,” etc.). The main encouragement and emphasis came especially at the end of the *niggun*, when it appeared that the melody had finished. Yet, specifically then, the final verse repeated itself over and over again, stronger and faster, teaching us that just when it appears that everything has finished, then the main emphasis of the matter begins.

At that time, the essence is revealed that is beyond all boundaries and limitations, and not restricted to any situation or circumstances. It is even found in those places where it appears with absolute certainty that it simply cannot be.

Therefore, specifically when we complete the luminous days of Chanuka, and enter the cold, dark, and gloomy days of Teives, the main concept of “the seventh generation” is fully expressed: to light even “candles of ice” so that “the darkness itself will illuminate.”

We then immediately proceed to the auspicious day of Hei Teives, the day of the “*pidyon shvuyim*” and release of the *s’farim* of our Rebbeim, which the Rebbe saw as the victory and approval from Above for the path and method of *chassidus* in “the seventh generation.”

When we go with the “cruse of oil sealed with the stamp of the *Kohen Gadol*,” when we go with the Rebbe, even when – and especially when – we neither understand nor feel what is happening, when we do not remain behind, on the level of “all who straggled behind you,” but move straight ahead without glancing right or left, as the Rebbe taught us “to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed,” when we go with the full and clear knowledge that G-d has sworn that “his candle shall never be extinguished” – an oath will certainly never change, *ch”v*, with the full and clear knowledge that the Rebbe *shlita* MH”M is leading the way, *chai v’kayam* forever and eternally, even when it appears as if “everything is over,” *ch”v*, then we will merit to see how even “the darkness itself will illuminate” before our very eyes, with the revelation of our King, our Moshiach *shlita*, at the true and complete Redemption, immediately – *mamash, NOW!*

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

CHASHMONAIM OF OUR TIMES

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM AND SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER



STORY #5
**“WE MUST WIN THE WAR
 AND CONQUER THE
 WORLD BEFORE MOSHIACH
 COMES”**

The 1930's were extremely difficult years for Lubavitchers in the Soviet Union. The largest Chabad concentration was in Leningrad where *chassidim* continued to *daven* together, to *farbrenge* and to observe a *chassidic* way of life. The authorities caught up with them and starting from Elul 5697 (1937) until the end of the winter, dozens of *chassidim* were arrested. Some of them died from the cold, torture, and beatings.

By the end of the winter, nearly the entire Chabad community in Leningrad was under arrest. This signaled the end of religious and *chassidic* life in Leningrad.

Two of the *chassidim* arrested were Rabbi Yitzchok Raskin, and the *mashpia* Rabbi Chonye Morosov who lived in his house. Rabbi Raskin's daughter, Mrs. Sarah Raskin, tells of their arrest:

“My father wasn't afraid of anyone. Although he was careful, he



knew they were watching everything that was going on at the house, but he continued doing his holy work. One day, a friend who had connections at the NKVD office told him the authorities were following him. ‘Itche, run while you can! They're following you and soon you'll be arrested.’ My father answered, ‘And if I run, what will happen with the school? What will happen with the *mikva*? What about the Jews who sleep at my house?’

“The harassment intensified and every day more *chassidim* were arrested. The feeling was that we would not be able to hold on for much longer. One day we had a *farbrengen* at our house and in a moment of inspiration and candidness my father exclaimed, ‘We must win the war and conquer the world before the coming of Moshiach. In the time of the Czars, during a war, they came to a fortress they had to conquer, but there was a moat around it and there was no time to build a bridge to cross it. What did the loyal soldiers of the Czar do? They began to jump into the water, one after the other, until the river was full of bodies and the Czar and his remaining soldiers were able to cross the moat and achieve victory. Surely, the victory belonged to *all* the soldiers, both dead and alive, but Hashem will help and we will be the soldiers that walk above. *Echaim!*’

“Thursday night, 2 Adar 5698, at one a.m., as dozens of guests were sound asleep, there were loud knocks at the door. We all knew who it was.

“The door burst open and we were told not to move. They went right over to R' Chonye Morosov, realizing that this was the man they had been searching for for some time. They sealed the door to his room and then searched the rest of our house. There was nothing they didn't touch. During all this time, my

*Every year as we watch the Chanuka lights, we tell of the Chashmonaim, who battled for the holiness and purity of our Torah. The Chashmonaim raised the torch of Jewish pride, in the face of insurmountable odds. * From then on and in every generation, brave “Chashmonaim” have arisen who have fought against our enemies. Despite the prevailing impurity, they have preserved Torah and m i t z v o s uncompromisingly and have managed to illuminate their surroundings with holy light. * We present to you eight stories about eight Chashmonaim who fought their enemies and won. * Part 2 of 2.*

father stood there calmly.

“As dawn broke they took my father and R’ Chonye and some other *chassidim* who had been staying in our house and left. At the last moment, my father turned around to us, his daughters, who trembled in fear, and in a calm but firm voice he

said, ‘Remember to go in the ways for which I am being arrested now!’

“They were never seen again. We found out later that dozens of other *chassidim*’s homes were raided that night, and *chassidim* were taken away. It was a well-planned operation.”

Years later the family learned that their father was judged hastily and was sentenced to death. In Nisan 5698 he was shot and killed in the NKVD cellar and was buried in a nearby cemetery. He was only 46 years old.

STORY #6 NIGHTTIME RESCUE

In the winter of 5707 (1947) the KGB got their hands on dozens of *chassidim* who were involved with the escape route out of Russia via Lvov. Miraculously they did not catch the Chein brothers: R’ Berke, R’ Avrohom Aharon, and R’ Dovid Leib. They continued living in Lvov and worked to support their families.

Despite the halt to the smuggling operation, the Soviet authorities didn’t move on to other pursuits, but made every effort to find the *chassidim* who were involved. The search was conducted at the same time as searches for other wanted men throughout the country.

One day, someone who visited R’ Dovid Leib was arrested, and after being interrogated he was sent to a labor camp. At a certain point, the KGB suspected that he had information about the organizers of the operation from Lvov and he was returned to KGB headquarters in Leningrad. They told him that they knew he had information about what had gone on in Lvov. He was interrogated for days and tortured, and he finally broke, revealing that R’ Dovid Leib’s house functioned as a center for operations and was the place where documents were forged. He also revealed the names of *chassidim* who lived or visited his house, such as his brothers, as well as R’ Mendel, and others.

The KGB was thrilled with the information and they set out to catch the traitors to the Motherland. Let’s listen to what R’ Dovid’s wife, Rivka, has to say about the arrest, though she only reveals a drop of her *mesirus nefesh* for others:

“In the middle of the night, four armed members of the KGB broke



into our home and began a search. They turned the house upside down. When they saw the *s’farim* on the shelves, they angrily threw them on the floor. When they calmed down, they began arranging the *s’farim* in a large sack they had brought with them. The sack was nearly full when my husband, R’ Dovid, noticed that one of the KGB

agents was holding a *Torah Ohr siddur* which he used every day and cherished. He asked him not to confiscate the *siddur*, and they deliberately threw the *siddur* on the ground and stomped on it. I couldn’t help but exclaim, ‘If you want, kill us! Shoot us with the weapons you have! But why must you torture my husband and degrade these holy books?’

“When they finished their search they took the documents they found, as well as the *s’farim*, along with my husband into their car and they left. I was distraught by his arrest, yet I thanked Hashem that my brother-in-law, Berke, had left the house beforehand. I suddenly realized that my brother-in-law was also in danger of immediate arrest. I left behind my little children, Yosef and Meir Simcha, and ran to my brother-in-law, Avrohom Aharon, to tell him that they were looking for him.

“When I got to his house I found my sister-in-law Minna, *a”h*, sobbing. She said that her husband was at a health spa in Georgia and he had sent a telegram that said he would be arriving by train the next day. The KGB had come to her house in the middle of the night and had found the telegram!

“While still crying, Minna said, ‘How can you think about others while your husband is arrested?’

“I didn’t have time to talk to her since I knew that other people were in danger. I began walking to the home of my brother-in-law, Berke,

who lived far from our house, in the suburbs. I had to cross a field of wheat in the middle of the night, but I wasn't afraid. I ran as fast as I could while wondering how I would get into his building when the entrance was locked for the night.

STORY #7 A MAN OF PRINCIPLE

The La Spezzaia sailed from Rome at the end of the summer of 5706 (1946). Despite the blue skies, soft, white clouds, and bright sunshine, the scene on the ship was evidence of a human tragedy of gigantic proportion. 1,014 people, who looked more like skeletons than human beings, were packed on the ship. These were Holocaust survivors, who with drawn faces and sad eyes, sat quietly. These were the lucky ones, the ones who survived Hitler's plans for extermination. All the rest remained behind.

There were no rooms on board. Everything was open, like the wounds that hadn't healed yet. Beds were scattered all over the ship, iron bunk-beds with two or even three levels, and each refugee brought his little bundle and slept on his bed, waiting for blessed sleep to overtake him and blot out the pain they had experienced and the horrors they had witnessed.

Two boys went to a bunk-bed at the end of the ship. Did we say boys? Actually, they looked closer to 70, but according to their passports, they were only 20. Tzvi Milevsky spoke first. "Dovid, do you want me to go on top, or will you?"

Dovid Shlomo Gershowitz didn't argue. "It makes no difference. If you want me to, I'll stay on the bottom and you go on top."

"When I got there I was happy to see that some drunks had lit a small fire, and while extinguishing it the door had been opened and had not been locked again. I quickly ran up the stairs and told Berke about the arrest. He didn't tarry, but took his *tallis* and *t'fillin*

Dovid put his small and shabby bundle on the wooden floor near the bed and tried to push it further under the bed, but something was blocking it.

"What's wrong Dovid?" asked Tzvi.

Instead of responding, Dovid bent over and looked under the bed. He slowly drew out a large and



heavy sack.

Tzvi was curious. "What can that be? Let's open it and take a look."

A thick rope firmly held the mouth of the sack closed. A knife from Dovid's pocket quickly took care of it. The two friends peered into the sack and their eyes popped in wonder. The sack was full of

with a little food and said he was leaving but he didn't know where he was going. I gave him all the money I had.

"It was only after I did all this that I allowed myself to return home, tired and broken, and to think about my own pain."

about one hundred gold watches in all styles and shapes.

Tzvi was the first to break the silence. "Dovid, we're rich!"

Dovid roused himself as if from a sweet dream and said, "What do you mean?"

Tzvi laughed. "Don't you understand? It looks like it belonged to someone who traveled on this ship and left it here. He might not be alive, or he may have lost all hope of recovering his belongings. You found it, Dovid, and it's yours!"

Something in Dovid's eyes told Tzvi that Dovid didn't see it that way.

"To take something that doesn't belong to me? How could I? I have to bring this to the captain and he'll know how to search for the owner."

Tzvi lost his patience and exclaimed, "What are you saying, Dovid!? We are penniless refugees, without a home, without family, and Hashem sent us this treasure so we can use it for good purposes. As soon as we arrive in Eretz Yisroel, you can build a home and will have a source of income. Why should you throw away what Hashem sent you?"

Tzvi will never forget Dovid's answer. Dovid stood up, and firmly said, "Tzvi, with Hashem there are no *chochmos*. When something is lost, you must return it. I don't want it and I couldn't possibly have benefit from something that I didn't work for."

STORY #8

THE FAILED SHIDDUCH

Rabbi Dovid Chein of Kfar Chabad related: My grandfather, Rabbi Meir Simcha Chein was a well-known Chassid. When he came of age to marry, his grandfather, R' Peretz, told him to go to Nevel and to find a bride there. My grandfather did as he was told and went to Nevel where he got engaged.

Grandfather was not a merchant nor a *rav*. He had gotten a large dowry from his father-in-law, and he didn't know what to do with his life. Should he go into business or be a *rav*? He went to Lubavitch where the Rebbe Maharash had passed away and neither of his sons, the Rashab and the Raza, had taken over.

He went to the Rashab and the Raza, each one separately, and asked their advice. One of them said he should be a merchant while the other one said he should be a *rav*. My grandfather was stuck and didn't know who to listen to. When he asked one of them to reconcile the conflicting answers, he was told, "I won't change my opinion and my brother won't change his opinion either, so do whatever you decide."

Here was a complicated situation, because he could not be a businessman, nor could he accept a rabbinic position since he didn't want to defy either brother. What did he do? He went back to Nevel and he used the dowry money to become a wholesaler of flour and flax. My grandmother stood in the store all day and did business with the retailers, while he sat in the *beis midrash*. When big merchants came to sell

merchandise, she would send them to the *beis midrash* and my grandfather would order and sign on the deal. Thus he was and wasn't a merchant, and he was and wasn't a *rav*.

He did this until the Revolution of 1917, after which the Communists confiscated all the wealth, leaving my grandparents with nothing but their house. My grandparents had ten children, seven daughters and three sons, and he raised them all in a fiery



chassidic atmosphere. Despite the wealth he had because of his business, he lived simply, without lavish furnishing in his home, etc.

His daughters once begged him to furnish the house, and he said, "When they come to my house for a *farbrengen* (they *farbrenge*d in his house day and night), and in the middle of

the *farbrengen* a Chassid like R' Shlomo der Geller gets up on the table and dances with his boots on and breaks the tabletop, the next morning the carpenter comes and fixes what he broke. If I buy a nice, new table and he breaks it, I will be upset and I don't want that...

The next story, about the *shidduch* for his oldest daughter Rochel Leah, gives you a glimpse into his *chassidic* character. When he looked for a *shidduch* for his oldest daughter, a *shadchan* suggested a *chassidische bachur* whose parents were well-to-do.

When it came time to make the *tenaim*, the *mechutanim* came to my grandfather's house, along with other *chassidim*, to celebrate the event. In the *tenaim* document, the *mechutanim* wrote that the couple's house would have armchairs and the floor would have a red carpet as wealthy people in Russia had in those days.

When my grandfather read the *tenaim* he asked the *mechutanim* to explain themselves. The *mechutan* happily said that these expenses would be covered by him. My grandfather said, "I'm not concerned about who's paying for it, but if this will be in my daughter's house, a Chassid won't be able to enter! No! I don't agree to such a *shidduch*."

The *mechutan* insisted that he wanted the young couple to live comfortably and the *mechutanim* got up and left. The almost-*kalla* began to cry, and one of the *chassidim* consoled her saying, "Don't cry. We'll eat the refreshments and say *l'chaim*, and Hashem will send you a better *shidduch* than this one."

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THE APPOINTED TIME

*Transcript of a public address delivered by the Rebbe MH" M, Shabbat Bo, 5751 (1991). On the same day the Rebbe delivered this address (and another one that followed it) twelve years ago, he asked that it not be publicized, for the events discussed therein had not yet come to pass. In the Rebbe's words: "Od Chazon LaMoed" [lit. "Yet another prophecy for the appointed time"]. Now the events have come to pass. * Transcribed from the Rebbe's oral address by Rabbi Yosef Yeshaya Braun (Sydney). * Released for publication by Rabbi Shmuel Man (Venetian Islands). * Free translation by Alexander Zushe Kohn.*

(Please note: This address was not edited for publication by the Rebbe.)

At first glance, [the concept of] "stability" seems to apply only to the Jewish people, who are bound to the Holy One blessed be He, and to the Torah – "This Torah shall never be substituted," i.e., it is permanent, immutable. The Sages tell us, however, that G-d "looked into the Torah and created the world." Hence, stability is drawn [from the Torah] to the rest of the world as well.

This is connected to the events that have transpired in very recent days. And the Sages have taught: "Although Man does not perceive [the spiritual dimension], his *mazel* [soul]

perceives." [Moreover, in this instance] there is no need for the perception of the *mazel* [because the facts are clear]: The most central place [in a country, empire, kingdom, etc.] is the capital, and [even more so], the capital of the capital – i.e., the king's palace. And although "*Sancheriv [king of Assyria], came and assimilated the world,*" this refers only to the people. That is, if witnesses come along and testify that so-and-so comes from a specific nation, the *Talmud* rules that we do not accept this as proof, because "*Sancheriv came and assimilated the world.*" Regarding the [names and locations of specific] lands, however, some of them *Sancheriv* mixed-up, others he did not

mix-up. Included in the latter group is Babylon, Yerushalayim's absolute antithesis.

This is why we have seen, very recently, that Babylon attempted to cause harm to Yerushalayim; it did not succeed, however, and "*misfortune shall not arise twice.*" Quite the contrary, we shall proceed from victory to victory, until the essential, true and inner victory, the true and complete Redemption.

As mentioned, "stability" is connected to the very recent events of the war's beginning. The king's palace has been decimated, and all stability has been uprooted. There is no longer any communication [between him and his country?], and no communication between him and the members of his army, for the communications have been severed at their source, and all stability has been uprooted. Those [objects of communication] still remaining have been removed from there in order to protect them from destruction.

He [Saddam Hussein] himself is no longer stable; he is moving about from place to place. And even in those places where he temporarily resides, he is like a wanderer, without stability, coming to these places against his will, and only because he knows that this is the only way he can continue to exist. He understands quite well that his situation is not good and that this is the only way he can survive. As for the members of his family – he has sent them to a very distant place. We see these things clearly. It is obvious, therefore, that there is no longer any substance to him; he is a non-entity.

Since instructions have been issued

[by the Israeli authorities, regarding what to do if he attacks Israel], people should behave as *though* there is substance [to him] and go through the motions of protecting themselves. In reality, however, there is no longer any substance to him, for as stated, his palace has been uprooted.

Indeed, they themselves admit this – it has been publicized. Despite the fact that there are various matters that they have not disclosed – i.e., all the devastation and destruction that has been wrought – nevertheless, *this* particular matter *has* been disclosed, and widely publicized. Though we cannot actually see all of these things, nevertheless, the information has been made available to certain individuals, who in turn, are publicizing it on a massive scale. The essential thing is that the Jewish people should derive instruction from all this in matters that pertain to their Divine service.

Also – and this is the main thing – the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning Basra has begun. The conquest of Basra, and the victory over Basra has begun. There will be complete and true victory, that is, the true and complete Redemption. Especially, since the capital, and the capital's capital – i.e., the king's palace – have been decimated. Moreover, the Sages tell us: "*Kingship on earth reflects kingship in Heaven.*" As such, the novel thing about this [war] is specifically the decimation of the palace, and the destruction brought upon Babylon, and in particular, within Basra, as publicized by the nations of the world.

This matter pertains to the Jewish people, because there is a lesson to be learned in our service of G-d. Namely, that we must display trust in G-d, especially in light of the fact that "*the eyes of Hashem your G-d are always upon it [i.e., the land of Israel].*" Hence, we must know this in all times and in all places, even in the time of exile, and within the doubled and redoubled darkness of exile – "*for all the Children of Israel there was light in their*

dwellings." "*Their dwellings*" in exile, refers to Goshen of Egypt. Although Goshen is "*of the best of the land,*" it is, nevertheless, in Egypt.

There is an opinion that Goshen is actually located within the land of Israel, with a strip of its land extending into Egypt. However, this opinion contradicts the teachings of the Talmud, as well as the plain meaning of the Scriptures. Also, this opinion ignores the fact that both the Red Sea and a very large expanse of land

Saddam Hussein is moving about from place to place ... He is like a wanderer, without stability, coming to these places against his will, and only because he knows that this is the only way he can continue to exist ... It is obvious that there is no longer any substance to him; he is a non-entity.

intervene between Israel and Egypt, as mentioned on previous occasions.

Another essential point: These events should lead to the true and complete Redemption, in a manner that does not leave any room for cute interpretations, but rather, in the literal sense. And the land of Israel should be complete both in the spiritual sense – which need not even be mentioned, for after all, Yerushalayim reflects perfect fear of Heaven – and in the physical sense, which will be the true novelty

here.

All of this should transpire in a manner that does not cause any anxiety – i.e., without war, and without hardship. Especially since today is Shabbos, which precludes any mundane or worrisome matters, transforming them instead into positive forces, so that we become anxious to take the silver and gold objects [of exile], as we did at the time of the Exodus of Egypt. Indeed the prophet says, "*As in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I [G-d] will show you wonders.*"

Also – and this is the main thing – "Yerushalayim is filled [i.e., rebuilt] from the ruins of Tyre." This reflects the idea of wholesomeness, wholesomeness of soul, and wholesomeness of body, and the two together, as souls within bodies, without any interruption [of life], and with Moshe and Aharon – who will assist in redeeming all the Jewish people from exile – joining us.

All of this is especially relevant today, for Shabbos is the day "*from which the six weekdays are blessed,*" especially the sixth day [Friday], the day G-d created the human being, the [recipient of the] ultimate revelation, the essential and true revelation. This pertains to every Jew, for as stated in Tractate Sanhedrin, which has special relevance to *halachic rulings*, Man was created singly in order to teach us that every individual Jew is required to come along and say, "The world was created for my sake" [i.e., "for the sake of my Divine service"], and to thus present himself as the master of the entire world. Indeed, he becomes the master of time, and the master over this lowest of worlds – "*His [G-d's] dwelling place in the lowest realms*" – and he causes everything to become good, with open, revealed good.

This is the essential thing: True and complete redemption, with our young and old, sons and daughters, in the holy city of Yerushalayim, on the holy mountain, in the Holy Temple – immediately!

STYLES OF THE REBBEIM

*Each Chabad Rebbe said maamarim in his unique style. * An overview of the styles of the Rebbeim. * From Shaarei Limud HaChassidus, edited by Rabbi Michael Golomb. * Most of the material is taken from talks of the Rebbe MH" M, who defined the styles of the Rebbeim. * In honor of Hei Teives, when we celebrate the victory of the s'farim, and renew our commitment to study their teachings, as per the Rebbe's instructions.*

One of the areas in which the unique approach of each *nasi* is expressed, is in his style of lecturing and explaining *chassidus*. The Sages say, "No two prophets, prophesize in the same style." By examining the style of a *maamer*, you can determine which of the Rebbeim said the *maamer* and you can also derive new teachings from changes in style from *nasi* to *nasi*.

(At the beginning of a *nesius*, it's possible that the influence of the previous *nasi* is still felt and the style will be similar. However, with time, the unique pathway of that *nasi* becomes progressively more revealed. As his leadership extends further, you see more of the new *nasi's* additions

and novel input (ascending in holiness). Though it is also possible that even at the beginning of a new *nesius* the new Rebbe will begin with his unique style (even when it's difficult for the *chassidim* to get used to the new style) since it is something critical for that particular *nasi*).

The following are some general points about the style of each *nasi*:

THE ALTER REBBE

We learn in a number of places that the *inyan* of the Alter Rebbe is the *s'fira* of *chochma*. This means that he revealed the level of *chochma* within *Toras chassidus Chabad* in the way of a seminal point, with relatively brief explanations. The Alter Rebbe's

chassidus is the foundation which includes all of *chassidus Chabad*, especially the *Tanya*, the Written Torah of Chassidus, upon which is based and which comprises all the explanations of *Toras ha'chassidus* (as per the dictum, "There is nothing [in the oral Torah] that is not hinted at in the [written] Torah) (see Zohar Vol. 3, 221a).

THE MITTELER REBBE

The Mitteler Rebbe *chassidus* is associated with the *s'fira* of *bina*, explaining and expanding on the point of *chochma*, the teachings of his father, the Alter Rebbe, at great length. After a long discussion in his *maamarim*, the Mitteler Rebbe often writes that all this is merely according to one perspective, for there is another explanation.

In the Mitteler Rebbe's *maamarim*, we also find the expression "*d'lo k'nal*" (not as explained previously), because due to the great flow of intellect, the mind goes ever deeper until it reaches the opposite reasoning.

The Mitteler Rebbe often writes (at the end of a topic) the abbreviation "*vd*" (this is enough for the discerning), which we don't find in the works of the other *n'siim* (except when quoting the Mitteler Rebbe verbatim). In fact, the appearance of this abbreviation in a *maamer* is an indication that the Mitteler Rebbe is its author.

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK

We also see great expansion with the Tzemach Tzedek, who compiled the *s'farim* and *maamarim* of those who preceded him (the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, and certainly the Alter Rebbe and the Mitteler Rebbe, whom he called "my teacher and father-in-law" or "my uncle, my father-in-law"). This is in addition to drawing upon all parts of the Pardes of Torah. Indeed, the Tzemach Tzedek's teachings include references from Mikra, Mishna, Gemara, Halacha, Midrash, Zohar, etc.

The especial contribution of the Tzemach Tzedek is regarding the *s'fira* of *daas* in connecting *nigleh* and *chassidus*. He compares and reconciles *inyanei chassidus* in the teachings of the Alter Rebbe, etc., with *nigleh* of Torah (whereas the innovation of the Mitteler Rebbe is in explaining and expanding on the points themselves, as said above).

The Tzemach Tzedek often writes, "vtz"i" (*vtzarich iyun*, it requires further analysis how to reconcile the matter), and then he explains how this is done.

(Even though we find the citing of *nigleh* in the *chassidus* of the Alter Rebbe (as alluded to by his name, "Shneur" – "shnei ohr," two lights, the light of *nigleh* and the light of *chassidus*), nevertheless it is rare in occurrence and used in a general way. In the Tzemach Tzedek's teachings the uniting of *nigleh* and *chassidus* is done regularly, and not only in a general way but in detail. We see that his teachings include *nigleh* and *chassidus*, in a way that is a mixture of Mikra, Mishna, Talmud, etc., thus resembling the

Rambam, who gathered from all parts of Torah.)

THE REBBE MAHARASH

We see similarities in the Rebbe Maharash's teachings to those of his father in that his teachings consist of all parts of Torah. The Rebbe Maharash's teachings are unique in that they are written simply (and briefly, for his time was very precious), and he brings numerous verses and sayings of the Sages and explains them in a way that even laymen can understand. This reflects his special quality (as in his aphorism of "*L'chat'chilla aribber*" and regarding his "*Baalshemske*" conduct, beyond the natural order). Namely, that all topics in *chassidus* (whether those explained in the teachings of the Rebbeim who preceded him, upon which his own teachings are based, or whether in the teachings of the Rebbeim who followed him, which are based on his teachings), even the deepest teachings, are explained in a way that even the simplest people can understand at least something of them.

One of the innovations in the Rebbe Maharash's *maamarim* is the *hemshech* (serialized discourses).

THE REBBE RASHAB

The style of the Rebbe Rashab is like the style of the Mitteler Rebbe, but it is unique in that in his *maamarim* the topics of *chassidus* are explained with greater breadth and depth and with intellectual understanding, far more than in the teachings of his predecessors. The understanding and explanation of *chassidus* – in a way that the study of *Toras ha'chassidus* is

understood like a topic in *nigleh* – was innovated by the Rebbe Rashab. His teachings also strongly emphasize the "*halacha*," or final conclusion of various topics discussed in *chassidus* (especially in Hemshech 5666 and 5672).

This is why the Rebbe Rashab is called (as the early *chassidim* called him) "the Rambam of Chassidus," for his especial contribution is similar to that of the Rambam in *Mishneh Torah*, where he clarifies the *halacha* in a highly organized manner. The Rebbe Rashab also explains things in a way of "established *halacha*, organized with an explanation of each topic in its proper place," and concludes with the bottom line in *avodas Hashem*.

The Rebbe Rashab's *maamarim* can be identified by the frequent use of the term, "etc.," unlike the works of the other Rebbeim.

THE REBBE RAYATZ

We find two extremes with the Rebbe Rayatz. On the one hand, he deals with simple people and he said very simple *maamarim*. One of his contributions is the translation of *chassidus* into "70 languages," starting with *maamarim* in Yiddish, which he wrote in a way that can be grasped by human intellect.

On the other hand, he wrote and published the deepest *chassidic* ideas, and he added explanations to the *maamarim* of his father (including the *maamarim* of Hemshech 5666 and 5672). In these deep *inyanim* we see in his style and explanations how he resembles the Mitteler Rebbe.

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FINDING THE WAY THROUGH THE DARKNESS

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

PART I

A small, old, wooden house stood on the side of the steep mountain as though hiding in its shadow. As far as the eye could see, were the majestic Carpathian Mountains. The Divine creation was visible in all its glory.

A young couple lived in this house, a couple who chose to flee the tumult of the city. They had married only a few months before, and now they were building their lives quietly and peacefully.

They called him Yisroel. In his childhood, he had been called

Yisroelik, and when he became the Rebbe of the Jewish people, he was called Rabbi Yisroel Baal Shem Tov. Despite his youth, his appearance and demeanor reflected profound wisdom and understanding. His eyes always radiated joy, and his face bespoke a deep tranquility.

His young wife Rochel was content, and this was despite the fact that she hardly ever saw her husband. Throughout the week, Yisroelik left home and walked through the forests that covered the Carpathian mountains. He would leave Sunday morning and return Friday afternoon,

before Shabbos. Rochel was happy because she knew her husband was an outstanding *tzaddik*, a scholar and holy man. Most people didn't know this. She knew, while her husband hid it from others, even from her brother, the great Rabbi Gershon of Kitov.

R' Gershon hadn't anticipated his sister's questionable choice of a *shidduch*. He had hoped she would marry an outstanding Torah scholar and G-d-fearing man, not some anonymous person who showed up at their home one day and showed him an engagement contract that their deceased father had signed.

After the couple met, the two agreed to marry. R' Gershon had no choice but to accept his sister's decision, but in order not to be ashamed, he sent the young couple far away. He was glad that they agreed so readily to fulfill his request, and didn't know this is what his new brother-in-law greatly desired in any case.

Yisroelik wandered in the mountains during the long hot summer and the snowy winter. He used a stout walking stick and had a small knapsack on his shoulder, which contained his *tallis* and *t'fillin*, a book or two, and a loaf of bread.

Rochel happily worked at various jobs to support them, while her husband attained ever higher levels in holiness.

PART II

It was the height of winter and snow fell and covered all in its white blanket. It was almost Chanuka, the holiday of light, joy, and warmth.

The week of Chanuka, Yisroelik went out, as he usually did, on Sunday. On his way out, he said to his wife, "With Hashem's help, I hope to return with nightfall of the first night of Chanuka in order to light the *menora*." His voice was soft and conciliatory. "But if, G-d forbid, I tarry and don't come till night, don't wait for me. Light the *menora* yourself so as not to delay this great *mitzva*."

He said goodbye and walked away from the house with measured steps. His wife followed him with her gaze and her heart told her that something would happen. In her heart, she prayed that Hashem would protect her husband.

The week passed quickly and it was evening. In a few minutes it would be nightfall and the first Chanuka light would be lit in all Jewish homes.

Yisroelik had set out to return home some time before. In previous days, he had gone quite far from home, but he knew the way back; the

roads and paths were well known to him.

The light of the joy of a *mitzva* illuminated his visage, even though his thoughts wandered off in hidden places. He hummed a tune as he walked.

His high boots sank deeply into the snow. The thick stick cleared the path before him. A fur hat, like the peasant farmers wore, was on his head. The bitter cold and the piercing mountain winds whipped his face. Snowflakes had started falling, making visibility and walking difficult.

The forest paths disappeared and the tangle of branches became ever thicker. Yisroelik glanced here and there. Darkness descended. This was the first time he did not find his way home. He discovered himself walking in circles, but he managed to maintain his *simcha* and trust in Hashem.

The hour grew late and the time for lighting the *menora* had long since passed. He so wanted to light the *menora* at the proper time. He knew that each year, at the time that the *menora* is lit, the "hidden light," the light of Moshiach, is revealed, but something stood in his way, some powerful spiritual force was obstructing him, as it were.

He grew tired and a strange heaviness took hold of him. He found it difficult to continue walking against the howling wind. He finally sat down on a rock that stood among the trees.

Yisroelik sat there, exhausted. Another two minutes went by and he fell asleep. The shrieking wind and the sound of the trees branches moving about seemed to be part of his dream. The darkness intensified and to his surprise it seemed to him that he could see a figure approaching.

The Baal Shem Tov took a good look and saw a figure in white, holding a large, wax candle, walking towards him. The figure came closer and he could see a tall, distinguished looking Jew with a white beard framing his

shining face.

"Who are you?" the Baal Shem Tov asked.

The man smiled good-naturedly and said, "I am Matisyahu the Kohen from Modiin, a Chashmonai."

The man's voice was soft and pleasant. A mighty blow suddenly sounded as a large branch crashed into another with great force. The Baal Shem Tov awoke to see the eminent man walking away. In another moment, he had disappeared into the fog.

Yisroelik quickly got up in order to follow the man with the candle. The flame danced on, the winds powerless to extinguish it. The Baal Shem Tov kept walking without knowing how much time had elapsed, until he finally began to recognize his surroundings. He noticed some familiar signs, roads that he had frequented. In another few minutes, he identified the paths that led to his house.

From a distance, he could see a tiny flame in the window of his house. A pure flame that had been kindled by his worried wife. Despite the severe cold, she stood in the doorway, outside the house, wrapped in her heavy coat and fur hat. She was relieved and overjoyed to see her husband finally approaching. It was long past midnight and she had worried, "Who knows what happened to him on this stormy night, in the darkness of the end of the month."

The Baal Shem Tov looked right and left, but there was no trace of the man who had led him home.

PART III

A few minutes later, the Baal Shem Tov was standing in front of his tin *menora*. He prepared the wicks, poured the oil, and with hidden, lofty, mystical intentions, he said the *brachos*. When he finished reciting the poetic songs that follow the lighting, dawn began to break over the snowy Carpathian Mountains.

THE TRUE HONOR OF LUBAVITCH



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

In connection with the auspicious day of Hei Teives, “*Didan Natzach*,” when it became revealed to all that “the father (the Rebbe) and the *s’farim* belong to the *chassidim*” (in the words of the righteous Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, of blessed memory, which bore considerable weight in the court’s decision on Hei Teives), I have chosen to bring out a number of *chassidic* feelings in the spirit of what *chassidim* are saying among themselves “in these days, at this time.” Many of these words may not find favor in the eyes of many Jews (among them very good and prominent Jews). However, if they believe that this is the truth, it is forbidden to hide it, and we must do everything possible to make it heard with the greatest sincerity and fortitude, and of course, to do so with *ahavas Yisroel* and *chassidic* brotherhood.

(The *mashpia*, R. Mendel Futterfas, of blessed memory, was accustomed to say that “*chassidim zainen keinmahl nisht ‘broigez*” (*chassidim* are never angry). A *chassid*, even if it appears to him that his friend has strayed off the path, does not speak about him behind his back. Rather he

specifically says what he thinks about him in his presence, saying *l’chaim* at a *chassidic farbrengen* with a “*chassidic kiss*” out of a sense of love and unity, saying, “My brother, please don’t be a fool, and please don’t stray from the path that is ours, yours as well as mine, perhaps even more than mine...”)

It was not our fathers that the Holy One, Blessed Be He redeemed on Hei Teives, He redeemed us, “those of us here today, all of us living.” We are not talking about some story that happened in the days of Antiochus, not about the slander of Avigdor in the days of the Alter Rebbe, nor even about the period of the Yevsektzia that imprisoned the Rebbe Rayatz over seventy years ago. We are talking about an event that occurred just a few years ago, when nearly all of us experienced the holy *sichos* and the situation that prevailed before and after “*Didan Natzach*.”

We have been commanded not to read this *Megilla* backwards, *ch”v*, not as something that only happened in the past, rather “these days are remembered and done” today, here and now. By contemplating what happened in

the past, we seek to learn a lesson that will teach us how to deal with our present situation.

One hundred years ago, in a *sicha* from Yud-Tes Kislev 5664, the Rebbe Rashab said the following (*Toras Shalom*, from p. 34, free translation):

Take heed and listen, Israel, this day you have become a people. Today marks the giving of *chassidus*, today is the Rebbe’s day of joy. Yud-Tes- Chaf Kislev is a holiday. *Chassidus* had already begun in 5538, and this [the imprisonment and the redemption of the Alter Rebbe] was in 5559, for only then did *chassidus* emerge victorious in judgment... Everyone agreed on *chassidus*. At the beginning, there was a denunciation of [the teaching of] *chassidus*, but afterwards, everyone agreed to it. This entire matter of the *kitrug* on the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov was a spiritual one. The Rebbe wrote this in a letter, and I have also written once that Yud-Tes Kislev is the Rosh HaShana of *chassidus*, etc...

Just as they wanted to “make them forget Your Torah and violate the precepts of Your Will” during

Chanuka, so too here. Except that there it was the Hellenists who wanted to make them forget, and here it was through a Jew, the *Samech Mem* who clothed himself in a Jew and carried out the matter through him. In this case, the dressing up of the *Samech Mem* was done through a Jew – Avigdor – in order to conduct the *kitrug*, etc. We should know that Avigdor was no simple person. He was a *rav*. And where was he a *rav*? Pinsk, where the holy *rav* of Berditchev had previously served as *rav*. From the holiness of the Berditchever *rav*, it is possible to understand the “the opposing power” of Avigdor, who was no simple individual, as “the opposing power” is always on a level corresponding to the level of holiness, etc.

As to the reason why this happened specifically through a Jew, it is written, “a shadow [the level of “*makif*” and “*chaya*”] they (the *klipos*) have, but a shadow of a shadow [“*makif d’makif*” and “*yechida*”], they don’t have,” as the *klipos* do not have the level of *yechida*. *Chassidus* is known to be specifically from the level of *yechida*, and therefore, it must clothe itself in a Jew, for a Jew has everything. Therefore, the *Samech Mem* dressed up in “the opposing power”... and it found Avigdor qualified for this, and the opposition was conducted through him. In any event, “after all was done,” *chassidus* emerged victorious, for everyone agreed that *chassidus* was the true teaching of the Baal Shem Tov.

This matter was mentioned briefly in the *D’var Malchus* from Parshas Mikeitz 5752, note 66 (*Seifer HaSichos* 5752, Vol. 1, p. 220): “Except that Chanuka was through a decree of the Greeks, whereas in the time of the Alter Rebbe, the decree was through a Jew who also had ‘a shadow of a

shadow,’ the level of *yechida*, and therefore, specifically through him, there could be the opposition to the revelation of the level of *yechida* in the Torah.”

In our generation, “the seventh generation,” as we approach the conclusion and culmination of the *avoda*, when we reach the purpose and objective of everything that was before, the drawing down of the *Sh’china* to the world, *chassidim* at the time of the court case over the *s’farim* said that for there to be such hiding and concealment of the revelation of the essence, of the drawing down of the *Sh’china* to the world, it was not even enough to have someone from a family of *chassidim*, who was born and raised by *chassidim*. Instead, there was a specific need for someone from “within” to hide and conceal this wondrous revelation ever so briefly.

As is known from what the Rebbe himself related at the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5745, several *chassidim* proposed that the entire affair not be aired publicly and to compromise on some form of monetary compensation to preserve the honor of Lubavitch. Certain *chassidim* were already prepared to cover the expense in order to spare the pain and anguish and finish the matter “for the good of everyone.” That Shabbos, the Rebbe cried out against this proposal from the depths of his heart: “They suggest that I should protect Lubavitch and the honor of Lubavitch. I know perfectly well what Lubavitch is and what is the honor of Lubavitch. I say with the utmost responsibility that in order that Lubavitch be as it should and that the honor of Lubavitch will be as it should, it is forbidden to make any compromise with them whatsoever, and it is forbidden to give them a *pruta*, *ch”v*, *ch”v*. Anyone who gives them even one *pruta* is waging war

All efforts to concentrate upon matters that are “acceptable to everyone,” and to continue to educate, learn, and live only according to how we taught, learned, and lived once upon a time – clearly have their source only in the one who first clothed himself in the Hellenists, and then in Avigdor, Nachmanson, and the “opposing side” in the “court case over the *s’farim*,” even if he is dressed in “*zeidene zupitze*” and speaks “in *di chassidishe shprach*” about Lubavitch and “the seventh generation” of long ago...

against my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe.”

There were those who suggested that while this was true, this was only from the spiritual aspect of the matter. However, from the material point of view, the reality was that there was no other possible way to save the *s'farim* and prevent the pain and anguish, except through compromise and monetary compensation. On this point, the Rebbe screamed, “Such talk is literally tantamount to heresy and *avoda zara!* Even idol worshippers believe in G-d, “they call him the G-d of all gods,” yet they say that He is “exalted above all nations and His glory is (only) upon the Heavens.” Whereas in relation to the physical world, they say “For He has left the world,” *ch”v*, to the stars and planets. In other words, they make a distinction between spirituality and materialism. How can a G-d-fearing Jew, no less a *chassid*, even consider such a distinction?! ...”

The Rebbe MH”M *shlita* was so adversely affected by this entire matter, as it were, that from the moment the court case began on Yud-Tes Kislev 5746, he stopped saying *maamarim* with their traditional *niggun*, except for two unexpected instances on the 13th of Nissan and Erev Shavuot 5749. In later years, the Rebbe even stopped saying the *maamarim* in the form of *sichos!*

(It was only in 5750, when the opposing side signed a waiver on all rights and demands in the case, that the Rebbe said, according to his secretaries, “*yetzt vet men kenen zahgn chassidus*” (now *chassidus* can be said). Yet, it has not been fulfilled to this day. In other words, the matter has apparently not reached its absolute conclusion, and there is seemingly some connection with the case of the

s'farim that are still stuck in Russia. The Rebbe himself made this connection in the *sichos* from Hei Teives and Shabbos Parshas VaYigash 5752, and even said that for this reason, the government in Russia is apparently beginning to collapse, as we see from the fact that it has moved its capital city, etc.)

This matter takes on an even greater meaning when we recall that the Rebbe officially accepted the leadership by saying a *maamer* (“*Basi L’Gani*” 5711), and suddenly, the Rebbe doesn’t say *maamarim*... In other words, there is a war and *kitrug* being conducted over the leadership of “the seventh generation”!

They think that it is the Rebbe’s desire to return to the old tried and tested methods of Lubavitch in the earlier years.

We can see to what extent this entire affair affected the Rebbe by the following statement that he made during that period: “It would have been appropriate, and at first I had hoped that the *chassidim* themselves would have handled this and spare me all the anguish. The truth of the matter is that the word ‘anguish’ does not adequately express the seriousness of the issue... This was something that was literally a matter of health!”

Then, on the auspicious day of Hei Teives 5747, when the federal court rendered its decision of “*Didan Natzach*” before the eyes of the entire world, the Rebbe gave an

unexpected *sicha* shortly after the news came, speaking at length about “you have not sent me here, but *Elokim*.” This means that when we see matters of *Elokim* (the attribute of justice), we must know that this is a *shlichus* from G-d to come to the recognition and feeling that “Yosef still lives,” and thus, “the spirit of Yaakov their father was revived.”

On the following Shabbos, the Rebbe proclaimed that Tuesday, Hei Teives, marked the beginning of a new era, in which nothing remains except “All of you stand ready for the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash with the true and complete Redemption.” The Rebbe added that we have to state the true reality according to Torah openly, even when people claim, “he was (actually) eulogized and embalmed.” There is no need to think about what the reaction will be, since the world is ready to accept this. For our part, we simply have to say it in words that come from the heart, and then the words will have their effect, gracefully and peacefully.

As we come closer to the final and absolute conclusion of the *avoda* of bringing the *Sh’china* “down to this world” with the true and complete Redemption, the *Samech Mem* uses all his efforts and strengths to disturb matters, as his end is drawing near with the fulfillment of the destiny of “And I will cause the spirit of impurity to pass from the world.”

On the other hand, since we are approaching the revelation of the essence of the Redemption, he won’t settle for

“*bad shluchim*,” who are already no match for this revelation. Therefore, he’ll have to be much craftier (and he’s not called “*der kluginker*” for nothing) and dress up

in much loftier matters of holiness.

At such a time, he sees that everything he did up until now was not enough, as even someone who was a *chassid* in the past can no longer conceal the revelation of the Rebbe's essence. Thus, he is left with no alternative other than to dress himself in ideals expressed by *chassidim* of "the seventh generation." These are Jews who study *chassidus*, especially the teachings of the Rebbe MH"M *shlita* in great depth with much consideration, contemplation, and excitement, serving G-d in the realm of *t'filla*, repairing their *middos*, intense involvement in the Rebbe *shlita's* Mitzva Campaigns with great strength, energy, and all the *shturem* that is required, fervent love and unity with all their fellow Jews to bring them closer to the *Oibershter*, and who are prepared to sacrifice literally everything for the Rebbe. Yet, they have one slight problem: the recent *shturem* in connection with the true and complete Redemption "does not find favor in their (*chassidishe*) eyes..."

It seems, however, that even on this matter, they sometimes have the best of intentions. It appears to them that all this *shturem* drives Jews away from *chassidus*, and thus, is detrimental to the "honor of Lubavitch" and the Rebbe, etc. Therefore, under the pretext of "*ofen ha'miskabel*" and "*keilim d'Tikkun*," the Rebbe's very words uttered as part of the campaign to spread the announcement of the Redemption, they think that it is the Rebbe's desire to prevent all such activities on this issue and to return to the old tried and tested methods of Lubavitch in the earlier years, as "*Lubavitch iz nisht aktiv*" (Lubavitch is no longer active). It has begun to seek newer objectives, proclamations, slogans, and has left the "*p'nimius*" of long ago.

As a result, there are even certain extremist elements (who were dressed first in the Hellenists, and then in Avigdor, Nachmanson, and the "opposing side" in the "court case over the *s'farim*") that claim that the *sichos* of 5751-5752 should be shelved, and not publicized, *r"l*. Those with a more moderate ideology say that while the *sichos* are indeed holy, we have no understanding whatsoever of

The Rebbe cried out from the depths of his heart: "They suggest that I should protect Lubavitch and the honor of Lubavitch. I know perfectly well what Lubavitch is and what is the honor of Lubavitch ... Anyone who gives them even one pruta is waging war against my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe."

their true meaning, and we see only the intensity of the *Galus*. Therefore, they almost never deal with these *sichos*, and certainly do not live with them. In practice, they try to bring Lubavitch back to the Lubavitch of long ago, or just to "the seventh generation" of long ago, before the new era that the Rebbe established in latter years.

(This is explained in the *kuntres* "*Becha Y'vareich Yisroel*," from the *sichos* of Chaf-Beis Shvat 5752, printed in the *D'var Malchus* of Parshas Yisro, where the Rebbe compares the innovation of this new era in recent years to the new era in connection with the leadership, which began on Yud-Yud-Alef Shvat 5710-5711. And as mentioned above, it was on Shabbos Parshas VaYigash 5747 that the Rebbe started to speak about this new era and time that began on Hei Teives!)

We know that the Rebbe has been fighting and "giving up his life" to bring Moshiach in the most revealed and actual sense. We know that we are now literally in the last waning moments of the exile, and it's just that for some totally inexplicable reason, we don't actually see the Redemption. We know that the Rebbe needs us, as it were, now in these times, as it arose in His Will that the situation requires the specific efforts of the lower realm. He pleads, asks, and demands of us, "Do everything in your ability...to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed," especially in a manner befitting "the new era of the leadership," according to the specific instructions, conduct, and demands of recent years.

All efforts to concentrate upon matters that are "acceptable to everyone," and to continue to educate, learn, and live only according to how we taught, learned, and lived once upon a time – clearly have their source only in the one who first clothed himself in the Hellenists, and then in Avigdor, Nachmanson, and the "opposing side" in the "court case over the *s'farim*," even if he is dressed in "*zeidene zupitze*" and speaks "*in di chassidische shprach*" (in the *chassidic* language) about Lubavitch and "the seventh

generation” of long ago.

It is impossible to escape from the Rebbe MH”M *shlita’s* ceaseless and heartfelt call to literally each and every one of us to bind ourselves in mind and spirit to the one remaining objective: “to greet *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* in actual deed.” Naturally, this is done simply through study and involvement in every last detail that occurred in the past. However, we must also be instilled with the subject of primary importance now: the Redemption and Melech HaMoshiach, particularly as elucidated in the *D’var Malchus* of 5751-5752, including the issue of the identity of Melech HaMoshiach, the acceptance of his sovereignty, and the fact that he is *chai v’kayam* in its simplest interpretation.

Without this, even if we learn, live, and involve ourselves with the highest possible matters, this is simply evading the only task that stands before us. All of us know what someone is called who deserts the battlefield, especially at the height of the campaign (“*di hechste tzeit*”), when the commander is fighting with all his strength, to the point of “giving up his life” for the final victory.

“*S’iz a zichere zach, az der Oibershter vet oisfirn un der Rebbe vet oisfirn*” (It is a certainty that G-d will fulfill completely His will and desire, and the Rebbe will fulfill completely his will and desire). However, in these final moments when G-d needs us, as it were, we must not sneak away from the battlefield! We must put our

shoulder to the wheel and unite in learning the teachings of our King, our Moshiach, particularly the *sichos* from 5751-5752 (“If only *Anash*, particularly the *T’mimim*, would be strict...”). We will live with Moshiach ourselves, we will spread the announcement of the Redemption and the Redeemer in every location and in every possible manner, and our physical eyes will behold the revelation of our King, our Moshiach, with the true and complete Redemption, immediately, *mamash*, now. Then, we will proclaim with joy and gladness of heart together with the whole world in a clear and resounding voice: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v’Rabbeinu melech HaMoshiach l’olam va’ed!*

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PLAYING DREIDEL

*Why do we play dreidel on Chanuka? What do the letters on the dreidel symbolize? What is the connection between the dreidel game and Moshiach? This and more in this fascinating article about the dreidel game. * Part 2 of 2*

The Nachalas Yaakov (*Ner Chadash*) writes in a similar vein, that it is brought in the name of the *kabbalists* that the name “*Gdshne-l*” has the power to chase away bad thoughts. He brings support for this by saying that he heard in the name of *kabbalists* that they found an acronym: *gei di sheigitz noch antloif* (go away you *goy*, run away). In order to hint to the youth that there is a name like this, through which all bad thoughts will dissipate, and in order that it be engraved in their memories, they make a game out of it and take a wooden square like a tower... This also alludes to the verse (30) “*magdil yeshuos malko, v’oseh chesed lim’shicho*” (He increases the salvations of His king, and does kindness to His anointed one [Moshiach]) – that during Chanuka the light of Moshiach shines forth, but afterwards it goes away, and so we spin the *dreidel* that looks like a tower (Heb. “*migdal*,” a play on the word “*magdil*”). This is to indicate

that it’s a time to ask Hashem to increase the salvations of His king and the kindnesses to His anointed one. Namely, to do *chesed* with Moshiach ben Dovid, who suffers because of our many sins. In order that it should be “*l’Dovid u’l’zaro ad olam*” (to David and his descendants, for all time) – that we merit the coming of Moshiach.

ALLUSIONS IN THE DREIDEL

The explanations in the *s’farim* of the students of the Baal Shem Tov are known – that the Chanuka miracle was a change in nature (31); Hashem changed the natural order of things and the Jewish people were victorious even though they were few against the many. In this spirit, the *Seifer Taamim* brings a reason for the *dreidel* game – that by nature the *dreidel* cannot stand on its own (without its being spun). This alludes to the overturning of the rules of nature so that the many

were vanquished by the few, and the weak overcame the strong, and the wicked were given into the hands of the Chashmonaim.

In *Taamei HaMinhagim* (32) it gives another reason for playing *dreidel* on Chanuka as opposed to the *gragger* on Purim, saying that on Chanuka the inspiration came from Above not from below, because the Jews did not do a proper *t’shuva*, and Hashem in His mercy saved us. Therefore the *dreidel* is held from the piece on top. On Purim they Jews fasted and wore sackcloth and there was an “arousal from below,” and therefore we hold the *gragger* from the handle underneath. (33)

The author of *Meir Einei Chachamim* writes: “The custom has spread that we spin the *dreidel*, upon which are written the letters: *Gimmel, Shin, Nun, Hei*. This alludes to the fact that the world is a revolving wheel, and each person, according to his ability and *avoda*, will merit according to his *avoda*, and will take his portion, or the opposite, *ch”v*, as it says ‘the *tzaddikim* will go in them, whereas the wicked, etc.’”

The *Shefa Chaim* (34) says that the reason for playing *dreidel* is that in the time of the Greeks, those who were not on the level of giving up their lives observed Mitzvos secretly. When they gathered on Shabbos or

for a *bris*, they would play in order to divert the Greeks. Thus the custom of playing is to show that this is not the way, and Chanuka is observed in order to show that we must be strong in doing all *mitzvos* in a public way, not hiding them.

In the *Seifer HaToda'a* (35) it says that the reason why Jewish children play *dreidel* is because they have money from the Chanuka gelt they receive from their parents. And since the lighting of the Menorah causes some *bittul Torah* (lack of Torah study) on the long Teives nights, we say to the children: Relax today and enjoy yourselves, as long as after Chanuka you'll buckle down to Torah and *mitzvos*. Even now, while you play, don't forget the miracles and wonders that Hashem did for us in His kindness, and we engrave their tops with the letters *Gimmel, Shin, Nun, Hei* (or in Eretz Yisroel with a *Pei* instead of the *Shin*). It is all in order to keep them focused on the miracle, even while they play.

*All you can do is
"turn a bit" and make
some effort and the
rest is up to Hashem.*

The *Shefa Chaim* (36) says that the *dreidel* game teaches trust in Hashem. This is because in this game nobody knows ahead of time whether they'll get a *Gimmel* and win everything, or a *Shin* and lose. The same is true in life – that nothing is in our control, and your cleverness won't help you. All you can do is "turn a bit" and make some effort and the rest is up to Hashem; all you can do is sit and wait to see how Hashem will make things happen.

Some see our unique history in the *dreidel*. Just as the *dreidel* spins on a point, falls over and rises again, so too the Jewish people in exile go from country to country

where they are degraded and where the gentiles even try to annihilate them, but after every fall we rise up again. (37)

**G'DOLEI YISROEL PLAY
DREIDEL**

Although in the *s'farim* that discuss the custom of playing *dreidel*, we find that it's children who play the game, we know that *g'dolei Yisroel* – especially *chassidic* luminaries, students of the Baal Shem Tov – would play *dreidel*. As it is brought in *Zichron Tov*, the Rebbe Yitzchok of Neshchiz would play *dreidel* with a boy who was raised in his home. The Rebbe of Komarna writes (23) that he saw, on a number of occasions in his youth, that his father would play *dreidel* on one of the days of Chanuka, and that was all, though he didn't know why.

Once, the Imrei Noam played *dreidel* with his son the Ateres Yehoshua, and each time the Imrei Noam would say, "Now I'll win," and he did. One time, the Ateres Yehoshua saw that he was about to win and he saw his father grow pale. He realized that the game was serious and he said, "Nu, Father should win." His father replied, "It's too late," and he passed away that year. (39)

**NUN-GIMMEL-HEI-PEI IS
THE GEMATRIA OF
"MENACHEM"**

The holy Ruzhiner Rebbe entered the courtyard on Zos Chanuka and found a group of *chassidim* playing *dreidel* and he said, "Play today, play *dreidel* today, because what you earned on the other days of Chanuka is not yet assured, but what you earn on Zos Chanuka is hard to lose and will remain with you."

* * *

We'll conclude by reiterating what the Nachalas Yaakov said on



the verse, “*magdil yeshuos malko, v’oseh chesed lim’shicho*” – that during Chanuka the light of Moshiach shines forth, but after Chanuka it disappears. Therefore, when we spin a *dreidel* that looks like a tower, that’s the time to ask Hashem to increase salvation and to do kindness with Moshiach ben Dovid who suffers for our many sins, so that it will be “for Dovid and his children forever.”

May we soon merit the complete revelation of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, whose name is “Menachem,” the *gematria* of *Nun-Gimmel-Hei-Pei* =138.

NOTES:

- 30) T’hilim 18:51
- 31) which is why there are eight days (a number that alludes to “higher than nature”), see Shaarei HaMoadim (Chanuka) p. 91
- 32) inyanei Chanuka, os 859, brought in the name of HaKarbon Ani
- 33) in Kuntrus Acharon (os 8) it says that this is the difference in the “v’al HaNissim” prayer said on Chanuka, “You fought their fight, You judged

WHAT THE REBBE SAID ABOUT THE DREIDEL GAME

“And he [Yaakov] sent Yehuda to Goshen” – the word “Goshna” in Hebrew contains the four letters that are on the *dreidel*. A Jewish custom is Torah, as was also seen in the homes of our Rebbeim, our leaders, and it’s known that there are a number of allusions regarding the *dreidel* and all its details as is explained in *Taamei HaMinhagim*.


(Seifer Hisvaaduyos 5747, vol. 2, p. 581)

“There is a Jewish custom to do special (Jewish) things on Chanuka that are connected with Jewish children. For example, giving Chanuka gelt, playing *dreidel*, and in some places, putting on plays that are about the story of Chanuka, dressing up like Chashmonaim, etc. The custom was that on one night of Chanuka, our Rebbeim and leaders would have a Chanuka party for the entire family, including the children, etc.

(Seifer Hisvaaduyos 5742, vol. 2, p. 545)

their judgment, You took their revenge,” and in the bracha that follows the reading of the Megilla it says, “Who fought our fight, Who judged our judgment, and Who took our revenge,” because on Purim the miracle came about through our prayers and fasting and there was an “arousal from below” and so it’s fitting to say “Who fought our fight,” but on Chanuka we don’t find an “arousal from below” at all, only Hashem Himself who helped the heroes who fought the Greeks and

- won, and so it says, “You fought their fight,” that Hashem Himself was the One Who fought the enemy – (Eizor Eliyahu L’Chanuka)
- 34) The Tzanz-Klausenberger Rebbe, Shefa Chaim, Yehi Ohr, inyan Seudas Chanuka, os 5, 5745
- 35) Chodesh Kislev p. 191 (5745 edition)
- 36) Yehi Ohr, ner 4, 5742, p. 52
- 37) Maagalei HaChaim (Moadim) p. 145
- 38) vol. 1, p. 18
- 39) Ner Yisroel, vol. 2, erech Chanuka



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GEULA ON THE CHAG HA'GEULA

BY SHAI GEFEN

CHAG HA'CHAGIM

The capture of our enemy in Iraq on Yud-Tes Kislev (8:30 p.m. on 19 Kislev, Iraqi time) has special significance, especially to us *chassidim* of the Rebbe MH"M, beyond the special significance of the date.

Chag HaChagim (holiday of all holidays), 19 Kislev, marks the triumph of *chassidus*, which is an inseparable part of the *Geula* process. The Rebbe made it clear that the work in Iraq and the downfall of Saddam Hussein are part of the process in which Moshiach is revealed, as in the famous quote from the Yalkut Shimoni. As such, there could not have been a more opportune time than the holiday celebrating the redemption of the first *nasi Chabad*, for the Sar of Bavel (Iraq) to fall. As it says in the Talmud, "Yerushalayim is only filled through the destruction of Tzor (Tyre)."

At the time the Rebbe spoke about it, it was clear that the capture of this enemy of the Jews was an essential component in the victory of the war. For example, there was the *yechidus* of 25 Nissan 5751, after the first Gulf War, when the Rebbe spoke about the fall of "Hassan Saddam." The Rebbe said:

"Starting from the one who oppressed the Jewish people, whose fall began on Purim of this year. Through the fact that it was specifically non-Jews who degraded him, and it was an additional instruction from the U.N. to Hassan Saddam, and certainly there will be a continuation in this

direction tonight or tomorrow morning, and may it be at the earliest possible opportunity."

In addition, there is what the Rebbe said which was deleted at the time, which was publicized at the beginning of Gulf War II. The Rebbe said this on the first Shabbos of the war back in 5751:

Lately we see that Hashem is destroying the Kingdom of Bavel [Iraq] as in, "zevach l'Hashem b'Botzra (a slaughter unto G-d in Basra)." [This is happening] in a way that they will no longer be established in their place as it was until now (as opposed to the rest of the nations who were dispersed [from their original homelands], ever since Sancheriv mixed things up in the world. This did not include Bavel itself, because being that it is the "opposing force" and the opposition to Yerushalayim, it remained in its place until now.) [And the downfall of Iraq is being brought about] by the nations of the world, destroying its capitol and the palace of the ruler. Indeed, the ruler himself is wandering from place to place, with no permanent position – to the point that they cut off the communications of the capitol city.

May the nations of the world continue with this, in ruin after ruin and destruction after destruction until the ultimate victory, including the twenty percent (or whatever percentage it is) that remain. And just as the fulfillment of the prophecy of the fall of Bavel has begun, so may it be completed until Bavel is completely

wiped out, and thereby, Yerushalayim will be filled from the destruction of Bavel (like Yerushalayim being filled from the destruction of Tzor), and it will be "and the kingdom will be G-d's."

And we *chassidim*, what's left for us to do is to intensify our anticipation and *emuna* in the revelation of the Rebbe MH"M. Just as all his prophecies were fulfilled in the most amazing way, so too, the main prophecy of "behold Moshiach comes," will be realized before our very eyes.

Specifically now, every Chabad Chassid ought to proudly spread the message that the Rebbe said at the Kinus HaShluchim of 5752 – that the only remaining *avoda* is *kabbalas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*.

UPROOTING JEWS FROM THEIR LAND

What a contrast! The world watches as the mortal blow descends upon the Iraqi enemy of the Jewish people, yet back in Israel the topic of the day is the destruction of a settlement. The announcements of P.M. Sharon and his government regarding the destruction of settlements and outposts are of great concern. It is nothing but a prize to the murderer Arafat and his gang for the terror they have been perpetrating. It makes no sense whatsoever. While the gentiles stomp on the head of the snake, we insist on resurrecting the Palestinian evil. A miserable decade in the annals of our history wasn't enough, so our leaders continue to seek out ways to make our lives even worse.



When they got indirect approval from the U.S. government to annihilate Arafat, they tarried and were nervous about doing so. Today the leaders of the state realize what a mistake that was, and we all continue to pay the price. We hope that our leaders here, after seeing how to properly deal with a terrorist threat in Iraq, without negotiating and making harmful announcements, will learn to do the same.

The quiet we've experienced these past weeks is not a quiet because of concessions, but a quiet that is really not quiet at all. The Arab appetite to intensify attacks has only increased since Olmert and Sharon's obscene remarks and the Geneva fiasco. It's only with G-d's help that terrorist attacks have been thwarted. Last week, terrorists who were about to perpetrate an attack were caught moments before they carried out their plans.

We also hope it's not too late to learn the lesson, and if they try to exert some pressure on us, we'll know to choose life over submitting to temporary pressure. We definitely have what to learn from the U.S., especially when it comes to security.

BECAUSE THEY SOLD THE TZADDIK

What took place last Friday at Kever Yosef HaTzaddik, when Jews tried to enter and were wounded, two critically, only shows the absurdity of the agreements that were signed with the one who is supposed to provide us with security. Even according to the Oslo Accords, Jews are supposed to have free access to Kever Yosef, but reality is quite different. Israel capitulated and allowed terrorists to win this battle. Not only is there not secure access to the Kever, but the Kever itself was demolished with nary a murmur from our government. If that wasn't enough, on that spot Israel abandoned one of its warriors, Madchout Yussuf.

Kever Yosef is the barometer of the terrible crime being perpetrated upon all of us. Abandoning soldiers, not standing by commitments, and allowing terror to win each time anew. So how surprising is it that we have deteriorated even further since we signed the Oslo Accords? The most absurd thing is that today, a government of the Right is continuing along these lines, more gung-ho than ever before.

The Rebbe made it clear that the work in Iraq and the downfall of Saddam Hussein are part of the process in which Moshiach is revealed, as in the famous quote from the Yalkut Shimoni.

A SEAT AT ANY COST

As those on the Right continue to be part of a government that has announced its plans to dismantle settlements at any price, they try to justify this position. Tourism Minister, Benny Alon has apparently noticed the hypocrisy and he has tried to explain how effective they are in influencing "from within" (a line that Mafdal used when they entered a government unconditionally).

Those who promised us Transfer for Arabs are now promoting Transfer for tens of thousands of their fellow Jews, and the dismantling of outposts. They have no shame and have announced that they won't leave their



Even at his daughter's *bas mitzva* celebration, Noam Federman was under heavy guard and in handcuffs

seats even if they throw Jews off their land. Who would have believed they would have sunk this low?

They brazenly lie and are ready to abandon their settler brothers, just as long as they don't lose their government seats. It reminds me of the bleak period in our history of the Judenrat, Jews who worked for the Nazis, though here it is being done willingly. No one is forcing them. It's just a matter of power.

Here is what the Rebbe said about such people on Shushan Purim 5734:

They certainly won't get the World to Come for that! And they won't even have This World, for they have so abased themselves. At first, they said they would absolutely not take part, but then – they joined the government! There are those who are confused and who wonder how it is possible that after they yelled that they wouldn't be part of the government, they're part of it anyhow!

The truth is, it's not at all surprising, since when you examine their actions you see that they never truly planned on leaving the government, for if they had truly planned that, they would have left the government (the transition government) immediately, when they came to this conclusion. They wouldn't have waited two weeks for a new government, for this isn't a matter that's prohibited to do later on, but every single moment it's prohibited to remain in a government like this. Therefore, as soon as they came to this conclusion they should have said: Until now we didn't know that it was prohibited to be in such a government, and that we must leave it. And now that we came to this conclusion and we know that it's prohibited to remain in a government like this, we must leave it immediately, and therefore we are going to leave (the transition government) ...

How can you put trust into and rely upon someone who is ready to sell everything for a seat? Although it is true that he doesn't do it on his own,

rather, he's following orders, outwardly it looks as though he is responsible, and when there are complaints they go to him! And so how can he be relied upon, and how can he be given a position when everybody sees he's ready to give everything for a seat?

... and the claim that due to the security situation on the Syrian border they have no choice and they must enter the government – this is no excuse since they cannot help in any case since nobody cares what they say; they are not told anything and they are not invited to meetings. When the religious make a suggestion they are spat on, and as usual, the religious don't treat it as such but regard it as "rains of blessing." The same thing happens with every suggestion they make – it's ignored, to the point that they are considered (and are even referred to as such in the papers) "second class citizens!" The truth is that this is a euphemism, because they are far worse than this. Actually, they should be called "Canaanite servants of the third class."

Their claim that they were promised for entering the government – that Yehuda and Shomron wouldn't be returned (without a referendum) – is nothing, since they already planned on returning part of Yehuda and Shomron, it's just that it's possible they haven't "yet" told the religious representatives.

When they entered the government, a certain *rav* called the day they entered a "black day," but the truth is that it's only black for them, but for everybody else it's the opposite, it's light. By entering the government, matters were clarified and everybody could see what they are: men full of lies.

It's a great pity on them since they cause the exile to last longer! What's clear is that the *is'chalta d'Geula* certainly didn't begin, and that they claim that the fact that a Jew who puts on *t'fillin* is a Minister too is the *is'chalta d'Geula*; it's just the opposite. He uses the *t'fillin* to sell out Judaism

and to do things that are the opposite of sustaining Judaism, *r"l*.

By their entering the government it became clear (that aside from the fact that they're liars, also) that now we can't say that this is the *is'chalta d'Geula*, but an intensification of the darkness and of exile!"

Let the leaders of the Ichud HaLeumi and Mafdal take note.

IT'S NOT TIME TO BE SILENT

Two interesting things happened last week that are connected:

The government's Legal Advisor asked for an investigation into the statements of the *rabbanim* of Pikuach Nefesh for speaking out against the treasonous acts of giving away parts of the Jewish homeland. He called it possible "incitement," which would seemingly require an investigation. Suddenly he forgot all the high flung ideas of Freedom of Speech, ideas which the Left has been touting for years, and under these words they have been inciting people to murder settlers and *chareidim*, but the Legal Advisor always judges them leniently and prefers allowing them the freedom to speak. Yet here, when *rabbanim* quote the *D'var Hashem Zu Halacha*, he considers it possible incitement!

Something even more serious: for over a year and a half they have been persecuting a fine young man, Noam Federman. Everybody who knows him testifies to his fineness. His only concern is for his fellow Jews, and he has helped many Jews with legal woes. But the Jewish section of the Shin Bet decided to put him under extended house arrest, and in recent months he's been in administrative detention.

He's the only Jewish citizen in the State of Israel who is punished like this without a trial and without being told what accusations are held against him and without the ability to defend himself!

Members of the Shin Bet burst into the middle of a legal session in the Supreme Court, and removed

Federman and put him in a damp cell in prison. Reminiscent of the NKVD in the 40's and 50's under Stalin.

The Shin Bet hasn't managed to convince anyone that this is a dangerous criminal. Federman is certainly a bitter enemy of the dictatorial government of the Left, and what can you do when he's gifted with a lightening quick legal mind? This is

definitely a serious crime, similar to the crimes for which many intellectuals were sent off to Siberia by the Communists.

Silence is all we hear from the enlightened Left, whose concern is solely for the enemy, and from the newspapers who are usually not reticent. The silence on the part of the Legal

Advisor is more than surprising.

Every G-d-fearing Jew ought to stand by Noam Federman and to loudly protest his Bolshevik-style incarceration, and demand his speedy release. This is in the category of a Torah prohibition, "do not stand by your brother's blood."

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COUNCIL LEADER OF ABU GUSH SIGNS SHEVA MITZVOS B'NEI NOACH PROCLAMATION

In the presence of dignitaries, Mr. Gever Salim, Arab Council leader of Abu Gush, signed a Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach proclamation. This concluded a meeting between the Council leader and Rav Boaz Kali, head of Matteh Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach, and Rabbi Zalman Notik, *mashpia* of Toras Emes in Yerushalayim.

“It all began with a suggestion by Mr. Uri Revach, a reporter for Channel 1 of Israeli TV, who became a baal t’shuva, and with whom I learn *chassidus* once a week,” explain Rav Notik. “During our learning, Mr. Revach learned of the Rebbe’s mitvza of Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach. As a seasoned journalist, he realized that this campaign was a terrific news item.

“One day he told me that in another few days Channel 1’s photographers would be able to film Sheva Mitzvos activities for a few hours. ‘Do something for Sheva Mitzvos and we’ll prepare a short piece for our TV program,’ he said, surprising me.”

Rav Notik invited Rabbi Kali to his house, and they discussed what project they might undertake. They recalled that Rabbi Levi Bistrizza, *a”h*, *rav* of Tzfas, had given his approval to projects at the settlement of Abu Gush near Yerushalayim, as a result of which he was on friendly terms with the local Council leader.

Rav Notik and Rav Kali went to Abu Gush, not knowing how they would get a meeting with the Council leader, and how in a brief



Mr. Uri Revach, reporter for Channel 1, interviews Rav Kali in Jaffa Shuk



From right to left: Mr. Gever Salim, Council leader in Abu Gush, Rabbi Zalman Notik, and Rabbi Chaim Sasson

meeting they would convince him to agree to their promoting the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach.

When they arrived in Abu Gush, they found out the results of the

Council elections, which had just been held. The former Council leader had been reelected.

Rav Notik and Rav Kali went to the Council leader’s house,

ostensibly to congratulate him on his winning the election. When they got to his house, they saw dozens of young Arabs singing and rejoicing, shooting into the air. However, when the Council leader's brother welcomed them in graciously, their

fears dissipated.

Religious and educational figures in the settlement soon gathered at the Council leader's house and they all shook hands warmly with the rabbis. R' Kali spoke and blessed the Council leader and then

explained the importance of observing the Sheva Mitzvos. After his speech R' Kali and R' Notik asked permission to explain the Sheva Mitzvos to the children. After a long discussion it was decided that this would happen the following Sunday.

Sunday morning, R' Kali went to Abu Gush for the final planning, as the leaders of the settlement suddenly decided to convene dozens of the dignitaries of Abu Gush at the home of the Council leader for a speech.

Sunday evening, R' Notik, R' Kali, and Rabbi Chaim Sasson went to Abu Gush. The Arab dignitaries were ready to listen to the Jewish rabbis. The Council leader greeted the rabbis and offered them kosher food.

The first speaker was R' Notik who spoke about Love of G-d. R' Sasson spoke about Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach in connection with Avrohom Avinu. R' Kali explained how these seven Mitzvos are observed today.

The Council leader surprised



A gift for the Council leader: a picture of the Rebbe with the Sheva Mitzvos written in Arabic



Rabbi Sasson talks about Moshiach and Geula with the Arab Council leader of Abu Gush



Council leader of Abu Gush signs the Sheva Mitzvos proclamation

everyone when he said that he felt moved as he began to realize that his appointment as Council leader was from G-d and for a G-dly purpose.

A beautifully written proclamation about the Sheva Mitzvos was presented and the Council leader signed it to the sounds of applause and to the flash of Channel 1's cameras.

The rabbis gave the Council leader a unique gift: a framed picture of the Lubavitcher Rebbe with the Sheva Mitzvos written on the side, in Arabic. The Council

leader hung the picture in a prominent place in his living room.

When the rabbis left the house, hundreds of residents of Abu Gush awaited them. With the permission of the Council leader, R' Sasson spoke to the crowd about fulfilling the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach.

They decided to spread the word further and picked the Arab *shuk* at Jaffa Gate in Yerushalayim. A short time later, a group of *chassidim*, led by *mashpia* Rabbi Noam Herpaz, went to the *shuk* and distributed brochures that explain the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach. Most stall-

owners responded warmly.

On Motzaei Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, Channel 1 broadcast a special program on the work Chabad does with Arabs in order to explain the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach to them. Reactions to the show were positive and Matteh Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach received numerous phone calls from people who praised their work.

Matteh Sheva Mitzvos said that the work they did in Abu Gush will serve as a model for work in other Arab cities in Eretz Yisroel.

200 "DECIDERS" AND 100 IDF OFFICER CANDIDATES VISIT ASCENT

"Deciders" is a concept in the world of tourism. These are leaders and representatives of unions, managers of companies, representatives of large corporations, retiree organizations etc. that tour the country and choose where they will send their employees on vacation and for recreation. This idea is the brainchild of the YisraClub tour agency which provides cutting edge domestic tour programs for unions.

200 of these "deciders" went to Ascent in Tzfas for a day to check it out, and they loved every minute of it. Rabbi Ayal Reiss who organized their program relates:

"They started the day by listening to a lecture on Kabbala, and then they heard an overview of the history of Tzfas, starting with the kabbalists who lived there, until the founding of Kiryat Chabad. Then they heard lectures whose main point was the besuras ha'*Geula*. For the artistic portion of the program we had the

group Kol Yaakov, Ascent's band.

"The feedback we got was terrific. We certainly look forward to their bringing more tourists to Ascent!"

A few days later a group of 100 female soldiers, candidates for educational officer postings, came to



Ascent. They had been hosted for the previous Shabbos by the Public Relations Unit of the Northern Command. The unit asked Ascent to prepare a special program for the soldiers for Kabbalas Shabbos and Havdala.

On Friday, two hours before Shabbos, they all gathered on the porch of the Ascent Campus, a porch that overlooks the Miron mountains and green forests. To the strumming of a guitar, they heard Rabbi Reiss explain what Kabbalas Shabbos, the Shabbos meals, etc. are all about.

When Rabbi Reiss finished his talk, they were surprised to see Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Grossman, *rav* of Migdal HaEmek and excellent lecturer, who had come to Ascent because of a family *simcha*. He described a Shabbos in a Jewish home in a most beautiful way.

On Motzaei Shabbos the soldiers came to hear Havdala and *chassidic* stories. Then they enjoyed a musical presentation with songs of *Geula* and *Moshiach*. Before leaving, the soldiers were invited to come to Ascent in their free time, for recently the administration of Ascent decided to allow soldiers to sleep at Ascent's guest-house for free.

A WEDDING IN CHICAGO

By Yehoshua Merenfeld

One of the amazing qualities of Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem is the relationships people form here. We are like a band of brothers in every sense. Anyone who visits for even a half-hour can notice it, as it permeates the atmosphere of our Yeshiva. We strive to help each other and help each other help others. So when a former student and friend invited us to come to his wedding in Chicago to bring Tiferes Menachem's air of excitement, what else could we do?

We were scheduled to leave Motzaei Shabbos of Parshas VaYeitzei, but as it had been snowing heavily since Friday afternoon we were apprehensive about road conditions and safety. As much as we had anticipated the journey we could not let our excitement undermine our safety. We checked weather and road reports and felt we could make the trip, however, it wouldn't have been appropriate for aspiring *chassidim*, like ourselves, to go on a journey without first writing a letter to the Rebbe MH" M for a blessing. With a response that was pertinent and positive we were instilled with renewed confidence to carry on as planned. We loaded up our van with nine yeshiva students, one rabbi, numerous holy books, several pounds of kosher junk food, and pushed off onto Interstate 80.

Whether it is in Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem, 770, or a van headed to Chicago, Judaism cannot be compromised. We remained Lubavitcher *bachurim*/lamplighters at every step of the journey, and thus we had a rolling Malaveh Malka. Somewhere in the middle of New Jersey we broke out the tuna fish sandwiches, seltzer water, and onion rings, told stories of the Rebbeim and sang *chassidic* melodies until late into the night.

We stopped only to recite the Prayer for Travelers, which was said with deep concentration, considering the snow storm and unfamiliar roads. The mood in the van was positive and charged like an electrical box, and so no one was able to sleep minus a five-minute doze here and there. We traveled strong until seven the next morning when we decided not to push off the morning service any longer and pulled into the next rest stop with our traveling *minyán*.

A soldier in the army of the Rebbe is never off duty, and we were prepared with cards of the Seven Universal Laws of mankind and those proclaiming the imminent revelation of the Rebbe.

It would be naïve to think that ten *chassidic* Jews donned in *t'fillin* and praying fervently in the midst of a public rest stop wouldn't attract curious looks and questions from passersby, and so we did. What is surprising though is the receptiveness of many gentiles to the Universal Laws and the imminence of Moshiach. We soon completed our prayers and were back on the road again.

"The state of Illinois welcomes you," stated the sign as we crossed the state line. It was just what we needed to reenergize us for the last leg of the trip. We were anticipating a dip in a hot *mikva*, a change of clothes, and something to eat besides onion rings as we entered the state of Illinois. We arrived at the local Chabad House at roughly three o'clock, prayed the afternoon service, and made our way to the Kabbalas Panim. The majority of us had not slept in a little under 24 hours, but we were charged with excitement and ready to bring joy and enthusiasm to the occasion. At the Kabbalas Panim the *chassan* gave over the Rebbe's *maamer* with emotion and clarity, inspiring us and putting us in

the right frame of mind for the sacredness of the occasion.

After the *chuppa* ceremony, which was moving and intense, we made our way to the reception hall. Inside we assembled for the evening service and then sat down for a delicious festive meal. Soon the *chassan* and *kalla* entered and we promptly thrust the *chassan* on our shoulders. We had a large Moshiach flag with us that we waved high in the air as we danced around in circles. We coaxed guests out of their chairs and on to the dance floor as the celebration grew stronger. I was filled with an overwhelming sense of satisfaction at having accomplished all that we had set out to do. It was nice to talk to others telling them about our Yeshiva in Sea Gate and they were impressed by our commitment to our friend. I would like to say that we could have danced all night long, but by the time that we reached the Sheva Brachos we were pretty much out of steam.

We spent the night with gracious hosts who had kindly opened up their homes for us, a kindness we greatly appreciated. With the Yeshiva's schedule not stopping for anyone we anxiously headed back to New York, allowing ourselves about six hours of sleep before departing promptly in the morning. We loaded ourselves on the van and departed from Chicago. Despite being tired and hungry and not having all the comforts of home, the journey back was just as warm and friendly as the first ten minutes on the way from New York.

Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem of Sea Gate, NY, is hosting Torah by the Sea a 10-day learning excursion December 26 – January 4, '04. For more information & to register please contact mailto: info@tiferes.org; phone: (718) 333 – 1176; website: www.tiferes.org for online registration.

MRS. MUSSIA KATZENELBOGEN, A"H

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

Mrs. Katzenelenbogen was born at the beginning of winter 5668 (1907) thanks to the *bracha* of the Rebbe Rashab to her parents, Rabbi Chaim Elazar and Chaya Duba Garelick.

The family lived in Rogotchov when she was a child. Because of a halachic query, she had the privilege of seeing and talking to the Rogatchover Gaon herself. A halachic question had come up at home and her father did not want to pasken the *halacha* even though he was capable of doing so. He said that since the Rogatchover Gaon lived in their city, he had to be asked.

She and her brother, R' Mendel Garelick, went to the Gaon's house. As soon as they arrived, he asked them why they had come when their father could decide himself. They told him that their father didn't want to pasken when the Rogatchover lived in the city ...

She went to school but did not attend on Shabbos so as not to desecrate the Shabbos. Not going entailed *mesirus nefesh*.

With the Rebbe Rayatz's instructions, she helped many Tmimim get out of serving in the Red Army.

In 5692 she married Shimon Katzenelenbogen, the son of Rabbi Michoel and Sarah (Mumme Sarah, may Hashem avenge her blood). They lived in Stary Russia and two years later they moved to Malachovka, a suburb of Moscow.

Over the years, her family, both the Garelik family and the Katzenelenbogen families, suffered from persecution by the communists. Her father and brother were arrested in 5695 while they were in home in Malachovka, in the middle of the Shabbos meal. They were accused of organizing secret chadarim. After interrogations and torture they were tried and sentenced to exile.

In 5699 she gave birth, with the *bracha* of the Rebbe Rayatz, to her only daughter, Feiga (Volovik).

During World War II, as the Germans approached Moscow, she fled with her husband, daughter, and other relatives. They traveled to Uzbekistan where they lived until the end of the war. They wanted to leave Russia via Lvov but were unable to. Her husband, brother and sister, Tzippa Kozliner, were arrested and imprisoned. She and her young daughter

went to live in Chernovitz.

With blessings from the *g'dolei ha'chassidim* she worked devotedly on freeing her sister from a labor camp and ultimately succeeded, but her husband and brother were sent to Siberia for years.

While her husband was in Siberia, she had to support herself while being particular not to desecrate the Shabbos. She later told about her experiences:

"In order to support the family, I worked in a textile factory. The manager was Jewish and I was able to convince him about the prohibition of working on Shabbos. After a while, he was replaced with a gentile. As soon as he showed up, I informed him that I was Jewish and that I don't work on Shabbos. He agreed and said, "Then work on Sunday which is a day off." I was happy to comply.

"Sad to say, there was another Jewish worker there who informed on me to the senior members of management. That same day they came to check out how I worked. A large contingent came, along with the chief engineer. They stood near me for a few minutes and were impressed by my work. Then they told the chief engineer to thoroughly check my work. He stood near me and I was very nervous but he was also impressed by the speed and precision of my work. They gave their approval to my not working on Shabbos."

Her husband was released in 5716, and they moved from Chernovitz to Tashkent where they lived with self-sacrifice for 16 years until they were allowed to leave the country in 5732 (1972).

They went to the Rebbe and in *yechidus* asked for a *bracha* for their daughter Faiga. She had only one daughter, and for five years she hadn't had any other children. The Rebbe blessed her and a year later she went to the Rebbe again and asked that the *bracha* be fulfilled. The daughter had two more children. In appreciation, she named them for the Rebbe's parents: Levi Yitzchok (Volovik) and Chana (Gloiberman).

On Sunday, 28 Cheshvan, Mussia Katzenelenbogen of Nachalat Har Chabad passed away. Despite her suffering in recent years, her mind was clear until the day of her passing. She is survived by her daughter, and mourned by many more.