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TRUE LIFE, THE LIFE OF A JEW

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'YECHI; 16TH DAY OF TEIVES, 5750

1. Parshas VaYechi is the conclusion of the book of B'Reishis, the first of the five books of the Chumash. It is called, "The Book of the Just," "the book of Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, who are called, 'just.'"

Based on the principle, "the deeds of the Patriarchs are a sign for their descendants," this book outlines the totality of a Jew's service. "Va'yechi" means "and he lived." Thus, the lesson of Parshas VaYechi is fundamental, centering on life itself.

Our Sages declared that the Jewish people are truly alive, their life stemming from the Torah, which is "our life and the length of our days." If so, what lesson can be learned from VaYechi? For, as it stands, a Jew's existence is one of life.

The same question can be asked from a different perspective: The Alter Rebbe taught that we must "live with the times," "with the weekly Torah portion." What does it mean to live with VaYechi, to live with life itself?

Also, the name VaYechi warrants explanation, since the *parsha* actually speaks about the apparent loss of life, the life of Yaakov Avinu.

This portion reveals how Yaakov's life was eternal. Even after his passing he remained alive because "his descendants are alive." Thus, all the events related in the *parsha* are expressions of this life.

Chassidic thought explains that a person cannot feel his own life-force. We are limited human beings, capable of feeling and perceiving only that which is itself limited. Since our life-force is of a general nature, above all particular divisions, we cannot feel it. Though we do have certain powers we can feel and take control of. For example, intellect, sight, and hearing. These powers are limited in nature, revealed within the limbs of the body. Thus, we can perceive their presence.

The above explanation, however, is problematic. We begin our day by reciting "*Modeh Ani*," thanking G-d for our general life-force. Not only do we thank Him for the particular expressions of His beneficence mentioned in the morning blessings, we acknowledge that He has granted us the gift of life as a totality. Indeed, this is the most prominent of our expressions of thanks, recited immediately upon waking up in the morning.

Thus, this expression of thanks does not come because we understand and have meditated upon the fact that G-d has returned our souls. On the contrary, we express our thanks simply because we feel that our soul has been returned. If so, this appears to contradict the statements made above that the soul cannot be felt.

This contradiction can be resolved as follows: Since the soul transcends division, it cannot be felt or perceived. This is true, however, only within the natural order of creation. The connection of the body and the soul itself, however, transcends that order. In fact, this connection is only possible by virtue of G-d's miraculous, unlimited power. Hence, the essence of the soul is able to become connected and permeated through the body and our active consciousness until it can actually be felt.

Based on the above, we can better understand the continuation of the "*Modeh Ani*" prayer, "Your faithfulness is great." G-d's faithfulness is totally unbounded and thus, permeates even our conscious powers.

A similar concept applies in

relation to the blessing, “*Elokai Neshama*,” which states: “My G-d, the soul which You have given within me is pure. You created it. You formed it, etc.” Several questions arise. Among them:

a) The order of the blessing’s phraseology is difficult: Before the soul was created, how could it exist and be pure?

b) After addressing the blessing to “My G-d,” why is it necessary to add the word “*Atai*” (You) in the expression “You created it” (*Ata barasa*)? The same concept is conveyed by “*barasa*” without the pronoun “*Ata*”?

These questions can be resolved as follows: The expression “the soul You have given...is pure,” refers to the soul as it exists in the world of Atzilus. The three expressions “You created it, You formed it..., You...” refer to the soul’s manifestation in the three worlds of Bria, Yetzira, and Asiya. In order for the soul to descend to the lower levels, a source of influence above Atzilus (the highest world) is needed. Thus, the liturgy reads “*Ata*,” You, i.e., G-d’s essence. G-d’s essence is the force that makes the soul’s descent possible.

G-d’s infinite power causes even “the soul that You have given within me,” within this world, to be pure.

Based on the above, we can understand the lesson to be derived from Parshas *VaYechi*. *VaYechi* refers to the essence of life, not only the life-energy that is revealed by the soul. It refers to the life of the soul itself, the very source of life, “the Lord, your G-d, is true. He is the living G-d.” The life-energy, nevertheless, is extended until it serves as the source of life on the material plane for a soul with a body.

In this context, we can understand the opening phrase of Parshas *VaYechi*, “And Yaakov lived in

the land of Egypt for seventeen years.” Each of the words has unique significance.

“Yaakov” can be broken up into “*Yud eikev*.” The soul, the *Yud*, is drawn down throughout the individual’s total personality until it affects even its heel, the very lowest part of the body.

“In the land” — Our Sages explain that the word “land” is connected to the word “want.” “Why was it called land (*aretz*)? Because it wanted (*ratzta*) to do its Creator’s will.” Despite the great descent, there is still a desire to fulfill G-d’s will.

“Egypt” (*Mitzrayim*) is associated with the concept of boundaries and limitations (*meitzarim*). In this context, however, it has a positive

VaYechi refers to the essence of life, the life of the soul itself, the very source of life.

connotation — that the unlimited life-force of the soul permeates the limitations of human personality.

“Seventeen” is numerically equivalent to “*tov*” (good). The influence from Above descends to become invested within a person’s being to the extent that he consciously feels its goodness.

Thus, this verse clarifies and emphasizes that the life-energy of the soul, which is unlimited and hence, reflected in the power of faith, becomes drawn down into our conscious intellect and emotion. There is a parallel in our prayers, in which the expression of thanks of “*Modeh Ani*” becomes invested in the particulars of the morning blessings, which include all the person’s needs

throughout the day.

The Torah is “our life and the length of our days,” resembling the general life-force that cannot be felt until it becomes internalized in a specific power of the soul. Similarly, the influence of the Torah as a whole becomes apparent when a person lives with the particular aspect of Torah that is relevant to the time at hand, i.e., the weekly Torah portion.

VaYechi combines the two, revealing the general life-force of Torah, drawing down the unlimited Divine energy that is above the Torah. This allows the essential life-energy, the essence of the Torah, to be drawn down into our consciousness.

G-d “looked into the Torah and created the world.” This statement implies that the revelation within Torah brings about a revelation of the life-energy of the world. Thus, it is apparent that “the heavens and earth and everything they contain came into being only from the truth of His Being.” This, of course, will be obvious in the Messianic age when, “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters fill up the ocean bed.”

2. Therefore, Parshas *VaYechi* is an appropriate conclusion for the book of B’Reishis. Compare B’Reishis and the other books of the Torah and you find that there are many more *mitzvos* mentioned in the other books. This is because B’Reishis is the source and root of the other *mitzvos*. It represents the middle column, which is above (not restricted by) the divisions of right and left — the 248 positive *mitzvos*, which reflect kindness, the right column, and the 365 negative commandments, which reflect the left column.

Thus, the book of B’Reishis speaks about the lives of the Patriarchs, who reflect the level of Atzilus. In contrast, the other four

books reveal the *mitzvos* which express G-dliness in the levels below Atzilus. Therefore, the book of B'Reishis, the essence and the source of Torah, concludes with Parshas VaYechi, which reflects the essence and the source of life (of the Torah and of the Jews).

Concluding the book of B'Reishis, we declare, "*Chazak, Chazak, v'nischazeik,*" reinforcing the process of transition through which these essential powers descend and are internalized within our consciousness.

3. Yaakov Avinu represents Atzilus, the highest of the worlds. His children (with the exception of Yosef) represent the world of Bria. Yosef's spiritual source, however, is even beyond the level of Atzilus. Accordingly, it is within his potential to draw down the revelation of Atzilus to the world of Bria, and thus, to the other lower worlds.

"Yaakov" refers to the soul as it exists within Atzilus, the essence of the soul, which is beyond division. The tribes can be compared to the soul as it is revealed within the body. But Yosef reflects the essential G-dly energy through which the soul is brought down within the body, allowing for the essential life-energy of the Jewish soul to be felt within the body even when the Jews are in a state of exile.

On this basis, we can explain the connection of VaYechi to the

particular concepts mentioned in the portion. The beginning of the Torah portion relates how Yosef took his two sons, Ephraim and Menasheh, to be blessed by Yaakov. Similarly, the conclusion of the portion mentions these two.

Ephraim and Menasheh are representative of the entire Jewish people, as implied by Yaakov's blessing: "By you, Yisroel will be blessed. They will say, 'May G-d

The essential G-dly energy allows the Jewish soul to be felt within the body even when the Jews are in a state of exile.

make you like Ephraim and Menasheh." In particular, Ephraim and Menasheh represent the Jewish people in exile. Thus, by bringing Ephraim and Menasheh to Yaakov, Yosef was preparing for the influence of Yaakov to be drawn down to the Jewish people in exile.

Similarly, Yosef's effort to sustain the Jewish people in Egypt involved giving them spiritual, as well as

material, nurture. This prepared them for the exodus from Egypt, as we read in the book of Shmos, which we begin reading at *Mincha*.

We must bring all the above to the level of deed for "action is the main thing." On Shabbos Parshas VaYechi, a Jew should feel and express new life in Torah and *mitzvos*. It is Shabbos Chazak, a Shabbos that should strengthen him, his family, and his entire surroundings.

This should be connected with a *chassidic farbrengen*. In general, it is proper to "gather the congregation together on Shabbos" through the organization of a *Kiddush*. May this custom spread throughout the Jewish community. This is particularly appropriate on Shabbos Chazak, when we celebrate the conclusion of one of the books of the Torah. This celebration must reflect, in microcosm, the celebrations of Simchas Torah.

The uniqueness of the present time is emphasized because we are within 30 days of Yud Shvat, the *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe Rayatz. Especially this year, the 40th anniversary of his passing. Just as Yosef gave the Jews the power to emerge from the Egyptian exile, following the directives of the Yosef of our generation will give us the potential to proceed to the Messianic Redemption. May it be speedily in our days.

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WHAT MAKES 19 TEIVES LIKE 3 TAMMUZ

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



The 19th of Teives is one of the auspicious days of “Didan Natzach,” marking the final court decision in direct connection with the Rebbe regarding the return of the s’farim. It would seem that this is a “personal” matter of the Rebbe, so why do we have to celebrate? However, this is not the case, as the Rebbe’s personal matters have specific relevance to chassidim. In fact, in many respects the relevance to them may be even greater! An illustrative chassidic lesson from the unforgettable affair in connection with the s’farim.

There are a number of days that mark the different victories achieved in the legal courtroom battles of “*Didan Natzach*.” If all these days represent a unique significance in the spreading of the wellsprings of *chassidus*, then the 19th of Teives, 5750, is one of particularly noteworthy mention. On this day, victory was achieved in the continuing court case over the *s’farim*.

As has been mentioned in this column on numerous occasions, this entire court case was nothing less than “Petersburg.” In other words, it was a *kitrug* and a manner of concealment on the spreading of the wellsprings of *chassidus* in the seventh generation, when the *Sh’china* would be drawn down to this world. When the judgment of “*Didan Natzach*” was

rendered in both the heavenly and worldly courts, then the permission had been granted and the spreading of the wellsprings of *chassidus* began on a much larger and stronger scale. As the Rebbe *shlita* classified it in a *sicha* from Shabbos Parshas VaYigash 5747: this marked the beginning of “new times and a new era” in which only one matter remained – “All of you stand ready for the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash with the true and complete Redemption.” This can be compared to the situation following *Chag HaGeula*, Yud-Tes Kislev, which then marked the beginning of a new era in spreading the wellsprings of *chassidus*.

“And the year after, he established them and made them *Yomim Tovim* in praise and thanksgiving.” Exactly one year after the first court victory over the *s’farim* on Hei Teives 5747, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* himself established with much fanfare that this day was a day of great merit and redemption, a day of “*Didan Natzach*” for generations to come, a day to strengthen in the study of the *s’farim* and to strengthen the library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, etc.

(That Shabbos the Rebbe began the *farbrengen* with an approving mention

of the fact that a “*Didan Natzach*” sign adorned the walls, despite the fact that there were a number of good and prominent people who opposed that sign and all signs in general, with the excuse that everything must be *p’nimius*, not with noisy publicity. They suggested that the Rebbe simply doesn’t want any new *chassidic* holidays, to the point that they did not want to submit a *maamer* for the Rebbe’s proofreading in honor of Hei Teives, as was customary on every auspicious day on the Chabad calendar. It was only in the merit of a few stubborn individuals who submitted the *maamer* without the expressed approval of the “powers that be” that we merited another edited *maamer*.)

As is known, even after the victory, the opposing side, both in heaven and in earth, did not sit quietly and continued its struggle (in order that we could merit further auspicious days) by appealing the court’s decision. As a result, an additional court case commenced, which was followed by more difficult days of fear and concern over the pending judgment on the innovation of the seventh generation.

On the 25th of MarCheshvan 5748, the appeal was totally rejected, and the *s’farim* were established finally as the sole and rightful property of Agudas Chassidei Chabad. Two days later, on the 27th of MarCheshvan, the court ordered that the *s’farim* must be returned immediately to 770, and on the great and glorious day of the 2nd of Kislev 5748, the *s’farim* came home. This event seemingly marked the culmination of the court case and the ultimate expression of “*Didan Natzach*.”

At first, *chassidim* thought that they should celebrate the victory with great splendor and public display. They wanted to bring the *s’farim* to their rightful place in a giant parade with a band, etc., similar to what they did the

previous year for Hei Teives over a period of seven days, when the Rebbe participated personally with great joy, giving a *sicha* each night with special instructions, etc. However, the Rebbe *shlita* did not agree, writing an explicit answer that the matter should be handled in a quiet manner without fanfare, as follows:

“Since it should now be fulfilled with peace of mind and body, etc., the order of things should be carried out quietly, and regarding the abovementioned: [i.e., the intention to bring the *s’farim* to 770 without a band or parade, it should rather be done] **quietly...**”

This can be compared to the giving of the two sets of the *Luchos HaBris*.

The Rebbe’s personal matters are not only relevant to chassidim, the relevance to them may be even greater!

The first set was given with great noise and commotion and was eventually broken, whereas the second set was given quietly in an aura of tranquility and they remained whole and complete.

This comes to teach us the significance in commemorating these days (albeit in a more quiet and low-key manner), just as we celebrate the giving of the second *luchos*. *Chassidus* explains that the reason why the holiday of Simchas Torah was established specifically on Shmini Atzeres was due to the great joy over the second set of *luchos* that were given on Yom Kippur.

Similarly, as the Rebbe explains in a *sicha* from Shabbos Parshas

VaYishlach 5752 (see note 46), we find that Lag B’Omer is considered the giving of the first *luchos* in *p’nimius ha’Torah*, while the holiday of Yud-Tes Kislev represents the giving of the second *luchos*.

However, even here the battle had not yet ended. The opposing side saw that they had lost the fight for the *s’farim*, and so they decided to attack from a different direction. They filed a new lawsuit, based on slanderous and libelous accusations that the Rebbe’s statements in connection with the *s’farim* incited “extremist elements” to acts of violence and their undesirable results. It was their hope that this would force the Rebbe to appear in court to respond to the charges. In this instance, it would be much more difficult to convince the judge to rule that the Rebbe was not obligated to testify in his own defense, since the suit had been lodged against him personally. (In the first case, on the 13th of Kislev 5746, the judge precluded the eventual “*Didan Natzach*” by ruling that “the king does not testify nor do others testify for him.”) Nevertheless, *baruch Hashem*, there was another “*Didan Natzach*.” On the 26th of Tishrei 5750, and then finally after an appeal, on the 19th of Teives 5750, the court rejected the suit out of hand, and the case was closed. (Since the suit dealt with the Rebbe directly, as opposed to Chabad in general, the deliberations were not publicized, and thus, very few details are known.)

At first, it would seem that the 19th of Teives pertains only to the Rebbe personally, and has no relevance to *chassidim*. However, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* said the following in connection with *Chag HaGeula*, Gimmel Tammuz (see *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 4, p. 1315):

“It can be said that the reason why my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, did not establish the 3rd of Tammuz as a holiday – as he did regarding the

days of Yud-Beis-Yud-Gimmel Tammuz – is because the whole concept of the *nasi* and shepherd of Israel is to influence the people of the generation (and his “personal” matters have no relevance to him). And since when he is in exile, his ability to influence is greatly limited, he did not establish Gimmel Tammuz as a holiday.

However, the *hiskashrus* of the *chassidim* to the Rebbe, the *nasi*, must be in every respect...even regarding “personal” matters. Thus, it is incumbent upon *chassidim* to celebrate the day of Gimmel Tammuz.”

The 19th of Teives appears to stand out in similar fashion. While Gimmel Tammuz is the day when the Rebbe Rayatz was rescued from a death sentence, the Rebbe Rayatz did not establish it as a holiday, since it was a personal matter that did not directly affect his work in spreading *chassidus*.

However, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* established that *chassidim* are connected even to the Rebbe’s personal matters. In this *sicha* (among others), the Rebbe stated further, “it is understood that in many aspects, the 3rd of Tammuz is even more joyous than the days of Yud-Beis-Yud-Gimmel Tammuz.”

Similarly, we find with the 19th of Teives, which was also apparently a personal matter of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* himself. Yet in a variety of aspects, the Rebbe’s personal matters are not only relevant to *chassidim*, the relevance to them may be even greater!

In essence, the entire court case over the *s’farim* also revolved around this question: Does a personal and private matter of the Rebbe have relevance to the Rebbe alone, or to *chassidim*, as well? In other words, is the Rebbe’s library something private, which according to the opposing claim

subjects it to inheritance and division among “the legal heirs,” or is it in fact, as established in the court before the eyes of the world, that the Rebbe’s personal effects belong to the *chassidim*, and as the righteous Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, of blessed memory, said, “Father and the *s’farim* belong to the *chassidim*”?

Not only do we find that the Rebbe’s private matters are specifically relevant to the *chassidim*, but to a certain extent, they pertain literally to the Rebbe’s very essence!

Thus, it is clearly understood that *chassidim* must also celebrate the auspicious day of the 19th of Teives, the day of the Rebbe’s personal “*Didan Natzach*,” despite the fact that the Rebbe did not establish it officially as a *yom tov*, as the Rebbe’s private and personal affairs are of great relevance to *chassidim*, as mentioned above – and even more. By the same token, the other auspicious days mentioned above that have not been established as *chassidic* holidays should also be celebrated by *chassidim*.

As we mentioned earlier, our official legal claim before the court was the fact that the Rebbe’s library was not his private property, rather, it belongs to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, and to each individual Lubavitcher *chassid* (“*tzu yeder Lubavitcher chassid vahs gait arum*” – *sicha*, the 15th of Tammuz 5745). Therefore, even after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rayatz in 5710, the *s’farim* belonged to Lubavitch.

At that *farbrengen*, the Rebbe further emphasized with a pained and heartfelt cry the need for clarification of this matter: Our real claim is that “he is among the living.” Even though thirty-five years had passed since 5710, this does not mean that the Rebbe was only in the World of Truth, whereas here in this physical world, he does not exist, *ch”v*. The Rebbe is here and “he is among the living” in this physical and material world!



Beis Kislev 5748. The *s’farim* arriving in 770

There are those who claim, the Rebbe says, that it has been thirty-five years since the Rebbe's passing, and they actually participated in the *levaya*. Thus, the Rebbe has already been in the World of Truth for thirty-five years. Go and explain all this to someone who has no concept of anything that lacks "tangible value." He thinks that anything that you can't count on the fingers of your hand – e.g., dollars – simply does not exist! He mentions the Rebbe in this physical world only in the context of earning more money by selling his *s'farim* and other items. However, from his point of view, the Rebbe does not exist in this physical world.

The opposite is true! For thirty-five years now, at every moment, the Rebbe has been found "*nahch merer un nahch shtarker un nahch frisher un nahch lebediker*"! (more, stronger, more invigorated, and more alive). The Rebbe cried these words several times, both at that *farbrengen* and on other occasions.

However, the Rebbe continued, since we have "no common language" with someone who has no connection to something he doesn't see with his own eyes ("*nishta kain safu m'shuteses*"), as he claims that "the Rebbe doesn't exist" in this physical world, *ch"v*, therefore, we must speak to him in "his language." Thus, our claim is that the Rebbe's library belongs to Lubavitch, "*tzu yeder Lubavitcher chassid vahs gait arum*" – and this he can see for himself.

But as the Rebbe has emphasized again and again, our true claim is that "he is among the living," and any talk about inheritance, *ch"v*, *ch"v*, is totally irrelevant! Neither rabbi nor attorney has succeeded in establishing that we are talking about an inheritance, *ch"v*, when "he is among the living"! The best possible proof for this is that "his seed is alive," something that is simply inconceivable unless in fact, "even he is among the living"!

* * *

Here, the wise son asks the question: What does that mean? How do you explain this? Is it not a true claim that the *s'farim* belong to Lubavitch, and for this reason, it was officially ruled that they must return to 770? Was this just a claim in order to convince the court in a manner that even the opposing side will understand the reasoning, but in truth, the claim was incorrect, *ch"v*? Don't the *s'farim* really belong to the Rebbe personally, since "he is among the living," and he continues to live after

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the *histalkus* on Yud Shvat 5710? (As has been publicized frequently, the Rebbe MH"M himself wrote in connection with the court case that it is grievous and wrong to suggest that a *nasi* took a certain action merely for appearance's sake, in exchange for a particular favor. In fact, anyone who would say such a thing deserves to be put in *cherem*, *ch"v*.)

Obviously, this is not the proper interpretation. It is clear that the official external reason given that "the *s'farim* belong to Lubavitch" is absolutely true. However, behind this truth, there stands an even more inner

truth: the *s'farim* belong to the Rebbe because "he is among the living" and it is impossible to separate Lubavitch from the Rebbe! There is no Lubavitch without the Rebbe, and there is no Rebbe without Lubavitch! The Rebbe is not just some private individual with his own personal concerns, and as the Rebbetzin said, "Father and the *s'farim* belong to the *chassidim*"!

The opposing side argued that in the previous generations, among the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, and even with the Rebbe Rashab, of blessed memory, there was a division of an inheritance, including a division of the sacred writings of the Tzemach Tzedek among his sons. In the aforementioned *sicha*, the Rebbe responded, "Why are they bringing the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Maharash into all this? This has no relevance to our discussion! In connection with the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek, the argument among them was who will receive the writings in order to learn from them. However, none of them ever considered going out and selling the *s'farim*! In our case, the leader of our generation said clearly that it was his desire that the library belong to Agudas Chassidei Chabad."

This brings us to another question: Since the truth is that "the Rebbe is Lubavitch, and Lubavitch is the Rebbe," how is it possible that in the previous generations of Rebbeim, we find numerous instances of the division of their "personal possessions" among their heirs (albeit for the sole purpose of learning from them), whereas in this case, in the seventh generation, there can be no such thing?

The answer is clear: From the very outset, the purpose of *chassidus* was not, *ch"v*, to remain in the same place and at the same level, but "to spread the wellsprings outward." In other words, the wellsprings of *chassidus* must reach lower and lower to be

totally united with and accepted by the lowest of all possible levels. And as is well known in a variety of sources, this phenomenon attains its apex specifically in our generation, the seventh generation.

The previous generations were each on a very high level, to the point that the seventh generation is built upon them, as the Rebbe frequently compares our generation to “a midget standing on a giant’s back.” But, in the final analysis, the *Sh’china* had not yet reached “down into the world” in a total and absolute sense, as there was still some “separation and division,” as it were, between G-dliness and the world. This lowly physical world had not yet been completely instilled with the knowledge that its entire *metzius* is G-dliness. Therefore, our Rebbeim still seemingly had some modicum of existence as private individuals, albeit very high and distinct, which had yet to penetrate the world completely.

Specifically in our generation, the seventh generation, we have reached the pinnacle in drawing the *Sh’china* down to this world. The concept that the world’s very existence is total G-dliness and that it is absolutely impossible to separate G-dliness from materiality has finally been revealed. This starts at the top with the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*, who has no private or personal matters. His only concern is Lubavitch, and the only concern of Lubavitch is the Rebbe!

(In fact, this all started in the sixth generation with the Rebbe Rayatz, when to a certain extent, the drawing down from Above to the physical world below actually began. The difference is that this was not affected through the lower realm, exemplified by *Yesod*, which precedes *Malchus*, as elucidated throughout *chassidus*.)

In the famous *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Bo 5752, the Rebbe brings this point to explain that in all the previous generations, including the generation of the Rebbe Rayatz, “the

eighth generation since the Baal Shem Tov,” there could be a *histalkus*, a departure of the soul from the body. This is because it was not yet in an ultimate state of health and perfection, since “the process of elevation had not been completed.” Thus, there was some relevance to a division and distinction between G-dliness and the world, and between the soul and the body.

Only in our generation, “the ninth generation since the Baal Shem Tov,” when the *avoda* has reached its

He is already steeped in “compelling all of Israel” and “fighting the wars of G-d,” “and in a number of matters, he is already winning,” as we see from what is happening in the world, “and they will beat their swords into plowshares,” etc.

conclusion and “the process of elevation has been completed,” there is no division or distinction between G-dliness, spirituality, and the **eternal** soul on the one hand, and the physical body on the other, as it possesses eternity and continuity “without any interruption.” Therefore, specifically in our generation, “we pass immediately without any interruption to the eternal life of the Future to Come,” which, the Rebbe emphasizes in the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Shmos 5752, is “an absolute promise in the Torah.”

In connection with our situation, we now come to the auspicious day of Yud-Tes Teives, which represents “the revelation of the essence,” as mentioned above, to the point that its penetration is total. Even the lowest and most remote place in the world cries out that its *metzius* is G-dliness, emphasizing specifically that the Rebbe’s personal and private concerns are *our* concerns. This stems from the fact that “*chassidim*, who are connected to the Rebbe, the *nasi*, are also connected to his private matters,” since “the Rebbe is Lubavitch, and Lubavitch is the Rebbe.”

We have heard and seen the Rebbe’s holy words again and again that all delays and hindrances have been removed, everything is already in a state of revelation, including the revelation of the essence of the existence of Melech HaMoshiach (which is the main thing, as it leads to what follows: the “spreading forth” and ultimate *hisgalus* for all to see through his activities). He is already steeped in “compelling all of Israel” and “fighting the wars of G-d,” “and in a number of matters, he is already winning,” as we see from what is happening in the world, “and they will beat their swords into plowshares,” etc.

Thus, we must courageously increase in our *hiskashrus* and *bittul* to our King and Moshiach *shlita*, continuing with all our strength and fortitude to spread the announcement of the Redemption in “the only *avoda* that remains: to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed,” particularly in the holy call and proclamation (*sicha*, Shabbos Parshas Toldos 5752) that represents the revelation of the essence of the existence of Melech HaMoshiach, resulting in his ultimate *hisgalus* for all to see through his activities at the true and complete Redemption:

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

HOW TO CARRY OUT THE ONLY REMAINING SHLICHUS: **KABBALAS P'NEI MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU**

BY NOSSON AVROHOM, PINCHAS PIZEM, AND SHAI GEFEN

Twelve years ago, on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752, the Rebbe said:

“As the Rebbe, my father-in-law, nasi doreinu, the sole shliach of our generation and the only Moshiach of our generation, announced that all the avoda has been completed, it is understood that the “send please, in the hand of the one You will send,” the shlichus of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, has begun.

“And from this we understand that the only thing left to do now in the avoda of shlichus is to actually greet Moshiach so that he can fulfill his shlichus and take the Jews out of Galus!”

*Beis Moshiach spoke with seven shluchim and asked them how they implement this new shlichus. * Part 2 of 2*



RABBI BORUCH GOODMAN
 Shliach at Rutgers University,
 New Jersey

**“IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO
 INSTILL BELIEF IN
 MOSHIACH IN OTHERS, IT
 HAS TO BE INSTILLED IN
 US!”**

What is your approach to fulfilling the final *shlichus* to prepare the world to greet Moshiach?

The way to instill belief in Moshiach in others, is to first make sure it's instilled in us. At my Chabad house, the students sing “*Yechi*” on their own, because they know this is the Rebbe's beloved song.

In all the classes that I give, I connect the topic to *Geula*. When people see that the *shliach* talks about *Geula*, not as a legend or wishful thinking, but with *chayus* and *simcha* and utter *bitachon* that the Rebbe MH”M is about to appear at any moment, then the listeners

get it, because they see this is serious business.

The way I spread the *b'suras ha'Geula* is not new for me. This is what I learned from the *mashpia* and *shliach*, Rabbi Nosson Gurary – that when you want to influence others, you need to communicate genuine *chayus* and *simcha*. If I had to define it in brief, I would say it like this: to

be a *dugma chaya* (a role model).

How do you deal with people who, after all you say, still remain doubtful about the Rebbe being Moshiach?

I'll tell you something. Ten years ago, when I went on Shabbasos to make Torah gatherings in *shuls*, nobody was ready to hear any

mention of “Moshiach,” or that the Rebbe is Moshiach. The reality today is that this is the most popular topic. Today everybody is ready to hear it and many of them even believe it.

The question that was always asked at the Chabad house was: Why do you mention this in every single talk? I would answer with a parable. If people stand near loudspeakers they can wonder why the noise is so loud, when they could actually hear what is being said or played at much lower volumes. Yet they realize that it's in order that people who aren't standing right near the loudspeakers can hear it, too. The same is true for Moshiach. I talk a lot about Moshiach and *Geula* so that if a student just happens to pass through the Chabad house, he'll hear about Moshiach immediately.

You hear a lot about *Geula* because you're always here. The attention I give to this subject is also for those who come here only occasionally.

There was a student who came from a Litvish background who always made fun of the Moshiach topic. He once left a class he was taking very upset because he didn't understand it. As he passed the Chabad house, he noticed me and he asked: When Moshiach comes, will there be classes then, too?

The question was so real! You could sense that the spark of Moshiach in him had come to life. With time, we developed a great relationship, and we had long conversations about Moshiach and *Geula*, and he slowly began to accept everything about Moshiach.

Do you have a story for us that will show the readers the kind of results you get when you talk about Moshiach?

A few years ago, I organized a



program for the students at the university. We had a musical group called Moshav appear, which I brought in from Eretz Yisroel. After massive advertising in every possible corner of the campus, we had a great turnout. The hall was packed with about 400 students.

The performance was divided into two parts. During intermission, I went over to the members of the band and asked them to sing a song about Moshiach. They didn't want to, saying they hadn't practiced songs like that and they didn't want to make fools of themselves. I wasn't happy about this and they could see this. The students who saw this going on, also asked the band to sing about Moshiach, but it didn't help.

At the end of the performance, one of the band members made a brief speech in which he explained that the only reason they had come was because of Moshiach, and that all the songs in the world are for Moshiach. The band members yelled, "Moshiach Now!" three times and left the stage.

The audience left except for one person who came over to me and said he had never been at a Chabad house before. This was his first time, so he didn't understand why I make a big deal about Moshiach Now. What's it all about?

I patiently explained to him what Moshiach is, and how the Rebbe said that Moshiach is coming for



The Chabad House of Rutgers University, NJ, in the shape of 770

our generation. After about a half an hour's conversation, I invited him to come to us for Shabbos.

He accepted my invitation, and from that Shabbos on, after his graduation from the university, he was a regular guest of the Chabad house. He became really close with us, and as a result he began to take on more of Torah and *mitzvos*. One day, in the middle of an ordinary conversation, he said he wanted to attend a *yeshiva*.

At first, he learned in a *yeshiva* for *baalei t'shuva* in Seagate, then he

switched to Hadar HaTorah in Crown Heights. He even went to Eretz Yisroel and learned in a Chabad *yeshiva* for a short while. Today he's back in the U.S. to complete his studies, and he's a spiritual lighthouse for all Jews he encounters.

If you would see him today, you'd find it hard to believe that this was someone who was so far from *Yiddishkeit*. He has a full beard and is a genuine Chabad *chassid*, and it's all thanks to "Moshiach Now" which the band members said at the end of their performance.



RABBI YORAM ULMAN
Shliach and Dayan in Sydney,
Australia

**"I EXPLAIN THE TOPIC OF
MOSHIACH AS IT'S
EXPLAINED IN HALACHA,
AND THE OPPOSITION
MELTS AWAY"**

What approach do you use in order to convey the *b'suras ha'Geula* to the people you come in contact with?

The topic of Moshiach in general, and "Yechi" in particular, is something that is always present. It's expressed most in the *shiurim*, even when the *shiurim* are not about *Geula* and Moshiach. In general, the

entire community lives and breathes Moshiach, and anticipates his coming.

The work to instill the *inyan* of Moshiach among those outside Chabad has, *baruch Hashem*, yielded definite results. As a *dayan* in the Sydney Beis Din, I've succeeded in eradicating the great opposition to the topic of Moshiach among various groups, which comes mostly from lack of knowledge of the subject. I explain to them that not only does it not go against *halacha* and the Torah, but the opposite is the case. The topic of *Geula* and the identity of the *Goel* are firmly anchored in *halacha*.

“In my role as dayan, I try to explain to people the subject of Moshiach from a halachic perspective, and how it is no contradiction to halacha. Ironically, it’s easier to talk to not-yet religious Jews about this, but I also respond to religious people who maintain that Chabad’s emphasis on Moshiach goes against halacha.”

I'll give you an example to show how the *inyan* of Moshiach has reached all levels of Judaism. I have a good friend who is one of the important *rabbanim* in Australia. In this role, he lectures in one of the large schools here. A few months ago, he asked me to come and speak at the same school on the topic of Moshiach and *Geula*.

You have no idea how much the lecture affected the students, who sat and listened for a long time, fascinated by the Rebbe's *sichos* on *Geula*. At the end of my talk, that *rav* took the microphone and announced that my next lecture would be about the Identity of

Moshiach – the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

How do you handle the opposition?

I'll tell you something, the approach I use is not one of advertising, although that's important. In my role as *dayan*, I try to explain to people the subject of Moshiach from a *halachic* perspective, and how it is no contradiction to *halacha*. Ironically, it's easier to talk to not-yet religious Jews about this, but I also respond to religious people who maintain that Chabad's emphasis on Moshiach goes against *halacha*.

Once a Litvishe *bachur* came to me and said that Chabad does not

follow *halacha*. I told him: Chabad follows what it says in *halacha* and doesn't make the *halacha* fit its way of thinking.

Do you have an example or a story about people who changed their way of thinking about *Geula* and Moshiach because of your explanations?

About a year ago, I went to Eretz Yisroel to attend a conference of *rabbanim* which was organized by Rabbi Lazar, chief rabbi of Russia. On the second day of the conference, I got into a conversation with a Litvish *rav* who is close with Rabbi Elyashav's family. The main topic of our conversation was the

need to make peace between *misnagdim* and *chassidim*.

I asked him why they don't eat Chabad *sh'chita* in Russia. He said that one of their biggest problems today with *sh'chita* in Russia is that the shochet is Rabbi Kogan, who believes that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam b'gashmius*. The one who guides them in this is Rabbi Elyashav himself, who *paskened* that they shouldn't eat Lubavitch *sh'chita*.

When he finished his “*Ani Maamin*” about *sh'chita* he looked me in the eye and asked me, “Do you believe the Lubavitcher Rebbe is alive *b'gashmius*?” I said, “Yes!”

Then I told him that I didn't believe that Rabbi Elyashav would say what he claimed he said. If it was true, I wanted to speak to him about it. After he heard me proudly state my views, he didn't want it to look like his *rav* opposed me, so he said that he hadn't really heard it directly from Rav Elyashav, but from someone who repeated it in his name.

He expressed great interest in the topic of Moshiach and asked me if I'm a Meshichist and whether we say “*Yechi*” in my *shul*. I said, “Yes,” to both questions. He seemed agitated, but he kept quiet.

Once again I learned that if you explain things properly and show how it's *halachically* correct, and it's not something the Rebbe or *chassidus* Chabad made up, then the opposition disappears.

We say “*Yechi*” at my *shul* after every *t'filla*. We discuss *inyanei Moshiach* and live with the *Geula*. I don't try to convince anyone or to force anyone to think like me, because as soon as the opposition disappears you see the *emuna*, and when go about it wisely, by explaining things properly, nobody can oppose you and say, I don't believe that.



RABBI YEHUDA FRIEDMAN

Shliach in Mill Basin, New York

“WHEN THEY REALIZE THAT THE CHASSIDIM DIDN’T MAKE IT UP, BUT IT COMES FROM SICHOS OF THE REBBE, PEOPLE ACCEPT IT.”

Do you have any original ways of presenting the *b’suras ha’Geula*?

Yes, our calendar. Every year I publish a calendar, which, in addition to having “*Yechi*” in Hebrew and English, also has *sichos* of the Rebbe about *Geula*. There’s a long *sicha* for each month along with a short *vort* on the *parsha* which has some connection to *Geula*.

Most of the *sichos* I choose are

RABBI CHANANEL YEHOSHUA PIZEM

Shliach in Sderot, Eretz Yisroel

“WHEN A PERSON SEE THAT IT’S ALL IN THE SOURCES, HE REALIZES THIS ISN’T CRAZY, AND HE’S RECEPTIVE TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY”

How do you publicize the *b’suras ha’Geula*?

Every week I distribute the booklet *HaGeula*, which explains the subject clearly. When I walk down the street and someone asks me, “How are you?” I answer, “*Baruch*

from 5751-5752. People immediately identify our calendar as something connected to Moshiach. When someone asks for the calendar, he calls it the “Moshiach Calendar.” I think this is an original and great way of getting the message out.

Do you ever get questions that

“When people see that the chassidim didn’t make this up, but it’s right there in the sichos, they accept it. The only question that has thrown me, and for which I don’t have a good answer is, ‘Okay, but there are other Lubavitchers who don’t believe this!’”

are difficult to answer?

Every question has an answer. People see the strong *emuna* that *chassidim* have in the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, and they realize this is something serious. When people ask tough questions like, “You told me

the Rebbe is *chai v’kayam*, but I was in 770 yesterday and I didn’t see him!” – the best answer is to open a *sicha* and to explain how there is no *histalkus* of the *nasi*, to show them the *sicha* of Parshas Shoftim 5751, about how the *nasi ha’dor* exists forever; or the *sicha* where the Rebbe explains how Moshe exists in every generation.

And when people see that the *chassidim* didn’t make this up, but it’s right there in the *sichos*, they accept it. The only question that has thrown me, and for which I don’t have a good answer is, “Okay, but there are other Lubavitchers who don’t believe this!”

Hashem, waiting for the *Geula*.” That easily gets us into a conversation about *Geula* and Moshiach.

In addition, we have many *shiurim* on various topics in Judaism and we always connect it to Moshiach. Every Shabbos there is a *shiur* on *Geula* and Moshiach at the Chabad house, and after every *t’filla* we say “*Yechi*.”

I give a *Tanya shiur* every day in a Hesder *yeshiva*, and at the end of each *shiur* I present a short thought about Moshiach. The Chabad house has a sign with the picture of the Rebbe and the words, “*Boruch HaBa Melech HaMoshiach*,” as well as a Moshiach flag. People love it,

especially the flag. People have come into the Chabad house to ask what the flag is for, and we get into an involved discussion at the end of which they often agree to attend a class.

The entire city knows the identity of Moshiach already, and are waiting to see him. People want to know more and more and they ask, “Nu, when is he coming already?” “If only he came already.” When we advertise a *farbrengen* or a children’s rally, in addition to “*Yechi*” we write the Rebbe’s prophecy about *Geula*.

I can tell you that there’s nobody in Sderot who doesn’t know who

Moshiach is.

How do you handle questions about *Geula* and Moshiach?

Generally speaking, when a person asks a question, he's not interested in being lectured at; he wants a short answer that will shed some light on his question. People ask me, how do you say that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam*? In most cases, intelligent people ask me this, and I answer them: Dovid HaMelech is *chai*? The answer to that is usually yes, but there are many explanations. I immediately explain

“The entire city knows the identity of Moshiach already, and are waiting to see him. People want to know more and more and they ask, ‘Nu, when is he coming already?’ ‘If only he came already.’”

that you can ask the Rebbe MH”M questions through the *Igros Kodesh* and he answers and helps those who seek his help. He's more alive than people you see. This is what we call life, *chayus*. The fact that Chabad continues on, in a bigger way than ever, tells us that the Rebbe is alive.

If they want to get into it further, I say to them: You can come with me to the Chabad house and I'll show it to you in the sources, in the Rambam, in the Gemara, in the Rebbe's *sichos*, etc.

When a person sees that it's all in the sources, that there's a solid basis for all of it, he realizes that it isn't crazy and he's receptive to what you have to say. You just have to explain it and show the *sichos*, where there are clear answers.

I once asked Rav Avrohom Dunin, what will be? How much time do we need in order to tell people that Moshiach is coming? It's uncomfortable to say that Moshiach is coming when they respond: You told me that yesterday.

He answered me: We are the

Rebbe's soldiers and we don't need to make calculations about when and how long it will take. The Rebbe said we should publicize it, and that's our job.

Do you have an interesting story for us about publicizing the *b'suras ha'Geula*?

We recently held elections for mayor and six candidates wanted the job. In the vast majority of cases there's another round of elections, and that's what happened this time, too. Two of the candidates remained

for the second round. One of them was the lawyer, Eli Muell. A few days before the runoff, he came to the *shliach* in Sderot, my brother, Rabbi Moshe Zev Pizem, and said he wanted to write to the Rebbe and to ask for his *bracha* that he should win.

He addressed the letter “To the Rebbe MH”M shlita,” without anyone telling him to do so. He promised the Rebbe “to be active in all *inyanei Chabad*, which are the Rebbe's *mosdos*.”

The polls predicted he would lose to his competitor. At ten o'clock at night the competitor's supporters and friends arranged a party because they were sure they would win. Two hours later Muell won by a relatively large margin.

At the lawyer's headquarters, they were ecstatic and they called the *shliach* at home and said, “*Yechi Adoneinu, etc.*,” and kept repeating the connection between the Rebbe's *bracha* and his victory.

In a conversation with his friends, the new mayor explained why he wasn't nervous even when the polls showed him losing. He said he had gotten the Rebbe's *bracha*. This is *emunah*.

CORRECTION:

The wrong picture appeared in last week's issue in the interview with Rabbi Amram Muell, senior lecturer at Ascent in Tzfas.

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SEEING IS BELIEVING

BY RABBI CHAIM ASHKENAZI



After his release from prison for the second time, the Alter Rebbe traveled to three Misnagdic greats. When asked by one of them “what chassidus accomplished,” the Rebbe responded, “the setting of fixed times for Torah study.” When that scholar expressed incredulity, as this was something Jews had always done, the Alter Rebbe explained that chassidus accomplishes that it should be a “kvius b’nefesh.” What is meant by a “kvius b’nefesh?”

NOT TO FORGET

The Rebbe once told the tale of the forgetful person. Every time he got up in the morning, he couldn’t remember where he had put his clothes. Then one day he got the bright idea which he thought might solve this problem – he would write down that his hat is near his head and his shirt is near his body, etc., and this idea worked. The Rebbe asked: How is it that he didn’t forget where his head and body are? The

answer is that you can only forget things that are external to you, but you cannot forget yourself, because that is you.

When a person eats, he doesn’t eat because the clock on the wall indicates that it’s time to eat. The person’s own biological clock lets him know he’s hungry. You can forget to eat for some time if you are very busy, but it’s more difficult to neglect drinking. Even drinking can be forgotten for a short time if you are

extremely preoccupied. Similarly, it is virtually impossible to go without sleep (and the Gemara says that if a person vows not to sleep for three days, he is lashed and forced to sleep immediately), and it is completely impossible to forget to breathe, etc.

The common denominator in all these examples is that a person doesn’t do these things because of what time it is, but because he feels the need to do so. Depending on the need for something is how I much I feel I must do it.

Nobody will ask, what difference does it make if a person eats because of the time on the clock or because he’s hungry, because everybody understands that the difference is enormous. In fact, it’s a serious problem if a person reaches a point where he eats and drinks because of what time it is and not because he feels the natural sensation of hunger. If he needs to check the time, that shows that the food is not being taken in by the body in a healthy, natural way and he requires reminders for something as basic as eating.

The analogue is that when a person establishes times for Torah study based on the time on the

clock, the possibility remains that he forgets to learn. His learning is something external to him and it doesn't have the desired refining effect on him; it is not a *kvius b'nefesh* (something fixed within the soul).

WHAT IS A "GADOL B'YISROEL"

The story is told of the Baal Shem Tov, who was once at a gathering of the great people of his generation and it was Rosh Chodesh. One of the *g'dolim* wanted to mock the Baal Shem Tov, thinking him an ignoramus, and he asked what is the *halacha* if you forget *Yaaleh V'Yavo* in the Shmoneh Esrei on Rosh Chodesh.

The Baal Shem Tov responded: What difference does it make for either you or me? I don't forget to say it, and you would forget to say it the second time!

Why wouldn't the Baal Shem Tov forget to say *Yaaleh V'Yavo*? Is it because he *davened* from a *siddur* and saw that on Rosh Chodesh you're supposed to say, "*Yaaleh V'Yavo*?" Obviously not. That's how the *gadol's* mind worked, and so as soon as his mind was diverted, he forgot that it was Rosh Chodesh. The Baal Shem Tov *felt* Rosh Chodesh. He lived Rosh Chodesh. An additional light of holiness shines on Rosh Chodesh, and since the Baal Shem Tov's life was one of holiness, this was his breath of life. How could he forget?

For the Avos, G-dliness was their essence, and they bequeathed this to their descendents till the end of time. This is overt reality for genuine *g'dolei Yisroel*. Everything they said and did was not because of external reasons (like the clock telling you it's time to eat), but because they lived it. That's why we can't disagree with them, and we certainly can't mock them.

The story is brought in the *sichos*

of the Rebbe Rayatz that the Rebbe Maharash said that German Jews cannot be *chassidim*. He had been in Germany and he saw a chart in *shul* which said that the *davening* took 15 minutes every day, 18 minutes on Mondays and Thursdays, and 25 minutes on Shabbos. When a *chassid davens* he doesn't know when he'll finish, because if he gets inspired and feels *Elokus* in his *davening*, why would he stop? And if he's not inspired, he didn't even begin to pray!

(Similarly, they say in the name of R' Reuven Dunin, *a"h*, that when they asked him if he had *davened*,

When a chassid davens he doesn't know when he'll finish, because if he gets inspired and feels Elokus in his davening, why would he stop? And if he's not inspired, he didn't even begin to pray!

he would say: If you mean, did I turn the pages? – yes, I did that.)

LIKE IN LEIPZIG

The Rebbe told the story of the Maggid of Mezritch who had a friend from before the period of time that he became close to the Baal Shem Tov. They were both *mekubalim* and they *davened* with the mystical intentions of the Arizal. After joining the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid began *davening* at great length. His friend asked him: I also

daven with the intentions of the Ari, and it doesn't take me that long to finish!

The Maggid asked him: What do you do for a living?

The friend answered that he was a merchant, and every so often, he traveled to the fair in Leipzig. It entailed weeks of preparation, then a long trip, the stay at the fair, and the return trip.

Said the Maggid: What do you need to do all that for when you can simply stay home and imagine the whole thing?

Answered the friend: Are you serious? I need money, and in order to get it I need to be there!

Said the Maggid: Listen to what you just said. I need to be on all the levels we meditate upon in each paragraph of the *davening*. I can't stay here and imagine that I'm going from world to world. And this takes time.

This is what it's like when you do *mitzvos* by the clock. The clock indicates that now it's time to put on *t'fillin*, and now it's time for a *shiur*. You remain as you are and the Torah and *mitzvos* are separate from you, and the connection between you and Torah and *mitzvos* is the clock!

A *chassid* boasted to the Rebbe Rashab that his son had learned *Tanya* by heart and the Rebbe Rashab asked: And what did *Tanya* teach your son?

The expression for this is, "a donkey carrying a load of *s'farim*." Even if the donkey would have all of *Shas* and its commentaries on its back, it would still remain a donkey (even if it is refined in some way since it was used for *k'dusha* purposes)! As the Rebbe Rayatz writes in connection with what it says regarding the cows that carried the *aron*, "*va'yosharna ha'paros*" (lit. "and they sang," but also "and they

remained”). Even though the *aron* refined the cows somewhat and they began to sing, they remained cows.

WHAT DO WE LIVE WITH?

From time to time, we need to think about this. I’ve put on *t’fillin* hundreds and thousands of times (women: I’ve lit candles for weeks and months and years). I’ve mentioned Hashem’s name tens of thousands of times in *brachos* and *davening*. I’ve learned pages and pages of Gemara, *halachos* in *Shulchan Aruch*, chapters of *Tanya*, *maamarim* and *sichos*. Why is there such a chasm between what I do and what I feel? Why is it that when I say, “for they are our lives and the length of our days,” which refers to “Torah and *mitzvos*, statutes and laws which You taught us,” the question is how much they have affected me and to what extent I feel that “they are our lives?” Whereas eating, drinking, etc., are *k’vuim b’nefesh!*

If a doctor tells a patient that if he eats or does something it will have an adverse effect on him, the patient generally accepts it. This is so even if the doctor isn’t the most brilliant individual and doesn’t radiate honesty and upstanding behavior. The proof is that if the doctor would ask a patient for a loan of \$100, the patient wouldn’t give it to him without his signing to it.

Yet, when the Torah says that if a person does such-and-such it will be very good, and if he does otherwise it will be bad – and it’s *paskened l’halacha* in the Rambam and *Shulchan Aruch* or in *Tanya* and *chassidus* – why doesn’t this move us as much? The Rambam, the Beis Yosef, the Alter Rebbe, and the other Rebbeim are far more reliable than the doctor! If any one of them would ask us for a loan of \$1000, we would give it immediately without their needing to sign any

papers!

The problem is not that we don’t trust them and that we rely more on the doctor; it’s that we maintain that the doctor is talking about things that affect my very life, whereas the Rambam and the Beis Yosef are talking about things that *don’t* directly affect my life. They aren’t things that I live with. They’re things that I heard about and even believe, but they don’t impact me in the same way.

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doesn’t this move us
as much?***

In *chassidus* the way it’s put is that things of this world are in the category of “vision,” and matters of the soul are in the category of “hearing.” We’re not talking about someone who doesn’t believe, G-d forbid. Of course he believes! He has set times for Torah study and other *mitzva* obligations. But they aren’t “our lives.”

The *mashpia* R’ Chaim Shaul Brook, *a”h*, would say there are

three “*heims*” (in Hebrew, “they,” and in Yiddish, “home”):

“*Heim chayeinu*” – this is our life, referring to holiness;

“*Heim u’n’shei’hem u’v’nei’hem*” – they and their wives and their children, referring to *klipas noga*;

“*Heim lo yad’u drochoi*” – they didn’t know My ways, referring to the three impure *klipos*.

This is what differentiates one person from the next, i.e., what is their “*heim*,” their home, their true abode. Is it *k’dusha*, *klipas noga*, or the three impure *klipos*, G-d forbid.

By learning works of *musar* alone it is impossible to make *k’dusha* your “*heim*.” You can only frighten yourself into staying away from the other “*heims*,” but scare tactics won’t make you feel that G-dliness is true life.

Only *chassidus*, specifically as taught by the Chabad Rebbeim, who bring these teachings within our intellectual grasp, achieves this. *Chassidus* teaches that physicality in itself is worthless, and *chassidus* raises a person up so that matters of this world become things that you “hear about,” while soul matters became tangible.

R’ Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, in defense of the Jewish people, would say to Hashem: If you put all the enticements of the world in *s’farim* and put Gan Eden and Gehinom right in front of their eyes, who would sin?

This is the role and innovation of *chassidus*. *Chassidus* puts the life of our souls, and everything connected with it, before our eyes. As a result, everything associated with the body becomes removed from us, like something we hear.

(I once heard about a *gadol* who was offered something to eat. He said the doctor didn’t allow it. He was asked: Which doctor? He

answered: the Rambam in *Hilchos Deios*. If another doctor would say so, he wouldn't consider it forbidden. He would consider it a suggestion, but if the Rambam said so, it's Torah and therefore it's forbidden.)

IT'S MOSHIACH!

Why is it that *chassidus* gives us this awareness? Because *chassidus* is a taste of the World to Come, when it will become obvious to all that our true "lives" are *Elokus*, Torah, and *mitzvos*. It says that in the future, if a person would want to pick a fig on Shabbos, the fig would cry out: It's Shabbos today! (This doesn't necessarily mean that the fig will be able to speak, though Hashem can make that happen, too; it can mean that just as a person doesn't put his hand in a fire because the fire "screams" out DANGER, i.e., the danger is extremely obvious, so too, it will be just as obvious how dangerous it is for the soul to pick a fig on Shabbos.)

The stage after that is even higher – when *mitzvos* will be annulled. The Rebbe explains that this means that they will be so palpable that there will be no need for them to be commanded.

So it's clear why *chassidus* can accomplish something like this today. When I say *chassidus*, I don't just mean "learning *chassidus*," but I also refer to the "*darkei ha'chassidus*," *chassidic* ways of doing things whose purpose is to refine a person. R' Hillel of Paritch said that all the many *hiddurim* he observed were in order "that a *chassidic vort* would be better absorbed by him." And even before the study of *chassidus* and following its ways, there must be the foundation. Namely, one must have total devotion and connectedness to the Rebbe, who gives and reveals the *chassidus*.

They tell of one of the meetings of *rabbanim*, when the Rebbe Rashab met the Chafetz Chaim and the Chafetz Chaim asked him how he got the T'mimim to look so *eidel*. The Rebbe Rashab said this was accomplished through the study of *chassidus*. The Chafetz Chaim said: If that's the case, I'll have a *chassidus shiur* for my *talmidim*. The Rebbe Rashab smiled. Afterwards they asked the Rebbe Rayatz why the Rebbe Rashab had smiled, and he said: Learning *chassidus* isn't enough; you need a Rebbe, too.

This is why *chassidim* are known to be *mehader* in *mitzvos*. We see this in the punctiliousness in choosing

an *esrog*, *matza*, *tzitzis*, *t'fillin*, *kashrus*, etc. For somebody whose connection is time-based, it's possible to fulfill one's *mitzva* obligations by fulfilling minimal requirements, too. But if it's a *kvius b'nefesh*, we've never heard that a person will look for a place where, *b'diaved*, there's air to breathe. On the contrary, he'll leave that place in a hurry!

So too with all his other physical needs of food, clothing, and shelter: a person doesn't look for the easy way out. He wants the finest and the best. This is precisely how we are supposed to feel about our soul's requirements, and we ought to just "get by" when it comes to our physical needs.

Why do Chabad *chassidim* in particular, those who want to feel the "this is our life" of Torah and *mitzvos*, want to see the *hisgalus* of Moshiach? Because Moshiach is the one for whom *Elokus* is what his life is all about in the most tangible way. As the Rebbe writes about the Rebbeim: they are *neshamos* "for whom the curtain was sundered," and for them it shines down below just as it is up Above. This is why only he can be Moshiach, who will appear imminently and lead us towards this kind of life.

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PERSONAL REDEMPTION

BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

A number of amazing miracle stories that I heard from a Skolye chassid, between Mincha and Maariv in the Chabad shul in Ramat Shlomo.

“ALTER” WITH A “TAV” OR A “TES”

Last summer, while on a visit to Eretz Yisroel, I *davened* in the Chabad *shul* in Ramat Shlomo. Between Mincha and Maariv, I spoke with one of the *shul's gabbaim* about the fascinating architecture of the *shul*, which is just like that of 770 in Crown Heights.

“I think that whoever went to see the Rebbe is reminded of it when he sees this building,” I commented.

“You’re absolutely right,” said a voice from behind me. I turned around and saw a *chassidische* fellow who was dressed as a Polish *chassid*.

He said he was a Skolye *chassid* and that when he came into the *shul* for the first time he immediately recalled the *yechidus* he had had with the Rebbe.

Back in 5742, he visited the Rebbe as a member of his *rebbe's* entourage. The room where the Rebbe held private audiences is replicated in the Ramat Shlomo *shul* too, and when he saw it he was extremely moved.

Parenthetically, at that *yechidus*, the Skolye Rebbe said that when he heard the news of the release of the Rebbe Rayatz from jail in 1927, his grandfather told him to *daven* from the *amud* for Shacharis and to say Hallel after the Shmoneh Esrei!

Anyway, this Skolye *chassid* and I got into a fascinating discussion about miracles of the Rebbe. He said that one of his friends, who had also been part of that entourage, went for “dollars” years later, in 5751, and the Rebbe reminded him of the *yechidus* and asked him to convey his wishes to the Skolye Rebbe that “he have length of days over his kingdom.”

Another friend of his, a Gerer *chassid* named Alter, wrote a letter to the Rebbe in the 60’s and received an answer. Thirty years later, at the beginning of the 90’s, he wrote another letter and received a letter in return. How amazed he was when he saw a note in the margin of the second letter, where the Rebbe said he should find out how to spell his name, “Alter,” with the letter Tav or a Tes, since he spelled it differently in his two letters!

INSTANT GEULA

The Skolye *chassid* said:

I’ll tell you a miracle story of your Rebbe that just happened, through the *Igros Kodesh*. I have a Lubavitcher friend, who until recently, wanted nothing to do with the *Igros Kodesh* miracles. He thought that after Gimmel Tammuz you cannot receive answers from the Rebbe, and he even mocked those who did so.

One night he was visiting a Chabad center, and the one in charge had to leave for a few minutes to take care of something. He asked my friend to take over for him. My friend agreed, and he sat at the desk. Not a minute went by before a woman walked in and asked for his help in writing to the Rebbe.

My friend tried to convince her that you can’t write to the Rebbe anymore, but she insisted and said she had heard that not only could you write to the Rebbe but that the Rebbe answers through the *Igros Kodesh*.

When he saw she wouldn’t give up, he told her how to write to the Rebbe. A few minutes later, she came back with her letter and asked him to put it into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. This was too much for him and he tried to get out of it, but she was persistent and he finally put her letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*.

When she asked him to read the letter, he didn't even try to protest but said he would just read the words, and that's all!

On the page that he had put the letter into, there was a letter in which the Rebbe explains that the redemption of the Rebbe Rayatz on 12 Tammuz was a general redemption from which strength can be drawn by every individual for their personal redemption.

He didn't know what she had written, so he didn't understand what answer she had from this letter, but she seemed very satisfied.

Her cell phone rang and she answered with a calm hello, but when she heard who had called her she looked stunned. From that point on, her tone changed completely. She didn't say much but she looked more and more shocked.

“When I got the answer about a personal redemption, I felt that the Rebbe was writing that especially for me. Every word that I read spoke to me, to my particular situation...”

The odd conversation was over in less than a minute, and when she was through the woman said, “You have no idea how fast the Rebbe took care of my personal

redemption. It wasn't only a precise answer in the *Igros Kodesh* – the *bracha* was fulfilled instantly!”

My friend had no idea what was going on and as much as he shunned *Igros Kodesh* stories, this time he was curious to hear what this was all about. The woman said:

“My husband and I are in the process of getting divorced. We just didn't get along and we came to the mutual conclusion that we needed to separate and build new lives. The problem began when my husband began asking for sizable sums of the money I had brought into the marriage. He kept making new demands and threatened that he wouldn't give the *get* if he didn't get what he asked for.

“Since I refused to submit to his blackmail he broke off all contact and I've been left without a husband



The Chabad *shul* in Ramat Shlomo, a replica of 770, overlooking neighborhoods in Yerushalayim

and without a *get* for half a year now, as an *aguna*. Since I heard about the amazing *brachos* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, I decided to try it myself, and that's why I came here. I wrote my story to the Rebbe and asked for a *bracha* to be free of this man.

"When I got the answer about a personal redemption, I felt that the Rebbe was writing that especially for me. Every word that I read spoke to me, to my particular situation. I was happy to receive the Rebbe's *bracha* but I didn't dream that the *bracha* would be fulfilled so quickly. As soon as I finished reading the answer, my phone rang and it was my husband!

"I was stunned by the fact that he had called me after half a year in which we hadn't spoken, especially when the timing was so amazing, right after I had written to the Rebbe. But the biggest shock was when I heard him say that he had come to the conclusion that things couldn't go on like this anymore, and he was ready to forget about his demands and to give me a *get*!"

A DOORWAY WITHOUT A MEZUZA

My friend was stunned by this open miracle that took place before his eyes. He had heard and read amazing miracle stories after Gimmel Tammuz, but he always thought it was impossible and that people were exaggerating or were adding or omitting details. However now, when he personally took part in and witnessed the miracle, a crack in his wall of coldness appeared and he began to rethink the topic.

To his credit let it be said that he's an honest man and when he came to the conclusion that his approach until that point had been in error, he decided to change his way of thinking. As a first step, he decided that he himself would write

to the Rebbe.

As a *chassid*, he sorely missed the connection with the Rebbe accomplished in writing a *Pa"N*, and when he realized he could write, he felt that the Rebbe had been restored to him. Once again, he could pour out his heart to the Rebbe and know that someone was listening, and that help was available if he needed it.

My friend actually did need help. One of his children, a very talented boy, had a peculiar problem. When he went to school, he stopped communicating. He could sit for days in class without saying a word. He didn't speak with his classmates,

My friend kept his problem mostly to himself though he consulted with some experts. None of them could figure it out. Why didn't the boy speak in school?

didn't answer his teacher's questions, and was utterly removed from his environment.

Strangely enough, when he went home the problem disappeared. He sat with his father in the evening and reviewed everything he had learned, like any other child. It was truly bizarre. The boy's teacher, who had called my friend for an urgent meeting, was shocked to hear that the boy acted normally at home. He simply didn't believe that this was possible until my friend taped his son reviewing his learning so that he could see that the boy listened in

class and understood everything that was taught.

My friend kept his problem mostly to himself though he consulted with some experts. None of them could figure it out. Why didn't the boy speak in school?

Now, in his first letter to the Rebbe, after years of not writing, my friend poured out his heart to the Rebbe and asked for advice and a *bracha* for his son. He took a volume of *Igros Kodesh* and stuck his letter into the volume, hoping he would get a clear answer and a *bracha*.

The answer he got was dumbfounding. He had placed his letter by a letter from the Rebbe in which the Rebbe responds to someone who had asked for a *bracha* for his son's speech problems, and the Rebbe wrote that he should check all the doorways of his home to see if there was a doorway without a *mezuzah*.

My friend went to check the doorways of his house. He went from room to room until he finally found a doorway to a tiny closet of a room that did not have a *mezuzah*!

He put up a *mezuzah* that very day and the next day his son spoke for the first time in school! As the days went by, his son opened up more and more and within a short time he was like any other child.

* * *

As I said, I heard this from the Skolye *chassid* whom I met in the Chabad *shul* in Ramat Shlomo. Last Tishrei the story was told in 770 and Rabbi Zalman Notik who was present at the *farbrengen* added that he heard the second part of the story from the boy's teacher. The teacher was so amazed by the miracle that had taken place before his eyes, that he began to publicize that even today we can write to the Rebbe and see miracles and wonders.

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ALL ABOUT STORYTELLING

FROM THE BOOK L'SAPER M'BEREISHIS
BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

*Many new books have been published lately, including many that relate chassidic tales and tell us about chassidic luminaries. * What is important about a chassidic book? How should a story be told? What purpose is accomplished in the telling of a story? What about the listener – does he have any responsibilities? * Now that we've celebrated Didan Natzach and have taken advantage of the Hei Teives sales, let's see what our Rebbeim had to say about stories of tzaddikim and chassidim.*

Our holy Rebbeim effusively praised stories of *chassidim* and *tzaddikim*. If you examine a selection of quotes from their *sichos* and *maamarim* or in their writings and letters, you quickly notice five categories:

The Book: the importance of writing stories and bringing them to the public (the agent)

The Writer/Storyteller: how to tell a story (the *mashpia*)

The Story: the importance of the story (the means)

The Purpose of a Story: what does the story teach and what does it accomplish (the goal)

The Listener: who should listen and how to listen to a story (the *mekabel*)

What follows is a compilation of statements from our Rebbeim that relate to all five categories.

THE BOOK

The Rebbe Rayatz, in a letter, writes: "Every member of *Anash* and the T'mimim ought to write, in whatever language is easiest, whether in Lashon HaKodesh or the spoken language, all he recalls. Whoever finds it difficult to write himself, in light of the great benefit to him personally, materially and spiritually, and for the benefit of the

Klal, and to earn merits of holiness, should try to get someone to write what he tells them." (1)

The Rebbe Rayatz once said: "I once brought a book of stories to my father, the Rebbe. They weren't written by the Rebbeim but by those from the Rebbe's household, and my father was very pleased. He said to me: I value this more than if you would bring me something written by a Rebbe.

"It's known how precious a manuscript was to my father. He sacrificed his life to obtain a manuscript of the Alter Rebbe, yet a book of stories was more precious to him." (2)

The Rebbe also told about the *gaon* and *chassid* R' Yitzchok Isaac of Homil, who was sent by his Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, to the Ruzhiner Rebbe regarding some communal matter. While he was there, he saw two of his *chassidim* who had come to their Rebbe to obtain his approbation to their books.

One of them brought his book, which contained his original Torah thoughts, and the other one brought an anthology of stories of *tzaddikim* and *chassidim*. How surprised R' Isaac was when he saw that the Ruzhiner *tzaddik* gave his approbation to the *chassid* who had written a book of stories, and only

afterwards gave his approbation to the author of the *chiddushei Torah*.

When R' Yisroel Ruzhiner saw R' Isaac's astonishment, he explained why he had done what he did, and concluded:

"We go in the order that Hashem gave us the Torah, first the book of B'Reishis that contains stories of the righteous, as the Midrash says: Who did He consult with? With the souls of *tzaddikim*. Only afterwards comes the book of Shmos, which begins to deal with the laws of the Torah – 'this month shall be to you.'

"The two authors are *chassidim* of stature, and both manuscripts are wonderful. The *chiddushei Torah* relate the scholarliness and the insights that the author thought up in Torah, while the stories of *tzaddikim* relate the *chiddushim* that

Hashem innovated and continues to innovate in His world. That is why we first gave an approbation to the book of stories of *tzaddikim* and then to the *chiddushei Torah*." (3)

THE WRITER/STORYTELLER

The Rebbe Rayatz relates, in his father's name:

There's an additional advantage, the advantage of the storyteller. Even though it makes no difference who the storyteller is, when it comes to the effects of the story there's a big difference. When my father, the Rebbe Maharash, would tell a story, you had to listen with all ten soul powers and analyze each letter, because something that he said affects all ten soul powers. (4)

The one who tells a story needs greater preparation than one who relates a deep *maamer*, and one who

hears a story – even the best *mekabel* from the weakest *mashpia* – needs greater preparation than when he hears the deepest *maamer*. When you tell an authentic story, it sets the person on the path of peace and the path of truth, and when you tell a story that is not authentic, it makes you into a *chitzon* (a superficial person driven by the thoughts and opinions of others) and liar.

The one telling the story must tell it with all its details, so the listener will feel he's living through it. (5)

You need to learn how to tell a *chassidic* story, not to pretty up the story with explanations and personal interpretations, and to tell it with each detail in the correct order. One needs to teach oneself how to sing a *chassidic niggun*, to sing without the trills of a *chazan*. *Chassidic* stories and *niggunim* established, with Hashem's help, generations of *chassidim*, *baalei avoda* (6).

...I've seen this palpably with the stories I had the privilege of hearing from my father, the Rebbe. Not only was he particular with the details in a way that made it all clear, he would also describe the location and situation in such detail, so that the story of what happened and the event would be vivid before the eyes of the listener ... (7)

* * *

The Rebbe Rayatz wrote in a letter:

It is well-known from the holy Rebbeim that any story of *tzaddikim* or *chassidim*, no matter the content – for even a story that at first glance doesn't seem to have any content, really does have much content – must be told with great precision, and even a paragraph of a story must be told precisely. (8)

... When you tell a story, it is



hiskashrus with the level of action of the *tzaddik*. (9)

The Rebbe Rayatz related in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, who heard it from the Rebbe Maharash:

You need intelligence to tell a story ... (10)

The Rebbe Rayatz also said:

Once, at the Pesach Seder, the Tzemach Tzedek explained a familiar paragraph in an unusual manner:

“It’s a *mitzva* to relate the story of the exodus from Egypt” – by telling the story of the exodus from Egypt, you go out of Egypt. “And even if we’re all wise and we’re all discerning and we all know the Torah” – a perfect Chabadnik – it’s still “a *mitzva* for us to tell,” i.e. we need to tell *chassidic* stories, and by telling them we go out of Egypt. (11)

THE STORY

The Alter Rebbe said:

When we heard Torah from our Rebbe, the Maggid of Mezritch, we considered it the Oral Torah, and when we heard a story from our Rebbe, we considered it the Written Torah.

A story from a *tzaddik* is the Written Torah. (12)

Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash, related:

I heard from the Rebbe, my father-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, at a meal on Chanuka: A *chassidic* story is the soul of *chassidus*. (13)

The Rebbe Rayatz writes in a letter that he heard from his father, the Rebbe Rashab, in the name of his father, the Rebbe Maharash:

I love stories and talk of *chassidim*, even those things that are not so precise, and even those things that are exaggerated. *Chassidic* stories warm and

illuminate a *chassidic* home.

Chassidic sichos Chullin (mundane talk) is *Chullin al taharas ha’kodesh* (the mundane elevated to the purity of holiness). *Chassidic d’varim beteilim* (idle chatter) that is manifested in the telling of stories filled with exaggerations, is amongst the things referred to in the Gemara, Tractate Chullin, which states that “everything the Torah prohibited, it permitted something similar.” (14)

The Rebbe Rashab said:

Chassidic stories are a general *hatava* (lit. improvement or preparation), that make a person into a man of fine character and an *oveid Hashem*. After *hatavas ha’neiros* [a ref. to the service in the Holy Temple of preparing the lights of the *menora*], comes the light that shines forth. (15)

The Rebbe Rayatz related:

Every story is a window. Through this window shines the light of *avoda* whose source is the sun of *chassidus*. This light illuminates all dark corners of all people. (16)

By the elder *chassidim* there was no need for “Ask your father and he’ll tell you”; they would tell on their own (without being asked). They didn’t consider a story something to simply tell over, but a lesson for life. A story like this was necessarily engraved forever. (17)

The Rebbe Rayatz explained the Gemara in Brachos (7b), “Greater is the service of Torah than its study” as follows:

There are two things in Torah: 1) its learning 2) its service.

The quality of Torah is very great. We lack the proper words to clearly express the greatness of Torah study, but, after all this greatness of Torah study, its service, the stories of Torah and the stories of those who learn Torah, *tzaddikim* and *gaonim*, is greater still.

Briefly put: Learning Torah is the body and the service of Torah is the soul. A body without a soul is dead, *r”l*. A soul needs a body. A soul without a body is not what we call life. True life is when the soul is in the body. In the world of Torah, learning it without its service is a body without a soul, and its service without learning it is a soul without a body. True life is when you have both – the learning and the service. (18)

...The true service of Torah is the *chassidic farbrengen*, because at a *farbrengen* – when it’s done as the *chassidic* elders did in every generation – you tell stories of *tzaddikim* and *chassidim* with the lesson in them. And you explain what you need to learn from them, arousing the appropriate inspiration to the content of the stories, and to a certain degree this results in actual staying away from evil and doing good. It is for this reason that our holy Chabad Rebbeim and the famous *chassidic tzaddikim* loved *chassidic farbrengens* and the telling of stories. (19)

The Rebbe writes in one of his letters:

It’s known how our holy Rebbeim valued stories of *tzaddikim* and *chassidim*. And the *sicha* of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, is known – that the book of B’Reishis precedes the other books of the Torah, even though it consists mostly of stories of *tzaddikim*, and the books that follow it contain the *mitzvos* of the Torah. (20)

THE PURPOSE OF A STORY

The Rebbe Rayatz writes in a letter:

You must know that every story has a lesson in life. Every story ought to lead to a good character trait, to inner enthusiasm in *hiddur mitzva*, and to feeling the pleasant ways of *Toras ha’chassidus*. (21)

The Rebbe Rayatz also says:

Every story ought to add to an *inyan* in *avoda* and to bring about an opening of the heart and mind in *haskala*. Every story ought to lead to straightening out crookedness in the heart.

The book of B'Reishis is mostly stories, and is called the Book of the Upright, because the holy stories therein straighten out a person's heart and mind so that they are vessels to receive Torah and *avoda*. Every story ought to bring to a benefit in *haskala* and *avoda*. (22)

On another occasion, the Rebbe Rayatz said:

I see an inestimable value in every single *chassidic* story; even the simple and commonplace stories bring great benefit... (23)

The Rebbe MH" M writes:

Stories of *tzaddikim*, *chassidic* leaders...just as they emphasized the importance of stories of *tzaddikim*, how within them are contained the soul and soul-of-the-soul of Torah, and being that Hashem repays measure for measure, so too do they merit that it be fulfilled in their stories. Namely, that even if it seems as only a garment to the body, it is possible to illuminate them with the soul-of-the-soul.

THE LISTENER

The Rebbe Rayatz writes in the name of his father:

Once, in the summer of 5656 (1896), my father said: You need intelligence to tell a story. Moreover, you need intelligence to listen to a story. (25)

The Rebbe Rashab would say:

When my father would tell a story, you had to listen with all ten soul powers and analyze each letter, because a statement of his affected all ten soul powers.

Furthermore, some people think

that the listener needs to be an adult with the ability to grasp miracle stories, etc., and that little children shouldn't be shocked, etc.

Regarding this, the Rebbe said:

My father-in-law, the Rebbe, said that when the children – the Rebbe's children – were young, he hired a teacher for them. The teacher thought that children shouldn't hear scary things, like miracles and wondrous things that aren't understandable. He thought this was

When you tell an authentic story, it sets the person on the path of peace and the path of truth, and when you tell a story that is not authentic, it makes you into a chitzon (a superficial person driven by the thoughts and opinions of others) and liar.

for adults, who can understand intellectual things properly and who are able to accept miracles. But children will only be shocked, and therefore – thought the teacher – you should only teach those parts of Judaism that are intellectually understood.

When the Rebbe Rashab found out about this pedagogical approach, he fired the teacher.

You need to begin with *emuna*

and *kabbalas ol* and not with intellect! Even things that can be understood intellectually, need to be done with *kabbalas ol*. So too with *chinuch*, you need to tell children about miracles that are above intellect, and it plants *emuna* within them. Complaints that this is not orderly, and what do you need to start with shocking material, come from the *yetzer ha'ra*, the old and foolish king. (26)

* * *

May we all, storytellers and listeners, be proper *keilim* to internalize stories, to learn a lesson and insight, and to behave in accordance with the will of our Rebbeim and to give them *nachas*.

Notes

- 1) Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 5, p. 97099
- 2) Seifer HaSichos 5702, 13 Shvat, os 1
- 3) Igros Kodesh Rayatz, vol. 6, p. 75-77
- 4) Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1, likut 5, os 10
- 5) Seifer HaSichos 5704, Naso, s'if 6
- 6) Lik. Dib. vol. 3, likut 23, os 49
- 7) Seifer HaToldos Rashab p. 127
- 8) Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 6, p. 280
- 9) Seifer HaSichos 5701 (Heb.) p. 72-73
- 10) Seifer HaToldos Rashab p. 127
- 11) HaTamim, choveres 8, p. 8-9
- 12) Lik. Dib. 3 likut 23 os 30
- 13) HaTamim – choveres 8, p. 8-9
- 14) Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 4, p. 59
- 15) Seifer HaMaamarim 5711, p. 60
- 16) Ibid p. 147
- 17) Lik. Dib. Pesach 5694
- 18) Seifer HaSichos 5701, 2 Nissan os 3
- 19) Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 6, p 75-77
- 20) Igros Kodesh Admur shlita vol. 5, p. 327-328
- 21) Igros Kodesh Rayatz, vol. 4, p. 489
- 22) Lik. Dib. vol. 1, likut 5, vol. 2, os 10
- 23) Igros Kodesh Rayatz, vol. 5 p. 115
- 24) Igros Kodesh Admur shlita vol. 7, p. 73
- 25) Seifer HaToldos Rashab p. 127
- 26) Likkutei Sichos, vol. 19, p. 19; also see Igros Kodesh vol. 22, p. 298

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

BY RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER VOLPE

A few weeks ago there was a big to-do and the world turned over. What a scandal! A few losers who were thrown out of their own Leftist parties presented a ridiculous “peace plan” in Geneva, which was all about dismantling settlements and giving away land to our Arab enemies.

All the official and unofficial Lubavitch spokesmen protested on behalf of a Complete Eretz Yisroel. One rabbi tore up the agreement in front of the cameras. Others danced around a bonfire made of the agreement. Still others cried “traitors.” The media called these protesters “inciters,” and referred to Rabin’s assassination. Then came the apologies and of course we heard, “this is not the way of official Chabad.” While all this was going on, the Geneva folk enjoyed the publicity.

I beg to differ with all those approaches. Yossi Beilin is not a traitor. He’s loyal to the approach he has always championed. There is no need to tear up or burn the Geneva Joke because the document can’t change a thing and merely serves the personal interests of those who wrote it up. The act of betrayal is not on the part of the Left.

This is our problem. We shoot all our ammunition at the wrong

targets, and the real enemy rubs his hands in glee.

The prime minister of Israel and his ministers are the real traitors. Ariel Sharon was elected to strengthen Eretz Yisroel and to fight terrorism, and he has betrayed his electorate. He has betrayed the Holy Land. He has betrayed the thousand people who, because of his corrupt

“I beg to differ. From a Chabad chassidic perspective, nothing terrible happened. It is good that Arutz Sheva is no longer operating...”

politics, died *al kiddush Hashem*. He is the one who has betrayed the tens of thousands of maimed and injured, amputees, blind, unconscious, widows, widowers, and orphans.

Sharon, Mofaz, and Olmert are the ones who, because of their announcements, heighten the terror and garner us new sacrifices every

week. The ministers of Ichud Leumi and Mafdal are senior collaborators to this betrayal, and they are the ones ignoring the tens of thousands of people who voted for them who sacrifice themselves for the land.

How pleased the *yarmulke*-wearing ministers are when they see those who are supposed to be fighting the “wars of Hashem,” the wars of the king of the house of Dovid, emptying their quivers against the empty balloon of the Geneva Illusion, while they sit on the dais at Yud-Tes Kislev and Chanuka events in Lubavitch. They speak of G-d, but hypocritically vote for Sharon’s policies.

We just celebrated Chanuka, hoping and praying that the *rigla d’turmuda’i* (*tarmud* containing the same letters as “*moredes*,” meaning the rebellious one) be eradicated. When we look at what took place recently, we are frightened by the thought that the leader of the Zionist government in the Holy Land and his band of ministers, are the ones that rebel! It is for them and the eradication of their traitorous government that we lit the *menora* on Chanuka.

For decades, the Rebbe screamed that the territories should be settled, nothing should be given away, and the terrorists should be eliminated.

Melech HaMoshiach stands and fights to save us, and who openly rebels against him (in a way of, “knowing his Master and intending to rebel against him?”)? Peres? Beilin? Achmad Tibi?

The chief rebel is Arik Sharon, who just announced as law that Israeli soldiers will forcibly remove hundreds of Jews from their land. This is open rebellion against Hashem, against Moshiach, against the Jewish people, and against Eretz Yisroel!

Where are our leaders? It isn't pleasant to enlist *Anash* to protest against the real rebels, so what do we do? We expend our energy on the clowns, Beilin and company, and we invite the rebels and their collaborators to *farbrengens*, ceremonies, and gatherings. We honor them by asking them to speak, and we pat them on the shoulder and say, “you are our brothers.”

Another event took place, which rocked our world. *Rachmana litzlan*, they shut down Arutz Sheva. The Chabad newspapers yelled, “Bolsheviks! They don't allow freedom of speech!”

I beg to differ. From a Chabad *chassidic* perspective, nothing terrible happened. It is good that Arutz Sheva is no longer operating. There is no excuse for a station that speaks on behalf of the religious to broadcast vulgar songs. If they can't function without them, we will manage without Arutz Sheva, with G-d's help. We cannot build the house of G-d in ways that are not in accordance with *Shulchan Aruch*.

Furthermore, every Thursday night there was a program in which a rabbi responded to questions. On many occasions, terrible things were said in the name of Torah. They

spoke of the Medina being *is'chalta d'Geula*, something which the Rebbe said caused *korbanos*. Better that a station that talks of things that have led to *korbanos*, no longer operate.

The station has also broadcasted things against our belief, which is based on the *b'suras ha'Geula* of the Rebbe himself. In addition, the rabbi said things regarding *ikrei emuna* that are not acceptable. I heard this myself: A woman said



that what Ramban says in the *sidra* doesn't fit with scientific reality as we currently know it. The rabbi responded in his soft singsong: So the Ramban made a mistake! When the woman couldn't believe what she was hearing, he went on to say: Did Dovid HaMelech not err? So, did he stop being Dovid HaMelech? So, even the Ramban erred!

There's another rabbi from Kiryat Arba who answered questions

occasionally. When somebody asked about the controversy between the Vilna Gaon and *chassidus*, the rabbi answered along the following lines: You can't use the word “controversy,” when referring to *chassidim* and *misnagdim*. There's no controversy here. The *misnagdim* follow *Shulchan Aruch* and the *chassidim* go against *Shulchan Aruch*!

On another occasion, he told a listener that it's *asur* to learn *chassidus*.

When our families listen to the “holy” Arutz Sheva and hear things like this, and the songs that are played, it penetrates the *neschama*. After all, this isn't a station of *k'fira* but Arutz Sheva!

When are we going to finally rid ourselves of the dust of “nationalism,” “religious nationalism,” and the “Right,” that clings to us? Chabad is not nationalism. Chabad isn't Zionism. And Chabad isn't the Right.

We are Soldiers of the House of Dovid. We have one mission, i.e., to reveal Moshiach and to fight his wars (including *shleimus ha'Aretz*, *hafatzas ha'maayanos*, etc.) When we have this goal before our eyes, then the Zionist prime minister who sheds our blood is far worse than Shimon Peres. “Nationalistic” ministers who support a government that uproots settlements are worse than Beilin. A radio station and paper that are the “religious Right” that disdains our Rebbe, *chassidus*, and *ikrei emuna* and the foundations of our *chinuch*, are nowhere to be found in our camp.

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

SHLUCHIM RELATE – MORE STORIES

BY NOSSON AVROHOM AND PINCHAS PIZEM

*A selection of amazing stories that were told at farbrengens during the Kinus HaShluchim 5764. * Part 2.*

A BRACHA FULFILLED WITHOUT HAVING TO WAIT IN LINE

Rabbi Moshe Axelrod, director of the Chabad house in Atlit relates:

In 5738, there was a terrible terrorist attack on the coast road.

Dozens of people were killed and wounded, including three members of the Oichman family, a distinguished and wealthy family in Atlit. The mother and oldest daughter were killed and the father was critically wounded. After weeks of unconsciousness and being connected to a respirator, the father, Yossi, recovered and eventually remarried.

A few years went by and the couple had no children. Yossi, who had suffered so much already, found this additional burden unbearable.



In 5751, he went on a quick business trip to New York. The council leader at that time asked me to arrange for Yossi to be able to get a *bracha* from the Rebbe without having to wait in line.

I called Rabbi Yekusiel Rapp, and he arranged things for Yossi, who got a *bracha* from the Rebbe for children. A year later, the couple had a daughter.

The next day this news item was broadcast on all the stations and in the papers within Eretz Yisroel and abroad, and made a great *kiddush Hashem*. Since then, Yossi has become a regular contributor to the Chabad house of Atlit.

TOO CLOSE TO CALL

Rabbi Amram Shaatal, *shliach* in Tel Mond relates:

The present council leader in Tel Mond once visited the Rebbe and received *brachos* for personal issues. He also presented a key to the city to the Rebbe, along with the signatures of all the council members inviting the Rebbe to visit the *yishuv*.

Before the recent elections held in the *yishuv*, the council leader was

doing terribly in the polls. When I heard this, I told his son and friends to tell him to write to the Rebbe, as he had done in the past, and to ask for a *bracha*.

A few days later, I met him on the street. He was doing even more poorly and he was feeling very pressured. Once again I suggested that he write to the Rebbe, but he objected, not thinking it was possible to do so.

I spoke to him for a while and explained about *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, but he rejected my explanations. Some time later, on Erev Simchas Torah, I got a phone call from him.

“Amram, I want to write to the Rebbe,” he said.

I asked him to come to *shul* in two hours, when I would have finished giving my class. Two hours later, his oldest son, a student who is very intelligent, came to *shul*. I told him what he needed to do before writing to the Rebbe, and in a phone conversation between him and his father it was decided that since I had bought him *t’fillin* but he didn’t use them every day, he would commit to putting them on daily.

In the answer he opened to, the Rebbe wrote a *bracha* to a *rosh yeshiva* on his new appointment. The son read this answer and was very excited. He happily called his father and told him the Rebbe’s

amazing answer.

In the days that followed, the council leader's position was still awful and he was expected to lose the election. This was definitely a challenge in *emuna* for us since the Rebbe's letter was clear, but the polls predicted the worst.

The night after the elections, as the ballots were counted, it became obvious that it was a close race between him and his competitors. A few hours later, the news was that he had won!

The results of the election shocked everybody, especially those who ran the polls that predicted doom. At the victory celebration, the council leader told about the Rebbe's answer that he had gotten through the *Igros Kodesh*, a *bracha* by which he had been reelected for another term.

WHY DIDN'T THE REBBE BLESS THE "COHEN"?

Rabbi Sholom Dovber Volpe of Kiryat Gat relates:

Some years ago, the *rav* of Komemiyut, the *gaon* Rabbi Menachem Mendel Mendelsohn, told me that once a Satmar *chassid* said to him, "You are now speaking to a Jew who saw *ruach ha'kodesh*." When Rav Mendelsohn asked him what he meant, the Satmar *chassid* said, "A few years ago I visited relatives of mine who live in Williamsburg. They tried to convince me to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe. At first, I politely refused, since I'm not too excited about visiting *Admurim*, and it's a pity for the *bittul Torah* that I cause by visiting them. But they insisted that I go and after they pestered me I decided to go and see what they were talking about.



The Rebbe was blessing each of them with "yashar ko'ach Kohen." I figured the Rebbe didn't know me, so I could join the Kohanim and get a bracha, too...

It was Hoshana Rabba when I found myself on the threshold of the back door of 770. I ended up staying there the next day too, on Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah. When I *davened* there on Simchas Torah I saw the crowd move aside to allow a few dozen people near the Rebbe. I asked somebody what was going on and I was told that these men were Kohanim and the Rebbe was blessing each of them with "yashar ko'ach Kohen." I figured the

Rebbe didn't know me, so I could join the Kohanim and get a *bracha*, too.

I stood in line with the Kohanim, who passed by the Rebbe and got a *bracha*. When it was my turn the Rebbe remained silent, and then the Rebbe continued blessing the people

behind me.

THE MIRACLE OF RAIN IN TEL AVIV

Rabbi Amir Kahana, dean of the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv relates:

Three years ago we decided to build a *mikva* in Ramat Aviv. The story of how the *mikva* came to be built is replete with miracles and

numerous answers from the Rebbe. When we asked how to build the *mikva*, we opened to "it should be a beautiful *mikva*



building," and so we invested a lot of money into the building. It would be accurate to say that it's one of the most beautiful *mikvaos* in the world.

Ramat Aviv has a great shortage of land, and in order to build a *mikva* we couldn't buy a lot but had to rent one. While searching for a suitable spot we found a hole in the floor the *yeshiva* is on, and we discovered that the basement is quite spacious. We were thrilled to see this and immediately began plans for construction, consulting with Rabbi Mordechai Shmuel Ashkenazi, *rav* of Kfar Chabad. It was amazing how the space was absolutely perfect for the *mikva*. At first, we were missing just ten centimeters, but after we grouted the tiles it was perfect.

An amazing miracle happened that year. Yud Shvat came out on Shabbos, and we had a *farbrengen* at the *yeshiva*. Rabbi Boaz Lerner, a *chassid* who knows about *mikvaos*, was there. During the *farbrengen*, we spoke about how it was already the middle of Shvat and not enough rain had fallen to fill the pit with rainwater.

In the afternoon, after we *davened* Mincha, we asked the Rebbe for a *bracha*. When we read the Rebbe's answer together we stood there openmouthed in amazement. The Rebbe wrote that the responsibility for the lack of rain in the entire area was ours! We were

shocked. We spent a long time trying to figure out what the Rebbe meant. After all, this was one of the nicest *mikvaos* in the world and we hadn't skimmed on any aspect of its construction. What could the problem be?

We didn't waste precious time but went up to the roof of the building and after examining every nook and cranny we discovered that on the gutter where the rainwater had to pass through there was a rusty nail (which invalidates the water, which needs to be pure and clean). There was also a ladder that was leaning in such a way that the top touched the channel of water. Rabbi Lerner corrected these two problems.

We hadn't yet gone downstairs when a strong wind began to blow, and it poured! Rabbi Lerner's hat flew off in the wind and all the *bachurim* who were there, and had witnessed what had happened, were amazed by the miracle.

One Friday, the Am Chofshi (anti-religious) movement demonstrated outside the *mikva*. They were afraid that building a *mikva* in the neighborhood would undermine their position in Ramat Aviv. They had put out ads on the university campus, but sadly for the organizers, nobody showed up and they had to postpone their protest for the following week.

The next week they brought a busload of new immigrants along with protest signs and they paid the people to stand there all day. A *mekurav* of the *yeshiva* went out, seemingly to join their protest, but after standing there a little while he gaily announced lunch upstairs in the *yeshiva*.

Hearing this, they all trooped upstairs and became part of a *chassidische farbrengen*, at the end of which they all put on *t'fillin*. When the Am Chofshi people showed up

later...

THE DOLLAR WANDERED AROUND FOR TWELVE YEARS

Rabbi Yigal Kaspi, *shliach* in Maalot relates:

In 5752, on 26 Cheshvan, I passed by the Rebbe for "dollars." A few days later, I mistakenly used the dollar I had received from the Rebbe in a store. When I discovered my error, it was too late to find the dollar.

This year when I attended the Kinus HaShluchim, I went into a store and in my change I noticed a dollar with writing on it. When I read it, I was shocked to discover that it was my handwriting, and it was the very same dollar I had lost twelve years ago! You can just imagine how thrilled I was.

THE ARAB WHO GOT THE JEW TO WRITE TO THE REBBE

Rabbi Boaz Kali, one of the heads of the schools in Chaifa and Kiryot, relates:

We were doing renovations at our home and we had Arab workers working for us every day. One day, a neighbor came to me in order to



write to the Rebbe. The Arab painter who saw the neighbor get excited over the Rebbe's answer, asked what was going on. I explained to him about asking a holy man for a blessing, and told him about the miracles that took place as a result.

The Arab liked the idea and he asked if he could write to the Rebbe, too. I said he could, but he had to make some sort of positive resolution. Since he had already committed to observing the Seven Noachide Laws, I suggested that he commit to publicizing the laws among his friends and acquaintances.

He agreed, and he wrote a letter and put it into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. The letter he opened to had a *bracha* for success and many *brachos*. At the end of the letter, the Rebbe wrote about the significance of the beard from a *chassidic* perspective. The Arab began growing a beard. (By the way, I saw in a recently published book that in the old handwritten manuscripts of Rabbi Yonoson Shteif, it says that a gentile *should* grow a beard for a number of reasons.)

A few days later, I met the Arab (now with a beard) at a bus station on the way to Chaifa. He told me that since he had written to the Rebbe, his fortune had taken a turn for the better. "There's nobody like your Rebbe," he said.

He explained: "The very night I wrote the letter to the Rebbe I got a phone call from someone who owed me a lot of money. I had already despaired of ever seeing that money again, and he told me, 'Come take the money. I'm sorry it took so long.' An hour went by and an architect from Chaifa called me. It had been a long time since he had provided work for me and he was calling to offer me a serious construction project in Carmel. Since that day, whatever I do is



blessed.”

His amazement about the Rebbe's *brachos* was boundless and he wanted to hear about the significance of growing a beard. The bus was delayed, so I explained to him about the beard and how it signifies the 13 Attributes of Mercy, and that it is Hashem's light upon us, whereas the hairs of the head are “excesses of the brain” and represent the evil inclination.

A *kibbutznik* from Kfar Masrik (a village near Acco) was standing nearby. He had hair down to his shoulders. He was listening in to our conversation and he interjected, “How did this Arab get a *bracha* from the Rebbe? Can I get one, too?”

I said, “Gladly, though you are, *baruch Hashem*, a Jew, and you need to put *t'fillin* on first.” He willingly put on *t'fillin* and then sat down to write to the Rebbe. He wrote his life story and recent events in his life, and he asked for a *bracha* for a serious operation that he had to have on his head. He recited “*Yechi*” and then put his letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*.

On the page he opened to, the Rebbe was writing to someone with an illness and saying that he had no reason to be concerned about the doctors' worries and that his

situation wasn't as bad as it seemed.

Despite his doctors' warnings the operation went smoothly, to the astonishment of the doctors and the medical staff who had anticipated a long recovery period.

COOPERATION AMONG SHLUCHIM

Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz, *shliach* in Beit Shaan relates:

During *Aseres Yemei T'shuva* of this year, I visited various schools in Beit Shaan to do *Kaparos* with the children and to talk to them about Yom Kippur. One day I got a call from Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm, *shliach* in Thailand, who told me about a *bachur* who was in Thailand for years and was very involved at the Chabad house and participated regularly in the *davening* and classes. “He's flying to Eretz Yisroel now and I gave him your phone number so you can tell him where to *daven* on Yom Kippur, and in general, guide him during his stay.”

Two days later the *bachur* called and I helped him out. At the end of his visit, he asked me to get him two copies of *Towards a Meaningful Life* by Rabbi Simon Jacobson.

I got the two books but he didn't call back. The next morning two young women came to the Chabad

house to do *Kaparos*. When I heard that they live on Kibbutz Sdeh Nachum, I asked them if they knew the *bachur*.

One of them said she did, and that she was his sister-in-law. She asked me where I knew him from, and I told her about the books he had asked me to get, which I still had.

She exclaimed, “Yes, one of the books is for me!”

The connection of the two women with the Chabad house grew stronger as time went by. That Yom Kippur the *bachur* and four of his friends from *kibbutzim* in the area came to the Chabad *shul* in Beit Shaan.

New lines of communication opened with the members of that *kibbutz*. “Thanks to the cooperation between *shluchim* in Thailand and Beit Shaan, we managed to break through the hostility and to get into the *kibbutz* and bring them *Yiddishkeit* and *chassidus*.”

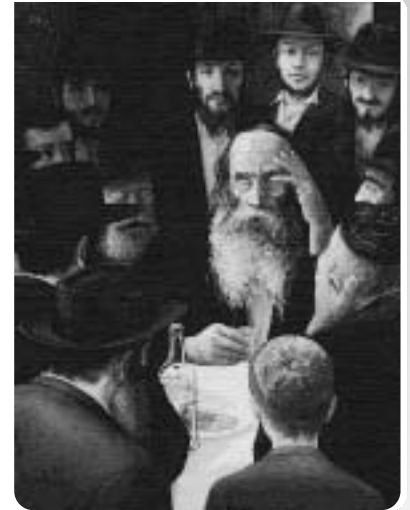


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SOME ROAD MAP!

BY RABBI YEHESKEL LEBOVIC



OF LEADING AND LEADERS

Since the beginning of recorded history, there never was an instance of a treaty, agreement, national plan of action, etc., referred to as a “Road Map.” As everything is by Divine providence, we must search into why there is a current plan called the “Road Map Peace Plan” by people around the world.

Some light can be shed on the topic from Rashi’s commentary (*B’Reishis 47:7*), commenting on the *pasuk*: “he (Yosef) led them *“va’yenahagem”* (his brothers’ families, recently settled in Egypt) with bread.” Unkelus, in his Aramaic translation, renders this as “he *fed* them with bread.” Rashi, though, retains the literal meaning of “leading” – for this is what the Hebrew verbal root of this word, *NaHeL*, means. Except that *leading* can be extended to mean “leading in the sense of caring for, and attending to someone’s needs.” Rashi sees this as necessary, for otherwise “leading with bread” does not sit well.

To support this notion of extended meaning, Rashi first says that the word in question, in the *Nahel* root, is synonymous with the

Naheg root, which also means to lead and conduct. Hence, the word in the *pasuk* “*va’yenahalem*” can be understood as “*va’yenahagem*.” What Rashi is doing here is not merely making a grammatical point; he is actually referring to a *pasuk* in

G-d has His Road Map, in which are mapped out all the twists and turns of history (the direction), all leading towards the ultimate goal of Redemption (the destination).

T’hillim, which contains this very word “*va’yenahagem*”: “And He led them “*va’yenahagem*” as sheep in the desert” (T’hillim 78:52). What clearly emerges from this *pasuk* is that leading is not restricted to leading someone in a certain

direction, towards a certain destination, but can also be extended to mean “leading and taking care of all their needs,” much like a shepherd leading his flock in the desert and attending to all their needs.

This explains why all great Jewish leaders are compared to shepherds leading their flocks. In term of Yosef, this means that he was seeing to it that, not only was bread available in sufficient quantity, but also was available in terms of efficient distribution and rationing in order to last throughout the years of famine. Once Rashi thus found this *pasuk* in T’hillim, in which the root *Naheg* (synonymous to *Nahel*) has this kind of *extended* meaning, he proceeds to quote another two *p’sukim* containing the *Nahel* root and also having this extended meaning. (a) “There is no one leading her [the nation of Israel]” Isaiah 51:18), where leading obviously means leading the whole nation in an overall, general manner, encompassing all the details pertinent to governing a country, rather than leading in a spatial direction. However, Rashi is not thoroughly satisfied with quoting only this *pasuk* (and therefore, goes

on to quote an additional one), for to some extent leading a country is somewhat similar to leading in a direction: the governing body leads the whole country into certain routes of a "Road Map," leading to some national destination. As opposed to this, leading with bread is a very specific situation, dealing only with bread and sustenance.

In order to find a more specific application, Rashi therefore also quotes, (b) "He (Hashem, my Shepherd) has led me onto the still waters" (T'hillim 23:2). This well known *kapitel* of T'hillim, referring to Hashem as "my Shepherd," lists the several *specific* ways in which Hashem acts as our Shepherd. The *pasuk* quoted by Rashi speaks about Hashem specifically supplying us with all our water needs.

We thus see that these two synonymous roots, Nahel and Naheg, have three possible meanings: (a) spatially leading in a certain direction, towards a certain destination; (b) leading an individual, group, community, or country in an overall, general way, encompassing all aspects, much the

same way a shepherd leads his flock in an overall way, attending to all their needs; (c) leading in an extended way, but in a *specific* manner, addressing a *specific* need.

WHY NOW?

This whole exposition sits well also in the English language, in which the terms *leading* and *leaders* have also the extended meanings mentioned here. But, still, why did world leaders choose to call a plan a "Road Map," conveying a very restricted context of spatial traveling from point to point, rather than so many other alternate terms which *clearly* convey the *extended* meaning of *leading* discussions and planning (the "traveling phase," from point to point) towards some eventual agreement (the destination)?

ONE REASON...

I suggest two reasons: (A) the leaders involved were guided from on High to choose a very restrictive term (*Road Map*) to indicate from the very onset that: (1) in the same way that the spatial connotations of a road map have absolutely no bearing and application to political

matters, so too, all the terms of the *Road Map Peace Plan* bear no real connection to the matter at hand; (2) in the same way that directions and situations in a road map often change and fluctuate, so too, there is no solid and lasting direction inherent in this misguided Road Map plan.

AND A BETTER REASON

(B) G-d has His Road Map, in which are mapped out all the twists and turns of history (the direction), all leading towards the ultimate goal of Redemption (the destination).

And along the way, G-d is our true, trustworthy Shepherd, attending to our general welfare and all specific needs. It is, therefore, only now, when G-d's Road Map is about to reach a final destination through Moshiach, that the forces of evil are rallying forth in a vain attempt to derail G-d's Road Map, and substitute it with some road maps of their own making, which shall be of no avail, with the coming of Moshiach, *b'karov mamash!*

Based on Likkutei Sichos vol 15 p. 399-403



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THE SPEECH IN HERTZELIYA AND THE ATTACK IN PETACH TIKVA

BY SHAI GEFEN

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HERTZELIYA AND PETACH TIKVA?

The attack on Thursday was anticipated. Just a week beforehand, Sharon delivered a speech in Hertzeliya that will be remembered in infamy because he announced his plans to dismantle Jewish settlements. On the day of the attack, Sharon met with his legal advisors to discuss how to circumvent the courts in dismantling Migron and other strongholds in Yesha.

Then, after two months of quiet, the bomber achieved his goal. Are you still unsure as to what motivated those who sent the bomber on his mission? When you constantly hear that the Israeli government is going to kick Jews off their land, there's nothing like an attack to pressure the Israeli public into compliance. A thousand killed thus far has led the Israeli leadership into making unconditional and unilateral concessions. Logic says that the higher the price, the greater the concessions. What do you expect Sheikh Ahmad Yassin to do?

There's no reason to blame those who send the suicide bombers when we have our own idiotic government to deal with. They would be fools if they acted otherwise. Look at what happened in the exact opposite situation. After Saddam Hussein was captured, the leader of Libya, Muammar Quadaffi, announced the dismantling of weapons of mass destruction, to the shock of all the

Intelligence agencies in the Western world.

Another example is when Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, they got it over the head. The U.S. responded in a strongly negative way and threatened an arms embargo, like the other nations of the world. But this led way for respect and admiration for what Israel had done, and ultimately proved to be an excellent move.

Concessions, fear, and prostration have never proven themselves on any level. When Israel acts this way, the result is death and destruction. We've seen this time and again. The more we talk about concessions, the more people are killed.

WHERE ARE THE RELIGIOUS PARTIES?

Lately we've been hearing that there are feelers being sent out to the *chareidi* parties about entering Sharon's coalition in the event that parties on the Right leave. We hope that religious Jews who see *halacha* as their guide in life, will not agree to support policies that lead to our deaths in exchange for money.

THERE'S A SOLUTION

They like telling us that there's no solution and we've reached the point of no-return. We need to do away with this lie, once and for all. The dramatic changes taking place in all areas of the world prove that there's no basis in reality for this attitude. It's a view which the Left

and the new Hellenizers try to foist on us

How did the Middle East look ten years ago? Nobody envisioned the current situation. Who dreamed that Saddam would be removed from the scene? Who anticipated Libya's announcement, or the other changes taking place in the international arena, like the U.S. saying that the Islamic countries are the real threat? Just ten years ago, Secretary of State James Baker explained that the U.S. doesn't need Israel; it has Moslem allies.

Today things have drastically changed, and this teaches us a simple but essential point. Things can change even if it seems impossible. The heart of kings and ministers is in Hashem's hands, and the only question is whether we know what we want. Apparently we don't.

HYPOCRISY

The hypocrisy screams to high heavens. A Leftist activist was seriously wounded as he demonstrated against the Partition Fence. The entire country screamed as though goodness knows what had happened.

First of all, it was the Left who proposed the Partition Fence idea, in the hopes that Israel would then be cut in two. It was only after they learned that Arafat was opposed to it that they too opposed it. Secondly, why the tumult over the wounding of this activist? Why don't we see a similar reaction when hundreds of innocent Jews are killed on the



streets of our country? Why don't we see demonstrations of the Left when we are murdered?

We see shocking cooperation between Arabs and the Left at demonstrations against the Fence. When a bus blows up, why don't we hear a word from these people whose sole concern is the welfare of our Arab enemies?

It happens again and again. The collaborators with the enemy stand at Arafat's side, and play the victim. The media also cries crocodile tears. Why doesn't the same media cry about the administrative detention of Noam Federman, or about the prisoner Yosef Ben Boruch, who sat in prison for a year and a half for nothing? Silence.

Furthermore, we hear the Left tell us that one may not refuse the order to dismantle settlements. These are the same people who tell soldiers to refuse to obey orders, and the media supports them. They only raise a cry when the Right talks about refusing orders to dismantle settlements.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

The recent revelations about the numbers of conscientious objectors, is no reason to get all excited and to blame the Left. They never dared to do this in so open a manner. Sharon and his pals can be assured that they have an important share in this non-compliance story. There wouldn't be any non-compliance if Sharon would truly lead us and wouldn't put citizens into mortal danger when they're under attack.

When Barak lost the elections and Sharon won, the Left thought it was all over. They all thought that the era of concessions was behind us. But those on the Left who sat on the fence and anxiously waited to see what the "Bulldozer," i.e., Sharon, was going to do, discovered

that he was a fox in Arik's skin. That's when they arose from their despair.

The Left's position, which had gone bankrupt and had become a symbol of despair, came to life. It's not surprising that we're hearing more and more about non-compliance to serve, at the same time that we're hearing about concessions.

It's what we call in *chassidus*, cause and effect.

I SAW A TOPSY-TURVY WORLD

Here's a story that is not taken from fantasy land:

The *Shas* party in the Knesset presented a no-confidence motion because of Sharon's plan to uproot strongholds and settlements (amazing in itself). The Right, that is hanging on to its seats for dear life, found different ways to avoid the vote. The better ones, like Mafdal, disappeared from the hall, and waited for the anger to pass before continuing to enjoy both worlds.

One minister decided to cast away all shame. He didn't run away; he declared his loyalty to the prime minister at all costs, even when a no-confidence motion was proposed about a fundamental issue, which we all know can happen any day. Minister Benny Alon from Moledet voted with the government to postpone the no-confidence vote on the issue of dismantling settlements.

I didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. We've already gotten used to the fact that you want to remain within the government while letting the public know that some houses and *yishuvim* can be moved and you can still remain in the government. But we expected at least some face-saving, so that those who voted for you won't feel you betrayed them, that you're spitting in their faces.

After two months of quiet, the bomber achieved his goal. Are you still unsure as to what motivated those who sent the bomber on his mission? When you constantly hear that the Israeli government is going to kick Jews off their land, there's nothing like an attack to pressure the Israeli public into compliance.

I don't think there was such despicable and traitorous behavior ever before in the Knesset. We've seen how the Left snickers and exults over this. Shame!

TERROR ALERT DOESN'T STOP CHABAD'S PRISON PROGRAMS

The names read like something out of a script. Sing Sing, Otisville, Orangeburg, Gowanda, Attica, Green Haven, Allenwood. They are names of prisons, state and federal in the NY regional area. In New York there are sixty-seven facilities State facilities. They are located in all parts of the state, from one end to the other. Some prisons are as far away as an eight hour drive from 770. During Chanukah Lubavitch Youth Organization visits all state and even some federal facilities, in order to bring the joy of Chanukah to those Jews that most others have forgotten.

On the first Sunday of Chanukah, the second candle, President Bush issued the most severe terror alert 'code orange' since September 11th. Rabbi Kasriel Kastel of Lubavitch Youth Organization had arranged for cars of volunteers to visit all sixty-seven State facilities during Chanukah, as he has done for over 30 years. These volunteers bring special kosher food and Chasidic joy to Jews spread out in these prisons.

But "code orange" meant that the volunteers would not be allowed into the facilities, one of the many precautions the state takes, whenever

the security code is upgraded. But Rabbi Kastel who has been doing this for many years knew that the Rebbe MH" M would never allow the "forgotten Jews" not have their Chanukah visits, code orange or no code orange.

So Rabbi Kastel contacted Rabbi Shmuel Spritzer who has been volunteering his time with Jewish prisoners across the United States.



Rabbi Spritzer immediately on Monday early morning called the Commissioner of New York State Department of Corrections and explained the problem. Commissioner Glenn Goord is in contact with Rabbi Spritzer on an ongoing basis and knows the good work Rabbi Spritzer does for the Rebbe MH" M. He told the rabbi that he "will get on it immediately" and by

10:07 am Monday morning, an email went out to all sixty-seven prisons in the State, with an order from the Commissioner to allow the Lubavitch volunteers in for Chanukah.

"I was tremendously relieved and pleased," said Rabbi Kastel. "The Chanukah program is eagerly anticipated by all of the Jewish inmates. We bring *menoras* and candles, dreidels and best of all, good kosher food for a truly traditional Chanukah party." Rabbi Kastel added that he and Rabbi Spritzer have always worked hand in hand and that this was not the first time Rabbi Spritzer "saved the day."

In addition to contact to all Jewish prisoners in the US, Rabbi Shmuel Spritzer with a team of other volunteer business people, also publish a monthly bulletin called Reaching Out, which they send free to all Jewish inmates even beyond the US. One inmate, when told of the terror threat said "I'm really glad they were able to get in. When Lubavitch comes, they do whatever it takes to make sure we have a real Jewish experience."

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inyanei Yut Tes Kislev and inyanei Moshiach and Geula.

in between the talking, was Tuvia on guitar, leading the crowd in traditional Chabad niggunim, as well as performing a few of his original songs from his 3 albums. (Listen and see at www.tuviabolton.com). At the end of the evening, Rabbi Lisbon said that although there have been excellent farbrengens in the past, this year's was truly amazing.

Rav Tuvia Bolton, from Yeshivat Ohr Tmimim in Kfar Chabad, was the guest at a Yud Tes Kislev Melave Malka farbrengen in Baltimore, Maryland.

Rav Tuvia, who was flown to Baltimore especially for the event at the invitation of Rav Elchonon Lisbon, Rav of Congregation Ohel Levi Yitzchak, kept the crowd of close to 200 spellbound and entertained with Chassidish stories, stories and Sichot of the Rebbe,



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