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

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“YOU HAVE NOT YET SAVED YOUR PEOPLE!”

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'EIRA; ROSH CHODESH SHVAT 5750

1. The Torah specifically mentions Rosh Chodesh Shvat, relating: “On the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year, Moshe spoke to the children of Israel regarding all that G-d had commanded him for them.... Moshe began to explain this Torah, saying...”

The *Megilla* states, “These days are remembered and carried out.” The Arizal explains that when a day is “remembered” properly, all the spiritual influences that were originally expressed are “carried out” again. Thus, by remembering the events of the first day of the eleventh month, we cause the spiritual influences of that day to be expressed again. Furthermore, based on the principle, “always advance in regard to holy matters,” we can assume that, each year, these influences are expressed on a higher level.

Based on the Alter Rebbe’s directive to live with the times, we must learn a lesson from this narrative applicable to our own circumstances. Moshe Rabbeinu’s address to the Jewish people was intended to prepare them to enter

Eretz Yisroel. The opening verse of *Shmos*, “These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Israel,” teach us an important lesson in this context.

The Hebrew word “*eileh*” (these), refers to something openly revealed. “That Moshe spoke,” refers to the entire Torah, *p’shat*, *remez*, *drush*, and *sod*, which range from the simple meaning of the Torah to its deepest mystical secrets. All dimensions of the Torah must be revealed to “all of Israel,” every Jew, to prepare for the entry into *Eretz Yisroel*.

Thus, each year, on Rosh Chodesh Shvat, the Moshe Rabbeinu of each generation — and the spark of Moshe that each Jew possesses within his soul — declares that the service of receiving the Torah and the *mitzvos* has been completed and he is prepared to lead them into *Eretz Yisroel* in the true and complete redemption.

2. The above concepts are reflected in this week’s Torah portion, Parshas VaEira. The portion begins with G-d’s promise to redeem the Jewish people in response to Moshe Rabbeinu’s complaint, “[As of yet] You have not saved Your

nation.” First, however, He states, “I revealed Myself to the Patriarchs, to Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov [in the name of] G-d, Almighty, but My Name Havaya I did not reveal to them.” Rashi explains, “...I did not reveal My attribute of truth to them...I promised [to give them *Eretz Yisroel*], but did not fulfill.” Now G-d states that He will immediately fulfill the promise to bring the Jewish people into *Eretz Yisroel*, after revealing to them that “I am Havaya.”

Chassidic thought explains that “I am Havaya” is associated with the revelation of the giving of the Torah. The Patriarchs lived before the giving of the Torah and did not experience the full revelation of “I am Havaya,” which was revealed to the Jewish people at the giving of the Torah.

In this context we can understand the connection between these two concepts: The promise to bring the Jewish people into *Eretz Yisroel* was not fulfilled until after the revelation of “I am Havaya” at the giving of the Torah. At the giving of the Torah, the decree separating the “higher realms from the lower realms was nullified.” The nullification of this decree gives the Jewish people the potential to enter the land of K’naan and

transform it into *Eretz Yisroel*. In a larger sense, this refers to our efforts to refine the entire world and transform it into *Eretz Yisroel*, to make it “a dwelling for G-d in the lower realms.”

Thus, each year when Parshas VaEira is read, G-d’s response to Moshe Rabbeinu’s protest is revealed. The Moshe Rabbeinu of each generation — and the spark of Moshe in each Jew — protests (as explained in last week’s *farbrengen*): “From the time I have come to speak in Your Name,” i.e., to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos*, “You have not saved Your people,” the redemption has not come.

This protest, in turn, evokes a promise from G-d: The Torah and *mitzvos* have already been revealed. Indeed, each year, the revelation at Mount Sinai has been repeated for over 3,300 years. The Jewish people have received the Torah and *mitzvos* in their entirety. Therefore, G-d promises the Jewish people that He will immediately redeem them from exile and bring them into *Eretz Yisroel*.

These two concepts are reinforced when they coincide. On a single Shabbos, the completion of the revelation of the giving of the Torah and imminence of the Messianic redemption are conveyed both by the day of the month and the weekly Torah portion.

3. To understand the above concepts in greater depth, it is necessary to understand their connection with the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu made his address to the Jewish people in the fortieth year after they left Egypt. The revelation of the Torah on Mount Sinai was “from above to below,” characterized by G-d revealing Himself to the Jewish people. In contrast, Moshe Rabbeinu’s address to the Jewish people was made “in his own words.”

Indeed, our Sages state that Moshe related the book of Dvarim independently. Of course, this does not mean that this book is not a revelation of G-d’s Torah. Surely, it is. Rather, our Sages’ intent was that, in this instance, G-d’s Torah invested itself within Moshe’s intellect to the point that the words he spoke were simultaneously G-d’s and his own, thereby making it possible for these words to be grasped and comprehended by the intellect of the Jewish people.

The potential for this accomplishment is connected with

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the concept of forty years, which is associated with G-d’s granting “A knowing heart, eyes that see, and ears that hear.” As our Sages stated, “After forty years, a student can attain [a full grasp of] his teacher’s knowledge.” Thus, after the forty years in the desert when the Jewish people lived with the revelation of Mount Sinai, they were able to internalize it and appreciate it, not only as a revelation from above, but as an aspect of their own service.

The internalization of the giving of the Torah in the fortieth year is an

appropriate preparation for the Messianic redemption, which is also alluded to by the number forty. Thus, our Sages explain that there is an allusion to the redemption in the Final Mem (numerically equivalent to forty) of the word “*misra*” in the verse, “for the increase [*misra*] of the sovereignty and for peace without end.” Similarly, the Rambam ends the *Mishneh Torah* by quoting a description of the Messianic era, “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters fill the ocean bed.” In Hebrew, the last three words of this verse conclude with a Final Mem.

In particular, there is a special emphasis on the above concepts in the eleventh month of the fortieth year, the month of Shvat. Chassidus explains that the number eleven is connected with the inner dimensions of the level of *kesser*, a rung that transcends the ten *sfiros*, “You are One, but not in a numerical sense.”

After the service of the first ten months of the fortieth year — and in particular, after the service of the tenth month, “the tenth will be holy,” revealing the *Yud*, the spark of G-dliness present in every entity, we come to the eleventh month, in which the level of *kesser* is revealed. This new phase begins with a new revelation in Torah. After reaching the completion of the quality of ten, which is associated with the quality of forty (a full expression of the four intellectual faculties), we proceed to the level of eleven, the inner dimension of *kesser*.

Similarly, the number eleven is connected to the concept of redemption and the entry into *Eretz Yisroel*, as evidenced by the fact that Moshe began to address the Jewish people in the eleventh month. The revelation of the eleventh level brings about redemption from all boundaries and limitations, bringing the true and complete redemption.

[The name of the eleventh month, Shvat, is also connected with the Messianic redemption. Shvat has the same letters as the word *shevet*, which is interpreted as a reference to Moshiach, as our Sages commented on the verse, “A *shevet* will arise in Israel’ — this refers to the Messianic king.”]

Added emphasis on the uniqueness of the eleventh month of the fortieth year comes this year when Rosh Chodesh Shvat falls on Shabbos VaEira. As explained above, Parshas VaEira relates to the beginning of the revelation of the giving of the Torah. The full dimension of that revelation came on the first day of the eleventh month, when the revelation of the giving of the Torah permeated through the full range of the Jewish people’s conscious powers.

This also relates to the fact that Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbos. Shabbos is connected with the weekly cycle that depends on the movement of the sun, which is a *mashpia* (a source of influence) reflecting revelation from above. Rosh Chodesh is dependent on the daily cycle that depends on the movement of the moon, which is a *mekabel* (a recipient), and reflects the service of man.

[In particular, both of these concepts are reflected within Rosh Chodesh itself. The Rambam writes that the sanctification of the month depends on the new moon being seen by witnesses (the revelation from above) and on the calculations of the court (the service of the Jewish people and the use of their intellectual powers). Significantly, the fusion of these two influences is seen in this *mitzva*, “the first *mitzva* the Jewish people were commanded to fulfill.”

This year, the above concepts are given greater emphasis: The giving of

the Torah is also related to the revelation of *Pnimiyyus HaTorah* (the Torah’s mystical dimension). The Torah declares that the miracles wrought in Egypt were performed “so that you will know that I am the L-rd.” The *mitzva* of knowing G-d — described by the *Zohar* as “the first [in priority] of all commandments,” comes by studying *Pnimiyyus HaTorah* in a manner whereby all of one’s intellectual faculties are used. This, in turn, will bring about the Messianic redemption, as Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was told, “With your text, the *Zohar*, Israel...will leave exile in mercy.” Similarly, Moshiach told the Baal Shem Tov that he will come when “the wellsprings of your teachings spread

The present exile, the Exile of Edom has been extended endlessly for reasons that defy explanation.

outward.”

In particular, the revelation of *Pnimiyyus HaTorah* began with the Arizal, who declared that, at present, “it is a *mitzva* to reveal this knowledge.” It was intensified in the year 5,500, “the dawn of the sixth day” as our Sages state, “G-d’s day is one thousand years” — (according to other conceptions, this year represents “midday on the sixth day”) — with the revelation of the teachings of Chassidus by the Baal Shem Tov.

Greater impetus came from the revelation of the teachings of Chabad by the Alter Rebbe, particularly after Yud-Tes Kislev, when “the service of

spreading the wellsprings outward began.” In each subsequent generation, this service was intensified, including the unique contributions of the Rebbe Rayatz, the eighth of the *nessiim* (counting from the Baal Shem Tov).

In particular, the Rebbe Rayatz’s activity can be divided into two periods, one including the years he lived in this material world, the eighth generation as above; and one after his passing, the ninth generation, the final generation of exile. This will become the first generation of redemption, the tenth generation.

Thus, this Shabbos marks “the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year,” the time when we are granted “a knowing heart, eyes that see, and ears that hear,” to “attain the [full grasp] of the teacher’s knowledge” and thus, to complete the service of the ninth generation.

The Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation, the Rebbe Rayatz, declared, “You have remained on this mountain for too long.” We have completed the service required of us and any undesirable influences have been corrected through *teshuva*. Now is the time to “Turn and head toward the mountains... Come, occupy the land which the L-rd swore He would give to your ancestors.” We are ready to enter *Eretz Yisroel* in the Messianic redemption.

The above is reinforced by the unique nature of the present year, 5750, “a year of miracles.” Furthermore, it is — according to the two opinions mentioned above, either midday or mid-afternoon on the sixth of G-d’s “days” — a time directly connected with the seventh day, the Messianic era, “the day that is all Shabbos and rest for eternity.”

Throughout the entire exile, the Jewish people have believed in Moshiach and waited anxiously for



his coming. In particular, the present exile, the Exile of Edom has been extended endlessly for reasons that defy explanation. All the signs the Sages have mentioned in connection with Moshiach's coming have been seen. Even in the era of the Talmud, our Sages declared, "All the appointed times for Moshiach's coming have passed." Similarly, in the subsequent generations, many great sages have predicted dates for Moshiach's coming and these too have passed without Moshiach

coming.

Nevertheless, our faith in Moshiach's coming has not waned. On the contrary, we have strengthened our crying out to G-d — "Ad Masai?!" (Until when?!) — and intensified our requests that He bring the redemption immediately. Thus, it is now a highly appropriate time for each individual to do what is dependent on him to bring the Messianic redemption. This involves strengthening one's faith and that of

others in Moshiach's coming, encouraging people to demand that he come, strengthening our observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, and in particular, spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward.

Everyone should also increase his gifts to *tzedaka*, and, in connection with the fortieth anniversary of the Rebbe Rayatz's passing, do so in multiples of forty. I will be the first to do so, promising a multiple of forty to every institution that is under the direction of the *nessiim* and dedicates itself to service in the three categorized of Torah, service, and deeds of kindness. Efforts should be made to open at least forty new institutions of this nature in the next year. Forty is not a limit. May many new institutions be opened until we reach one thousand institutions, recalling the verse, "The least one shall be a thousand..." This is connected with the Messianic redemption as the verse continues, "I the L-rd will hasten it in its time."

May these gifts to *tzedaka* bring close the redemption, and may we, in the immediate future proceed "with our youths and elders, with our sons and daughters" to *Eretz Yisroel* in the Messianic redemption.

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CREATING GOOD FROM THE BAD AND THE UGLY

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



Our Rebbeim fought with all their strength against those things that did not have a drop of truth or G-dliness, such as “the klipa of Napoleon” and all the “freedom” that led to the French Revolution, causing widespread permissiveness and abandonment of Torah values, etc. Specifically in this generation, the quality of freedom itself has revealed G-dliness, to the point that it has turned into a source of spreading Yiddishkeit and the wellsprings of chassidus.

The *mashpia*, R. Mendel Futerfas, told the following in the name of the *chassid*, “R. Shmuel Kotaiser,” a.k.a., R. Shmuel Levitin, who was the Rebbe Rashab’s *shliach* in the Georgian city of Kotais, and made tremendous achievements. Thus, he was called after the city’s name, in accordance with the custom among *chassidim* to call one another after their town.

Chassidim would say that there were three levels in *ahavas Yisroel*

among *tzaddikim*:

The holy **R. Zushe of Anipoli** simply loved every Jew, since he saw only the good in them. He never saw any bad in his fellow man. His entire existence was filled with holiness and

G-dliness, and as such, he could not see any evil. Therefore, when someone experienced a failure with something bad, R. Zushe simply didn’t see it. He only saw the good in his fellow Jews, and thus, he

loved them with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might.

There is a well-known saying from the Baal Shem Tov that “one’s fellow is nothing more than a mirror” in which there is seen the appearance of the person looking. Someone who has only good can only see good in his fellow. However, when someone sees undesirable things in his fellow, this signifies that he possesses certain ailments himself.

According to the *chassidic* interpretation of the Mishna, “All the plagues a person sees [within someone] outside [are only] of his own plagues,” only because he has these plagues himself is he able to see “plagues” outside, in someone else. If he were not “plagued” himself, he would not see plagues in his fellow Jew.

So it was with the holy R. Zusha. His entire *metzius* was holiness and G-dliness, and therefore, he only saw good in his fellow. He loved every Jew with all his might.

This path in *avodas Hashem* had relevance not just in connection with his fellow Jews, but in other matters as well. There is a famous *chassidic* interpretation (brought also

in the Rebbe's holy *sichos*, to the best of my knowledge, in the name of HaRav R. Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl) of the Mishna, "Milk that is milked by a non-Jew, and a Jew did not see it." This teaches us that when there is some problem with the milk, "milked by a non-Jew," someone who is on the true level of a simple Jew doesn't see this at all, as a Jew sees only goodness and holiness. However, anything that is not on this level, he cannot see – "a Jew did not see it."

There is a story that once someone came to R. Zusha's Rebbe, the Mezeritcher Maggid, and asked him, "How it is possible to fulfill the saying of our Sages, 'A person must bless on bad tidings just as he blesses on the good,' 'to accept them with joy, as the joy from revealed good'? This is seemingly against human nature. When a person suffers sorrow and afflictions, how can he be joyous just like when he experiences the happiness that comes from revealed good?" The Maggid sent him with his question to his student, the holy R. Zusha.

R. Zusha lived in dire poverty, and suffered harsh afflictions throughout his entire life. It seemed that he was just the person to ask. So when this Jew came to R. Zusha with his question, R. Zusha responded with surprise, "I don't understand, how can I answer such a question? You have to ask a question like that to someone who has had much suffering and affliction in his life, and find out how he confronted it. But, *baruch Hashem*, I've had practically no pain or suffering in my life. I've only benefited from G-d's goodness and kindness. How can I give an answer to someone on how to accept pain and afflictions with absolute joy?"

R. Zusha's wonderment was an illustrative answer to such a question.

The holy **R. Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev**, "the defender of Israel," is known for his tremendous *ahavas Yisroel*. When he saw a Jew who did not conduct himself as is fitting, he would give him the benefit of the doubt and even found and revealed a positive point within the bad, turning this bad quality into something essentially good.

There are a number of famous stories associated with this attribute. Once R. Levi Yitzchok saw a Jew eating on Tisha B'Av. He tried to suggest that he was ill and his

The ahavas Yisroel of the Baal Shem Tov was something else entirely. He saw a Jew's faults, and did not give him the benefit of the doubt! He simply had fervent love for every Jew, despite all the faults and defects!

doctor had told him that he had to eat, or that he forgot that it was Tisha B'Av, or that he didn't know that it was a fast day, or he was unaware of the seriousness of the matter. And if he ran out of excuses, and the Jew stated point-blank that he is fully aware of the implications, he is perfectly healthy, and he wants to continue eating on Tisha B'Av, R. Levi Yitzchok would lift his eyes heavenwards and say, "Master of the Universe! Look at how wonderful Your people are! A Jew would rather

appear wicked, as long as he doesn't lie!"

In another story, he saw a wagon-driver *davening* while smearing pitch on his wagon wheels. He lifted his eyes heavenwards and said, "Master of the Universe! How virtuous are Your people! Even while he smears pitch on his wagon wheels, he still *davens*."

However, the *ahavas Yisroel* of the **Baal Shem Tov** was something else entirely. He saw a Jew's faults, and did not give him the benefit of the doubt! He simply had fervent love for every Jew, despite all the faults and defects!

In truth, these three levels can be found in the Rebbe MH"m *shlita's* explanation of self-love (*Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 1, from p. 130):

A person usually doesn't see any faults within himself, and it appears to him that he is completely honest and righteous. When he comes to a situation where he has no choice and he must admit that he has failed by committing a sin, he justifies himself with different excuses. And when he is pushed to the wall and is left with no excuse for his unfit behavior, even then "love covers all transgressions" (even when it is clear that they are inexcusable acts of transgression and rebellion against G-d), and he loves himself without explanation or reason. In similar fashion, one must have love towards his fellow.

R. Mendel explains further: What does this mean? Was the Baal Shem Tov on a lower level than R. Zusha? How can it be that he saw the evil within a Jew, and was not even prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt?

The fact is that R. Zusha of Anipoli and R. Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev were great *tzaddikim*, but they were not the leaders – *Roshei B'nei Yisroel* – of their generations.

Therefore, they could allow themselves not to see the bad in a Jew – only the good, or at least (even if they saw the evil), not to see the “evil” within the evil, and to give Jews the benefit of the doubt by revealing the good within them.

The Baal Shem Tov, however, was the leader of the generation – *Rosh B’nei Yisroel* – and his job was to correct and elevate the people of his generation; he could allow himself to see the bad. He had to see the bad and the ugly in order to fix things within the Jew and extricate him from the depths of the mud and mire. He loved every Jew as he is, with all his faults, even without “giving the benefit of the doubt.”

It is specifically this type of total love that is called “essential love.” At the beginning stages of *ahavas Yisroel*, we discover some actual and revealed good. As a result, we love our fellow Jew since there is some logical reason for the love. However, specifically when we see a Jew’s faults in all their ugliness, and in any event, we still love him, then we reveal true and “essential love,” a love that finds expression in the mere fact that the person is a Jew, without any reason or explanation that tries to show that he possesses some revealed good within him. From the revealed point of view, it seems that he is totally evil, yet we love him with all the strength and fervor of our soul, due to the simple fact that he is a Jew. This revelation of the very essence of his existence as a Jew brings about a discovery of his great inner strengths, which totally repairs all remnants of evil within him, to the point that everything is transformed into complete and revealed good.

“The Torah was said in general and specific terms.” Just as this applies in connection with *ahavas Yisroel*, so too, we find on the issue of “drawing G-dliness in the world,”

“making a dwelling place for G-d in the lower realms.”

When we have to deal with the lowest of all possible worlds and make it into “a dwelling place for G-d,” where His Blessed Essence and Being will dwell in all its force and revealed power, this involves a variety of different levels, as the Rebbe explains at length in a number of *sichos* and *maamarim* (e.g., *maamer* “Pada V’Shalom 5726,” “*Drushei Parshas VaYechi*,” *Likkutei Sichos*, Parshas VaYechi, Vol. 3, *Likkutei Sichos*, Parshas VaYigash, Vol. 25, etc.)

This task requires us to be totally higher than the lower realms in order for them to leave no lasting impression upon us. If we are not allowed to be affected by all their problems and weaknesses in order to make them into a dwelling place for G-d, then we must reach a level where the existence of the lower realms, i.e., in all its deficiencies and limitations, takes up no space whatsoever. This represents the level where at any time or place, the essence remains unchanged in all its strength and fortitude. Only then can we start talking about turning the lower realms into a dwelling place for G-d.

This process of transformation can be achieved through a number of methods. The first way is “not to see the bad” – to be so lofty and so instilled with holiness and G-dliness that evil seemingly has no existence. Even when we find ourselves surrounded by evil, we don’t see it at all. We see only pure holiness, G-dliness, and the absolute Divine truth of “There is nothing else besides Him.” When this is instilled and revealed in every possible location, this completely fills the lower realms with holiness, thus making it a true dwelling place for G-d.

This is exemplified by the *avoda*

of Yaakov Avinu – “the middle line” that remains unchanged at every level, as opposed to the left and right lines, which decrease in light and their connection to their source as they spread out further and further. This middle line is the “bolt from one end to the other,” from the highest to the lowest of all levels,” each at full strength in equal measure. Even when he was at the low and humiliating level of the home of Lavan the Aramean, he was “exalted in essence,” remaining the same righteous Yaakov, exactly as he was in the home of his father, Yitzchok, and the tents of Shem and Ever. Therefore, he was higher than any degree of exile or descent, even when he was in its very midst.

When he was faithfully working for Lavan – “consumed from drought by day and frost by night” – he still remained a shepherd, essentially and totally separated from the experience of exile and descent. Thus, he turned the house of Lavan and everything within it into the possessions of Yaakov, which subsequently went with him to Eretz HaKodesh, as is written, “And Yaakov came whole” – “whole in body, whole in wealth, whole in Torah.” In addition, he was still “whole in his household,” as all his offspring and possessions, down to the “small jars,” were all elevated to holiness, to the point that even Eisav’s guardian angel was forced to admit “for you have striven with G-d and men, and you have prevailed.”

Even when he went down afterwards to Egypt, he remained separated and elevated above the entire existence of Egypt, as Pharaoh, king of Egypt, knew that every blessing he had was only in the merit of Yaakov.

However, with all the virtues of this level, giving strength to all the levels that followed (“as a dwarf standing on a giant’s back”), he did

not literally descend into the evil. Even when he was immersed in the darkness and exile, he remained totally above the evil. As a result, the “dwelling place” that he made was not literally in “the lower realms.” Rather, he instilled G-dliness and holiness in every nook and cranny, to the point that even the lower realm found itself was filled completely with *k’dusha*.

There was no elevation or purification of the lower realm; just the revelation of the true existence of “There is nothing else besides Him.” Even at the lowest of all levels, there is suddenly revealed the fact that literally everything is G-dliness.

In connection with the Rebbeim, this *avoda* generally corresponds to the Alter Rebbe, who stands in parallel with Yaakov Avinu regarding the *ushpizin* of the holiday of Sukkos. The Alter Rebbe continued the process of revelation everywhere, even deep within the lower realms, showing that its entire existence is G-dliness. Human intellect and emotion in every detail – thought, speech, and action – and all worldly matters, were filled with holiness, transforming their entire *metzius*, a literal dwelling place for G-d.

Yet, there was no literal “indwelling” in the physical world. As explained throughout *chassidus*, Chabad’s main quality is that even within the confines of the lower realms, from the point of view of human intellect, the fact of “There is nothing else besides Him” is eventually felt and understood. Yet, even when this penetrates human intellect and emotion – worldly thought, speech, and action – the evil itself was not affected. Thus, we find that the “dwelling place for G-d” was not yet on the level of the lower realms.

The second way to make the

dwelling place for G-d is “to see the bad and give the benefit of the doubt.” When we are not satisfied with just “not seeing the bad,” we know that we have to find the bad and correct it. As a result, we must go down into the lower realms (not remaining above), even becoming a part of them, and then making them

The ultimate purpose is to elevate and correct this level of evil, not just to find the point of light that exists within it. Even when we give the benefit of the doubt to this level of actual evil, we still must love all our fellow Jews with all the negativity they possess, to the point of converting this lowly state into pure holiness.

into the dwelling place for G-d.

This was the holy *avoda* of Yosef HaTzaddik. Unlike his father Yaakov, who even while in the house of Lavan, was not a slave under the authority of his master, but a worker under his own authority, Yosef went down to Egypt and entered into

bondage, as it were, as the slave of Potiphar, and afterwards, in prison. Yet, his innovation was that even in such a degrading situation and place, he ran the show. Whether in the house of Potiphar or in prison, “everything that was done there, he would do,” to the point that everyone knew even under such circumstances that “G-d was with him and everything that he did, G-d made successful in his hand.”

Even when Yosef afterwards became viceroy of Egypt, he was still under the rule of Pharaoh, his supreme commander, who told him that “only (in) the throne will I be greater than you,” and everything he collected for the grain that he sold, he brought to the house of Pharaoh. Yet, he was no longer a shepherd; he now dominated all aspects of Egyptian life – “without you, no man may lift hand nor foot in all the land of Egypt,” any Egyptian who wanted to ride a horse or carry a weapon had to secure the permission of Yosef.

Naturally, this was an indication of how busy and preoccupied he was in Egyptian affairs, and thus, he did not separate himself from them. Therefore, his brothers truly “did not recognize him,” as they could not possibly understand how this person, who was so deeply involved in Egyptian matters was in fact Yosef HaTzaddik.

This was Yosef’s innovation – even over his father, Yaakov (except that this actually came from the strength of Yaakov – “These are the generations of Yaakov: Yosef”). Even when he went down into Egypt, he did not remain above the lower spheres; he went into the bondage of Egypt, and even then, he found G-dliness and holiness, revealing them to the point that all those around him recognized that they were imbued with *k’dusha*. As *chassidus* teaches us, Yosef

HaTzaddik represents “S’firas HaYesod,” which brings down the world of Atzilus into the lower created worlds of Beria, Yetzira, and Asiya. Even when it descends to such depths, the light can remain in all its strength and fortitude, and even reveal from the point of view of the lower realms that its entire existence is G-dliness, and “There is nothing else besides Him.”

Thus, even within the realm of evil, we can find the “point of light” and its meritorious qualities through its ultimate connection to G-dliness and holiness.

Thus, Yosef HaTzaddik exemplifies the level of Shmini Atzeres, which assembles and receives the inner aspects of the holiday of Sukkos (“**you** shall make an *assembly*”). On this day, we go from the temporary dwelling of the *succa* into the permanent dwelling of the house, in order to turn the *ushpizin*, whose status as guests emphasizes the aspect of temporary dwelling, into *baalei batim*. As a result, we instill the holiness and G-dliness into this lower world, including all its limitations. Yet, despite these limitations, the “point of light” will emerge and completely fill its lowly existence, creating a dwelling place for G-d.

While this strength derives from the aforementioned *avoda* of Yaakov Avinu, it is on a much higher level. This is the level of “Shmini” (eighth), which is beyond all boundaries and limitations. Thus, only at such a level can there be a situation where a lowly entity can remain at its lowly state and still reach the level of high revelation, demonstrating its relevance to G-dliness.

Among the Rebbeim, this *avoda* corresponds to the Rebbe Rayatz, “the Yosef in our generation, whose first name is Yosef.” He descended into the world in a manner of active

engagement, and did not detach himself from the world. He went into “the tumult of Rome,” living specifically in the large cities and world government centers, while personally involving himself in encouraging his *chassidim* to do simple things such as teaching Alef-Beis, influence their fellow Jews to keep Shabbos, *kashrus*, family purity, etc. Together with this, he was deeply engrossed with the study and dissemination of the loftiest levels of *chassidus*. This is comparable to Yosef HaTzaddik, who was involved in the most lowly and mundane aspects of Egypt. Although he did not detach himself from them, he still was on the highest level of cleaving to G-dliness.

In this fashion, G-d’s dwelling place is found not only in the place of the lower creations, but also within those creations themselves, penetrating their essential lowly existence. Thus, we find even some “point of light” there, finding merit within the darkness, which can repair and elevate it to become the very essence of G-d’s dwelling place.

However, this is still only a revelation of the point of light within the lower realms – not at their lowest level. This represents giving the evil the benefit of the doubt by revealing the goodness that it truly contains. But the ultimate evil itself remains as it is, not transformed into good!

The ultimate purpose is to elevate and correct this level of evil, not just to find the point of light that exists within it. Even when we give the benefit of the doubt to this level of actual evil, we still must love all our fellow Jews with all the negativity they possess, to the point of converting this lowly state into pure holiness.

This is the *avoda* of *Dovid Malka M’shichai*, who comes from the tribe of Yehuda, “S’firas HaMalchus,” after

he receives the influence of Yosef HaTzaddik (“*bi adoni*,” within me, my master). He increases and reveals his especial quality, which is higher than Yosef, to the extent that “My servant, Dovid, will rule over them...forever,” above and beyond the lofty service of Yosef HaTzaddik.

As the Rebbe says in the *D’var Malchus* of Parshas VaYigash (sec. 12), “Together with the assistance from the strength of the *avoda* of the Yosef of our generation – my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, leader of our generation – there is also the aspect of ‘And Yehuda approached him,’ the imminent arrival of Moshiach, ‘My servant Dovid will rule over them...forever,’ which comes from the support and added fortitude from Yosef (of our generation).”

S’firas HaMalchus signifies the relevance to the lower entity itself in its lowest form, not to the point of light that can be found there. This point has no relevance to the light of revelation and truth in a realm of utter darkness, exile, and descent, so that “the darkness itself will illuminate” (*Basi L’Gani* 5710, sec. 1). The light must not only shine in a place of darkness, not only must there be some point of light within the darkness, but the darkness itself, the “darkness” within the darkness, must also shine!

How can this be? We’re talking about total darkness without even a single point of light. How can the darkness itself possibly shine? In fact, from the strict and limited point of view of *seider hishtalshelus*, this is simply impossible. If this is actual, complete, and utter darkness, how can it shine?

Yet, this represents the total breaking of the limitations of *hishtalshelus*, the revelation of His Blessed Essence, the essence that is higher than all boundaries and limitations. Nothing is impossible

for G-d, Who defies all possibilities, “He who told you what to do and how to act.” When this essence is revealed, even something as totally opposite to light as complete darkness – will shine!

This is the *avoda* of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* – involvement with the lowest possible levels, not just to find and reveal some point of light within them, but also to bring the darkness itself to a state of illumination.

For this reason, our Rebbeim fought with all their strength against those things that did not reflect truth or G-dliness, such as “the *klipa* of Napoleon” and all the “freedom” that led to the French Revolution, causing widespread permissiveness and abandonment of Torah values, etc. Specifically in this generation (and towards the end of the previous generation, in accordance with what was explained above), the quality of freedom itself has revealed G-dliness, to the point that it not just has a little light, but it has turned into a source of spreading *Yiddishkeit* and the wellsprings of *chassidus*. As discussed at length in a *sicha* from Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5752, even “Le Marseillaise,” the anthem of the French Revolution, with stanzas that reveal the true revolutionary character, has turned into a *chassidic niggun* in every respect, “the darkness itself will illuminate.”

The Rebbe MH”M *shlita* takes the world’s entire existence, exactly as it is – the VCR, Internet, the external aspects of loud and flashy publicity, and the very *metzius* of every detail of the world itself – and reveals its true essential nature, as “everything that G-d

Alm-ghty created in His world was only for His honor.” This means that not only can the physical world serve as a potential channel for the revelation of G-dliness, but its very

essence, which is seemingly in total contrast to G-dliness, serves as a revealed expression of the fact that “there is nothing else besides Him.”

The Rebbe has persistently taught us that simple *avoda* must come from all these marvelous developments in actual deed, as is known from the concept of Yehuda approaching Yosef, symbolizing the connection of Torah study to tangible action. We must use all worldly techniques on their lowest level and turn them into a dwelling place for G-d Alm-ghty and the actual revelation of His essence. All

The light must not only shine in a place of darkness, not only must there be some point of light within the darkness, but the darkness itself, the “darkness” within the darkness, must also shine!

the advertising, billboards, gimmicks, graphic effects, etc., in their lowest and most outward form are designed solely to draw attention away from the heart of the matter and concentrate on its external aspects. Thus, through these low and external means, we will arouse a greater sense of awareness among many more Jews about the announcement of the Redemption, bringing another Jew and another Jew “to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed.”

Furthermore, even those in

whom we still see the negative, and when we don’t “give them the benefit of the doubt,” nevertheless, we still love every Jew, even with all their faults, and we bring them to the very essence. As a result, we reveal that literally everything, even those things which appear to be in a state of utter darkness, without even a single point of light, are in fact only true good and holiness.

Eventually, we will see with our own eyes the truth behind the “contrary appearance” of Chaf-Zayin Adar Rishon and Gimmel Tammuz, which actually seemed as total darkness, without even a single point of light, as “he has borne our sicknesses and endured our pains, yet we showed him no esteem, stricken, smitten by G-d, and afflicted,” to the extent that it will appear to us that “he was cut off from the land of the living,” and “he made his grave among the wicked,” *ch”v*. Yet specifically then, the truth of the matter will shine in great revelation, and demonstrate that everything was really due to a lacking on our part (event though our failings are relevant to the Rebbe’s very being, and thus, it is considered as if it is a lacking on the Rebbe’s part). For the fact is, as the *p’sukim* continue, “he shall see his seed (“his seed is alive”), he shall live long (“*shlita*”), and the desire of G-d will succeed in his hand”! This entire “contrary appearance” has been to express in a truly revealed sense the eternal life of Melech HaMoshiach and his essence, which is not dependent upon “appearances” whatsoever, to the point that we will literally see this before our very eyes with the revelation of our King, our Moshiach, *shlita*, with the true and complete Redemption, immediately, *mamash*, NOW!

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

A CHASSID VISITS WAR-TORN AFGHANISTAN

BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

*Dovid Holtzberg spent five days in Taliban-land, where he met senior diplomats from the U.S. State Department. * After two days of meetings in northern Afghanistan, he met the two Jews left in Afghanistan, began printing a Tanya, and even made a bar mitzva for an embassy worker!*

Dovid Holtzberg spent two months on Merkaz Shlichus with Rabbi Abba Dovid Gurevitz, *shliach* to Middle Asia. He spent Tishrei in Tashkent, the capitol of Uzbekistan, with Rabbi Gurevitz, and in Cheshvan he traveled to Jewish communities in Uzbekistan: Samarkand, Andijan, Kokand, Pragana, Margilan, Buchara, and the state of Tajikistan. Wherever he went, he brought along a box of Jewish ritual objects and *s'farim* in the local language.

He made a bit of Chabad history in Tajikistan, because since the dismantling of the Soviet Union there has hardly been any ongoing Chabad activity there. There was a Lubavitcher who worked there, in Dushanbe, at the end of the 80's, but after he left a civil war broke out and

the roads were dangerous.

Rabbi Gurevitz, who is considered

the official chief rabbi of the country, is in touch with the Jewish community and helps them materially and spiritually. He has visited them many times, but it was difficult to send *bachurim* there because of the war.

Lately it's been quiet in the area and Dovid Holtzberg went to revive the Jewish community in Dushanbe. They were thrilled to see him, and they asked him to send their thanks to Rabbi Gurevitz, who looks after them.

But the most exciting and historic



The border crossing into Afghanistan; the diplomat Mr. Cohen on the right and Dovid Holtzberg on the left.

they could help.

Sunday morning they met and traveled towards the border. Just as they said, one of them made a phone call and it was arranged. Dovid crossed the border at noon.

A CHABADNIK IN THE ENTOURAGE

After they crossed the border, two cars arrived from the American Armed Forces that created a well-secured convoy. After a few hours of travel, they came to a Coalition forces army camp near the city of Mazar-Sharif. One of the diplomats was the coordinator between the State Department and the Coalition forces, and the man from the Pentagon served as the chief lookout in northern Afghanistan on behalf of the Defense Department.

Dovid's original plan was to take along his vital necessities, including inconspicuous clothing. But thanks to the sudden trip, he had his regular clothes and nothing special in his luggage, and all he had with him in cash was less than a hundred dollars. It's difficult to manage without cash in a country without ATM's and credit cards. However, when the Rebbe wants Chabad to go to Afghanistan, everything works out, despite the odds.

The three men found Dovid a place to stay at the military camp, and they told him that he would join them until his flight to Kabul, the capitol.

The next day they set out to visit every military unit in the area. With his *chassidic* way of dress and his obviously Jewish face, Dovid joined the retinue from the Defense Department. They visited the headquarters of the U.N. in the area, where they introduced him to the highest ranking official, a Jewish American who was shocked to see a



Jew in Afghanistan.

They also visited the local ruler and the head of the local clan, by way of preparation for the visit of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld at the end of the week. It was a quite a sight to see the district ruler bow in respect before the Lubavitcher *bachur*!

Dovid spoke to the soldiers about the need to observe Torah and *mitzvos* under all circumstances, even while serving in Afghanistan. He also spoke about the ancient Torah scroll belonging to the Jewish community of Kabul, which was taken from the *shul* by the Taliban and never returned. A man from the State Department promised to use his connections to locate the Torah.

TWO JEWS, TWO SHULS

Dovid wanted to get to the capitol, but there aren't regularly scheduled flights to Kabul. You go to the airport and if there's a plane, you buy a ticket. He was only able to get a flight on Tuesday morning.

After two days, in which all doors were opened for him, Dovid had to face the reality that is Afghanistan. He walked the streets a bit in order to find a decent hotel, and he met a woman who works for the U.N. At first, she was shocked to see someone who looked obviously Jewish, and she begged him to leave. After he explained that he was on *shlichus* for the Rebbe, she was recruited to help him. She took him to the most expensive hotel in the city, which is also the most secure, and after a short conversation with the person in charge of reservations he had booked a room for \$25 a night.

After putting down the few things he had with him, Dovid went out to look for the *shul*. He felt the Rebbe's presence with him with every step he took. Indeed, as soon as he left the hotel he met an English-speaking person who was excited to see a *chassidic* Jew, and offered to help him find the *shul*. After half an hour, they found the *shul*. This *shul* had had a lot of publicity in the Jewish papers when articles were written about the two Jews left in Afghanistan who lived in the *shul* building.

These two Jews are a classic story of Jewish controversy. The two don't talk to one another, and each one *davens* in a separate *shul* within the *shul* building. The *shul* is located on one of the main streets of Kabul. There's a big *shul* and a little *shul* and two apartments in which the two



Dovid with the man from the Pentagon, Mr. Zimmerman (in white uniform) and the diplomat Mr. Hetson (in the rear)

Jews live.

When Dovid arrived at the *shul*, and his translator explained to the neighbors that he was looking for the Jews, they got the younger Jew, Z'vulun Simantov. Amazed to see the young Jew standing before him, he invited him into his apartment, a small room on the second floor of the *shul*, saying, "A Jew, a Jew, religious, religious," in the Afghani language.

After a long conversation, in the course of which Dovid strengthened Simantov's *emuna* in the immediate arrival of Moshiach who would take him out of Galus too, along with the *shul*, Dovid gave him a picture of the Rebbe from the cover of *Beis Moshiach*. Simantov had



On the streets of Kabul

apparently heard about the Rebbe, because he loved the picture and insisted on hanging it on the wall of his room, alongside (*l'havdil*) the picture of the president of Afghanistan.

A SIGHT TO BEHOLD

At night, when Dovid returned to his hotel, he checked his e-mail and was happy to see that the diplomat from the State Department had begun to work on locating the missing Torah. He had sent Dovid a copy of the letter he had sent to the Afghani Secretary of State in which he asked him to set up a meeting for him regarding the return of the ancient Torah to its owners.

The diplomat also wrote that Dovid was invited to visit the American embassy in Kabul, where a number of Jews work.

Before going to sleep, Dovid remembered that he hadn't seen Yitzchok Levy yet, the other, older Jew. He realized there was no point in asking Simantov, since the two of them ignored each other's existence, and he decided to go to *shul* in the morning to meet the elderly Jew.

He arrived at the *shul* early in the morning. He began walking around the first floor when he suddenly heard a sweet voice reciting T'hillim. He followed the sound and through the window he could see an old Jew in a tiny room. The man had nothing modern about him, and he sat on a carpet, Eastern-style, and read T'hillim with a special tune. What a sight to behold!

Dovid knocked on the window and the man finished the chapter he was reading and got up to open the door for his rare guest. It had been years since had seen a religious Jew, and this one had a beard and *tzitzis*!

They spoke for hours about the Jewish community that once existed in Kabul, and about the remnants of that once beautiful community. The man showed Dovid his *sh'chita* knife, which was in perfect condition, and told him that he *shechted* his own chickens. He asked Dovid to visit the Jewish cemetery with him, but Dovid didn't have the time.

PRINTING THE TANYA IN KABUL

Dovid rushed to his next project, printing a *Tanya* for the first time in history in the capitol of Afghanistan. With a *Tanya* in hand, he went looking for a store with a copying machine. It wasn't easy, and even when he found a copying machine he discovered that stores in Afghanistan don't have electricity, and when you need to use electrical appliances you have to use a generator, which stands in the doorway of the store.

The generator was turned on, the copying machine began to work, and fresh pages of *Tanya* began to come out. But the job wasn't finished since the generator conked out in the middle, and that was the end of the copying, but at least he had gotten started.

By the way, as he went around to the stores, Dovid was surprised to see dozens of kosher products on the



The Rebbe's picture on the wall along with a sign that says: Chabad Lubavitch of Afghanistan and Central Asia



In Yitzchok Levy's room

shelves imported from the U.S. Some of them even say “kosher” in Hebrew letters.

BAR MITZVA IN KABUL

After realizing that he couldn't print the *Tanya* under the circumstances, Dovid headed for the American embassy. The announcement that a Lubavitcher *bachur* was planning on arriving, opened the embassy doors for him. He put *t'fillin* on with the Jews there and one of them said it was the first time he was putting on *t'fillin*! Naturally, they celebrated the man's *bar mitzva* at the U.S. embassy in Kabul.

On his way back to the hotel, Dovid passed another hotel where he had arranged to meet a Jewish businessman who had been in Kabul for months. Dovid had been in touch with him for some time by e-mail, and that morning they had arranged to meet at the hotel.

It was late at night and no longer possible to put on *t'fillin*, but since it was Erev Tes Kislev, the two of them sat down to *farbreng* for a few hours. The fact that Chabad goes everywhere made a tremendous impression on the man.

Many journalists congregate at

The man finished the chapter he was reading and got up to open the door for his rare guest. It had been years since had seen a religious Jew, and this one had a beard and tzitzis!

that hotel and when Dovid entered the lobby, some of them approached him and asked him if he was the Jewish rabbi who was interested in the ancient Torah. How did they know? Because on the flight to Kabul, Dovid had spoken to a reporter about his visit and the reporter had spread the news.

Dovid's exciting trip ended the next morning when he boarded a flight back to Dushanbe. Another point on the map had been conquered by the Rebbe and his *shluchim*.



At the *shul* with Z'vulun Simantov and the (gentile) neighbors

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THREE GOLDEN RULES IN CHINUCH

BY RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK JACOBSON



*Before approaching the chinuch of our children or students, we need to know three basic principles that will, b'ezras Hashem, ensure our success. * Part 2 of 2*

(Continued from last week.)

THE RIGHT WAY TO THE HEART

A *bachur* came to me from one of the Chabad *yeshivos* in Eretz Yisroel, with doubts about *emuna*. He had told his *mashpia* what was on his mind and the *mashpia* had yelled at him for talking that way and said he was worse than an animal. As a result, the *bachur* was still physically in *yeshiva*, but mentally and emotionally, he had left. What a big mistake on the *mashpia's* part!

Afterwards I met the *mashpia* and I said to him: I don't understand you. The Alter Rebbe was a big believer, nobody doubts that, and in *Tanya* at the end of chapter 29, the Alter Rebbe says, "and from this every person who has doubts about *emuna* can learn." I don't see that *Tanya* says he's

worse than an animal! He writes that this is natural, if you have an animal soul. The *chutzpa* and coarseness of the animal soul are the source of these doubts in *emuna*, and since a *beinoni* has an animal soul, it's possible that he'll have these thoughts. But the Alter Rebbe says this need not frustrate you. You're not sick. You're normal. It's human nature, but you should know that this isn't your essence. There's a deeper dimension to the person, a second soul, the portion of G-d Above. Are you more religious than the Alter Rebbe?

This approach pushes people away. I don't know why we need to scream or to come down on someone who is struggling with their *Yiddishkeit*. I know that if I scream at someone who doesn't agree with me, it's because he managed to make me doubt my position.

A WOMAN'S QUESTIONS

I must tell you what happened to a woman that I know. She comes from an American, non-observant family. She is very spiritual by nature, and in the sixties, she became a hippie. She wandered around the world and then came to Brooklyn and someone schlepped her into 770 to hear a talk the Rebbe gave to women and girls.

The way it worked was that after the *sicha* the Rebbe would remain in his place and each woman who had a question was allowed to go up and ask the Rebbe. They urged this woman to approach the Rebbe, and she said: You should know that I'm not here because I believe in you. I think this is a cult. I don't believe in you or in any miracle stories of yours. She said: The problem with people like you is that you don't educate people to think for themselves. You guide their every move.

The Rebbe began to laugh out loud. She told me that she thought the Rebbe would get angry and would tell people to throw her out, but he laughed as though he was really amused. Then the Rebbe said: Fine, but why did you come?

They dragged me here, she said.

Oh? Aren't you independent? You explained so nicely how a person needs to guide himself, yet they dragged you here?

She said: You're right, but they dragged me here.

The Rebbe said: Fine, I'm happy that you came.

She posed this question to the Rebbe: I'm studying psychology in university and my parents want me to continue with school but I want to go and learn pottery in the Far East. What do you think I should do?

The Rebbe thought for a moment and said: I think that both ideas are wonderful and very interesting. The world needs both, and I can't tell you that one is better than the other, but I have a third idea. Maybe you could devote some time to get to know yourself. As you said, a person needs to be independent. It would be worthwhile for you to devote time to truly getting to know what you're about, not just superficially. And since you're Jewish, maybe you'll go and learn what being a Jew is about. May it be with success.

She left 770, and she told me that at that moment she simply loved the Rebbe. He had won her over with his openness, his normality, and his logic. She stayed in Crown Heights for a few months and then considered the possibility of attending Beis Chana in Minnesota. She went back to the Rebbe and this time she spoke respectfully and asked for the Rebbe's opinion.

The Rebbe smiled and said: You think I'll give you an objective answer? You ask what I think? Of course, I think you should go there, but I'm not objective.

She went to Beis Chana and the rest is history.

This is the *mefaisinan lei*. She had told the Rebbe that Lubavitch is a

cult. She was embarrassing not only the Rebbe, but the entire *chassidic* movement and Chabad, and the Rebbe had all the reasons to "educate" her. But, then, what would have been achieved? He would have educated her, but he wouldn't have been *mekarev* her. The Rebbe wanted to save a Jewish soul, and he knew how to do this by *mefaisinan lei*, by speaking the language of the person before him.

It's very important to know how to feel comfortable with a child who

As you said, a person needs to be independent. It would be worthwhile for you to devote time to truly getting to know what you're about, not just superficially. And since you're Jewish, maybe you'll go and learn what being a Jew is about.

feels differently and thinks differently, how to speak to him nicely and in his language. Then the *hashpaa* is completely different.

THE GREATEST GIFT PARENTS CAN GIVE

The Mishna in tractate Edyos, at the end of chapter 5, says that in Akavya ben Mahalalel's final moments on earth, he called his son and told him some things. The son said: "Father, mention me to your

fellow scholars." Tell your friends good things about me.

Akavya said: No.

The son said: Is there something you found unfavorable in me?

Said the father: No. You should know that your deeds will draw you close and your deeds will distance you.

Think about that. A father is on his deathbed in his final moments. The son pleads with his father that he put in a good word for him with his colleagues. The father says, "your deeds will draw you close." Is this love? Is this warmth? Is this how you speak to a son in your final moments, no less? It sounds like this should have been said twenty years before, not in his dying moments. But Akavya ben Mahalalel wasn't interested in being described as a warm father in his eulogies. Even in his final moments, he thought of his son! He gave his son the greatest gift that a parent can give his child: independence.

The verse says, "when you raise up the lights," and Rashi says, "that the flame should rise up of its own accord." There are two approaches to *chinuch*. One approach is that parents stand over the child and hold the match. As long as they hold the match, the child burns properly, but when they can no longer hold the match the child falls, *ch"v*.

The second approach is educating children so that they are aflame not only because of you, but because of who they are. A child shouldn't be doing the right thing because he sees his parents watching him and he needs to be good for them. That's good at the beginning. The objective of education is for the child to understand that these things are important to **him**, and that **he** needs them, and **his** fate depends on them – only then will he do it on his own even when his parents aren't

watching.

This was Akavya ben Mahalalel's answer to his son. He could have told the *roshei yeshiva*: My son is great, there's nobody like him, etc., and they would have been *mekarev* him because the father had told them how great he is. But for the rest of his life he would have felt emotionally dependent on his father, who had testified on his behalf before he died.

His father chose to give him an even greater gift, that of independence, "your deeds will draw you close, your deeds will distance you." Know that your actions are important and they can turn the world over – positively or negatively. Your deeds matter to Hashem and it all depends on how you behave.

The objective of education is for the child to understand that these things are important to him, and that he needs them, and his fate depends on them – only then will he do it on his own even when his parents aren't watching.

This is the goal of *chinuch*. Not that we should educate children to look the way we want them to look; the role of *chinuch* is to uncover the child's independence, "so that the flame rises of its own accord," so that the children understand that their lives have deep meaning; and that their thoughts, speech, and actions can change the world; and that their daily lives are important to *Klal Yisroel*, to the soul of our nation, to Hashem, and above all else, to their own *neshamos*. They must develop an independent personality.

(From a lecture in a series of educational lectures initiated by Agudas Chassidei Chabad. E-mail the author at YYJacobson@aol.com)

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THE POWER OF THE RIGHT WORDS

BY RABBI YEHESKEL LBOVIC



IMPACT THOUGH NOT UNDERSTOOD

When the Tzemach Tzedek had to appear before the Russian authorities to answer accusations leveled against *chassidus* and *kabbala*, he would give his answers in Yiddish, and afterwards they would be translated by one of his *gabbaim*.

In one of the interchanges, the officials were extremely impressed with the fiery feelings that came across even in the *translator's* words. We can ask: what was the point of the Rebbe making statements in a language unknown to the officials, when he could have requested to answer all the questions in writing, which would have been easier to translate, rather than having the translator rely on his memory, waiting for the Rebbe to conclude his respective answers before translating (it stands to reason that the translation was not made in a halting, alternating kind of a way)?

It seems, therefore, that the *real* weight of conviction came *davka* from the *Rebbe's* words, though spoken in Yiddish, and only then was that conviction reflected in the

translator's words and expressions.

TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK – THAT IS THE QUESTION

The above can be connected to

The officials were extremely impressed with the fiery feelings that came across even in the translator's words, but what was the point of the Rebbe making statements in a language unknown to the officials?

Rashi's comment on the *pasuk* (Shmos 6:30) spoken to Moshe by G-d when he was complaining that "I am closed up of lips," i.e., I can (hardly) speak, so what's the point of even appearing before Pharaoh

and making a fool of myself in my inability to speak clearly. To which Hashem answered (Shmos 7:2), "See, I have set you as master over Pharaoh; Aharon will be your spokesman; you will speak all that I will command you and Aharon, your brother, will (also) speak to Pharaoh." Comments Rashi: "(You will speak) just once every single *shlichus* (mission) as you will have heard it from My mouth, and Aharon, your brother, will interpret and explain it in Pharaoh's ears." Rashi's proof that G-d is telling Moshe that he himself should also speak to Pharaoh (although his whole complaint was that he *cannot* speak, and we could then possibly understand the words, "You will speak all that I command you" as referring to Moshe speaking to Aharon and *not* to Pharaoh) is based on the *pasuk* which states clearly (Shmos 6:27): "They (both Moshe and Aharon) were those who spoke to Pharaoh." However, we can ask: (a) What does Rashi mean by his double expression, "interpret and explain"? (b) How does Rashi reason that Moshe was to say each message just once and *no more* than once? (d) Why does he use the term "mission" rather than "command," since these

statements constitute direct commands from G-d to Pharaoh to “let my people go, etc.” (d) What is Rashi stressing by mentioning Pharaoh’s ears?

TWO COMPLAINTS AND TWO FUNCTIONS

However, Rashi is addressing a bigger question: Moshe had *already* once before complained (Shmos 5:1,3), “I am heavy of mouth and tongue,” to which Hashem had *already* answered: “He (Aharon), will be a mouth unto you.” Why is Moshe complaining *again* along the same lines? Rashi is thus answering that the clue lies in that in these two cases he was using *different* expressions, each bearing a different connotation. In the first one, he was complaining that he was, “heavy of speech,” implying that he could still speak somewhat, albeit in a difficult and arduous way, whereas in this second complaint he was saying that he is “closed up of lips,” implying that he possibly would not be able to speak at all.

Thus, although he had been already told (after his *first* complaint) that Aharon would accompany him as his “mouth,” this made sense to him only as long as he would *also* be able to talk, albeit briefly, but now that he assessed that he might not be able to utter a single syllable, what weight would

his mere silent presence carry?

In answer to this *new* complaint, G-d answered: “(Don’t worry) you will (indeed be able to) speak.” G-d was assuring him that He would give him the ability to speak, because he was on a *mission* as a *shliach* of G-d. As such, his function was not to attempt to *convince* Pharaoh through cogent arguments, but to plainly state G-d’s words as he, Moshe, would hear them from G-d. G-d, without doubt, said His words only once, and Moshe was to

As the message would start to sink into Pharaoh’s ears, the real power began to break him and his evil might...

repeat them *exactly* as he would hear them, just once, and in Lashon HaKodesh, regardless of Pharaoh’s inability to understand Hebrew.

Only after that, would Aharon proceed to fulfill a *double* function: first “*interpret*,” i.e., translate G-d’s Hebrew message into Egyptian, and then “*explain*,” expound on the

message so that it would *sink* “into Pharaoh’s ears” and make its mark. And even as the message would start to sink into Pharaoh’s ears, the *real* power that would eventually break him and his evil might, lay more in Moshe’s short statements, as unintelligible as they were to him, than in Aharon’s oratory.

HIGH TIME FOR REAL LEADERS – NOT WISHY-WASHY POLITICIANS

Moshe thus paved the way for all future Jewish leaders and spokesmen. The first step is to firmly declare, even just once, the word of G-d, as it pertains to any given situation, stating it with a firm conviction, coming through both the spoken word and body language.

Thus, in our current era, all it would take is for any Jewish spokesman, worthy of the name and position (vs. cheap political charlatans pushing Jewish lives further to the brink of national suicide), to state unequivocally, just once, without any subsequent emendations: “G-d gave the Holy Land to our forefathers and their descendants, the Jewish people, along biblically delineated boundaries, forever, and no force on earth can change this fact with impunity.” Period.

Once this is *firmly* in place, the contemporary *Aharons* we Jews possess can utilize their oratorical talents to *explain* to the world whatever it is that they don’t understand, in order to make it sink deeper into their ears and psyches. Do we have to wait until Moshiach (may he soon be revealed) before regaining Jewish pride in our destiny and removing all the groveling charlatans from office through election landslides for Jewish leaders worthy of the name?!

Based on Likkutei Sichos vol 16 pp. 69-78

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SHLUCHIM RELATE – MORE STORIES

BY NOSSON AVROHOM AND PINCHAS PIZEM

The third compilation of stories told at farbrengens during the Kinus HaShluchim

HEALS THE SICK

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Kurant, director of the Chabad house in Gan Yavne relates:

Near the Chabad house lives a Russian



Jew. One day he fell sick and the doctors said he wasn't likely to live. With his last strength, the man made it to the Chabad house and asked me to make a "Mi Sh'Beirach" during the Torah reading for Moshe ben Feiga.

After the *davening*, I wrote to the Rebbe about him and put the letter in a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. The answer was to Moshe Aharon and the letter was a *bracha* for health and good news. I went to his house and asked him what his full name was. "The Rebbe gave a *bracha* to Moshe Aharon," I told him.

He exclaimed, "Yes, that's my name!" He explained that he remembered being called "Moshe Aharon" when he grew up but when

he moved to Eretz Yisroel they asked him for one name and he had said, "Moshe." He added, "I had forgotten about it. How did the Rebbe know?"

He was excited by the Rebbe's answer and he asked me what he needed to do so that the *bracha* would be fulfilled. I enumerated the *mitzvos* he could take on, and he decided to begin with *t'fillin*. From that point on, his health continued to improve, to the astonishment of the doctors, who admitted that this was an open miracle.

He became more involved in *Yiddishkeit* and began to visit the Chabad house from time to time. On Sukkos, while saying the *bracha* on the *minim*, he poured out his heart to me and confided that he was 57 years old and still uncircumcised.

We waited until he was completely better and then did the *bris mila*. That Shabbos we made a big party in his honor at the Chabad house, and there, in front of everybody, he told his personal miracle and ended with an old, joyful *niggun*. The crowd was moved and happily took part in his *simcha*.

* * *

The doctors discovered a dangerous liver problem in Gideon,

the son of a prominent family in our city. The treatment took a long time and he went to the top doctors. After all the treatment, even the best doctors threw up their hands in defeat and said there was nothing more they could do. The parents were told to try an expensive treatment abroad, which included a complicated operation.

The parents listened to the doctors and took Gideon abroad. After a series of operations and a complicated protocol, his condition began to improve and he was no longer in danger. A recovery period followed, and the family returned to Eretz Yisroel exhausted from the efforts and doubtful as to the results. In fact, within a few months he was hospitalized again in the ICU. His condition deteriorated and the parents were at a loss as to what to do next. The spirits of parents and son were at an all-time low.

One day, the parents heard about writing to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, and they went to the Chabad house to try it for themselves. They told their son's story and said they had reached the point of despair. They wrote to the Rebbe about their son and their feelings and asked for a *bracha*. In the letter they opened to, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of checking *mezuzos*. They immediately sent their *mezuzos* to be checked. I explained to them about the *seifer*

Torah that was written especially for Jewish children, and suggested that they buy their son a letter. They did so.

To their amazement, the very next day the doctors told them that their son was no longer in critical condition and he was transferred to a regular ward. From that point on, he improved daily, and two weeks later he was completely well!

* * *

At the Chabad house in Gan Yavne there was a woman who tried to sell her apartment for a long time. She advertised all over but nobody was interested. Even those who bothered to come and look at the apartment were not interested.

The woman consulted with me and asked whether she could get a *bracha* from the Rebbe. We wrote to the Rebbe and put the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. She got a *bracha* for good news. I suggested that she check her *mezuzos* and even went along with her to help her take them down. When I got to her house, I noticed that a number of *mezuzos* were missing. She immediately bought new ones and we put them up on the doorposts that didn't have *mezuzos*.

Two days later, I got a phone call from her. "Rabbi Kurant, I have two people in my house arguing amongst themselves over the price!"

THE PERMIT THAT ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY

Rabbi Doron Oran, director of *mivtzaim* on Ben-Yehuda Street, Jerusalem, relates:

On the porch of our Chabad house on Ben-Yehuda in Yerushalayim, we have a Moshiach flag near a large picture of the Rebbe. One day, a supervisor from the city council came by and said that those responsible for municipal oversight had passed by and decided that the

flag and picture had to come down. If it wouldn't come down within a certain period of time, he threatened, we would be fined.

We tried to argue with him, but he insisted this wasn't his decision, but a decision by his employers which he had to enforce.

We sadly took down the flag but decided to leave the picture, come what may.

Every Friday we have a *shiur* in the weekly D'var Malchus, which is attended by all sorts of people, young and old, religious and non-religious. I wasn't at the Chabad house that week and the participants decided to give the *shiur* over the loudspeakers so it could be heard on the street.

A few minutes before they finished the *shiur*, an angry official entered the Chabad house and ordered them to shut the loudspeakers. They did as he asked and got into a discussion with him. They invited him to join the *shiur*, and he agreed!

He seemed most amazed by it, and before they all left he said, "I'll tell you something. I'm the one who said the flag and picture must come down. Now I've changed my mind, and you can put it up. When I get to the office I'll make sure it's legal and nobody will give you a hard time in the future."

THE MISSING MAN WAS FOUND

Rabbi Benny Nachum, director of the Chabad house in Shlomi:

The story begins 10 years ago.



Rabbi Eliezer Ben Shmuel and his wife came to help me out. During the year they spent with me, they helped me open kindergartens. Today the kindergartens are flourishing with dozens of children.

In the course of his work, Eliezer would go on *mivtzaim* on the streets of Shlomi and nearby Nahariya. He got to know a young man, the owner of a restaurant, and began to be *mekarev* him. He took him to visit the kindergartens and the Chabad house in Shlomi, and at some point the man decided to buy a pair of *t'fillin* and to put them on daily.

Eliezer was thrilled and decided to convince him to buy *t'fillin* with the *k'sav* of the Alter Rebbe. After explaining why this was preferable, the man agreed to buy them.

When the man began regularly attending classes and got more into things, I got up the courage to ask him to sign a "Yisachar-Z'vulun" agreement. "I told him that according to the agreement the work we did and the Torah we learned, would be to his credit, and he would help finance our work. After discussing it at length he agreed."

Shortly after signing the agreement, the man disappeared. We tried to locate him but simply couldn't find him.

This year, in Elul, I went to South Africa to fundraise for the Chabad house. In the two weeks I spent there, I was hosted by the Hellers. They are a wonderful family, to whom the *inyan* of Moshiach is very dear. In addition to the room and board they provided me with throughout my stay, they also helped me in every other way possible. One acquaintance, a very sweet older man, would go around with me to various wealthy people he knew. He introduced me to them and explained about the work I do, about the great expenses we had, and how important it is to contribute to

support this work.

One afternoon we still hadn't managed to collect anything. We were feeling really down when the man accompanying me fell, broke a crown on his tooth, and wanted to go to the dentist. I tried to convince him to wait until later because it was late and we had accomplished nothing, and I was afraid that an entire day would go by without collecting even a dollar.

Since he insisted I didn't have much choice, and I had to accompany him to a large mall where his dentist was. In the meantime, he told me, you can go to the kosher restaurant near the dentist and try to talk to the owner. He's a nice guy, he assured me.

I entered the restaurant and was surprised to see that all the waiters wore *Yechi yarmulkes* and there was a large picture of the Rebbe on the wall. Then one of the waiters ran excitedly to the kitchen and called out, "Yisroel, the rabbi of Shlomi is here!"

A few seconds later, a tall bearded man wearing a hat emerged, came over to me, and gave me a hug. I still had no idea what was going on. I tried telling him that I wasn't the rabbi of Shlomi but the director of the Chabad house. Then he asked, "You don't recognize me?"

I tried to think who he could possibly be, but had no clue. A few more minutes went by and then it hit

me. This was the missing man from Nahariya! I laughed as I took out my calculator and figured out how much he owed us according to our agreement.

He gave me a generous contribution and tried to make up for what he had missed.

Rabbi Benny Nachum concludes:

I asked him how he knew I was in town, and he said that on Shabbos one of the waiters ate at his house and told him that he had *davened* that morning at Rabbi Heller's *shul*. There the *rav* of Shlomi had given a speech about his Chabad house. He immediately realized it was me, and he tried to look for me. Now, here I was, having walked into his restaurant by Divine providence.

I had complained about my day but it had ended just fine. And the best part was meeting the man who had become a full-fledged *chassid*.

HE LOOKED FOR STORIES AND FOUND A STORY

Rabbi Elimelech Shachar, director of the Chabad house in Rechovot relates:

I got a phone call from a young man



who introduced himself as a resident of Binyamina in the north. He said he was a student in a film school and he was making a documentary about writing to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*. He wanted to meet and interview me. I asked him why he chose me, and he said that he had called Tzach in Kfar Chabad and they had referred him to me.

We arranged to meet two days later. It turned out that the man helped the *shliach* in Binyamina a lot. Before we began talking, I suggested that we write to the Rebbe. He sat down and wrote about his work and asked for a *bracha* for success.

In the letter he opened to the Rebbe was writing to a Lubavitcher who had asked about how to arrange the Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen* he was having in his house. The Rebbe said he should try to bring as many non-Lubavitchers as he could and to put a lot of effort into doing so, and not to be embarrassed by those who made fun of him.

The young man read this letter and was amazed. He told me that he tried to convince his friends to attend *shiurim* and *farbrengens* at the Chabad house but they often laughed at him.

Now, he had his own *Igros Kodesh* story.

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SUICIDAL WITHDRAWAL

BY SHAI GEFEN

AMERICA SAYS NO!

The Israeli Left likes scaring us with lines like, "America threatens," and "America pressures," etc. Throughout the years, the Rebbe negated this approach and explained on countless occasions that in the vast majority of cases, it simply wasn't true, and the one exerting the pressure was "the goy within you." Even when there was pressure at times, it was only external, said the Rebbe, and if they knew to stand strong, they would manage to endure.

This week we got an amazing lesson regarding "American pressure," as opposed to Israeli defeatism. While the U.S. called upon Israel not to be swayed by the smooth talk of Assad of Damascus, as soon as Assad whispered, Israel began an aggressive campaign to enter into political negotiations with him, including ridiculous Israeli concessions. Military leaders, the Minister of the Treasury and the Foreign Minister pressured Sharon to enter into negotiations.

A bystander would think these people were in the throes of some bizarre hallucination, in strong need of psychiatric intervention. What happened? An Arab leader is fearful for his life and his government after seeing what happened to his pal in Iraq. He who helped hide weapons for his Iraqi neighbor, only hinted about his interest in achieving "peace" with Israel in order to avoid facing judgment day with the Americans. And we Jews, the wise and discerning nation, jumped to attention. "It wouldn't be right to

appear to the world like a nation that doesn't respond with peace," said one minister.

Herein lies the reason why we always lose the battle of public opinion (not to mention strategic territories!): we always think and say, "it wouldn't be nice," "what will they say about us," "what will they think of us."

Why didn't that minister think about how we will look to the world after an agreement of defeat and abasement the Arabs hand us? That minister and his friends should ask themselves: when do we look worse to the world, after concessions or after victories?

It pays to examine the facts: What have we gained in the last 25 years since Israel began to withdraw? Has our standing in the international arena improved? Have the motions in the U.N. against Israel decreased or increased? Has anti-Semitism gone down or gone up? Are there fewer dead and wounded or more? Do the Arabs anticipate more concessions or fewer?

Another point to ponder: The American leadership understands quite well what the fox from Damascus really wants. Are the Arab leaders not preferable over the delusional Israeli leaders? These are leaders who want to unilaterally withdraw from everything, against all logic and the will to live. Just to withdraw for the sake of withdrawal. It doesn't matter to them who their partner is and what he really wants. They want to retreat from all our strategic strongholds, and that's that.

The world looks at us in disdain and understands that they need to step on us in order for us to agree to another concession.

Here is another example in the latest confrontation with the Palestinians, which has been going on for three years. America gave the green light to wipe out Arafat. Former Defense Minister Peadar Kirby said so. "From our side you can hang him," Ben Eliezer disclosed from his conversation with the American Vice President Dick Cheney. However, Israel hesitated in fear of what the world would say.

Perhaps now we understand what the Rebbe meant when he said, twelve years ago, to Moshe Katzav, "Based on this, it would be preferable if the nations ruled Eretz Yisroel, and then Jews wouldn't give away land."

MADNESS

Along with the deterioration of Likud, as everybody stands in shock at how former friends have joined the extreme Left, Labor started a campaign under the slogan, "Leave Gaza by Pesach." Citizens are being asked to sign to a petition along these lines.

It's hard to blame the fantasy-driven Labor party led by Peres, the creator of the new Middle East (by the way, the Americans taught us how you *really* recreate the Middle East), while Right-wing government ministers are urging unilateral withdrawal. The prime minister himself said that tens of thousands of Jews will be uprooted from their homes in a transfer he is organizing. So what should we say to the Left?



Whoever thinks that the prime minister's words have no effect is in error. There are those who know how to gain immediate political benefit out of them. Now, those on the (old) Left are demanding that we leave all of Gaza by Pesach (not later). It makes no difference to them that mortars are flying from there into Ashkelon and Sederot. Their goal is to run from every possible area. With an agreement or without an agreement, they are devoted to the goal of flight. Each of them designates his own timetable. This one says within a year, another one says till Pesach, and tomorrow we'll hear from those who want us to leave by Purim. Does anybody have a rational explanation for this madness?

I think we should start a campaign to put our leaders into forced hospitalization until the weekend, because the longer they remain on the loose, they more damage they cause.

In a *sicha* of Gimmel Tammuz 5742, the Rebbe said that we need to *daven* for the leaders of the government and to give *tz'daka* for them. They certainly need a *refuas ha'guf* and *nefesh!* Whoever dreamed we'd live in such insane times? There's only one antidote: the *hisgalus* of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach.

WHY DID THE RIGHT CHANGE DIRECTION?

Many wonder how it is that a minister in Likud who was considered a hawk, changed overnight and says that settlements should be dismantled. They say that this minister helped the settlements and spoke against any withdrawal, and now she's collaborating with the prime minister and is ready for concessions that include the transfer of Jews.

Once again, we seem caught by surprise, but the truth is that we

shouldn't be surprised, for this is part of the process which has been going on the past thirty years, which used to be the Left's and is now the Right's. This is what happened to Shamir when he went to Madrid ready to make concessions (we didn't want to understand why the Rebbe fought him; today we understand); it's what happened to Begin at Camp David, and it's what happened to the leaders of Labor, who were ardent supporters of settlements. This is precisely what is taking place today to those on the Right, who are ready for any concession.

Whoever does not hold on to the true basis for Eretz Yisroel, with a Torah perspective, ultimately concedes all. When one's position was based on "*is'chalta d'Geula*" or Zionism, when it goes of style, he or she is even ready to give up values that were formerly held to be holy.

The Rebbe stood against the world regarding the Camp David agreement. They, on the other hand, look to see which way the wind is blowing and based on that, they make their decisions. Only someone who bases himself on *halacha*, *Shulchan Aruch siman 329*, which negates any concession and opening the land before the *goyim*, just as he accepts the *mitzvos* of *t'fillin* and *Shabbos*, can stand by his principles.

We need to ask ourselves: Why didn't we do enough to publicize the *halacha* in *Shulchan Aruch*? If we had, then maybe those who call themselves our friends wouldn't have turned Left. Those who were with us in Zion Square and blocked roads with "*Zu Artzeinu*" (Benny Alon was the leader and today he's a collaborator) are ready today to make any concession and withdrawal.

There's no point in being surprised over the move to the left. We can say now, that even those who were called "the leaders of the

These are leaders who want to unilaterally withdraw from everything, against all logic and the will to live. Just to withdraw for the sake of withdrawal. It doesn't matter to them who their partner is and what he really wants. They want to retreat from all our strategic strongholds, and that's that.

settlers” are the first to agree to dismantle settlements for “pragmatic” reasons. So we shouldn’t be unduly impressed by those who put their faith in values like Zionism, the State, or Nationalism. In the end, they’ll also realize that “there is no choice” and you must compromise, *r”l*.

HE’S GOOD FOR ASSAD

In one of the largest news dailies, it was publicized that current Minister of the Treasury, Mr. “Good for the Jews” Netanyahu, begged the prime minister to seriously check into negotiating with the Syrians. He also insisted on the need to arrive at a compromise over most of the Golan Heights, extending to the water sources. The practical ramifications of such a deal would mean destroying settlements and returning the entire Golan Heights to the Syrians.

In the past, they publicized that Netanyahu was seriously negotiating with the Syrians, with him agreeing to return the Golan Heights until nearly the Kineret. Then he denied it. Today he doesn’t even deny it. The man who was described as “Good for the Jews,” is nothing but an impostor and a fraud who acted like he was on the Right but whose true colors are now apparent.

The one who betrayed us once, will betray us again. The one who gave away Chevron and continued to give Arafat land even after the tunnel incident, and went to Wye in humiliation, carries on with the same approach in regard to the Golan Heights. There is no difference between Sharon, Lieberman, and Netanyahu. They are all cut out of the same cloth, driven by love for the power of governing, and the lives of Jews mean nothing to them.

THE ENTIRE COUNTRY IS THE FRONT

They’re talking about peace with

Syria and learn no lessons from peace agreements that were signed in Oslo and Camp David with Egypt. In recent weeks, new information has emerged indicating that even the dubious peace with Egypt is nothing but an illusion, and Egypt is preparing for war. Thanks to our “peace” with them, they have achieved military parity with Israel, and this is while it’s clear that Egypt is behind the massive weapons-

There is a fundamental difference between our situation today and the sugya in Gemara Eruvin, because in the Gemara it’s talking about a situation where Kutim only besiege Jewish cities, but today the situation is that gentiles besiege all of Eretz Yisroel! All four borders from all directions!

smuggling into Gaza, and it aids terrorists.

The following is a rare *sicha* of the Rebbe, explaining that all four borders are in the category of “gentiles who besiege,” and not only the borders but all of Eretz Yisroel is within the *halachic* category of “opening the land before them.” The *sicha* was said on 29 Elul 5740:

... The gentiles don’t just besiege

individual cities in Israel, but all of Eretz Yisroel at all its borders! And after all this, there are still Jews who maintain something shocking, that we are not in a situation of “gentiles who besiege.”

Even so, it says in *Shulchan Aruch* that even in a situation in which they are interested in nothing more than straw and hay, and they even say that after they get the straw and hay they will go back where they came from, the *din* is that “you go out against them with weapons” even on Shabbos. And this *din* applies not only in Eretz Yisroel but also outside of Eretz Yisroel.

They maintain that now this not a situation of “gentiles who besiege towns in Israel,” since in the case of “gentiles who besiege” there is fear of possible war. And now, two friends meet, one an Egyptian and the other an Israeli (along with a third friend, an American), and nobody is thinking of war! Nobody is trying to frighten anyone with war or weapons; two countries are discussing how to increase the friendship between them! ...

The present situation is open and clear. All the borders of Eretz Yisroel – of Egypt on the south, Syria in the north, Jordan on the east, all four sides of Eretz Yisroel – are occupied by enemy armies – “the Kutim besieged Israel” – including the border with Egypt!

The call to war is no longer something of the future! They are already planning for war now, but it’s being carried out by terrorists! The terrorists don’t get paid by isolated individuals but are financed directly by the “Kuti governments,” the Arab countries in Africa and Yemen. This situation is one that is explicitly that of “gentiles besiege.” And not just “besieging”; they are already waging war!

The same thing is happening on the border with Egypt, but the

Egyptian leader utilizes other methods. He doesn't start immediately with war but waits until he gets everything he was promised without war, namely the oil, etc. Then it will be much easier to wage war, when all the oil and security are no longer in Israel's possession!

We read every day in the newspapers that on all three borders stand soldiers who enable terrorists to go through, or who send terrorists that wage war against Eretz Yisroel. On the border with Egypt are military camps – and they still imagine that this isn't a situation of "gentiles besieging Jewish cities" – they imagine that this isn't the situation that prevailed in Nahardaa, about which the Gemara says, "you go out against them with weapons."

Indeed, there is a fundamental difference between our situation today and the *sugya* in Gemara Eruvin (and the *halacha* in *siman* 329), because in the Gemara it's talking about a situation where "Kutim" only "besiege" Jewish cities, but today the situation is that "gentiles besiege" all of Eretz Yisroel! All four borders from all directions!

It is only with Hashem's kindness that "great is the shepherd" who watches the sheep of His flock – in the meantime, all is quiet. This is despite the fact that since the Camp David accords were signed, there have been more terrorists.

"KARASI V'EIN ONEH"

The new edition of *Karasi V'Ein Oneh* is about to be published in two

volumes with all the *sichos*, letters, *yechiduyos*, and responses that the Rebbe said about *shleimus ha'Aretz* since the Six Day War. The book is definitely one of the most important works for our times.

We need to distribute it as widely as possible – not only because people will be amazed by the Rebbe's vision, but when they read how all the strategies are ripped to shreds, they will understand how the Rebbe's approach is the only valid approach.

Jewish leaders need to read it, and while many people ask what they can do to spread the Rebbe's word, distributing this book to all sorts of Jews, *rabbanim*, etc., is one way of doing it.

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150,000 PROTEST SHARON'S POLICIES

About 150,000 people packed Malchei Yisroel plaza in Tel Aviv Sunday night, to demonstrate against Sharon's plans to give away parts of Eretz Yisroel. Members of the Yesha council said that pressure was exerted by the Prime Minister's office on ministers and Knesset members, not to participate in the demonstration.

Tourist minister Benny Alon addressed Sharon and said: "The nation will not allow you in your old age to shame your youthful accomplishments. Don't think that the nation is tired and wants to withdraw. The nation does not want to withdraw, not from the Torah, not from its traditions, not from its history, and not from its land.

"Nobody will take away your acts of bravery from you, but all of us – all the Jewish people – will not allow you to carry out your plan of removing Jews from this land. We'll remind you of the times you said that there is already a Palestinian state on the east side of the Jordan and its capitol is Amman!"

The minister of Housing, Effy Eitam, said: "Ariel Sharon, as we see signs of victory on the worldwide battlefield against terror and against police states that support terror; at a time when Saddam Hussein of Iraq fell; when Libya agreed to drop its plans to develop weapons of mass destruction; in Afghanistan – Bin Laden disappeared as though the earth swallowed him up, and Syria wants to join the free world – now we hear weak talk from you?! We have a red line, and the red line is the blood of hundreds of women, children, and old people. It's behind that red line that we stand resolutely and say



Many Chabad *chassidim* joined the demonstration

"no" to terror. Terror will not just go away, and will not vanquish us." Eitam made it clear that his party would not cooperate with the uprooting of settlements.

Minister Uzi Landau asked: "How will a unilateral withdrawal solve the demographic problems? If you can move Jewish settlements as a solution to a tough problem, you can also move Arab settlements. All plans for unilateral concessions to the Palestinians have led to increased terror and increased attacks." In Landau's opinion, in order to reach an agreement, you

need to subdue terror, bring down the P.A., and bring in new leadership in its place.

Deputy minister of Education, Tzvi Hendel said: "Arik Sharon- let the army win. Let's annihilate the P.A., send them back to Tunisia, and strengthen our settlements. Let them go back to their lands. We returned to our land. This is our land, and only our land."

Rabbi Chaim Druckman, *rosh yeshiva* of the B'nei Akiva schools, said: "Uprooting settlements in Eretz Yisroel is inhumane and immoral. Uprooting Jews from their homes creates a split among the Jewish people and we've come to cry out against it. It's a prize for terror and a capitulation to our mortal enemies."

Large numbers of Chabad *chassidim* joined the demonstration, bringing signs with the Rebbe's position written on them about standing strong for *shleimus ha'Aretz*.

CONVENTION FOR SHLUCHIM IN THE C.I.S.

The annual convention of shluchim who work under the auspices of Ohr Avner in the C.I.S. took place in the Crown Plaza on the shores of the Dead Sea. Lev Leviev, who funds Ohr Avner schools, had the shluchim and their families take over the entire hotel.

The shluchim represented all the states: from Kazan in Russia, from Baku in Azerbaijan, from Minsk in White Russia, from Talin in Estonia, from Riga in Latvia, from Chabrobsk in the Far East of Russia, and the list goes on. In every one of these cities, the Rebbe's *shliach* is everything: the *rav*, community leader, principal of the schools, representative of the Jews to the government, etc. and he faces numerous challenges.

The shluchim attended lectures and workshops with *rabbanim* and experts who discussed issues and situations pertinent to those working in the former Soviet Union. Topics included: cooperation between the schools of the Ohr Avner network, the Jewish Agency, and the Israeli Ministry of Education; the relationship between shluchim and the relief agencies; curriculum for the schools; fighting missionaries, etc.

Separate workshops were held for the shluchos on topics like *chinuch* of the children of shluchim. The children of the shluchim had a program too, run by the girls of the Beis Rivka Seminary of Kfar Chabad and organized by Mrs. Chana Raskin, shlucha in Vladivostok.

At the end of a day packed with workshops, one of the professors who was invited to attend the convention said, "I don't understand how you do everything you do. You're young and were not trained to speak, to direct, to advise, and to educate. Yet you manage to thrill an audience, to run community *mosdos* and schools, and provide advice wherever needed. Today you got tips



The *shluchim* of the C.I.S.

from the professionals and with Hashem's help, you'll be even more successful."

On Tuesday evening there was a *farbrengen*. The main speaker was Rabbi Moshe Lazar, *shliach* in Milan. On Wednesday afternoon, there was an event at which Rabbi Yona Metzger, chief rabbi of Israel, spoke. He spoke enthusiastically about his last visit to the shluchim in the C.I.S. and expressed his amazement over their *mesirus nefesh*.

The main address was given by Lev Leviev, who is the main supporter of this wonderful work. At the end of the convention, the *shluchim* posed for the traditional group picture and on Thursday morning the *shluchim* left, encouraged and stronger than ever.

It was a unique convention, which broadcasted a level of energy that only *shluchim* in the C.I.S. are capable of. These *shluchim* live under complicated material and spiritual conditions, but they continue to do their work, providing *nachas ruach* to the *meshaleiach*, the Rebbe MH"M.



R. Yona Metzger addressing the *shluchim*



the main address at the convention for *shluchim* to the C.I.S.

TORAH BY THE SEA

BY REUVEN CAPLAN

The sun is coming up at Sea Gate, on the shores of Brooklyn, New York, at the Baal T'shuva Yeshiva, Tiferes Menachem, with Rabbi Abraham Lipskier as the Rosh Yeshiva. It is the beginning of a great adventure, ten days of Torah by the Sea with many students, rabbi's, guests and potential students.

The theme of this gathering, as expressed by Rabbi Rashi Elgarten, coordinator of the program, is to address the basic and common issues that every thinking Jew would have in coming closer to traditional Judaism, e.g. anti-Semitism, Science and Faith, and Chassidism. He continues, "How does a person in transition receive information to bring him closer to Judaism? Further, said Rabbi Elgarten, "this first semi-annual gathering is an opportunity for young men to come to this unique Yeshiva to learn Torah and experience, first hand, the true meaning of Yeshiva life. The atmosphere is as important as the physical plant. Here at Tiferes Menachem we support our students, encourage them to stand on their own and realize that in this Yeshiva's life style, everyone is climbing the mountain together. This fact enhances the experience to learn freely. This is friendly ground!" The Yeshiva is its Seder, its living conditions and its *kavana*. *The Seder of this conference was Powerful!*

Imagine this- Morning *chassidus* at 8 am [one hour]; then the Mikveh, Morning Prayer 9:30 to 11:00 am. Then we eat-the best kosher food in any Yeshiva. We are blessed with a

dynamite speaker on Torah, Mishna and Gemara, 12 to 2:30; then we eat. We break for one whole hour. The afternoon prayer is at 4 p.m. The afternoon speakers [see below]. Evening prayer 6:30-7 p.m., Then we eat. There is an hour break. The Evening Speakers [see below] from 8-10 pm. The day ends with Club Tiferes-live music by the students and/or a Farbrengen! What a Seder. The highlight of this Seder was the nine speakers.

Rabbi Y.Y. Greenberg began with a two day discussion of torah. "Torah



is a way of life, when we learn, there is a unity, we are digesting torah and we are digested by it," he said. "Further, academics and action go together. It is a legal imperative. Even if you know it all, you have to study the Torah; it is a *mitzvah* to study it." This was just the beginning of his two day tour of the Torah, both the written and oral Torah. It was fascinating. Did you know that the 72 Rabbis who translated the written Torah for King Ptolemy purposely misinterpreted the original text 15 times; they all did it in the

exact same places! One example is the statement that the rabbit is kosher, even though it isn't. This was done because the Hebrew word for rabbit is similar to the name of the King's wife. Rabbi Greenberg's entire lecture is archived at www.Tiferes.org in streaming video as are all the lectures.

The next two morning lectures were given by Rabbi Aryeh Israeli who spoke about the "Scribal Arts" and "Tzitzis." Both presentations were informative and practical. Rabbi Israeli is a sofer. During his first presentation, 22 of us actually wrote a letter in a Safer Torah, thereby fulfilling the *mitzvah* of writing a Seifer Torah. In the talk of Tzitzis, we learned the Chabad way to tie the Tzitzis. If you want to know how to do it, just check the video archives at www.Tiferes.org.

Our first Farbrengen occurred on Motzaei Shabbos, Beis Teives. Dr. Dovid Sholom Pape's discussion entitled, Candles of the Soul was punctuated by an amazing occurrence. He began telling of an individual who visited 770 during a service, and at one point, this individual prostrated himself in front of the Rebbe, just like Joseph's brothers. Apparently, this story has been told many times. Well the person who did this was in our audience, Shmuel, a doctor from Florida (more about him later). Shmuel told us the full story of how he came to prostrate himself before the Rebbe. Hearing that story from the mouth of the man who did it was an amazing gift for all of us. Baruch



Rabbi Shloma Majeski



Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson

Hashem. Dr. Pape also spoke to us about the amazing court decision which confirmed that the books in the Rebbe's library belonged to the *chassidim* and the significance of this to the Rebbe himself-the challenge to the Chair. This too can be seen at www.Tiferes.org.

The next evening speaker was Y.Y. Jacobson, a dynamic young man well known to the Crown Heights Lubavitch community. Rabbi Jacobson spoke on the topic, "The 21st Century Jew: A Profile for Survival." He gave us a brief history of anti-Semitism, the current rise in anti-Semitism, and told us how a modern Jew could combat this. "Anti-Semitism arises when the Jew becomes weak. If we want to stop it, we Jews must become strong. We must show the world the strength we Jews displayed at Entebbe and during the 6-day war." That is just a taste of his timely and impassioned discourse. Check our video archives at www.Tiferes.org.

The next speaker was a real treat for this author. We share a lot in common. Both of us have degrees in zoology-an archaic term no longer listed in college catalogues. We both studied ecology, and we both came to the conclusion, some time ago, that everything comes from Torah, so why

not all of science, especially the science of life. Dr Aryeh Gotfryd is my personal hero. His books on Science and Faith, especially *Living with Moshiach*, and the translation of *Mind over Matter* are inspiring. Dr Gotfryd's analysis of the paradigm shift from "Hard-Nosed Materialism" [The Irrelevance of G-d and the Insignificance of Man] to "Modern Integrative Holism" [The Reality of G-d, Soul, and the Meaning of Life] is both precise and accurate, both exciting and Torah based. The world is 5764 years old. All of the radioactive dating techniques that say differently are pure poppycock. Amen! He spoke for two sessions, almost four hours. His talk was entitled, "Science & Faith: "And on the 7th day Science Rested." Catch it all on our video archives, www.Tiferes.org.

Simon Jacobson, the older brother of Y.Y. Jacobson spoke on "Jewish Intellectualism: It's not what you think." He tells us that everything is relative. The Torah is the object truth given to the Jewish People at Sinai. It was transmitted to us through people, Moses, Joshua. How do we know it is the truth? We know that Torah is Divine wisdom because for 3316 years the message was preserved and not corrupted and the Torah has always remained more

dominant than the teachers. The teachers always had to live up to the standards of how one studied Torah. There is a methodology, 13 steps; no one can change that, not even Moses. The teachers are to be selfless and transparent to the teaching of Torah. In terms of Jewish Intellectualism, how can a finite mind be related to Hashem? *Chassidus* indicates that "Hashem in his infinite capacity has the ability to create the infinite and he has the power to also create the finite." Please learn more online at www.Tiferes.org .

Then spoke the Dean of *chassidic* Speakers, Rabbi Shloma Majeski. His informative talk gave me, a Baal T'shuva of four months at Tiferes Menachem, the answers to all the questions about Chassidism I might every think to ask. His easy style and exact presentation was both informative and interesting. I can now say that I know the basics of what Chabad-Lubavitch brings to Judaism. Through prayer with great kavana, niggunim, simcha, the esoteric teachings of Torah, our Rebbe, our *ahavas Yisroel*, two pair of T'fillin and miracles, the Chabad *chassidic* way of Life is a special gift for the whole world. This too can be viewed at www.Tiferes.org , click on video archives.

Finally, Rabbi Heschel Greenberg,



Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

the older brother of the first speaker, spoke to us about the “Moshiach



Dr Aryeh Gotfryd

Factor.” He shared a story from Rabbi Akiva who said that Queen Esther was a descendent from Sarah, who lived to the age of 127 years. Queen Esther was the leader of 127 provinces. What did she see? With darkness all around her, she, Esther, which comes from Hester (concealed), she could see through the darkness. She could rule over 127 countries (127 types of exile). Rabbi Akiva’s students were suffering the darkness of the destruction of the second Beis HaMikdash. He asked, “What is Moshiach and what does it mean to wait for Moshiach?” The history of the Jewish People is the

story of waiting for Moshiach! His commentary on this can be viewed at www.Tiferes.org. He also gave a talk on “How believing in Moshiach will help me pass my calculus exam!” That is on the web site, too.

There were eight speakers in ten days, all of whom brought their own focus to Sea Gate for this gathering at Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem. Each speaker had his own style and interest. Each with his own life experience to share and each with a point of view centered on the importance of Torah and Torah Mitzvahs. There is another half to this ten-day story at Yeshiva Tiferes Menachem, Torah by the Sea, and that is the story of the participants. There were approximately 30 people throughout the conference. This is their story, their comments and their hopes.

THE ATTENDEES

There were 25 participants at this conference on “Torah by the Sea.” Fifteen of them were current students of the Yeshiva. The other ten were first time guests. The ages of the attendees ranged from 17 to 62. They were all aspiring Baalei T’shuva. Here are some of their comments.

The person who came from the greatest distance was Yaron Nouray. He is from Los Angeles, the Pico-Robertson area. He was born in Iran and fled to Israel when he was 12 years old. After 12 years in Israel, he came to the United States. He is an office manager for an Oriental Rug Company. He heard about the Yeshiva from his Shliach. His trip to Sea Gate was really a vacation for him. He has never attended a *yeshiva* before and does not consider himself totally religious. He told me that he felt that the speakers were good, the weather,

food and learning were also good. “I am not humble here. I could speak up and share my torah learning. That felt great.” He liked all the speakers, but Yosef Jacobson and Aryeh Gotfryd were his favorites. He also said that Rabbi Aryeh Israeli was a great teacher and that he liked studying *chassidus* the best. Finally, “I came here to get away; I needed peace and quiet.... This is a good place to learn.”

Another visitor to the Yeshiva was Shraga Faivel, a 46 year old resident of Chicago. He runs a small medical supply firm and has never been to a *yeshiva*. He was born in Russia and left there at age 15, lived for two years in Israel and spent the next three years in Italy and Germany. He has lived in the United States for 24 years. His Shliach told him about the Yeshiva and he is friends with two other former students. He came here to experience the *yeshiva* life. He said that the experience was impressive and potent. He said that he came closer to Hashem than at any other time in his life through this experience. “This is a very warm place, the accommodations are wonderful and the beach is great. I walked on the beach many times. I expected to learn Torah and take it into my daily life. It was very manageable, it fits.” “I was impressed with Yosef Jacobson who asked the



Rabbi Aryeh Israeli



Dr. Dovid Shalom Pape



Rabbi Y.Y. Greenberg

question, 'How can we promote the Jew and Bring Moshiach?' I want to reach out to Jews and do *mitzvahs*. I am on fire about this as a result of my experience here at the Yeshiva. I am proud to be a Jew. You should be proud to be a Jew. Say it, say it out loud!! Aryeh Israeli inspired me the most, especially on the last Shabbos (Parshas *VaYigash*). *Mivtzaim* (community outreach) in Brighton Beach was the best. I would walk up to people who just looked Jewish and talk to them and give them something to read in Russian. They loved it and I loved it. I want to do that in Chicago. I got more than I bargained for here. I got set on fire. I reached new heights spiritually. I am going to set aside some time each day for learning. I will be back." A powerful impression shared by a powerful Jew.

It is now time to write about the most famous, inspired and accomplished guest who attended this conference. Stuart Ross Farber, M.D., who lives in Orlando Florida; He is married and has children. He is 49 and is a Neurologist. He is a friend of Rabbi Lipskier and helped get started the live internet broadcast at the Yeshiva of its classes and other activities, like this conference. This is his first trip to a Yeshiva. He came prepared to learn, to eat kosher and

to go to the Mikveh every day and twice before Shabbos. In the succinct manner that only a physician can muster he stated, "The speakers were excellent—they were knowledgeable, sincere and intelligent. The learning was excellent. Furthermore, Hashem exists; there is more to life than the physical, spiritual goals should be our main emphasis." I will probably come back. Shalom" Now why is he famous? He is the one who prostrated himself before the Rebbe who was mentioned in Dr. Pape's story. Please come back Shmuel.

Reuven Kushnir from Brooklyn, New York is a current student at this Yeshiva. He was born in Russia, and came to the United States when he was 17. He has been here for 12 years. He teaches Math at several local colleges, including Touro College, and has a M.A. degree from Penn State. He was drawn to the Yeshiva through a brochure he found. Nine months later he was living at the Yeshiva. Even before he started to learn, he observed that the daily schedule was very precise, very scientific. He was orthodox before he came, a misnaged. Now he is Chabad. "The conference was very different from the regular Yeshiva program. It consisted of lectures on

topics of Judaism as compared to the



Rabbi Simon Jacobson

daily schedule which is very specific—Gemara, Mishna, *chassidus*, Chumash, etc. — and involves individual learning with a partner. I liked Rabbi Yosef Greenberg, I got a lot out of his lectures because I am used to him as a teacher. The other lecturers were outstanding people. I remember Rabbi Greenberg saying that 'Torah is Hashem's toy; it really has nothing to do with the world.' He also told us about the College Professor who realized that there is more depth in two lines of Torah than all secular literature combined." He concluded, "The Yeshiva is a very

unique place to be where we all get out of it whatever we are prepared to receive. Torah is a subject that will enrich you if you are a vessel to receive it. “

Kenny Glassman, *Motel*, lives in the Bronx and has been coming here on and off for about a month. This is his first *yeshiva* experience. He is 43 years old and not employed. He heard about the Yeshiva from Rabbi Levine and also talked to a former student. He drove cars for 23 years. Born in Queens, he has lived in California, New Jersey, Costa Rico, Florida and the Bronx (for the last 23 years). He wears a Yankee baseball cap. He said “I came to study Judaism. I had no expectations- I just jumped into the fire. I like it here

because it is safe; I am surrounded by good men with the same desires to have a better life as I do. It is a clean place. There is a lot of kindness. The conference was great; every speaker had something to say that touched me. The diversity of these speakers was impressive- they were not cut from the same cloth. I remember Simon Jacobson best because of his down to earth, open, honest manner and spoke about how we view others and how we have a meeting of the minds.” When I asked him about the learning, he said, “The Chumash speaks to me the most. I never read it. *Chassidus* is very interesting, too.” He concluded with the following: “This is a great place, and warm. The Rabbi’s are

professionals and good Jews...good people.” His advice to parents is, “Jewish families should promote a traditional Jewish life! It is advantageous to everybody involved. This Jewish world in general makes the other world a better place.”

Finally, I want to tell you about David Cian. We share the same birth date, July 31st. He is 20 years old and lives in Miami, Florida. He was born in the United States, is a college student and has friends attending the Yeshiva. He is not religious although he is friendly with the local Chabad Shliach. He heard about the conference from his friends here. He says, “I feel that I am at home here, we are learning nonstop. All teachers are well read. They are the best I have ever had. The food is good. I knew it would be good and I knew I would enjoy it. The speakers were down to earth even with their spiritual conversations. They were serious, with much depth. I think more people should know about the Yeshiva. Rabbi Lipskier is the best. Come here, check it out. Everything here answers the question I have about Torah *mitzvahs* and their importance for life. This is about life and how you should live it. I am less anxious about Judaism than I was because of this experience. It is good that someone like me with a secular background can come here and learn about Judaism.”



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RABBI NETANEL SHLOUSH, A”H

REFLECTIONS: MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

Chabad chassidim were greatly saddened to hear the news of the passing of Nati Shloush, age 51, of Crown Heights. His passing is a source of great pain to his young family and to dozens of mosdos chinuch and chesed in the U.S. and Eretz Yisroel.

Netanel Shloush was born on 17 Shvat 5713 (1953) to his father, Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Netanya, Rabbi Dovid Shloush. He was educated in Eretz Yisroel until he was older when he went to the Chabad *yeshiva* in Brunoy, France. This is where he became acquainted with Lubavitcher *bachurim* for the first time, and they were *mekarev* him to Chabad *chassidus*.

From there he went to 770, where he became even more involved in *chassidus*. Nati met Rabbi Yoel Kahn and learned *chassidus* with him, further inspiring his inner feelings for Chabad.

After he married his wife, Chana, in 5742, he lived in Crown Heights with his six children.

A TREMENDOUS ISH CHESED

“Nati never sought the honor that he deserved. He distributed millions of dollars to *tz’daka* on the condition that his giving not be publicized. He was an expert at *mattan b’saiser* (giving secretly). He donated to Chabad *yeshivos*, to Bikur Cholim, to Kollel Chabad and to the Siyumei HaRambam, and to numerous other *mosdos*,” testifies someone who knew him.

Nati gave very large sums of money to *mosdos Torah* and *chesed*. “We have a box full of plaques that were given to him, but he refused to hang them up,” says one of his family members. He stayed far away from honor. His home furnishings were simple. He gave *tz’daka* and even donated *sifrei Torah*, while he himself didn’t remember who got from him, who he gave to...

He had a giving nature. One of the *bachurim* who ate at his home said he visited the Shloush home only on Shabbos, “because I knew that if I visited on a weekday he wouldn’t let me leave without pushing some money into my hand.”



“Often he would pull a handful of bills out of his pocket, but he wouldn’t check to see how much he had taken out,” said Rabbi Menachem Volpe, *rav* of the Chabad community in Netanya who knew him well.

“He was granted a prodigious measure of generosity which is almost unheard of. At his wedding, many poor people attended the meal. He personally ran around and made sure that each one sat and ate. Even when they pleaded with him to sit at the head table since he was the *chassan*, he refused to do so until he was sure that all the poor were taken care of.”

In recent years, his business didn’t do well, but he wouldn’t stop giving. At this difficult time, an acquaintance borrowed a large sum of money from him. When it came time to pay back the loan, the man didn’t show up since he hadn’t managed to raise the money. The man came a month later with the money and apologized profusely for the delay.

Nati refused to take the money from him. He later told his brother that “the day had come and I saw that he wasn’t bringing me the money. I realized that he didn’t have it, and that day I forgave him completely. This is why I have no permission to take the money from him.” Nati didn’t rest until all the money was returned to the borrower.

On another occasion, the *gabbai* of the *shul* got

him involved in setting up a library. The *gabbai* miscalculated the amount of money required. When the *gabbai* saw that he didn't have enough money, he began to raise the difference among his friends. When Nati heard about this, he yelled at him and said, "If you needed more, why didn't you tell me?"

During the Shiva, one of the people said, "Since I raise money for a certain mosad, I asked Nati to contribute. Without much hesitation he said he'd give me \$1000. Then he asked me, 'When can I meet with you?'"

"I was shocked – not as much by what he gave, but by his question. I told him I *daven* Shacharis at seven o'clock in a certain *shul*. The next day, Nati was there at 6:45 with the money in his pocket.

"I'm used to fundraising, and I've met many wealthy people, but I never saw someone who was so involved in his business run after me to give me his donation. I know how hard it can be to chase after donors, even when they make promises to give, take their time in giving it. With Nati it was the opposite. He got up especially early in order to meet me and to bring me his donation!"

Nati Shloush's personality was summed up by something the Rebbe said. It was when Rabbi Shmuel Butman and R' Netanel Shloush passed by the Rebbe together for dollars. Rabbi Butman asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for Nati for outstanding wealth. Nati later said that he wouldn't have dared to ask for *brachos* like that. The Rebbe said, "His name is Natan-El" – G-d gives – and that was what Nati was about, giving with all his heart, to everyone, with no limits.

REFINEMENT

Nati was outstanding in *yiras Shamayim*, in the *midas chassidus*, as well as being a great philanthropist, yet he remained modest; he never wanted credit for himself or his contributions.

His friends say he was a refined individual. In recent years, he would sit in 770 and learn *chassidus*. He had a good head and knew how to learn, but he would ask *bachurim* to learn with him and would even pay them for doing so. The *bachurim* thought he was affluent or didn't know how to learn. They didn't know the truth, that he knew how to learn and was no longer wealthy, but his nature was to give.

"He had *yiras Shamayim* and a broad mind," said Rabbi Menachem Volpe. "I am too small to speak about a *chassid* who was a friend, a man of truth, a man of *chesed* and *tz'daka*, an outstanding individual."

PERSONAL ACTS OF CHESED

A *chassid* relates, "Often he would give envelopes to poor people. He once gave me an envelope with a few hundred dollars and told me that someone would be coming to take it in the afternoon. A man came who looked like a street person. I gave him the envelope and he said thank you and left.

"That night Nati asked if the man had come for the money. When I described the person who came, he said that the man who was supposed to come hadn't come, and the person who took the envelope was the wrong man. He wasn't angry, though."

Nati wasn't satisfied with merely giving money. He went twice a week to do *Mivtza T'fillin* with Russian Jews. He would take along cookies and drinks. Even though he didn't speak a word of Russian, he loved them and they loved him. They always let him put *t'fillin* on them.

In his hard times, he said that if he couldn't do his *mitzva* the way he wanted to do it, he'd find another way. Before this, he had given lots of *tz'daka* because he had the money to do so. When he was no longer wealthy, he did personal acts of *chesed*. When the *bachurim* came from Eretz Yisroel in Tishrei late at night and he saw they had no place to eat, he made sure to bring rolls, tuna, and salads and he took care

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of them lovingly.

Rabbi Menachem Volpe says that throughout the years Nati would make nice donations to the *mosdos* in Netanya. Even during his financial downtimes, he tried to give as before, but above everything – he would ask to be able to drive Rabbi Volpe to the airport.

Even during his illness, he did personal acts of *chesed*. Toward the end of his life, his family moved to a building on Eastern Parkway. His children relate that one Shabbos someone knocked at the front door of the building since he didn't have the key. Nati got up and opened the door for him. A neighbor who arrived at the same time was surprised to see him and asked him why he bothered when he was in pain. Nati answered, "Why should I lose out on a *mitzva*?"

SPREADING YIDDISHKEIT

Nati Shloush was in the jewelry line. He traveled often around the world to attend various shows. Even in these far-off places he exhibited Jewish pride and would find the way to the hearts of the many Jews he met, being

mekarev them to Torah, to *chassidus*, and the Rebbe.

At one of the shows, he met Aryeh and Gila Gabrielov, who had a booth for their exclusive jewelry company, Argil. Their company participated in all the important jewelry shows in the world, one of them taking place in Basel, Switzerland.

Aryeh relates: "One day a Jew by the name of Netanel Shloush appeared at our booth. He was a Lubavitcher *chassid* who was also in jewelry. We got into a conversation and he asked us whether our booth would be open on Saturday. We hadn't considered otherwise but he began to convince us not to open the booth on Saturday. We told him that we had to, according to the contract we had signed with the ones who ran the show. Furthermore, Saturday was the busiest day and we had come to work, not to

play.

"He continued trying to convince us and then he went on his way. After he left, we sat down and thought about what we were doing. Even though we had pushed him off, for some reason what he had said had found its way into our hearts. We finally said to ourselves, 'okay, we're working hard and we deserve a small break.' We didn't open on Saturday even though we lost a great deal of money.

"The next day Netanel came and asked what had happened on Saturday. He found it hard to believe that we had really been closed. That day he invited us to New York to photograph our collection and to close a big deal... On that visit, we visited the Rebbe and thanks to Netanel we became acquainted, for the first time, with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Since then we

are *chassidim* and *mekusharim*, heart and soul – all thanks to Nati's warm words."

HIS UNTIMELY DEATH

Nine years ago, in Adar, he was diagnosed with the dreaded disease and he suffered greatly since then. When he could no

longer work, he devoted himself to learning Torah and doing *chesed*. He sat in 770 and learned *chassidus* with the Israeli *bachurim*. He enjoyed this tremendously. Or else he would say T'hillim. He also visited *kivrei tzaddikim* to *daven* for *Klal Yisroel* and for his personal needs.

He didn't complain about his problems, even when he suffered greatly. He was well aware of his condition. When he could no longer go to 770, he stayed home and committed to doing nothing at all before he finished his lengthy learning schedule. There was no such thing for him as "not being able to manage." He had to manage even on days when he didn't feel well.

While in the hospital on a respirator and unable to



Speak, and he wanted to communicate, he would point at a chart of letters. He once indicated that he wanted to put on *t'fillin* immediately. It was shortly before sunset. Putting on *t'fillin* was no simple matter since he was attached to so many machines. In addition, there was also the problem of cleanliness in the room. When his wife pointed this out, he indicated that he wanted to put on *t'fillin*, no matter what.

Then they discovered another problem in that there was no man around to help him do it. His wife says, "I took the *t'fillin* out of the bag and put them on his head and arm, not exactly right. We said "Shma" but that wasn't enough for him, and he indicated that he wanted to put the *t'fillin* on correctly. I told him it was impossible, but he insisted.

You could see that this meant the world to him.

"Suddenly Rabbi Boruch Jacobson came into the room. He visits patients in this hospital and this was the first time he was visiting my husband. He was like an angel from heaven who heard Nati's cry and came to help him. He put the Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam *t'fillin* on with him. Then Nati indicated with his hand that he wanted to give *tz'daka*.

"That was the power of this man, that even in his worst moments he wanted to do *mitzvos*."

Nati Shloush passed away on Hei Teives. His funeral passed by 770 on the way to Eretz Yisroel. "May those who dwell in the dust arise and sing" when "Hashem will wipe away the tears from every face" with the *hisgalus* of Melech HaMoshiach.

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