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WITH AWE & TREMBLING

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS YISRO; 20TH DAY OF SHVAT, 5752

The Ten Commandments are recorded twice in the Torah: once in Parshas Yisro and once in Parshas VaEschanan. Since the Ten Commandments are the foundation for the entire Torah and include the entire Torah, it is obvious that their repetition communicates central lessons relevant to the Torah as a whole, i.e., they each represent an approach that is vital to our observance of the Torah in its entirety.

The fundamental difference between the narrative of the Ten Commandments in Parshas Yisro and that of the Ten Commandments in Parshas VaEschanan is that Parshas Yisro relates how the Ten Commandments were given by G-d. Parshas VaEschanan, by contrast, presents Moshe Rabbeinu's description of the giving of the Ten Commandments. They are the words of Moshe, not the direct word of G-d, as it were.

This difference reflects two fundamental dimensions of the Torah: On the one hand, the Torah is "G-d's will and G-d's wisdom," "The Torah and the Holy One,

blessed be He, are one." From this perspective, the Torah is a "hidden treasure," beyond the grasp of man.

Conversely, however, "the Torah has journeyed and descended through hidden stages, stage after stage through the entire set of the spiritual cosmos until it became invested in material entities and matters of this world." This process reached its fullest expression at the giving of the Torah, when the Torah was given to the Jewish people in this material world. From that time onward, "the Torah is not in the heavens," but rather it is the possession of the Jewish people. After the giving of the Torah, the Torah must be studied by the Jewish people as "souls within bodies," and it is on the basis of their understanding that Torah law will be decided. Similarly, through their observance of the *mitzvos*, they transform the world into a dwelling for G-d.

These two dimensions should be reflected in the way in which every Jew studies Torah: The awareness that the Torah transcends human knowledge leads to *bittul* (self-nullification). This *bittul* is reflected in the verse, "My tongue will repeat

Your sayings," which is interpreted as follows: "The Torah is 'Your sayings,' and my tongue is merely repeating what You have said." In this context, we can also interpret the verse "G-d, open my lips and my mouth will recite Your praise," i.e., although it is a man who is speaking, what he is saying is "Your praise," G-d's words, not his own. "The Divine presence speaks from his throat."

On this basis, we can understand our Sages' statement that we should study the Torah with the same awe, fear, and trembling experienced by the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. For, although we are lacking all the open miracles of Sinai, the essence of the experience that a limited human being is perceiving the word of G-d is the same.

Conversely, we must also appreciate that the Torah was given to man as he exists within our material world, a soul within a physical body. Accordingly, a person must endeavor to understand the Torah with his own mind and faculties. And when he achieves this, the Torah he studies is considered as his own; he receives a

measure of authority over the Torah which he has studied.

These two points are also reflected in the ultimate purpose of our Torah study, which is to fashion a dwelling for G-d in these lower worlds. Here, too, we see two dimensions. One is that the world is a dwelling for G-d, a place where He reveals Himself totally, as a person reveals himself without restraint in his own home. This relates to the transcendent dimension of the Torah. Since “the Torah and G-d are one,” the Torah can reveal His presence in the world.

Simultaneously, the Torah has undergone a process of descent, investing itself in matters of our material world. This enables the dwelling to be part and parcel of the lower world, causing its own framework of reference to serve as a medium to reveal G-d’s dwelling.

In this context, we can apply our Sages’ expression, “One who enters a country should follow its customs,” to the Torah’s descent into worldly existence. Since the Torah adapts to the modes of existence of our material environment, it therefore has the potential to make them into a dwelling for G-d.

Based on these concepts, we can appreciate the significance of the two narratives of the Ten Commandments in the Torah. The description of the Ten Commandments in Parshas Yisro reflects G-d’s speech, granting the Jewish people the potential for their Torah study to reflect G-d’s speech.

This concept is reflected in the introductory verse to the Ten Commandments, literally translated as, “And G-d related all the following to say...” The commentaries note that the word “*leimor*” (to say) appears frequently

in the Torah with the intent that the message communicated should be conveyed to others. This meaning, however, is not appropriate in this instance, for the entire Jewish people were present at the giving of the Torah. Nor can the intent be to communicate the message to the Jewish people of future generations, for all the souls of the Jewish people, even those yet to be born, were in attendance at Mount Sinai. Therefore, the intent of the term in this instance is that G-d gave the Jewish people the power to say the words of Torah as He said them

Parshas Yisro relates how the Ten Commandments were given by G-d. Parshas VaEschanan, by contrast, presents Moshe Rabbeinu’s description of the giving of the Ten Commandments.

that the words of the Torah studied by a Jew should be “G-d’s word.”

The Ten Commandments as they are described in Parshas VaEschanan, by contrast, were spoken by Moshe Rabbeinu. This grants a Jew the potential to comprehend the Torah with his limited human intellect, and in a larger sense, to make a dwelling for G-d within the context of our material world.

Thus, each account of the Ten Commandments possesses an advantage lacking in the other. The

account in Parshas Yisro reflects the advantage of direct revelation from G-d, without intermediaries. All the Jewish people heard the commandments from G-d Himself.

In contrast, the description of the Ten Commandments in Parshas VaEschanan reflects how they are related by Moshe. Although Moshe was “a medium who connects,” and “the Divine presence spoke from his throat,” this still represents a descent. And therefore, the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai represents the pinnacle of man’s connection with G-d.

Nevertheless, receiving G-d’s word in this manner negates our individual existence. (And thus our Sages relate that after each of the commandments were spoken, the souls of the Jewish people expired.) Conversely, the second description of the giving of the Ten Commandments reflects the ultimate expression of a person’s individual existence that a Jew, like Moshe, can be a medium for the expression of G-d’s speech.

These advantages can be explained within the context of the expression, “a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds.” The description of the Ten Commandments in Parshas VaEschanan reflects how even the lower worlds become a dwelling for G-d. There is, however, a limitation. Although they serve as a dwelling for G-d, there is a difference between G-d and His dwelling. To refer to the analogy mentioned above, in a person’s own home, he expresses himself most freely. Although this is true, his home is merely the place where he expresses himself. There is a clear difference between the person and his home.

Similarly, in the analogue, although the description of the Ten Commandments in Parshas VaEschanan reflect how the Jewish

people – within the framework of worldly existence – become a dwelling for G-d, there remains a difference between G-d and His dwelling. The description of the Ten Commandments in Parshas Yisro, by contrast, reflect how nothing exists aside from G-d Himself.

The ultimate level of fulfillment is when there is a fusion of both approaches. Then G-d's essence is revealed within our material world with no limitation whatsoever and this revelation is internalized within the Jewish people (as opposed to causing their self-nullification). In this manner, a Jew repeats "G-d's word" and becomes a channel for the revelation of G-dliness in the world at large.

In this context, the two narratives of the giving of the Ten Commandments can be seen as two stages in a single process. The narrative in Parshas Yisro reflects the potential for the revelation of essential G-dliness. And the narrative in Parshas VaEschanan reveals how this essential G-dliness becomes internalized within Moshe, within the Jewish people, and within the world at large. In this manner, the revelation at Mount Sinai, becomes relevant to our divine service at all places and in all places.

2. There is a connection between the above concepts and the date on which Parshas Yisro is read this year, the 20th of Shvat, ten days after the *hilula* of the Rebbe Rayatz, and two days before the *hilula* of the Rebbe Rayatz's daughter, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka.

Shvat is the eleventh month in the year. As mentioned on previous occasions, all existence is structured in a framework of reference of ten. Eleven refers to a level of transcendence above that framework. These two levels are also reflected in the Ten

Commandments. The Ten Commandments themselves reflect a set of ten. The first commandment, "Anochi," reflects a level of transcendence: "You are One and not in a numerical sense."

The Rebbe Rayatz's *hilula* falls on the tenth day of the eleventh month, referring to the transcendent quality associated with eleven being drawn down into the limited framework of ten. And this is the ultimate goal of the giving of the Torah – that G-d's essence be drawn down every day by the Jewish people in their Torah study.

***Every individual
should seek to convey
the totality of the
Torah and its mitzvos
(for they are all
reflected within the
Ten Commandments)
to at least ten other
Jews.***

Surely, the above is relevant to our generation, the last generation of the exile and the first generation of the Redemption, for it is in the Era of the Redemption when we will witness the completion of the above process, seeing how G-d's essence permeates every dimension of existence.

And the Redemption can come immediately. Indeed, "*miyad*," the Hebrew for "immediately," is intrinsically connected with the Redemption, for its letters serve as an acronym for the names Moshe, Yisroel, David, the three Jewish

leaders associated with the Redemption. Moshe redeemed the Jewish people from Egypt, and our Sages declare, "He was the first redeemer and he will be the ultimate redeemer." It is the spreading outward of the wellsprings of the teachings of Yisroel, the Baal Shem Tov, which will bring the Redemption. Similarly, Moshiach will be a descendant of David, the first anointed king.

Similarly, *miyad* can reflect the continuity between generations as reflected in the acronym Moshe, Yehoshua, *doram*: "Moshe, Yehoshua, and their generations." This emphasizes how the concepts symbolized by the three letters are not distant from each other, but rather in direct connection.

Each one of us – man, woman, and child – must take a lesson from the above concepts. Since the Ten Commandments were associated with the unity of the Jewish people (at Mount Sinai they camped "as one man, with one heart"), our application of the lessons they teach should also involve a community, i.e., ten other people. Every individual should seek to convey the totality of the Torah and its *mitzvos* (for they are all reflected within the Ten Commandments) to at least ten other Jews.

Although the above directive applies to every member of our generation, it is particularly relevant to those present in this "sanctuary in microcosm," the house of prayer, house of study, and house of good deeds of the Rebbe Rayatz. Since the *Nasi* represents the entire generation, this building is *Beis Chayeinu*, "the source of our life," for every person in this generation.

When all the Jewish people here will serve as a living example of how the Rebbe Rayatz's directives

should be fulfilled, the influence from this house will reach Jews throughout the world. And this will hasten the coming of the time when the synagogues and houses of study in the Diaspora will all be taken to Eretz Yisroel together with the entire Jewish people. May this take place in the immediate future.

**THE EVE OF THE 22ND OF SHVAT, 5752
THE YAHRTZEIT OF THE REBBETZIN
CHAYA MUSHKA, O.B.M.**

1. Tonight is the eve of the twenty-second of Shvat. Twenty-two is numerically equivalent to “*becha*” in the verse, “Through you (*becha*), Israel will be blessed.” This verse indicates that “through you,” blessing will be drawn down to each and every Jew, generating positive activities, which in turn, will lead to further activities of blessing in a pattern that will continue endlessly.

Ultimately, these activities will lead to the fulfillment of the prophecy, “And G-d will wipe tears away from every face...” Tears, (*dim’a*) in Hebrew, is numerically equivalent to 119. G-d’s act, as it were, of wiping away tears represents an increase, causing the sum to reach 120, the number of years that represent a complete human life. Thus, when Moshe reached 120 years, he stated, “today my days and my years are completed.”

The above relates to every Jew, for every Jew possesses a spark of Moshe Rabbeinu within him. This spark of Moshe generates positive activity, which, as explained above, initiates a pattern that continues to generate further positive activity forever.

The Hebrew word for “forever,” *olam*, also means world,” and also relates to the Hebrew word “*helem*,” which means concealment. Indeed, our world is characterized by

concealment, the concealment of G-dliness, allowing for a soul, “an actual part of G-d,” to be concealed, i.e., to depart from this world after its “days and years are completed,” i.e., after they have been endowed with fullness and completion through good deeds. And in this context as well, the pattern mentioned above applies. Each good deed leads to more good deeds, in a never-ending sequence.

The above also shares a connection to the Torah reading of the previous Shabbos which describes the giving of the Torah. Our Sages relate that after each of the Ten Commandments, “the souls of the Jewish people departed,” a

*May the soul reach
the ultimate level of
ascent, the level to be
reached at the time of
the Resurrection.*

phenomenon parallel to death, and G-d revived them with the dew which He will use to resurrect the dead in the Era of the Redemption.

Similarly, in the present context, four years ago today, an “actual part of G-d,” a Jewish soul ascended from this world. Each year, on the day of the *yahrtzeit*, that soul ascends to a higher level, indeed, a level immeasurably higher than the heights the soul had reached previously. This is reflected in the recitation of *Kaddish* on that day.

May the soul reach the ultimate level of ascent, the level to be reached at the time of the Resurrection. And may this take

place in the immediate future. For ours is the last generation of the exile and the first generation of the Redemption. And the potential for the Redemption is particularly emphasized this year, “a year imbued with wonders” and “a year of wonders in all things.”

“*Ba’kol*,” the final word of the latter phrase, relates to the threefold expression of blessing associated with our Patriarchs, “*ba’kol mi’kol kol*.” That expression, in turn, is numerically equivalent to the Hebrew word “*kabetz*” (192), meaning gather, and alludes to the ultimate ingathering of our exiles. Together with all the Jewish people of the present generation who will proceed to Eretz Yisroel amidst health and joy, they will be joined by “those who lie in the dust,” the souls of the previous generations, who “will arise and sing.”

In particular, this applies to a soul who has merited that many Jewish girls be named after her and educated in the spirit in which she lived, which came as a result of the education she was given by the Rebbe Rayatz.

This will be hastened by the distribution of money to be given – with each person making an addition from their own funds – to *tzedaka*. This will speed the coming of the Redemption, when “the Holy One, blessed be He, will make a dance for the righteous,” a dance that will be joined by each member of the Jewish people – man, woman and child. And they will point to G-d and say, “Behold this is the G-d in Whom we put our trust.”

This will take place in the immediate future “With our youth and our elders... with our sons and our daughters,” we will proceed to Eretz Yisroel “on the clouds of heaven.” And “those that lie in the dust will arise and sing.”

UNTIL THE DARKNESS ITSELF WILL SHINE

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



Granted, the light is so strong that it shines to the most remote corners, however, how can it be that the light could make the darkness itself shine? A detailed review of the three time periods on the way to the Redemption (prior to Yud Shvat 5710, from Yud Shvat 5711, and since the 22nd of Shvat 5748), and the innovation of the “seventh generation,” particularly in the third time period.

Once at a *farbrengen* in Tomchei T'mimim, when *chassidim* wanted to create a better illustration of materialism as a false reality, and spirituality as the true reality, they tried to describe an argument between *Gashmius* and *Ruchnius* over which one is the true reality.

Meeting one another on the street one day, *Gashmius* began by telling *Ruchnius*, “You are nothing but ‘spirit’ (*luft gesheftn*). You have no actual existence that can be seen or felt. Everything about you is just theory and ideology. This is no true existence whatsoever. In

comparison, I am the real existence. I can be seen and felt, perceived by all the senses.

“Who can be the true reality other than me?” *Gashmius* concluded with a blast of victory.

“You are mistaken, brother,” *Ruchnius* rebutted. “Everything you have said is false and superficial. Think about it: What makes you real? Is the ultimate truth determined by you? Does the fact that things are supposed to be one way or another make any difference to you? From your point of view, *metzius* is only that which gets up

and screams, ‘I exist,’ something that takes up physical space and lets nothing else stand in that place, irrelevant of any connection to the true reality. Even if common sense and truth cry out that this neither can nor should be, it has the absolute insolence to get up and scream ‘I exist’ without any consideration of the truth of the matter. You call that ‘existence’?

“In contrast to you,” *Ruchnius* continued, “I deem *metzius* to be only that which is absolutely true and correct. At the moment that it is neither true nor correct, it simply has no existence. For example, the fact that $1 + 1 = 2$ (and any other intellectual fact of knowledge) exists only because it is the truth, whereas, $1 + 1 = 3$ (and any other incorrect data) has no existence whatsoever. Since it is incorrect, it simply doesn’t exist. (This form of twisted logic has certain intellectual content in some form, but since it is false, it has no true state of existence.)

“On the other hand, you, *Gashmius*, see *metzius* only as that which gives no consideration to what is correct and how things should be. It stands and screams without any substance or truth, ‘I

exist in my place, and I won't let anyone else come in!' That's existence? That's the height of *chutzpah!*"

In this light, the fact is that physical things are expressed in terms of quantity, as opposed to spirituality, which exists in terms of quality. When we say that someone has "lots of common sense," this doesn't mean that he has a greater quantity of common sense, but a deeper quality with more understanding, better ideas, a sharper intellect, etc. To say that he has "more" common sense (in terms of quantity) is totally irrelevant. In contrast, when we say that someone has "lots of money," this doesn't mean that there is better quality to "lots of money" as opposed to "a little money"; "lots of money" means a greater quantity. In other words, we have something else that stands up and screams, "I exist," and doesn't let anything else stand in its place.

In short, physical existence is another "*chatzup*" that gives no consideration whatsoever to what is truly correct and what should be. Instead, it stands and screams without any substance or truth, "I exist"...

In the end, the *farbrengen* participants all came to the conclusion that *ruchnius* is the real existence, and the whole purpose of a Jew in this world is to give *ruchnius* the strength to prevail over *gashmius*, quality over quantity, and truth over lies. However, the true essence of G-d Alm-ghty, which is higher than the superiority of *ruchnius* over *gashmius*, is revealed specifically within the *gashmius*. The "dwelling place" for His Blessed Essence is specifically "in the lower realms," in this lowest of all lowly and material worlds, with no real connection to the higher spiritual worlds – no merits, no perfection, no *metzius*.

So if such an existence has no truth whatsoever – an utterly false existence, a total zero, the *chutzpah* of someone who stands and screams, "I exist, and I won't let anyone stand in my place" – then how does it exist at all? "The strength of the *atzmus*," the essential strength of His Blessed Essence, expresses itself specifically in the lowest of all states of physical existence. Only His Blessed Essence is a *metzius* that does not exist as a result of something else, *ch*"v. All other forms of existence (even G-d's Infinite Light, which is included in His Essence at the

"Revelations" hide the essence. The essence is expressed specifically in a place where there are no revelations, garbed in a totally opposite fashion.

highest levels – the "essence of the light" higher than any degree of expansion or revelation) do not exist on their own, rather they derive from G-d. "[Every existence] needs Him."

The existence of the essential and absolute truth of G-d's Essence is not dependent, *ch*"v, upon anyone or anything else – only G-d Himself. It does not exist due to certain circumstances based on one reason or another – just "because." "Happy is the people whose lot is *thus*" – because – without any need for reason or explanation to justify

its existence. It exists only because He exists. "[Every existence] needs Him, but He does not need them."

This absolute, essential, and G-dly truth, which is dependent upon nothing, finds its true expression in "the lower realms":

The "higher realms" cannot express this absolute G-dly truth that is not dependent upon anything. Quite to the contrary. The higher they are, the more reasons and merits they have to justify their existence. Thus, they do not reveal this *metzius* that exists without any reason. This is expressed specifically in "the lower realms," "the false existence," something that truly has no justification for its existence or, for that matter, any existence whatsoever. Yet, it does exist. But how? If its entire being is simply one big zero, how can it exist at all? Here is where the true and absolute existence of His Blessed Essence, the *metzius* that exists for one reason – because – is fully expressed. This is existence without reason or explanation. Only He can create such a *metzius* without explanation or justification for its existence.

The created entity most certainly does not exist from its own essence, *ch*"v. Its true existence depends entirely and solely upon the G-dly force that literally sustains and enlivens it at every moment. However, the essence of such a *metzius* demands neither reason nor justification for its existence. The mere fact that it feels its own existence and requires nothing else, as it were, stems from His Blessed Essence, thus expressing in a revealed sense that His Essence is the true source of its existence.

"Revelations" hide the essence. The essence is expressed specifically in a place where there are no revelations, garbed in a totally opposite fashion. Only when we see it in such a manner, yet existing in

all its strength, do we truly perceive the true “essence,” not just the circumstantial one.

To illustrate this point further, when we want to know if someone is a true *chassid* and *yira Shamayim* who stands on his principles, how and when do we see this? When there are “revelations,” when everything goes smoothly without the need for any sacrifices, it is still impossible to know for certain if he absolutely and truly possesses these qualities “in essence,” without any alterations or the need to be dependent upon others. It is specifically when there are no “revelations,” when all available information would bring the person to conduct himself in a completely opposite manner, yet he remains steadfast to his principles – then we can see the true and absolute essence – he’s for real.

* * *

In recent weeks, we have explained at length the three levels of *ahavas Yisroel*. There are those who don’t see evil in others at all, those who see it but give them the benefit of the doubt, and those who love every Jew from their very essence, even if they can’t find any merit within them.

This corresponds to general levels of confronting the darkness. First, there are those who are always above the darkness, even when the darkness totally surrounds him, to the point that they do not see the evil. Then, there are others who search for the points of light, even within the lowest level of darkness. Finally, we find some who reveal His True Being even in “the darkness within the darkness.” In such a case, not only do we see that it does not stand in contradiction to His Blessed Essence, but it expresses it in a way that “the darkness itself will shine.”

To pursue this point further, these three levels represent three

allegories brought frequently in *chassidus*, including the *maamarim* of “*Basi L’Gani*,” e.g., “*Basi L’Gani*” 5738 and the Mitteler Rebbe’s *Shaarei Torah*: a) a large torch that illuminates from afar; b) an overflowing barrel of water that has burst open with the water streaming outward; c) the physical power of giving birth, which specifically expresses “the fulfillment of intellect.”

These three analogies express the same general point of “the seventh generation.” “Come into my garden, my private chamber” – this lowly and physical world is the specific location of “my garden,” the place of pleasure, and “my private chamber,” the place of dwelling, where G-d dwells in His very Essence and Being. Specifically through an actual descent into the lowest of all physical realms there is an expression of “taking the essence.”

Yet, as the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* explains in the *maamer*, this has three levels, “each one (of the three analogies) brings further elucidation.”

The first analogy – a large torch that illuminates from afar – indicates the greatness and fortitude of the Infinite Light, which is powerful enough to reach even the farthest place and to have an effect upon it (even though the light that reaches there is “a small and weak light”). However, this effect is only from the aspect of the higher realms, not the lower.

In the second analogy – an overflowing barrel that has burst open with the water streaming outward – the water remains completely unchanged in all its strength (unlike the light that gets dimmer as it goes farther away) with an effect in the lower realms to the point that they are instilled with G-dliness (just as the water affects and soaks everything wherever it

flows).

(This point is emphasized even further in *Shaarei Torah* (p. 58) by the Mitteler Rebbe’s example of a *mashpia* and his student, as the *mashpia*’s influence has a strong effect to make the latter a proper “vessel.”)

However, this is achieved only through searching for and discovering “the points of light” within the darkness. It is impossible to bring out the relevance of G-dliness from the “darkness within the darkness” itself, which has no connection to G-dliness whatsoever.

This brings us to the innovation of the third parable – the physical power of giving birth – descending into the depths of physicality and darkness to the point that has absolutely no relevance to G-dliness. Yet, this is exactly where the relevance to G-dliness is revealed in a true spirit of renewal.

The possibility for this comes specifically from the strength of G-d’s Essence, which is the essence of everything, even the darkness within the darkness. Therefore, it possesses the ability to have an effect even upon such a low level, where there is no relevance to G-dliness, so that it will also establish the connection **on its own**, even more than the “revelations,” as only this can be a true expression of G-d’s Essence.

It is written, “And G-d will illuminate my darkness,” and *chassidus* explains (“*Basi L’Gani*” 5710, Sec. 1) “the darkness itself will shine.” This doesn’t mean that some point of light is found within the darkness, rather, “the darkness **itself** will shine,” similar to what is written regarding *Krias Yam Suf*, “And behold, the cloud and the darkness, and it [**the cloud and the darkness**] illuminated the night.”

In connection with the True and Complete Redemption, it is written,



“and the night will shine as the day.” In other words, this doesn’t mean that the night will **also** shine from light deriving elsewhere, rather, the night **itself** – the darkness within the darkness – will also shine.

From the point of view of His *atzmus* – the “essence” of all existence – everything is “*k’chasheika k’ora*” (as is the darkness, so too the light) before Him. Thus, from this strength, even the darkness itself can shine, exactly as does the light – and more so, as mentioned above.

(The above expression of “*k’chasheika k’ora*” (with the letter *Chaf*, indicating comparison, appearing twice) as opposed to “*chasheika k’ora*” emphasizes that the two are actually identical. If it would say “*chasheika k’ora*,” this would mean that the darkness is only “similar” to the light. However, when the *Chaf* is doubled in “*k’chasheika k’ora*,” this indicates that darkness and light are exactly the same – just as the light shines and illuminates, so does the night and darkness.)

If we try to interpret all this in terms of “the seventh generation”

and *S’firas HaMalchus*, with their purpose to draw down the *Sh’china* to the lowest of all worlds and connecting it to G-dliness, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* reveals (in the *kuntres* “*B’cha Y’varech Yisroel*,” printed in the *D’var Malchus* of Parshas *Yisro* and *Chaf-Beis Shvat*) that in our generation, “the seventh generation,” there are three time periods: prior to *Yud Shvat* 5710, from *Yud Shvat* 5711, and since the 22nd of *Shvat* 5748.

(This is in addition to the explanation in the *D’var Malchus* of Parshas *VaEira* regarding the three time periods in connection with the Rebbe Rayatz. The period before he accepted the leadership was compared to the time prior to *Mattan Torah*. The actual period of leadership was on the level of *Mattan Torah*. After the Rebbe Rayatz’s *histalkus*, particularly “on the eleventh day of the eleventh month in the eleventh year” (*Yud-Alef Shvat* 5711, when [the Rebbe Rayatz...] received the leadership anew, marks the “**days of Moshiach**.”))

Even during the first time period, until *Yud Shvat* 5710, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* actively stood at

the forefront of all activities in spreading *Yiddishkeit* and the wellsprings of *chassidus*. However, this was still during the period of the Rebbe Rayatz’s leadership – “*S’firas HaMalchus*” as it is included and united with “*S’firas HaYesod*.”

The second time period began on the first full day after the Rebbe Rayatz’s *histalkus*. (The Rebbe MH”M *shlita*’s leadership literally began from the moment of the *histalkus*, as it is impossible for the physical world to be without a Rebbe. However, since *Yud Shvat* 5710 began during the Rebbe Rayatz’s leadership, the portion of the day after the *histalkus* remained a part of the previous leadership. Thus, it was only on the first full day after the *histalkus* that the new leadership truly began – “*S’firas HaMalchus*” on its own.)

This became particularly prominent from “the eleventh day of the eleventh month in the eleventh year” – *Yud-Alef Shvat* 5711 – the day that the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* officially accepted the leadership. On this day, the innovation of the new post-*histalkus* leadership began, the leadership of the Rebbe MH”M *shlita*. To a certain extent, until this day, everything was merely a continuation of the Rebbe Rayatz’s leadership – “*S’firas HaYesod*.”

The third time period began on *Chaf-Beis Shvat* 5748 (though it is also brought in the Rebbe’s holy *sichos* that to a certain extent, this period began a bit earlier, on *Hey Teives* 5747 – “*Didan Natzach*,” and to an even greater degree a bit later, on the fortieth anniversary of the *histalkus* – *Yud Shvat* 5750). This represents the aspect of “*Malchus Sh’b’Malchus*,” the lowest point within *Malchus*, and descending to such a level can only be achieved through “the strength of the *atzmus*.” Therefore, specifically here, “the strength of the *atzmus*” is

fully expressed in a manner that is superior to all levels of revelation.

These three time periods seem to correspond to the three aforementioned analogies. The first time period (prior to Yud Shvat 5710), during the Rebbe Rayatz's leadership, "*S'firas HaYesod*," which gathers and unites the spiritual influence of all the *s'firos* (including *S'firas HaMalchus*) and reveals it to the lower worlds with a great revelation, corresponds to the great torch. Due to its size and intensity, it succeeds in reaching and penetrating even the farthest distances, both physically and spiritually.

This period marked the beginning of activities in spreading *Yiddishkeit* and the wellsprings of *chassidus* everywhere in the world. *Shluchim* were sent to "conquer the world" by bringing the light and the truth of *chassidus* to every location. They started to translate and explain *chassidus* in all the world's languages and in terms that even simple uneducated Jews could understand. They began to use publicity in its lowest and most external forms, e.g., "*L'Alter L'Geula*" stickers, *HaKria V'HaKedusha* newsletters. This demonstrates the great intensity of *chassidus*, which can reach and penetrate the lowest of all possible levels.

Yet, during that time, the main emphasis was on bringing the G-dly light to the most remote locations, a task made possible by the light's immense power. From its vantage point, the lower realms were still not a proper "vessel" for G-dliness.

In the second time period, with the Rebbe MH"M *shlita's* ascension to the leadership ("*S'firas HaMalchus*" on its own), all activities began to take on a greater and more inner quality on a more permanent basis, turning each location into a "vessel" for G-dliness.

In addition, the number of *shluchim* grew at a rate far exceeding those that had been sent previously. All subjects in the area of spreading the wellsprings of *chassidus* increased beyond all measure in both quality and quantity. *Shluchim* began to give greater and greater emphasis to turning their city in the lowest of all realms into a center for G-dliness, an independent entity of Torah, holiness, and *chassidus*. The spirituality penetrated every fiber of the *shlichus*, breaking through all lowly boundaries, according to the unique nature and mentality of the location (as is explained at length in the *sicha* from Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5752, particularly in connection with France), developing a greater awareness of G-dliness on its own.

This is similar to the water that flows out of the barrel, remaining exactly the same outside as it was in the barrel (unlike the light that dims the farther away it goes), completely filling and saturating the outside with water.

However, with this approach, we are still searching for the points of light and truth in the darkness, but we have not reached the darkness itself whatsoever, the darkness within the darkness. But since this level of darkness has no relevance to G-dliness, how is it possible to make the darkness itself develop this relevance?

This, therefore, is the innovation of the third time period, where we reach even the darkness within the darkness. During this period, all the "revelations" – *sichos*, *maamarim*, letters, telegrams, dollars, "*kos shel bracha*," *panim*, *lekach*, seeing the Rebbe, hearing his holy words of *chassidus*, etc. – have dwindled to the point that it seems that they have ceased completely. This is total hiding and concealment, without a single point of light and truth, and absolutely no relevance in trying to

find one.

In such a state of spiritual descent, there is neither advantage nor fulfillment, as we do not see the strength of the light reaching great distances, nor do we see the lower realms becoming a "vessel" for G-dliness. It appears as if there is absolutely nothing, *ch"v*.

Yet, specifically in this situation, the true and essential *metzius* breaks through and is revealed with all its strength and force. Then, the absolute and eternal truth comes out even within the darkness within the darkness, which does not have even a single point of light. Subsequently, this reveals (to the extent that we can say this in connection with the "revelation of the '*atzmus*,'" which is higher than all levels of revelation) the fact that "there is a Rebbe." This fact is not dependent upon anything else; it exists in all its strength and in every detail, even when there are no "revelations." This is similar to G-d's Blessed Essence, which is essentially true and correct, dependent upon nothing, existing with all its strength, and even penetrating the darkness within the darkness.

This is why we believe with absolute certainty in the Rebbe's prophecy ("the prophecy of Melech HaMoshiach prior to the Redemption," *sicha*, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751) of "Here comes Moshiach," even though several years have passed and "he has not yet come" before our flesh eyes.

This is why we continue to write, print, and say publicly "the Rebbe *shlita*," even though this seems to be the opposite of reality, *ch"v*.

This is why we travel to the Rebbe, *daven* with the Rebbe, write to the Rebbe and receive his answers, and publicizing this conduct even to those who are

presently not in our circles. We do so with full force, unashamedly, for despite the fact that this all sounds so unrealistic and unacceptable, it has been accepted and proven.

This is why in spite of all the arguments about the sorrow that we still endure, etc., Lubavitch keeps growing and developing, and more *shluchim* are going out and continuing to “conquer the world.” Jews are constantly coming closer to Torah and *mitzvos*, *chassidus*, G-dliness, and particularly, true and absolute *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe *shlita* MH”M, long after many people had “mourned” for the Chabad-Lubavitch Movement, predicting that it would soon crumble, *ch”v*.

For these and other reasons, the essential truth of Lubavitch has been revealed. It continues to exist in all its strength and fortitude, especially in the darkness within the darkness that has absolutely no connection to light and truth. With “the strength of the *atzmus*,” it has revealed the G-dly truth that “there

Specifically in this situation, the true and essential metzius breaks through and is revealed with all its strength and force. Then, the absolute and eternal truth comes out even within the darkness within the darkness.

is nothing else besides Him.”

Yet, despite all that has been said about “the essence” expressing itself specifically in an “opposing form,” if we limit its revelation to a mode of concealment, this is

subject to measure and limitation, thus proving that it is really not the essence (see *sicha*, Shabbos Parshas VaEira 5752).

The absolute truth of the essence come specifically when it has no such boundaries, and it is not limited and restricted to an unrevealed state of concealment. On the contrary, it can and must be revealed as it is, in all its fortitude and power for all to see.

To put it simply, as long as it is not revealed before our flesh eyes, it remains limited, teaching us that it is merely a preparatory stage for the true revelation of G-d’s Essence, which takes its fullest expression when it is unlimited and beyond all concealment. It will soon be revealed in its most actual and literal sense, when the entire world will rise up and proclaim from the depths of “the darkness within the darkness”: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed!*



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A STORY AND ITS LESSON

*A compilation of stories that the Rebbeim told about Chabad Rebbetzins, as well as the Rebbe's explanations of the lessons to be learned from them. * Presented in honor of Chaf-Beis Shvat, yahrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, a"h.*

GIVING THE DOWRY TO CHARITY

By the time the Alter Rebbe came of age, he was known far and wide as a prodigy. A *shidduch* with the daughter of R' Yehuda Leib Segal was proposed. The Alter Rebbe agreed to the *shidduch* on condition that the sum of 5000 gold coins promised to him as a dowry would be his to do with as he pleased. In his first year of marriage, he gave away the entire amount, with his wife's agreement, to a group of families who wanted to become farmers. This money helped them purchase land, animals, and tools, and to set up a millstone, and spinning wheels for wool and flax. Large settlements were founded near the city of Vitebsk, along the Dvina River.

* * *

The Rebbe MH"m explains: When the Rebbe Rayatz said that the Alter

Rebbe gave away his dowry to families who wanted to farm, he noted that this was done with the approval of his wife, Rebbetzin Shterna. When a Rebbe tells a story, there's a lesson even in the details of the story. The Alter Rebbe did not do what he did unilaterally, but he got his wife's full consent. For "its ways are ways of peace," and "the Torah was given solely to make peace in the world." *Chassidus (p'nimius ha'Torah)* adds that peace needs to be *p'nimi* (penetrating to one's inner core, not superficial), so that there's no possibility for strife.

As *chassidus* explains regarding love for Hashem, the level of "with all your hearts" isn't enough, even when that means "with **both** your inclinations"; the purpose of *avoda* is "with all your might," i.e., that the evil inclination and the animal soul are transformed into good, and what is done is not forced, but is done

willingly, with desire and pleasure.

This is the lesson from this story – that it's not enough to take pleasure in doing a favor for another Jew. The favor has to be done with the full cooperation of the body and animal soul. "You shall surely help **with him**," along with the body. Afterwards, as is the natural course of events in the world, when one has a family, it must be done with the full cooperation of one's wife.

When a person conducts himself properly at home, not only will he not encounter obstacles from his wife, she will give her fullest consent (not consenting "having no choice" or "who cares") but in a manner of "with all your might" and with true peace.

Another lesson is that a woman finds it more difficult to part with the dowry than her husband, since the money generally comes from her father. Thus, she is given additional *kochos* so that she can attain this level. And she can also reach an even higher level than her husband, for "according to the pain is the reward."

(Sicha 19 Kislev 5720)

WHY ARE YOU IMPRESSED?

Once, an *aguna* (an abandoned wife) came to the Tzemach Tzedek and brought her eleven- or twelve-year-old son with her. The boy was

mute and had hearing problems, too. A few weeks went by and due to the crowds she still hadn't seen the Rebbe.

What did she do? She wrote her question on a piece of paper, gave the paper to her son, and sat him under the table in the room where the Rebbe saw people in *yechidus*. She told him: When the Rebbe comes in, leave your hiding place and give him the paper.

The boy did as his mother told him, and in the middle of a *yechidus* he suddenly came out from under the table and gave the note to the

The Alter Rebbe did not do what he did unilaterally, but he got his wife's full consent. For "its ways are ways of peace," and "the Torah was given solely to make peace in the world."

Rebbe. The servant, R' Aryeh Leib, who was in charge of *yechidus*, was furious and he yelled, "*Sheigitz!*"

The Tzemach Tzedek said: Simple faith illuminates the eyes. Greatness was given only for Yisroel.

Then the Rebbe turned to the boy and said: Go and tell your mother that your father is alive and she should travel to Denberg.

The *aguna* was sitting with Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash, and was telling her about her plight. She said that her husband

had been missing for seven years, and she had permission from *rabbanim* to remarry. She wanted the Rebbe to give her his permission, too.

Then her son walked in and he loudly said: The Rebbe said that Father is alive, and you should go to Denberg!

When the *aguna* heard this she fainted. The double miracle [that her son spoke and that the Rebbe told her where to find her husband] became the talk of the town.

When Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, wife of the Tzemach Tzedek, heard about it she said: Look at what you're impressed by! By my father [the Mittler Rebbe] and my grandfather [the Alter Rebbe], miracles rolled about and nobody bothered to pick them up. My grandfather said that he wants people to understand *chassidus*, and that excitement over miracles is for Vohlin.

* * *

The Rebbe explains: There's a lesson here for everybody. We need to know that the primary connection to the Rebbe, my father-in-law, is not through miracles and the like, but through learning his *chassidus*. Miracles are only his "extension," while in *chassidus* he put his essence and his highest soul powers. Therefore, seeing a miracle should not add, and not seeing a miracle should not weaken. When a day, week, or month goes by and one does not see a miracle, he shouldn't miss it.

The truth is that one who wants to see how the Rebbe, my father-in-law, conducted himself with him, with miracles every day, even in his natural *inyanim*, but there's no need for this, as I said.

This applies to the person himself, but when it comes to someone else, when you want to be

mekarev a *bachur* or man to the Rebbe, my father-in-law, and to the ways of *chassidus* – if there's a need, there can be a drawing close via miracles, at first. But the point is to be *mekarev* him to learn *chassidus* in depth, and to be involved in *avodas ha't'filla*.

(Sicha 2 Iyar 5710)

"HER HAND IS OPEN TO THE POOR"

The Rebbe Maharash's household was run on a lavish scale. He would buy expensive gifts and jewelry for

May the women use their strength...to urge their husbands to study a great deal of Torah, even at the expense of work. They should say: I forgo the extras, the main thing is that you sit and learn.

his wife, Rebbetzin Rivka. The Rebbetzin was constantly involved in *tz'daka* such as dowering the bride, and when she needed money, she would pawn her jewelry and give money to the poor.

The Rebbe would often travel abroad and he invited his wife to join him. The Rebbetzin generally refused to go, and asked for the money it would have cost them if she went, which she gave to the poor. When the Rebbe would return home, he had to ask where her jewelry had

been pawned so that he could redeem it.

* * *

The Rebbe explains: Rebbetzin Rivka, wife of the Rebbe Maharash and granddaughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was educated by the Tzemach Tzedek. She knew how to appreciate a gift from the Rebbe Maharash. Nevertheless, *tz'daka* superseded this. Even though the Rebbetzin was a *tzadkanis* and on a higher level than most people, we need to learn from her.

There are women who urge their husbands to work even more, to be more involved in making a living, at the expense of their Torah study. This is not because they need bread to eat and clothing to wear, but for luxuries, so that the house is more lavishly appointed (like wall-to-wall carpeting, a Hollywood kitchen, a television for the house and one for the basement, so that wherever the children go, they will encounter this machine and be ruined by watching it).

The main thing is that her husband sit and learn, but when one thinks of the neighbor and friend, one loses one's head entirely. This illness has spread even among *chassidishe* women, who conduct themselves beyond the letter of the law in Torah and *mitzvos*.

A man told me that he has no time to learn since he spends his time explaining to his wife why he doesn't have money to buy her a Hollywood kitchen.

From here-on-in may the women use their strength in the opposite direction, to urge their husbands to study a great deal of Torah, even at the expense of work. They should say: I forgo the extras, the main thing is that you sit and learn.

If the Rebbetzin pawned a gift

from the Rebbe Maharash, a gift which did not entail diminished Torah study, *ch"v*, for the sake of Torah and *mitzvos*, obviously one should forgo jewelry that are an impediment to Torah study. This [the forgoing] will be the vessel for ample livelihood, to the point of

Despite the difficulties and daily worries, my mother took on another worry: seeing to it that my father's Torah could be publicized, so that numerous Jews could learn the explanations of p'nimius ha'Torah according to chassidus Chabad! Why? In order to bring the Geula, which depends on spreading the wellsprings outward!

literal wealth, and the wealth won't be an impediment to Torah study. On the contrary, it will be a vessel for G-dliness.

(Sicha Simchas Torah 5722)

COPYING MAAMARIM

When she first came to Lubavitch after her wedding, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara (wife of the Rebbe Rashab) would copy *hanachos* of *maamarim* that her husband wrote on the *maamarim* he had heard from his father (the Rebbe Maharash). Most of these copies are kept in a collection of manuscripts of *maamarei chassidus* belonging to the Rebbe Rayatz.

Somewhere else it's related:

The Rebbe Maharash was extremely orderly, and his daily schedule was known, including the times he went for walks. When he went for walks, *chassidim* would sneak into his house and copy *maamarei chassidus*. They'd post a guard who would give them warning of the Rebbe's coming. Thus, they copied many manuscripts. The Rebbetzin, who wrote quickly and well, was among those who copied. Her copies of the writings of the Rebbe Maharash were kept by the Rebbe Rayatz, in the same folder as the *hanachos* of the Rebbe Rashab.

* * *

The Rebbe says: One could ask: It seems reasonable to think that the Rebbe Maharash assumed or clearly knew that the writings were copied while he was out, for he knew the Rebbe Rashab's yearning for *chassidus*. If he didn't want them to be copied, he could have safeguarded the writings so they wouldn't be copied, and if he didn't care that they were copied, he could have given them permission to do so! Why did it have to be done in this sneaky way?

The explanation is that there are things that are to be taken with *mirma* (cleverness) the way Yaakov received the *brachos* from Yitzchok.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 514)



SLEEPING IN HONOR OF SHABBOS

The Rebbe Rashab once told his granddaughter, Rebbetzin Shaina, daughter of the Rebbe Rayatz, that on Shabbos she should do everything in honor of Shabbos – to eat in honor of Shabbos, to take a walk in honor of Shabbos, etc. The girl said: I agree to all of it, but one thing I don't understand – about sleeping in honor of Shabbos. How could one intend, while sleeping, to sleep in honor of Shabbos?

* * *

The Rebbe expounded on this: This story mentions not only what the Rebbe Rashab said, but also what his young granddaughter, Rebbetzin

Shaina, said. What relevance is there to us in what she said?

One could say that this is along the lines of what it explains in the Mishna (Edyos 1:6), “Why are the words of the individual mentioned among those of the majority? To dismiss them. For if a person will say this is my tradition, they will tell him you heard so-and-so's opinion (and what he said was rejected, explains Rav).

Here too, the granddaughter's comment was repeated in order to teach us that even when someone in America will say that doing so while sleeping is impossible, he will be told: That was said already in Lubavitch by the young

granddaughter of the Rebbe Rashab. However, the Rebbe did not accept what she said and demanded, even of her, that she sleep in honor of Shabbos! And she wasn't even *bas mitzva*.

(Sicha Shmos 5725)

INK OF SELF-SACRIFICE

In the year 5699 (1939), Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson was arrested for his work in strengthening *Yiddishkeit*. He was exiled to Tzili, a forsaken town in Kazakhstan (where he died in exile on 20 Av 5704-1944).

As soon as his Rebbetzin discovered where he was sent, she put her life in her hands and joined

him there, without taking the difficulties and danger into consideration. Her coming mitigated her husband's suffering somewhat, and who knows what would have happened if she hadn't done what she did.

She also made a precious spiritual contribution. She fashioned ink and paper for her husband, which enabled him to write his wondrous *chiddushei Torah*, which were published about thirty years later, under the title *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok* and *Toras Levi Yitzchok*.

* * *

The Rebbe says: This story is amazing. Despite the difficulties and daily worries, my mother took on another worry: seeing to it that my father's Torah could be publicized, so that numerous Jews could learn the explanations of *p'nimius ha'Torah* according to *chassidus Chabad*! Why? In order to bring the *Geula*, which

The purpose of avoda is "with all your might," i.e., that the evil inclination and the animal soul are transformed into good, and what is done is not forced, but is done willingly, with desire and pleasure.

depends on spreading the wellsprings outward!

There is a lesson here for every Jewish man and woman. To what

extent must one extend himself when it comes to Torah study and its dissemination? To the point of literal self-sacrifice. (Though in our generation it isn't necessary to give up one's life, *ch"v*. Rather, this effort can be made peacefully and expansively, materially and spiritually, and with joy and gladness of heart.)

And there's a specific lesson for Jewish women: The fact that Jewish women conduct themselves according to the laws of the Torah is nothing new. Neither is their going beyond the letter of the law anything new since this has become part of the Torah's directives. The *chiddush* is that you need to increase in everything connected with helping Torah study and its dissemination, even in a way that makes no sense, not even sense of *k'dusha*. Once my mother opened the way, the way is paved for all women to follow.

(Sicha VaYeilech 5746)

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THE BABA MEIR RABBI MEIR ABUCHATZEIRA

BY RABBI SHOLOM BER VOLPE
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN

PART 1



The Baba Meir was born in 5673 (1912-13) to his father, the *tzaddik* Rabbi Yisroel Abuchatzeira *zatzal* (the Baba Sali), and to his mother, the *tzadekes* Rebbetzin Pricha, peace unto her. His father named him after the G-dly *tanna* Rabbi Meir Baal HaNess, may his merit protect us.

As a young boy, Rabbi Meir showed no interest in child's play, preferring to study Torah diligently with a special private teacher his father had assigned him. By the time he reached the age of *bar mitzva*, he had already earned a reputation as an exceptional lad. As a young man, he assisted his father in the latter's role as *rosh yeshiva* and community leader in Arpod. He was also a teacher in the *yeshiva* and would answer questions relating to *halacha*.

When the Baba Meir was twenty-five years old, his father instructed him to travel to the city of Rabat to be tested by the Torah sages there. The elderly Torah sages were stunned by the young man's brilliance. They bestowed rabbinic ordination upon him and empowered him to be a *rav* and rabbinical judge. He was then appointed as head of the rabbinical court of the Midalt community, and he

became known far and wide as a *gaon*, *tzaddik*, and *kabbalist*. When his holy father moved away from Arpod, Rabbi Meir succeeded him as *rosh yeshiva* and community leader.

In 5725 (1964-65) the Baba Meir moved to Eretz Yisroel and settled in Ashdod, where thousands of people flocked to his home to receive his blessing and prayer. He was accustomed to fasting and abstaining from speech, and devoted all his time to Torah study and Divine service. In continuation of the legacy of his great-grandfather, the holy *gaon* and *kabbalist* Rabbi Yaakov Abuchatzeira, the Baba Meir was an ardent follower and student of the *kabbalists* and *chassidic* masters, both past and present.

Despite the fact that during the last five years of his life he was in severe pain, the *tzaddik* continued to receive his visitors warmly, and he accepted his suffering with love. On Chol HaMoed Pesach, 17 Nissan 5743 (March 31, 1983), the Baba Meir departed this world at the age of sixty-six.

At the *tzaddik's* eulogy, Rabbi Shmuel Vozner related that whenever he wanted to strengthen his fear of Heaven, he would take a taxi to the

home of the Baba Meir in order to get a glimpse of his face. On the thirtieth day of the Baba Meir's mourning period, the *gaon* Rabbi Shabsai Yudelvitz related stories of open miracles performed by the *tzaddik*, who saw from one end of the world to the other. Rabbi Yudelvitz concluded his words with the observation that the Baba Meir merited this ability because his pure eyes never looked at anything inappropriate.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE REBBE WHILE IN MOROCCO

The Baba Meir was deeply connected to the Rebbe, and corresponded with him, both in Morocco, and later, in Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe's first letter to him is dated 3 Elul 5710 (August 28 1949):

"*May mountains bear peace and blessing to the rav and gaon, the vasik and chassid, the G-d-fearing man, who sits in judgment, ish chai, v'rav paalim, who leads his congregation on the upright path, who illumines¹ and shines ... son of holy ones, etc., our teacher the rav Rabbi Meir shlita Abuchatzeira, leader of the holy Midalt community...*"

1. In Hebrew, the word "Meir" (the *tzaddik's* name) means "illumine" or "illuminate."

The Rebbe goes on to say that he was pleased to hear from Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky about Rabbi Meir's mighty activities, and that he received the Baba Meir's request for a blessing and mentioned him at the gravesite of the Previous Rebbe. The Rebbe also encourages the *tzaddik* to learn the *chassidic* teachings of the Previous Rebbe.

On 25 Elul 5710 (September 19, 1949) the Rebbe wrote to the Baba Meir concerning the educational institutions that were founded in Morocco at the time by the renowned *chassid* Rabbi Michoel Lipsker o.b.m. The Rebbe also writes there concerning profound *kabbalistic* concepts. In a letter dated 8 Adar II, 5711, the Rebbe thanks the *tzaddik* for sending him *Machsof HaLavan*, a *sefer* authored by his great-grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Abuchatziera *zatzal*. In the letter, the Rebbe explains the concept of *Machsof HaLavan* in the teachings of *kabbala*.

In a letter dated 3 Marcheshvan 5711 (October 14, 1950), the Rebbe responds to the Baba Meir's notification of his appointment as head of the rabbinical court of Arpod (in place of his father, the Baba Sali, who had moved elsewhere). In the letter, the Rebbe blesses him on his new appointment, and explains to him the meaning of the term "*mara d'asra*" [lit., master/rabbi of the area]. In a letter written on the third day of Chanuka 5715 (December 22 1954), the Rebbe expresses his joy over the fact that the *tzaddik* participated in a *Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen*.

When the matter of enrolling Jewish children in the proper schools arose, the Baba Meir issued the following call:

"Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 5733 (February 2-3, 1983). My brothers and *anshei shlomeinu*,² a holy and chosen community. I turn to you with a request that . . . the more souls you can

save by enrolling them in the schools and kindergartens of Chabad, the better. They will be successful and productive there, through a pure and holy education."

When the Rebbe launched the Shabbos Candles Campaign, the *tzaddik* wrote the following:

"Every G-d-seeking person must educate his young daughters to fulfill the *mitzva* of lighting Shabbos candles every Erev Shabbos in accordance with the call of our holy master, the *Admur* of Lubavitch *shlita*. Fortunate is the person who will heed the voice of this *gaon* and *kadosh*,³ and fulfill every detail of this ordinance. Let blessing come upon all who heed this, and let them receive spiritual and physical salvation."

"Fortunate is the person who will heed the voice of this gaon and kadosh,³ and fulfill every detail of this ordinance."

Indeed, the Baba Meir's son, the *tzaddik* Rabbi Dovid Abuchatzera *shlita* of Nahariya learnt in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim; he is deeply connected to the Rebbe, identifies with all Lubavitch matters in his city, and participates in Lubavitch events and *farbrengens*.

RABBI KRISPIN'S STORY

One of the Rebbe's first emissaries to Morocco was the *rav* and *gaon* Rabbi Machluf Krispin *shlita*, who eventually became the Baba Meir's son-in-law, and today, serves as the chief rabbi of Kiryat Biyalik. Rabbi Krispin talked to me about his appointment as the emissary

to Morocco, his engagement to the daughter of the *tzaddik*, and the private audience he had with the Rebbe. (See other details in the chapter on the Baba Sali). In his own words:

"I was born in 5692 to a family tracing itself to Torah scholars proficient in *halacha* and *kabbala*. We lived in Paris, and I learnt there in a Litvisher *yeshiva*.

"It was the 18th of Elul 5710 and, by Divine providence, I happened to pass by a certain wedding hall named Yaar that was located in our vicinity. (We lived in a Paris suburb.) I saw that a joyous Jewish event was taking place inside, and I went in to see what it was. It turns out that it was the wedding of the *chassid* Rabbi Shlomo Matusof. I was attracted to the wondrous *chassidic* joy, and I sat down at one of the tables. The renowned *chassid* Rabbi Peretz Mochkin o.b.m., who was sitting at the table, began talking to me. He showed me a *Tanya*, and said, 'Are you familiar with this *sefer*?' He then suggested that I spend a Shabbos at the Lubavitch *yeshiva* in Brunoy.

"His words, which came straight from his heart, penetrated my own heart, and I went to experience a Shabbos at the *yeshiva*. Both the *chassidic* atmosphere and the learning appealed to me. As a result, I approached Rabbi Yaakov Yurkovitz (whose wife descended from Lubavitcher *chassidim*, and whose son serves today as the Chabad *rav* of Lud) the *rosh mesivta* of the Litvisher *yeshiva* in which I had learnt, and I explained to him that since I come from a long line of *rabbanim* and *kabbalists*, it would be appropriate for me to learn in a *chassidic yeshiva*, where the Torah's innermost dimension is studied. After that, I transferred to Tomchei T'mimim.

(To be continued.)

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2. A Hebrew expression used in reference to the members of one's following,

community, sect, and the like; [lit., "men of our peace."]

3. Hebrew, "Holy man."

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ב"ה

CHABAD HOUSE ON WHEELS

BY SHAI GEFEN



*The Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim is one of the biggest in the world. * Rabbi Menachem Mendel Wilhelm spreads Yiddishkeit among the thousands of Eged members. * An interview that explains the relationship between Chabad and Eged.*

One of the fastest growing Chabad houses is the one that disseminates *Yiddishkeit* and *chassidus* among the 35,000 members of the Eged bus cooperative who are spread around the country, and not only among the members but among their passengers, too. Thousands of passengers use the Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim and they too benefit from Beis Chabad Eged.

The idea for the Chabad house on wheels, the brainchild of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Wilhelm, was one he had as a *bachur*. With time, the idea turned into a large and respected institution. The outreach work that takes place within Eged is comparable to that of any thriving Chabad house.

Even though Rabbi Wilhelm is still not a member of Eged, he is definitely

part of Eged's extended family; at least that is how they see him at Eged. He is respected by the directors of the longtime and large cooperative (one of the largest in the country) and is called, "HaRav Menachem." When it comes to anything having to do with religion at Eged, Rabbi Wilhelm is the man with the final word.

Rabbi Wilhelm organizes religious events for Eged. On Chanuka, 700 *bar mitzva* boys, the sons of Eged members, enjoyed a large and impressive *bar mitzva* celebration that took place in Kfar Chabad.

In addition to the usual activities a Chabad house does, Rabbi Wilhelm also serves as rabbi of sorts to the Central Bus Station and its *shul*.

Anything having to do with religion at the Yerushalayim Central Bus Station

ends up in his lap. So for example, when the new Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim opened, the largest in the Middle East and one of the biggest in the world, the owners of the station wanted the shops to be open three quarters of an hour after Shabbos is over. Rabbi Wilhelm insisted on a full hour. He explained that an hour is something clear-cut and definitive. If they allow $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, that is liable to change. Rabbi Wilhelm's decision prevailed.

How did your work at Eged begin?

It began many years ago when I was a boy, not even *bar mitzva*. I would go to the Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim in order to distribute brochures on the parsha. I would do this regularly, and little by little, I joined forces with the rav of the *shul* there, Rabbi Aharon Rabinowitz, *z"l*.

Over the years, I expanded my work and I began going from office to office and from driver to driver, putting *t'fillin* on with them as well as with directors of branches around the country and with the heads of departments in every district. I eventually became part of the scenery at Eged. We brought *bachurim* from Toras Emes in Yerushalayim who put *t'fillin* on with hundreds of drivers,

directors, mechanics and maintenance workers, so that our work with Eged goes on all the time.

Six years ago, we decided to open an official Beis Chabad. The demand for it came from the directors of Eged! Thanks to our ongoing connection with Eged, in addition to Eged's cultural activities, there are also religious and traditional activities. They came to realize that a Chabad house is inseparable part of life at Eged.

* * *

Two years ago, Rabbi Wilhelm along with the Israeli chief rabbis and the head chaplain of the I.D.F. dedicated the new *shul* that is located in the center of Central Bus Station of Yerushalayim, which is named for Eged members who fell in Israeli wars. The official Chabad house is in the large mall, while *t'fillin* stands are set up on every floor of the Central Bus

Eged drivers have been involved in attacks when terrorists have blown themselves up on buses. Rabbi Wilhelm visits the wounded. One of these drivers told him that he was saved because he had put on t'fillin on the morning of the attack, before going to work.

Station.

Rabbi Wilhelm has a shy smile and when you speak to him, you find him to be soft, conciliatory, and pleasant. He has never heard of the concept of "elbowing," something often used to describe the Israeli mentality, yet despite this (or maybe because of this) he has succeeded in becoming beloved throughout the enormous Eged cooperative. He is warmly received wherever he goes.

Rabbi Wilhelm's day is full. Every afternoon he sets up shop at the Chabad house and begins a day packed with activities, that sometimes go on until the wee hours of the morning. He often travels to Eged branches around the country in order to put *t'fillin* on with the drivers and to discuss Judaism with members. He makes house-calls which include putting up mezuzos and buying *t'fillin*, and simply keeping in touch.



Chanuka is one of the Chabad house's busiest times. Rabbi Wilhelm does a public menorah lighting at the Central Bus Station, a tradition going back many years. Tmimim visit Eged offices and smaller stations around Yerushalayim, where they do menorah lightings and other Chanuka activities.

Rabbi Wilhelm visits a different Eged branch each night. One Chanuka he described as follows, "I was in Beer Sheva where we did a large menorah lighting ceremony at the Central Bus Station there, with the director of that branch. In the first three days of Chanuka we had been to Chaifa, Tel Aviv, and Afula. This was in addition to the *bar mitzva* celebration for hundreds of Eged children. That year Eged increased its cultural budget for Chanuka and so we were able to distribute about ten thousand



Rabbi Wilhelm (left) with upper echelon Eged members at a party organized by the Chabad house. The speaker is Eged director, Mr. Arik Feldman

menorahs at different branches."

Every Erev Pesach, Rabbi Wilhelm distributes about 6000 sets of shmura matza.

What other activities does the Eged Chabad house do?

Just about anything a regular Chabad house does, we do too. Over the years, I've changed thousands of mezuzos in the homes of Eged members and in Eged offices. We've bought hundreds of pairs of *t'fillin* for *bar mitzva* boys. I participate in

members' joyous times as well as sad times, and I try to inject joy into their lives.

Every year there's a Shabbaton for Eged members in Yerushalayim which is attended by hundreds of people. Naturally, we provide the spirit for that Shabbos. We make the *bar mitzva* ceremony every year, and thanks to our work, they have started bringing their children to Kfar Chabad.

* * *

Rabbi Wilhelm's work has brought

SHMIRA ON EVERY BUS

The Rebbe spoke about having a Chitas and pushka on buses a number of times. There are answers from the Rebbe about having a Chitas on buses, like after the bomb on a bus in Yerushalayim in which two Beis Chana girls were injured.

In *Likkutei Sichos*, volume 21, p. 381, the Rebbe suggests that buses have a T'hilim, *Tanya*, and Siddur.

"The terrible security situation has motivated the directors of Eged to assist us in this mitzva. They say, 'If we invest so much money into security guards and armored vehicles, why shouldn't we spend a little money on spiritual protection?'"

BREECH BABY

Rabbi Wilhelm's routine activities also include house calls, putting up mezuzos etc. at the homes of Eged members. One time, Rabbi Wilhelm was invited to the home of an Eged member whose wife was in her ninth month of pregnancy and the baby was breech.

The doctors were talking about the danger to the baby, and so the father quickly called Rabbi Wilhelm and asked him to write to the Rebbe.

"In the answer the man opened to, it said his *t'fillin* and mezuzos should be checked. We found that the mezuzos were kosher except for one that was upside down! The baby turned around after we hung the mezuzah properly.

"After the baby was born, I was invited to be the sandek at the bris. As a sign of their appreciation and esteem for the Rebbe, they named the baby 'Menachem Mendel.'"



Rabbi Wilhelm (center) with upper echelon Eged members in 5759

about big changes at Eged. For example, every year, Eged holds a Day of Fun. Thanks to Rabbi Wilhelm, the cultural department of Eged decided

to have separate programs for boys and girls. Rabbi Wilhelm requested that *b'dikas chametz* take place on every Eged bus, something that hadn't happened before he requested it. Eged sells its chametz to the *rabbanut ha'rashit*.

This is all in addition to the work at the *shul*. Every morning there are a number of minyanim that take place there, as well as many minyanim for Mincha and Maariv. Quite a few Eged employees have grown accustomed to joining these minyanim, after Rabbi Wilhelm explained to them the importance of putting *t'fillin* on before driving their busses.

The awful security situation has motivated many bus drivers to put on *t'fillin* before going to work as a means of protection. Every day, *shiurim* at the *shul* in *chassidus*, Halacha and Aggada, are given by Rabbi Wilhelm.

Has there been a change in Eged's attitude towards religion?

Definitely. A very big change. In the past, many avoided religious activities but today, Eged sees this as something very important. In addition to which, many members of Eged are traditional or religious. Thanks to our ongoing activity, the directors of Eged encourage religious activities. I must mention the Director of the Secretariat of Eged, Mr. Arik Feldman, and Eged Spokesman Ron Ratner, who are very inclined towards the religious sector and are very interested in the work of the Chabad house.

There is no aspect of religion they don't take an interest in, and this is in order to make sure things are done in the best possible way. I am very close with the national directors of Eged too. If you knew Eged ten or fifteen years ago, you understand the revolution that has taken place here.

* * *

Getting this outreach work started wasn't easy. Not all Eged members were excited about the man trying to sell them on *Yiddishkeit*. An illustrative

THE TANYA WITH THE EGGED SYMBOL

Five years ago, a special event took place at Eged when the *Tanya* was printed in their offices with the Eged symbol. This was the project of Tmimim Kanelsky and Har-Tzvi, who were working for the Chabad house at that time, in the area of the Central Bus Station. The directors of Eged enthusiastically embraced the project and even paid for it, seeing it as an honor for Eged.

After the printing, a *farbrengen* was held with all Eged directors. One by one, they spoke about the privilege of having the *Tanya* printed at Eged.

Other printings of *Tanya* have been planned for other Eged branches.



story:

“When I first started my work, I dealt with a driver and asked him to put on *t’fillin* before hitting the road. He refused. I told him that I wasn’t getting off the bus until he put on *t’fillin*. The driver stuck to his guns and got me off the bus.

“The next Sunday, the driver came to me on his own and asked to put on *t’fillin*. I asked him what had made him change his mind. He said, ‘I saw how serious you were and I couldn’t refuse you anymore.’

“This man had never put on *t’fillin* before. After putting *t’fillin* on for the first time, he asked me to buy him a tallis and *t’fillin* with his own money. We made a special *farbrengen* to mark the occasion, and the driver donated a nice sum of money to our work.

“Many people who were far from *Yiddishkeit* have come very close to Torah and mitzvos, and today they are the first ones who seek us out. For example, the branch in Chaifa is not an easy one. Everybody knows what Chaifa stands for [communism and anti-religious sentiments], especially Eged. Just a few years ago, they didn’t want to see me at the branch in the ‘Red City.’ Today, there are quite a few drivers who are particular about putting on *t’fillin* before they set out. And whenever I go to the Chaifa branch, I am warmly received and asked to step up the work of the Chabad house.”

Rabbi Wilhelm doesn’t rest on his laurels. In recent years, he has used the day camps for the Eged children to spread the wellsprings and to instill a bit of *Yiddishkeit* in them. He goes from camp to camp and within a framework of a program called, “A Day with HaRav Menachem,” the children hear a shiur in *Yiddishkeit*, Mishnayos, stories, and enjoy other educational activities. The kids love it and after the first attempt, Eged insisted on his coming back the following year.

Did the Rebbe say anything about your work at Eged?

The Rebbe once sent mashkeh for a special *farbrengen* that we made with all the directors of Eged. Once, when I passed by for dollars and asked for a *bracha* for my work at Eged, the Rebbe gave me an extra dollar for “success in spreading the wellsprings.” Over the years, we brought many directors of Eged to the Rebbe and they got dollars

and brachos.

We once organized a group of Eged members who went to the Rebbe. I can tell you that two years ago, in honor of Hakhel, a large group (over 30 people) went to the Rebbe MH”M.

* * *

Since the Oslo Accords with the resulting terrorist attacks, Eged drivers have been involved in attacks when



The dais at the *bar mitzva* celebration for Eged children



The *bar mitzva* celebration for 700 Eged children in Kfar Chabad



terrorists have blown themselves up on buses. Rabbi Wilhelm visits the wounded. One of these drivers told him that he was saved because he had put on *t'fillin* on the morning of the attack, before going to work. This was after Rabbi Wilhelm had convinced him to do this some years before.

Rabbi Wilhelm visits not only the wounded but also the families, and he tries to encourage and help them with everything related to religious matters.

“In 5756, when there were major attacks on buses, we had a lot of work to do. There was a terrible atmosphere among Eged members.”

Rabbi Wilhelm came up with an idea of putting a Chitas and pushka on every Eged bus, for protection, as the Rebbe has suggested (see box). The leadership of Eged has given its approval of the project. Rabbi Wilhelm worked on a holder for the Chitas and pushka that is shaped like a bus.

“We’re talking about 4000 buses, and with Hashem’s help, Eged will help finance this project.”

There has also been a change regarding the *shiurim*. Rabbi Wilhelm recently started giving telephone classes by having a special phone number, which Eged members can call to hear a short *d’var Torah* on the parsha as well as customs and holidays.

“We are also working on having live *shiurim* on the phone which will be given by *bachurim* to interested Eged members. There’s a thirst and a demand from a number of people for more *shiurim* and I think this is the best solution.”

When I ask Rabbi Wilhelm about the key to his success in reaching all Eged directors on down to the drivers and other employees, he smiles and says, “It’s all the Rebbe’s *kochos*.” Whenever problems or questions arise, he has gotten answers from the Rebbe that give him the strength to go on.

CHANUKA AT EGED

Rabbi Wilhelm distributes a menorah, candles, and a Chanuka brochure to every Eged worker. Over 10,000 menorahs are distributed at all Eged branches.

Rabbi Wilhelm visits different Eged offices around the country throughout Chanuka and addresses the employees with a Chanuka message. He is warmly received wherever he goes.

A giant menorah is lit in the front of the Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim, and another one is lit on the second floor. The menorah lighting is carried out every evening by the managers of the stores, along with lots of visitors and accompanied by a band.

A Chanuka party took place in the dining room of the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv, and was attended by 5000 Eged members from around the country. Rabbi Wilhelm spoke about the Eged Chabad house’s work over Chanuka.



TRIPLETS!

BY YAALEH BEN-ARUYAH

One year ago, triplets were born to Ron and Hilla Feichman. This was after years of childlessness and heartache. The Feichmans tell their story, about the tough times, the tears, the brachos, and the miracle.

Because the withholding of success is in a way of “and it was to him as a salvation,” through this he will be inspired to increase in Torah and *avoda*, giving *tz’daka*, and therefore, there will be an increase in the bounty of Hashem, in material matters, too ...

So too regarding children – those who received the Rebbe’s *bracha* for children and are waiting for the fulfillment of this *bracha*, and the matter already began ... and suddenly stopped, need to know that this isn’t a postponement, *ch”v*, even for an hour. On the contrary, “and it was to him as a salvation” – that after some time they will see that this itself was part of “and his right hand embraces me.”

(Toras Menachem, Hisvaaduyos 5711, vol. 2, p. 272).

Erev Shabbos, 27 Cheshvan 5763, Shabbos Mevarchim Kislev. Candles can be seen glowing in the old stone house at the end of Shabtai Lane in Rechovot. The Mifaei home is shining with the special light of Shabbos. The long table, which fills the narrow house

from end to end, is covered with a white tablecloth and beautifully set. At one end are the female guests, friends, family members, and *mekuravos*.

When the door opens and a large group of *chassidim* enter, the women excitedly yell, “Mazal tov! Mazal tov!”

The new and happy father, a friend and brother in the Chabad *k’hilla* in Rechovot, Ron (Ronny) Feichman, acknowledges the good wishes. The entire community is thrilled that the Feichmans’s blessings for children were finally fulfilled, and three times over!

Although the Feichmans had recently moved to Elad, Ron made the *shalom zachor* with his brothers and friends in Rechovot, the *k’hilla* that supported him throughout.

* * *

Ron, who had lived with his parents in Australia, became a *baal t’shuva* as a boy and became close with the Chabad community. He went on K’vutza to 770 and stayed



there for five years. He returned to Eretz Yisroel after 3 Tammuz, where he met and married his wife, Hilla. Hilla's family was traditional and she had searched for depth and meaning and had found it in Chabad. They settled in Rechovot.

When time passed and they didn't have children, they went to doctors, *rabbanim*, and *mashpiim* and did all the *segulos*, got *brachos* and good wishes from scores of friends and acquaintances, but nothing worked. Nevertheless, they still believed they would have children, and that it was just a matter of time.

They filled this waiting period with activity and spreading the wellsprings. This is one of the reasons why, four years ago, they moved to the new city of Elad. There, they were among the first Chabad families, and they arranged *shiurim* and schools. Hilla held Rosh Chodesh parties and *chassidus* classes in her house. She was involved in the founding of the Chabad girls' school and ran it, in its first years.

At Hilla's urging, they strengthened their study and observance of the laws of Family Purity, and strengthened their *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe through consulting with *mashpiim* and the guidance of a *rav*.

"Despite everything, there were hard moments," says Hilla Feichman, when we met at her house after the triplets' bris. "I didn't know what else could be done in order to see the fulfillment of the *bracha*. When I wrote to the Rebbe, I always got general answers about spreading the wellsprings. They said nothing about children."

Three years ago, Hilla joined a group of women who were traveling to the Rebbe for Chanuka. "Throughout my stay there, I pleaded for children, that it should happen already! I felt it was a special time in a special place."

Ron tried getting *brachos* from as many people as possible. He knew the aphorism that the Alter Rebbe said: "When I was at the Rebbe in Mezritch, he once

told me in the name of our teacher, the Baal Shem Tov, that the *bracha* of a friend is important in Heaven and is more accepted there than the good counsel of the Angel Michael and his arousal of heavenly mercy!" For this reason, he asked people to bless him.

At a certain point, Ron felt he couldn't take it anymore. He suddenly felt the enormity of the pain and as though for the first time, he truly understood their situation. Five years of prayers, effort, running from doctor to doctor. Five years of anticipation and yearning, beseeching and *emuna*. That was it! He

felt he had to do something that would finally make it happen. He felt that he reached the point where he was ready to push the limits and demand of Hashem and His emissaries that the *bracha* be fulfilled already.

If you know Ron, you know that he's straight, direct, and honest. He went to their *mesader kiddushin* (the rabbi who had married them), Rabbi Ashkenazi, and complained, "You married us, so how can it be that you made *kiddushin* between a man and woman and there are no children? How can it be that a couple, who was married by a *chassidische rav*, haven't had children and are waiting five years already?"

"The *rav* became very somber," says Ron. "He heard me out in silence and then said, 'Don't worry, I promise you that with Hashem's help, it will work out soon.'"

Ron went to 770 for Tishrei 5762. On Simchas Torah, in the midst of the merrymaking, when Rabbi Yehuda Blesofsky took out the Rebbe's Torah, people crowded around to kiss it. Everybody knows this is a special time.

"I asked him to let me hold the Rebbe's Torah for a few seconds. Rabbi Blesofsky refused. I was ready to give him everything I owned to be allowed to hold it, but he said it was out of the question. I felt this was an opportunity I could not miss. I grabbed the Torah and yelled, 'Rebbe! I came to you to get a *bracha* for children. Rebbe, bless me!'



“Rabbi Blesofsky was taken aback by the obvious depth of my pain and answered, ‘Amen, may you have children soon!’

“Since we had gone to doctors and still hadn’t been helped, our *mashpia* suggested that we speak to our *rav* and listen to what he told us to do. ‘The *rav* is the Rebbe’s *shliach*. Go with the Rebbe’s *ko’ach*.’

“We spoke with Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gluckowsky, *rav* of the Chabad community in Rechovot, and he asked us to give him a list of the five best doctors. After some thought, he sent us to Dr. Lev Ran.

“When we went to this doctor, we told him, ‘We are here thanks to our rabbi, and if our rabbi sent us to you, that means that Hashem will bring about the *bracha* through you.’ The doctor said that with Hashem’s help, he would try to do his best. I said, ‘Dr., I’m here for no less than triplets!’”

The first treatment was scheduled for 11 Nissan, the Rebbe’s birthday. Ron reminded the doctor that he wanted triplets.

Two weeks later, the test results were positive. “I laughed, while Hilla was in shock.”

“Listen,” said the doctor, “it’s not 100% certain. Come back in two days.”

Ron retorted, “We’re not coming back in two days. We’re coming back in nine months to tell you about the *bris*!”

“We kept the pregnancy a secret until nearly the sixth month. We were in touch with Rabbi Gluckowsky throughout. We did everything with his knowledge and approval. I can’t tell you how much Rabbi Gluckowsky helped and supported us the entire time. We owe him tremendous gratitude for the warm, fatherly guidance he

gave us.”

At one of the checkups, the doctor looked at the ultrasound screen and said, “It’s better than good!” Three beating hearts were visible.

* * *

“Throughout that month, we received many *brachos*,” says Hilla. “People were unaware of our

exciting news, but they all blessed us wholeheartedly. We saw what it means to belong to the brotherhood of *chassidim*, to the *chassidic* family.

“On Chol HaMoed Pesach, a few days after the results of the examination, I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for an easy pregnancy. For the first time, after all those years, I got a clear answer about pregnancy and it also related to the time of

THE GENTILE SAID: “FOR THIS, G-D WILL GIVE YOU CHILDREN”

Ron Feichman relates:

“A few days before Pesach, I went to the Mifaei home in Rechovot in order to visit the grandmother who is known for her heartfelt *brachos*. When I walked in, I saw Ruth Mifaei standing and scraping the wall.

“What are you doing?” I asked her.

“Cleaning for Pesach,” she answered.

“How will you manage to clean so many walls with that little rag?” Although I was pressured for time since I was in the middle of building the upper floor of my home in Elad, I told her, “The best thing to do is to let me paint your walls. I’ll come tonight and paint it all.”

“From Elad I brought my Romanian workers who worked with me. I told them, ‘I want the house painted in two-three hours. I want it to look like new!’”

“When they took a look at what the job entailed, their hearts sank because the house was large and old. They looked at the walls and said they hadn’t brought enough paint. I told them that if they needed anything, I would bring it, but they should start working immediately. It turned out that there was enough paint for the entire house, even for two layers. Like the miracle of the jug of oil ...

“When the grandmother thanked me for the work, I told her I hadn’t come for free, and that I wanted to be paid for my work. She realized that I was referring to a *bracha*, and she showered me with *brachos* and added, ‘Only Hashem can pay you.’ This was two days before the first treatment on 11 Nissan.

“That night, when the job was done, we said goodbye to the Mifaeis. The workers noticed that I wasn’t getting paid and when we left, one of them said, ‘I saw what you did. You did a great thing. You don’t have any children, but for this, G-d will give you children.’

“That’s what the *goy* told me, and I was taken aback by what he said. I said to myself, the *goy* doesn’t have free choice, and if he used Hashem’s name and blessed me with children, then this is Hashem’s will!”



Ron Feichman receiving a dollar from

year. The answer was in volume 17, p. 135:

In answer to your letter of 22 Iyar in which you write once again about still not being blessed with children. Since there have been a number of new treatments innovated lately, you should consult, once again, with a top doctor in this field and ask him about these new treatments ...

And since we are in the days between Pesach, time of our freedom, and Shavuot, time of the giving of our Torah which was engraved on the *Luchos* – “do not read it *charus* (engraved), but *cheirus* (freedom),” freedom from all matters that constrict and cause worry. May you also relate good news in all the above-mentioned.

*Then he showed me
the Rebbe’s letter
which had the word
zachor three times.
His intuition told him
that the Rebbe was
hinting at three sons
on the way.*

With blessings for *kabbalas ha’Torah b’simcha u’b’pnimiyus*, and good news.

“Although I didn’t feel that well, the Rebbe’s words calmed and

strengthened me. This letter accompanied me throughout the pregnancy. At a later point, Ron opened a volume of *Igros Kodesh* and happily announced, ‘Hilla, we have three sons!’

“I didn’t know where he got this information from, and then he showed me the Rebbe’s letter which had the word *zachor* three times. His intuition told him that the Rebbe was hinting at three sons on the way (vol. 20, p. 219):

I received your letters of Rosh Chodesh Iyar and the one that preceded it. As it says in the *parsha* at the end of this week: if a woman...and gives birth to a *male* child. And the explanation of the Alter Rebbe on this is known, the allusion to service of Hashem – that

when things come as an inspiration from below in the service of the Jewish people, then a *male* child is born, something that endures ...

Yisroel repents (in a brief hour and a brief moment and with joy) and returns them to goodness (the source of good) and are immediately redeemed, a redemption not followed by exile, for it will be true and complete, *shir* in the *male* form.

With blessings for good news in everything that you write about, generally and specifically.

“During the pregnancy, I asked the Rebbe for additional *brachos*, and the Rebbe wrote, ‘that the days of her pregnancy should be filled easily and as they should be, etc.’ and this calmed me,” says Hilla thankfully. “I didn’t ask for anything further. The pregnancy went much better than expected.”

On 25 Cheshvan 5763 Hilla gave birth to three boys. Two months later, on 24 Teives, they had their bris and were named: Menachem Mendel, Levi Yitzchok, and Maoz Yisroel. Three new soldiers in Tzivos Hashem.

“I must thank Hashem, the Rebbe, and all the people, friends –



Rejoicing at the triple *bris*

near and far – and members of the community, who joined us in our prayers, and now share in our *simcha*,” says Hilla. “It’s important to me that they know how

important a *bracha* is, as well as the encouragement and love they showered on us. Our joy is their joy.



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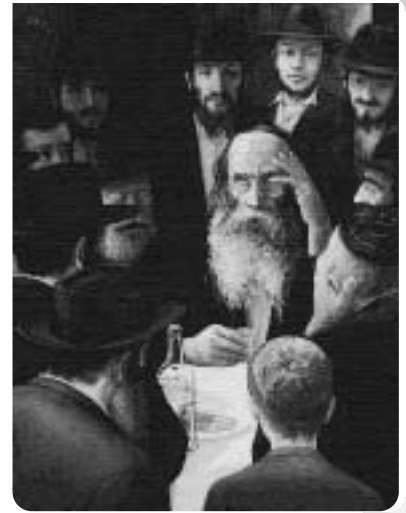
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PERFECTING LEADERSHIP

BY RABBI YEHESKEL LBOVIC



WAS A CLEAR COMMAND NEEDED?

When the Alter Rebbe was still a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch, one of the youngest, he had occasion to travel once and stop at an inn run by a simple yet G-d-fearing Jew. Talking to him, he found out that there was no daily *minyan* in his area – not even one for Shabbos – and that his family would go to a nearby, larger town for the High Holidays and some of the Yomim Tovim. The Alter Rebbe commented that it was not a good situation and that it would be worthwhile to consider moving to a different town just for the purpose of being able to *daven* with a *minyan*.

In the middle of the night, the Rebbe heard a big commotion in the house, with furniture being moved around, wagons loaded, horses harnessed, etc. Upon asking the *baal ha'bayis* what was going on, the latter answered: “Rebbe, you advised me to move, so I’m moving right now.”

This simple Jew did not analyze, weigh pros and cons, double check as to whether this advice was in the realm of immediate implementation,

etc. He fully understood that the present situation was not good, and since he was told how he could remedy it – though not directly “commanded” to do so and certainly he wasn’t told that he had to do it immediately – he acted on it. He probably did not have all the

In the middle of the night, the Rebbe heard a big commotion in the house, with furniture being moved around, wagons loaded, horses harnessed, etc.

ins and outs worked out as to where he was going, and how he would find new lodging, and how this would impact on his economic situation. But, upon gaining clarity through the words of the *tzaddik*, he acted with *bitachon* (reliance on

Hashem), assured of eventual success.

DIFFERENT KIND OF BATTLES

This story can be connected to several questions that can be raised on Rashi’s commentary as to why Moshe’s hands, raised heavenward in *davening* and supplication to G-d to assure victory against the Amalekites, who attacked the Jewish people shortly after their departure from Egypt, “were heavy” and needed to be supported in their raised position by two men standing on either side of Moshe (*Shmos* 17:12).

Rashi comments: “His hands became heavy because he had been lazy in the *mitzva* (of battling Israel’s foes) and had appointed another one (Yehoshua) instead of him.” Now, the *pasuk* doesn’t say “had become heavy,” but “were heavy.” So, why not say simply that they were heavy from the very onset because of his advanced age, and he therefore, needed constant support.

This can be answered in view of the fact that, 40 years later, we see Moshe Rabbeinu at the forefront of the battle against Og (BaMidbar

21:34), from which it is evident that his old age did not affect his physical strength. So obviously, there must have been another reason that in the case of the war against Amalek caused his hands to become heavy.

But why ascribe it to laziness? Especially in view of his having already “learned his lesson” when he had been procrastinating in circumcising his son (Shmos 4:24) and punished for it! And even if one already looks for some negative reason, other reasons, less incriminating against Moshe, are offered in other sources: (a) because he postponed the battle to the following day; or (b) because of the people’s sin, who had doubted Hashem’s power and had asked, “is then Hashem in our midst?” (Shmos 17:6).

Furthermore, Moshe must have had a very good reason for having appointed Yehoshua to fight this battle, since we see that on other occasions Moshe was very willing to lead and had actually lead the army to battle: he was at the forefront in the battle against Og, for example, as mentioned above. Moshe even defines a Jewish leader (*BaMidbar* 27:16) as one who “goes out in front of the people in battle (as Rashi himself comments there). So, how can Rashi ascribe his hands becoming heavy to his “mistake” of having appointed Yehoshua, if he must have had good reason to do so?

Let’s first analyze what his “good reason” might have been.

There was a big difference between this battle against Amalek and the battle against Og. The latter battle was miraculous, with Hashem having stated openly, “you shall do unto him as you have done against Sichon; don’t fear him” (*BaMidbar* 21:34; *D’varim* 3:2). The same applied to the miraculous Exodus

and Splitting of the Yam Suf. In such clearly miraculous situations, Moshe realized that nothing can stand in the way of victory, and that therefore, the usual norms for warfare (strong, young soldiers) were not necessary; even a 120-year-old could lead such battles.

At the time the battle against Amalek was about to take place, however, the Jews had displeased Hashem, and Moshe reckoned that this battle had to conform to the usual norms of warfare: young and strong men; don’t rush into battle without adequate preparation (therefore Rashi can’t accept that Moshe was being faulted for

Having then such a good reason for not leading the battle, why did Moshe Rabbeinu’s hands become heavy?

postponing the battle by one day).

Furthermore, during any battle we must supplicate for G-d’s help, and for that Moshe was well suited; he would fast and pray for their victory (an additional reason for his not leading the battle, being weakened by the fast).

...BUT REALLY THE SAME

Having then such a good reason for not leading the battle, why did his hands become heavy? It seems a bit farfetched, on the simple, literal level that Rashi deals with, to ascribe it to the people’s sin, for the very attack of Amalek was enough of a consequence for this sin, as Rashi (*Shmos* 17:8) explains. Why

should it also affect Moshe, if he was personally doing everything right?

We must, therefore, seek a faulty reasoning on Moshe’s part, as it were, which would then explain why he was thus personally affected.

Where did Moshe err and how was his reasoning faulty? The fact is that no matter how we slice it, he did err: a) If the premise is that G-d had commanded this battle to take place (as implied in Rashi on *17:13*), Moshe should still have lead the battle himself, offering a short (see Rashi on *14:15*) prayer on the battlefield to secure G-d’s help, notwithstanding whatever displeasure the Jews were guilty of.

If Hashem commands, you have to act with alacrity. Moshe did not act with alacrity and was “lazy” in this *one* respect, appointing Yehoshua in his stead. (b) Assuming that this premise may be questionable, for indeed it doesn’t say clearly that G-d commanded this battle to take place, we must then assume that Moshe acted on his own, on the strength of simple reasoning: *a Jewish leader does not stand idly while his people is attacked!* The attackers have to be pursued and destroyed.

If that was the case, it would strengthen the argument and distinction made above, i.e., this battle had to be fought according to normal conventions, which do not permit 80-year-olds on the battlefield. But even then, Moshe erred: When the Jewish people have to be protected from enemies and attackers, their defense becomes in and of itself the greatest *mitzva*, as if an express G-dly command was issued to fight such a battle. While one must proceed according to the tactics of normal warfare, one is also assured of victory associated with fulfilling this great *mitzva*.

There is, therefore, a limit to the tactical calculations that the leader directing this action must make. He has to lead by being there personally, both on the fighting end and the praying end (if suited for it, like Moshe). In the final analysis, Moshe should have been there. He was sloth in getting there, so, tit-for-tat, his hands got lazy and heavy.

THE OLDER THEY GET, THE SILLIER THEY BECOME – AND SOMETIMES ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS

It is not enough for the present “leader” of Israel to fail so miserably

in offering protection for the Jewish lives entrusted him; it is not enough for him to be so callous and lackadaisical in the face of thousands loosing their lives and being maimed for lack of such protection; it is not enough that instead of pursuing, attacking and destroying the enemy, he flip-flops and decides that it’s a good idea to hide behind a wall, “second best” after failing so miserably in providing the right kind of protection; it is not enough to make ridiculous prisoner exchanges which invite further kidnappings (and are, therefore, forbidden by

Jewish law); it is not demeaning enough to exchange live prisoners for dead ones; but in addition, he has the unmitigated chutzpa to tell his cabinet that he is proud of this accomplishment! No wonder that G-d is apparently manipulating his early removal from office before he can do any more harm.

When will Israeli society finally realize that they need a totally different kind of leader, a leader who lives up to the scrutiny of the Torah.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos vol. 21 p.89-99)

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NOT TO LOSE THE WORLD'S SYMPATHY

BY SHAI GEFEN

“SHOCKING!”

In the past, it took some time for us to get “feedback” for our serious mistakes in making concessions and caving in to Arab demands. This gave people room to claim there was no connection between them. This time though, everybody clearly saw that when Israel makes itself weak, the consequences are felt within days, and sometimes within minutes.

Last Thursday, the country was shaken by the humiliating exchange of hundreds of Arab criminals for three bodies and one live Jew. If that wasn't bad enough, the government had the chutzpa to try and make a victorious ceremony out of it. While the citizens of Beirut rejoiced, Israel hid its face in shame. Nobody rejoiced here. Everybody knew what would result from the release of Arab prisoners.

After five months of (relative) quiet (not that there weren't any attempted attacks; there were many), a bus was blown up in Yerushalayim.

After our ignominious flight from Lebanon, Arafat learned from Nasralla and realized Israel's weak point. This is what got the new Intifada started.

Here too, our enemies got the message. Israel is weak. Otherwise, it wouldn't have made such a ridiculous exchange. Let's get them!

The results: 11 dead, hundreds wounded. And this is before the released prisoners got back to work on carrying out attacks as the Security experts anticipate they will do, and as past experience has proven.

(The Arad family should be commended for announcing that it does not want terrorists to be freed in exchange for the body of Ron Arad, if he is not alive.)

When Israeli leaders make concessions to Arabs, they wrap themselves in the righteous cloak of sanctity of life. The question is: Everybody knows that the prisoner exchange means that Israel has lost its deterrent power, and that it has thereby strengthened terror organizations and increased their motivation to kidnap Jews. They know that many of the released Arabs will return to committing terrorist acts. Why do our leaders agree to these terrible deals? How is it that the nation doesn't react?

25 years ago, when 76 terrorists were released in exchange for one man, the Rebbe warned what would happen, but people didn't grasp the enormity of the tragedy. Only the Rebbe saw where this would lead and called the deal, “shocking.”

So too, nobody anticipated the consequences of fleeing from Lebanon, and didn't understand that the northern front also has the

din in Shulchan Aruch of “the land will be easy for them to conquer.”

Lebanon became a Hezbollah-run country, and tens of thousands of missiles and katyushas are aimed at our northern border while the Israeli government continues to award strategic victories to Nasralla and Hezbollah.

It's not surprising that the one who conceded to terror organizations in the midst of our land, who announces that he wants to give them a state, gives in almost unconditionally to other terrorist organizations. This is how he is losing our power of deterrence.

We saw the pictures of Arabs rejoicing in Beirut. It wasn't joy over the released prisoners but joy over Israel's defeat.

THE REBBE PROPHECIES: THE ONE WHO DESTROYED YAMIT WILL CONTINUE DESTROYING YISHUVIM!

The army is planning the ongoing destruction of outposts and the expulsion of Jews from Eretz Yisroel. This is by instruction of Ariel Sharon, the man who oversaw the destruction of Yamit and eighteen other settlements; the man who asked forgiveness for throwing Jews out of Yamit.

On Purim 5745, the Rebbe said an amazing *sicha* in the course of



which he said that the one who expelled Jews from Yamit, would expel Jews from other parts of Eretz Yisroel. Those who did not oppose the Camp David accords, thought uprooting settlements in Yamit and Sinai would save the settlements in Yesha, but they didn't understand that the door had been opened to uproot and destroy every Jewish settlement in the country!

The latest *tzara* is called the Camp David agreement. Since then there began, "you have begun to fall before him." At first they returned parts of Sinai to Egypt, then, the oil fields, until they compelled the Israeli army to expel Jews from Yamit! And this was after those living in Yamit were promised "festively" that they could remain there forever, and they invested sweat and blood, money and time, etc. And the main thing: the residents invested in it their faith in the holiness of Eretz Yisroel and the holiness of all matters associated with it, and this man himself who gave the promise recanted and instructed them to leave Yamit and ordered the Jewish army to expel them, maintaining that "we must keep our word!"

And the deterioration continues – "and you have begun to fall before him" – concession after concession. The situation has reached the point whereby with leadership like this Jewish lives are put in real danger... Those people who caused the *tzaros* mentioned earlier are today's leaders, and they try with all their might to continue that policy – whether in southern Lebanon, in the Galil, etc. – to concede on more parts of Eretz Yisroel that were given to the Jewish people by Hashem in a miraculous manner... They merely seek the right words to prepare public opinion to accept it, and just as they expelled Jews from

Yamit, so too they can expel Jews from other places etc., r"l, and "do not open your mouth to the Satan."

(Hisvaaduyos 5745, vol. 3, p. 1452)

As security forces continue their preparations to uproot and expel Jews from their land, we cannot sit back quietly. We must raise our voices in protest! The dark days of our history, in which Jews were expelled from their homes, are repeating themselves, only this time, it's Jews who are carrying out the expulsion.

HOW MANY ARE WE ENDANGERING

The massacre in Yerushalayim last week has, unfortunately, become routine. Once upon a time, an attack as great as that was spoken about for at least a full week. Today, after a few hours, it is considered old news, and this very fact ought to wake us up as we realize the seriousness of the situation we are in.

However, we are not interested as much in the news as we are in the dulled senses and shortsightedness that we exhibit. Instead of reacting and retaliating in kind, as logic would dictate, and as all the nations expect of us, including our enemies, the Foreign Office came up with a great idea. They decided to show the world a video of the attack scene in Yerushalayim, including the blood and gore, for the purpose of arousing public pity. The video was broadcast at the Foreign Office and everybody saw this as a great diplomatic victory for Israel. One senior official "wisely" explained that if we reacted with a military attack, we would lose the world's sympathy.

It would definitely be funny if it wasn't about us. According to the sympathy theory of our leaders,

At first they returned parts of Sinai to Egypt, then, the oil fields, until they compelled the Israeli army to expel Jews from Yamit! ... Those living in Yamit ... invested their faith in the holiness of Eretz Yisroel and the holiness of all matters associated with it, and this man himself who gave the promise recanted and instructed them to leave Yamit and ordered the Jewish army to expel them, maintaining that "we must keep our word!"

Israel should have been the most beloved nation on earth long ago, but for some reason, anti-Semitism increases with every attack. How come?

Apparently, the approach of eliciting pity is not working. Instead, we are reviled as a weak country, which cannot defend itself. We got real sympathy when we won, when we stood up for ourselves, like after the Six Day War. The “poor me” approach belongs to those who have no place on the cruel and cynical playing field of terror. Nasralla enjoys world recognition only because of his determination, and we are scorned.

Even if they would have pity on us, what use is there in that?

The Rebbe spoke about this Israeli “illness” in his *sicha* of 13 Tammuz 5742:

Instead of efforts to finish the campaign of Peace in Galilee, they are busy explaining and proving to everybody that the members of the P.L.O. are not “decent people!” They waste time, money, energy, and effort on this!

When they are victorious in this, i.e., they get so-and-so to admit that members of the P.L.O. are not “decent people,” and they might even utter lies, and they might even have shelled innocent civilians, what a great celebration there is. They managed to get so-and-so to admit and acknowledge this fact, despite the fact that he didn’t acknowledge it until now!

Everybody knows who the P.L.O. is and nobody need proofs and evidence for it – even when we’re talking about a “wild man!” But when two politicians speak to one another, the truth makes no difference, and they don’t take into consideration the fact that both of them know the truth. Rather, they

speak according to the rules of politics, i.e., when a certain question is asked, the answer must be such and such. But actually, everybody knows who the P.L.O. is, especially when they themselves announce it in writing and in print, etc.

*One shouldn't think
that they
accomplished
anything with their
press conference in
which they announced
that the members of
the P.L.O. are not
complete tzaddikim,
and not even
beinonim – what an
incredible chiddush!
What a waste of time!
Especially when these
efforts diminish from
efforts that ought to
be made on truly
important things!*

Therefore, one should not attribute importance to efforts in proving to the entire world that members of the P.L.O. are not “decent people,” and one shouldn’t think that they accomplished anything with their press conference in which they

announced that the members of the P.L.O. are not complete *tzaddikim*, and not even *beinonim* – what an incredible *chiddush*! What a waste of time! Especially when these efforts diminish from efforts that ought to be made on truly important things!

The campaign [Peace in Galilee] should be ended quickly, and the longer they delay – they cause the other side to make new conditions daily, which makes them convene meetings to discuss each condition separately, and in the meantime – the terrorists gain time!

RETURNING TO THE GHETTO

The discussions about the Partition Fence, which everybody is talking about, especially as it may (or may not) be discussed at the International World Court at the Hague, are missing the point. The Fence is a reflection of what has been going on in Israel the past thirty years, especially since the Camp David Accords and Oslo. Escaping reality. Closing our eyes and following fantastical and insane peace accords. It makes no difference why we flee reality, whether it’s because we lack the motivation to deal with the cruel reality being foisted on us, or for other reasons. The reality is that we are escaping reality.

They are wasting billions of shekel on the Fence, and this helps ruin our economy, just as the Camp David Accords did (you may remember the huge devaluation a year after the end of our withdrawal). Despite the Fence, the terrorists don’t stop trying to murder us. Nobody deludes themselves into thinking that the terrorist won’t succeed in infiltrating or digging tunnels in order to bring in explosives, just as they do between Egyptian Rafiach and Gaza, despite large Israeli

forces patrolling there.

All members of the government know that the Fence isn't worthwhile, and the only reason that it continues to be built is in order to show the Israeli public that they're doing something for security. The Partition Fence is nothing but a tranquilizer. At first, the Left came up with the idea, but then ironically, the Left abandoned it and Sharon's government adopted it. In the meantime, the Left became a strong opponent of the Fence. There's a simple solution – kill the terrorists. But the Jewish mind says, "build a fence," and everybody applauds, including

The situation has reached the point whereby with leadership like this Jewish lives are put in real danger... Those people who caused the tzaros mentioned earlier are today's leaders.

intelligent people.

The fallacy of the Partition Fence is far more serious than the fraud of the Oslo Accords. It's a dangerous illusion because suddenly, all of them rely on the Fence and they don't invest their efforts in attacking the terrorists. After the Oslo idea went kaput, they decided to rely on the pathetic Fence, which is practically worthless. It might provide a solution for this detail or that, but no more than that.

We have "been there done that," when it comes to fences and defense lines of this sort. In Sinai, after the Six Day War, we built the Bar Lev Line, which didn't prove itself when it came to the test. All the politicians supported the enormous defense line that was supposed to repel any attempts at invasion, yet it failed.

Aside from the fact that the Fence is pointless (in addition to the future katyushas, G-d forbid, which the Fence won't stop) the big danger lies in the message it broadcasts to all: Israel doesn't chase and doesn't attack. Israel runs. Israel is scared. Israel is fenced in. This political message is far worse than anything else, because the message is that the Jewish people are returning to their ghettos.



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**BAIS CHAYA
MUSHKA**

RABBI CHAIKEL CHANIN, A”H

On Thursday, 6 Shvat, the elder *chassid*, R’ Chaikel Chanin, passed away. R’ Chaikel was born on 17 Sivan 5666 (1906) in Beshenkovitz. His father was R’ Shneur Zalman Yitzchok Chanin, a *chassid* of the Rebbe Rashab. He learned in the local school and his teachers included R’ Chaim Shaul Brook, who was a major influence on him. Thanks to R’ Chaim Shaul, R’ Chaikel went to learn in Lubavitch in 5676/1916. Because of the war, he only stayed there for half a year, and then he returned home.

At that time, his father was drafted, and the Rebbe Rashab told him to buy forged papers under another name and to flee to Vitebsk. That’s how he avoided the army. The family moved to Vitebsk and R’ Chaikel celebrated his *bar mitzva* there. R’ Chaikel went to the *yeshiva* in Nevel briefly, but in 5681/1921 his father died, and R’ Chaikel, who was only 14 years old, had to support his family.

R’ Chaikel had *yechidus* a number of times with the Rebbe Rayatz, and in Tishrei 5688/1927, he spent the entire month with the Rebbe Rayatz in Leningrad.

In 5690/1930 he moved to Leningrad and in 5693/1933, he married Chaya Leah Nimotin. R’ Chaikel had done well in business and he gave large sums of money to the underground Tomchei T’*mimim yeshivos* that were scattered over many towns. Despite his young age, the distinguished *chassidim* gave him great respect and he was always invited to secret meetings about strengthening *Yiddishkeit*.

In addition to his involvement in community work, he also helped many individuals on a personal basis.

When the war began, he managed to arrange a job for his wife as a nurse in a hospital. Later on, when the front approached Leningrad, this position served

her well and she and her two daughters got special permission to flee the city and were saved from the Germans.

A few weeks later, R’ Chaikel also managed to flee Leningrad, but it took some months until he found his wife and daughters in Tzichavin. They stayed there for a few days, but because of the great famine it was difficult to obtain even a piece of bread. He decided to go from there to the interior of Russia to warmer parts. R’ Chaikel’s wife, who was working as

a nurse in a hospital, went with him, and they traveled for weeks until they arrived in Tashkent. When he alighted from the train and saw the market full of food, he decided to remain there.

As soon as R’ Chaikel rented an apartment, he went to the market and bought many sacks of flour, sugar, and other food items that preserve well. After setting up his family, R’ Chaikel began to help his fellow Jews. Every day he went to the train station and when he saw Jewish faces, he would approach them, invite them to his home, and feed them. His food supplies were finished within two months.

R’ Chaikel also got involved in establishing a *talmud Torah* for the children of *Anash*. His wife took on the financial responsibilities, and in the afternoon the *melamed* would teach their two daughters.

At this time, a Tomchei T’*mimim yeshiva* was founded in Samarkand, and R’ Chaikel donated money to this *yeshiva*.

When *Anash* began preparing to leave Russia via Lemberg, R’ Chaikel was among the first to go, but before leaving, he gave a large sum of money to the *yeshiva* in Samarkand to sustain it for a year.

While in Poking in Germany, R’ Chaikel looked for ways to found a Tomchei T’*mimim yeshiva* there. He and his wife tried to improve the situation of



Rebbetzin Chana, "Mother of Royalty."

In 5708/1948 he moved to Paris and there too, he continued his work on behalf of *mosdos* and *Anash*. In 5716/1956 his daughter married Rabbi Zelig Katzman, *a"h*. The wedding took place in New York, but the Rebbe did not allow R' Chaikel to leave Paris for the wedding.

In 5718/1958, his second daughter married Rabbi Isaac Shvei, *a"h*. The Rebbe allowed R' Chaikel to attend this wedding, and he had a long *yechidus* with the Rebbe on this trip.

In 5723/1963, his family emigrated to the U.S. and settled in Crown Heights. R' Chaikel did well in business and continued his deeds of *tz'daka* and *chesed*. He was devoted to all the Rebbe's *inyanim*.

When the Rebbe spoke about strengthening the

neighborhood, R' Chaikel invested a lot of money in buying houses and *shuls* in the neighborhood. He also sent many packages to *Anash* in Russia.

He had a special sense when it came to helping individuals. The Rebbe acknowledged one of these instances, and thanks to this, he personally received a *matza* on Erev Pesach from the Rebbe. Even in recent years, he would go to 770 every day and collect money from people, to help those in need.

In the past few months, he became sick and he spent a great deal of time in the hospital, but his mind was clear until the day of his passing. R' Chaikel is survived by his son R' Shneur Zalman – the director of *Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos*, and his daughters, Mrs. Katzman and Mrs. Shvei, as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren around the world.

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