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The international weekly heralding the coming of Mashiach  
**BEIS MOSHIACH**

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### **U.S.A**

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

### **ERETZ HA'KODESH**

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

### **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:**

M.M. Hendel

### **ENGLISH EDITOR:**

Boruch Merkur  
editor@beismoshiach.org

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Nissan, we read the portion connected with the kindling of the Menorah which relates to the tribe of Levi. [178]

This also relates to Nissan's distinction as "the month of redemption" and our Sages' association of Nissan with "miracles of a truly miraculous nature." [179] "In Nissan, we were redeemed and, in Nissan, we will be redeemed in the future," the Messianic redemption, when "As in the days of our exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders." Thus, the narrative of the dedication of the Sanctuary is appropriate for the present month when we will witness, with G-d's help, the dedication of the Third Beis HaMikdash.

The dedication of the Sanctuary also relates to the individual service of each Jew. Our Sages note that in the command to build the Sanctuary, "And you shall build Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within," the Torah uses the plural form of the word "within," and interpret that to mean, "within each and every individual." Within each Jew's heart, and in an expanded sense within his house and surrounding, a "Sanctuary for G-d" must be established. [180]

Thus, today, the twelfth of Nissan, the conclusion of the dedication of the Sanctuary, shares a unique connection to the present age, the last moments before the Messianic redemption when we are involved in the completion of the task of making this world a dwelling for G-d.

Today's service, the conclusion of the dedication of the Sanctuary, is connected with the expression, "Last in

deed, first in thought." This implies that when a deed is actually completed, one's original thoughts are revealed. This refers, not only to the thoughts necessary to plan the performance of the deed, but rather, to the person's fundamental intent, a thought that stands above any plans, an idea that the person himself may not be consciously

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aware of.

We see this concept reflected in our behavior. Deed comes after thought; i.e., first, a person desires a particular thing and then his will influences his intellect and emotions, until it reaches the aspect of conscious thought, speech, and then, deed. When,

however, the deed is carried out, a level of pleasure that was not expressed previously in thought is revealed.

Similarly, in regard to G-d: The "last in deed," the actual service of the Jews in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, reveals a level of thought that transcends all the levels revealed in the order of spiritual worlds, relating to G-d's very essence.

Our service on this earthly plane in refining the lowest aspects of this material world, transforming it into holiness, has an advantage over the revelation in the spiritual realms. The transformation of the lowest aspects of the world, "last in deed," comes about from G-d's essence which is above all levels that are revealed, even on the first and highest levels of thought. This concept is emphasized on the final day of the dedication of the Sanctuary, "last in deed," when the ultimate intention, "first in thought," was revealed.

This concept is related to the tribe whose Nasi offered his sacrifices on this day, the tribe of Naftali. Rashi explains that the name Naftali is associated with the concept of connection, which is related to the service of prayer. Prayer reflects the service of ascent from the lower realms upward. A person prays to G-d in concern over his material needs. This, in turn, brings about a new revelation from above. This service of elevation from below reflects the concept of "last in deed" described above.

This concept is also related to the service of the tribe whose Nasi offered sacrifices on the previous day, the eleventh of Nissan, the tribe of Asher.

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178. The question arises: With which tribe and which prince are converts associated? This question was relevant at that time as well because a multitude of people, the *erav rav*, left Egypt together with the Jews. Indeed, the commentaries explain that their number exceeded that of the Jews themselves.

179. Nasi has the meaning "lift up." This

interpretation develops another aspect of the connection between the *N'siim* and a month of "miracles of a miraculous nature" for a miracle lifts one above the natural order.

180. This concept is also brought out by the reading recited tomorrow which describes the kindling of the Menorah. The seven branches of the Menorah reflect the seven categories of Jewish

souls. They are united as one single entity as reflected by the fact that the Menorah was made from one single block of metal and that its lights all faced the center light. From the Menorah, "light went out to the entire world." Through this light, the world will be transformed into a dwelling for G-d as will be revealed in the Messianic age.

The service of Asher relates to the attribute of pleasure as implied by the blessing given to him, "he will provide the delicacies of the king." The attribute of pleasure relates to the dimension of yechida, the essence of the soul.

The Midrash explains that Asher relates to the "happiness of Israel," which comes because, "they chose the Holy One, blessed be He, as their G-d." This attribute is reflected in the date on which the sacrifices were brought, the eleventh of Nissan. Eleven is associated with a quality which transcends the ten s'firo, the level of "You are one, but not in a numerical sense," which is reflected in the level of yechida.

This service leads to the twelfth of Nissan, the day on which the essential connection between G-d and the Jews is revealed through the service of "last in deed" described above. This service reveals the level of "first in thought," the source of the Jewish souls, the quality of Asher, expressing it in a manifest manner on the worldly plane.[181]

This leads to the service of the thirteenth of Nissan. 13 is numerically equivalent to the Hebrew word "echad," meaning one. As mentioned, on the thirteenth of Nissan, we read the passage describing the Menorah whose light revealed G-d's oneness throughout the world.

The concept of "Last in deed, first in thought" is intrinsically related to the Messianic redemption. The time of the revelation, the end of times, is hidden and sealed and will not be revealed until the redemption actually comes. Since the nature of the redemption itself transcends the concept of revelation as the Rambam writes, "In that age, the Jews will... know hidden matters," therefore, the time for the revelation is also hidden.

The nature of the redemption is concealed not only from humans, but from G-d, Himself, as it were. The Midrash describes the nature of the redemption as follows, "to My heart, I have revealed it, but to My limbs, I have not revealed it;" i.e., the concept of redemption is above revelation even for G-d, Himself. Thus, the coming of Moshiach represents the level of "first in thought," an essential level which is above revelation. This level will be revealed in a manifest manner by the service of "last in deed," our service of refining the world in the period of the exile.

The fact that, in the Messianic era, the matters which are, by nature hidden, will be revealed, indicates that the dimension of G-dliness which is expressed transcends, not only the revealed levels, but those which are hidden. A level which is hidden, by nature, will never come into revelation. Thus, the revelation of concealment in the Messianic age reflects the influence of G-d's essence which stands above all concept of concealment and revelation.

This concept is also relevant to the time of the Messianic redemption. On one hand, there is a time, hidden and concealed, for the redemption. Nevertheless, the Torah commands us to wait for Moshiach at every moment. At any time, Moshiach can be expected to come.

The resolution to this apparent contradiction is related to the concepts described above. Just as G-d's essence transcends both concealment and revelation and fuses them both together, similarly, it transcends the entire concept of time and can fuse past, present, and future together.

To explain the above in simple terms that can be applied in our behavior: There is a difference in the way a person relates to an event which

he knows will take place at a certain specific time in the future and the way he relates to a future event whose time is unknown. When the event has a specific time, the person does not begin to prepare for it until its time approaches. In contrast, if there is no specific time set for the future event, there is a possibility that it will occur any moment. Therefore, a person lives in constant awareness of it and thus, the future has a powerful effect on his present behavior.

This concept can be applied in regard to the time for the Messianic redemption. If the time for the Messianic redemption was revealed, then, the concept would not be relevant at present. In contrast, since the time for Moshiach's coming is not revealed and yet, it is known that at any moment he may come, every moment of our lives is lived in anticipation of his coming.

The anticipation of Moshiach's coming fuses together the exile and the redemption. Considering Moshiach's coming as an imminent reality, grants one an awareness of the redemption in the midst of exile.[182]

This concept is particularly relevant in the present age, the last generation of exile. Now is the time of "last in deed" in regard to our service in exile. We have completed the service of spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward. To refer to the Previous Rebbe's expression, "we have already polished the buttons and are standing prepared to greet Moshiach."

The above is enhanced by the influence of the present year, the fortieth year after the Previous Rebbe's passing. This grants each of us the potential to "attain [full grasp] of our teacher's knowledge." [183] Added potential is granted by the fact that this is "a year of miracles," and that Nissan,

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181. The date, the twelfth of Nissan, also reflects this concept since 12 is numerically equivalent to the word "zeh." The term zeh, this, is used only

when referring to an object which one can point to and say, "This is it."

182. This is reflected in the Hebrew words for "exile" and "redemption." By adding

an Alef, representative of G-d, "L-rd of the world," the Hebrew for "exile" (gola) is transformed into "geula," redemption.

the present month, is associated by our Sages with, “miracles of a truly miraculous nature.”

Each one of us has been charged with the mission of hastening Moshiach’s coming by anxiously awaiting him and by preparing the world for his coming. Having reached the “last in deed,” the completion of the service of the N’siim, we are awaiting the “first in thought,” i.e., the revelation of G-d’s true and ultimate intent for the world, the Messianic redemption.

2. The above can also be connected with the chapter in Psalms, Psalm 89, whose recitation – based on the custom revealed by the Baal Shem Tov of reciting the Psalm associated with the number of years of one’s life – was begun on Yud-Alef Nissan.

The final verses of the chapter refer to “those who scorn the footsteps of Your Moshiach.” This reflects the service of “last in deed,” the refinement of the lowest of all possible of levels. Nevertheless, it is through this service of refinement that we proceed to the Psalm’s concluding verse, “May G-d be blessed forever. Amen and Amen.” On this verse, the Ibn Ezra comments, “Through Divine inspiration, the Psalmist saw the coming of the Moshiach and, therefore, expressed thanks to G-d.”

This verse also indicates the service necessary to bring the redemption. The Hebrew word “olam,” translated as “forever,” can also be rendered “to the world.”[184] The word “boruch” translated as “blessed” also has the meaning “extended.” Thus, the verse

implies that the revelation of G-dliness will be extended until it is revealed within the context of our world, within even the deepest darkness of exile.

The potential to carry out this service is generated from the fact that this Psalm is “A composition of Eitan HaEzrachi.” Chassidic thought explains that Eitan refers to the essence of the soul as it clings to G-d’s essence, the

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dimension of the soul which is a “part of G-d from Above.”

This dimension of soul is described as HaEzrachi, “the native born,” i.e., the innate G-dly potential present in every individual which reflects the level of “first in thought” described above. In our service, the level of Eitan refers to the power of the soul as expressed in mesirus nefesh, self-sacrifice.[185]

Maskil, the Hebrew word translated as “composition,” also refers to our essential potential for intellect which influences all our potentials.

Thus, we can understand the relation between the conclusion and the beginning of this Psalm. The potential to carry out the service of refinement in the darkness of exile, confronting “those who scorn the footsteps of Your Moshiach,” comes from the essential connection alluded to in the words, “Eitan HaEzrachi.” This quality generates the potential for mesirus nefesh which is necessary to carry out the service of “last in deed” in these final days of exile. Ultimately, this service will lead to the coming of the Moshiach.[186]

3. The above is also reflected in this week’s Torah portion, Parshas Tzav. Our Sages associate Tzav with the concept of eagerness and zealousness. Based on the principle that G-d also fulfills Torah and mitzvos – indeed, “He tells His words to Yaakov,” i.e., what He does, He commands us to do – He will surely be eager and zealous in bringing the Messianic redemption. Then, we will be able to carry out the sacrificial services described in this Torah portion in the third Beis HaMikdash.

[Throughout all the years of exile, our people have carried out the sacrificial services within “the altar in their hearts.” Surely, after so many years, G-d will grant them the potential to actually carry out these services in the Beis HaMikdash.]

The connection between this portion and the Messianic age is brought out by the Or HaChaim who

183. In particular, the number forty is intrinsically connected to the Messianic redemption. The Talmud states that, “the Messianic era will last for forty years.” (Significantly, this reference is in the same Talmudic portion (Sanhedrin 99a) which states that the time for Moshiach’s coming is hidden and not revealed even by G-d, as it were.)

184. The Hebrew word “olam,” translated as “world,” also relates to the word

“helam,” meaning “concealment.” G-d’s light is concealed within our world.

185. Eitan is also interpreted as a reference to the patriarch, Avrohom, for he opened the potential of mesirus nefesh for our entire people.

This potential also relates to the fusion of past, present, and future described above. The concept that this is an innate potential reflects the past.

Nevertheless Chassidus also interprets Eitan as referring to the future, reflecting the essence of the soul which will be revealed in the Messianic age. Moreover, even in the present, this potential is revealed within every Jew.

186. Significantly, this Psalm also contains many references to G-d’s choice of David and the establishment of an eternal covenant with him.

explains the verse in the opening passage of the portion, "the entire night until the morning" as follows:

Until when will Israel be in [exile]?... "The entire night" is a reference to the time of exile.... "Until morning" refers to the time when He will reveal His glory to us and then dawn will come.... This will be after 500 years of the sixth millennium have passed, the shining of the light of the sixth day, Moshiach will come. G-d's day is 1000 years long. The first five hundred years represent the night and the next five hundred years, the day.

The Or HaChaim's statements surely apply at present when 250 years have passed since that time, i.e., it is already passed midday.[187] Surely, Moshiach's coming is very imminent.

From Parshas Tzav, we proceed to

Parshas Shmini[188] which describes the revelation of the Divine Presence in the Sanctuary. May we merit the complete and all-encompassing revelation of the Divine Presence which will be in the Third Beis HaMikdash.

"Deed is most essential." Since, as explained above, Moshiach's coming is imminent, we must increase our efforts in the activities which demonstrate how our anticipation of Moshiach's coming effects our behavior and shows how we are prepared for the redemption.

In particular, this involves: a) an increase in the study of P'nimius HaTorah, spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward, for this will bring Moshiach. Added emphasis on this comes through the influence of the Tzemach Tzedek's yahrtzait tomorrow.

The Tzemach Tzedek's teachings reveal the fusion of nigleh (the teachings of Torah law) and P'nimius HaTorah (Chassidus) which will bring about Moshiach's coming. Surely, this day will be used for the study of the Tzemach Tzedek's[189] teachings, preferably at least three times throughout the day. b) An increase in tz'daka, particularly the tz'daka necessary to provide people with their Pesach needs.

May these efforts bring about that, on the Seder night, we are "all reclining," together with all four sons, the entire Jewish people, in Eretz Yisroel, in Jerusalem, and in the Beis HaMikdash, where "we will partake of the sacrifices and the Paschal offerings, and acknowledge You with a new song for our redemption and for the liberation of our souls."

187. Furthermore, there are some opinions which consider the thousand year period as referring only to the daytime hours. According to those views, we are

already past the mid-afternoon.

188. Shmini means "eighth." Our Sages have associated the number eight with the Messianic age.

189. The two names, Tzemach and Tzedek, are both names for Moshiach, further emphasizing the connection with Moshiach's coming.

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**LL.B. Fax: (416) 663-2348**

**E-mail: [bedson@bergeledson.com](mailto:bedson@bergeledson.com)**

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B"H 16th of Adar, 5764

## **MO'OS CHITIM**

To All Anash and Temimim שי

Sholom U'vrocho!

Throughout the years, during the Rebbe's Purim Farbrengen ("Thirty days before the Chag (Pesach)"), the Rebbe would customarily remind and urge everyone concerning the importance of contributing Tzedakah for "Mo'os Chitim."

It is well known that "Kupas Rabbeinu" endeavors to continue implementing all of the holy projects and activities which the Rebbe has established. Amongst these activities is the Rebbe's practice to extend financial aid to those families in need of their various Pesach necessities.

Accordingly, we are at this time urging and requesting each and every Anash member and Tomim שיחי to **contribute generously** to "Kupas Rabbeinu," in order to enable the administration to provide for these families and thus afford them with the opportunity to celebrate Pesach with contentment and joy.

Regarding this Mitzvah it is stated: "Whoever increases (in giving) is praiseworthy."

Unfortunately, the amount of families in need of this financial assistance **is more than generally assumed**. As such, the more generous your contribution to "Kupas Rabbeinu," the greater the number of families receiving assistance will be.

And since, with regard to all Mitzvahs we are instructed to act with Simcha and zest, it is all the more pertinent with regard to the aforementioned, as it is of paramount importance that the funds be received and distributed as soon as possible.

In the merit of Tzedakah which hastens the Geula, may we merit the true Geula Shlaimah, with the revelation of Melech HaMashiach - The Rebbe Nasi Doreinu, immediately, Mamash.

Chag HaPesach Kosher V'Sameach

*Vaad Kupas Rabbeinu*

P.S. 1) The traditional "**Magvis Yud Shevat, Purim**" can also be sent at this time, as well as all other Magvios.

2) All funds should be sent to the following address only; Donations are tax deductible

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KIRYAT MALACHI - ISRAEL

# WRITING TO THE REBBE

*In honor of the Rebbe's 102nd birthday on Yud-Alef Nissan, we present a compilation of sichos, letters, and stories about the importance of writing to the Nasi HaDor.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING

### HISKASHRUS TO THE HEAD

In simple terms: Every single Jew, with all his good qualities and his avoda, must be connected to the "extension of Moshe" – "Rebbe" – for through him, he becomes connected with Hashem his G-d. As it is explained in the revealed part of Torah, in the Mechilta on the pasuk, "and they had faith in Hashem and in Moshe, His servant," if one has faith in Moshe, His servant, it is considered as though he has faith in G-d." Furthermore, all matters pertaining to every single Jew, whether material or spiritual, are dependent on the Nasi. This is not just something stated in kabbala and chassidus; it is explicit in the Gemara: "One who has an ill person at home, should go to the sage and ask for mercy for him." That is, it is not enough that the "person who is ill" – both bodily and in his neshama, as he still lacks the

perfection in his service to his Maker – (or a member of his household) seek mercy for his own healing (for his physical or spiritual illness); rather, he needs the prayer of the "sage," and this is what effects, "and he will return and be healed."

*(Likkutei Sichos, vol. 11 p. 173)*

\* \* \*

The inyan of kabbalas ol is especially emphasized in the relationship between a chassid and Rebbe, for knowing that he is but the "foot," and the Rebbe is the "head," he is totally devoted to the Rebbe, and fulfills the Rebbe's directives with utter kabbalas ol.

There is an apparent question here: How is it possible to say that he himself does not have a head, when the Torah commands him to put on the t'fillin shel rosh? He must have a head, too!

The answer is as the Rebbe, my father-in-law, explains in a sicha about the inyan of the kabbalas ol of a soldier: The soldier has no head.

They used to say that a soldier's head is only needed to support his rifle strap.

This also pertains to writing a pidyon to the Rebbe.

By way of introduction: A certain meshulach, a fool, when he would be given a pidyon to give to the Rebbe, would refuse to take it, saying that you have to ask Hashem directly, and not intermediaries.

The truth is, as is brought in a responsum of the Chasam Sofer (it should be noted that in the s'farim of the Chasam Sofer we find chassidic concepts, for the Chasam Sofer was the close disciple of Rabbi Nosson Adler, who was the close disciple of the Baal Haflaa, the disciple of the Maggid), that there is a difference between angels and souls [with respect to the concept of intervention]. Namely, that a request made through the intervention of angels is considered using intermediaries, while a request made through neshamos (Jewish people), which are above angels, is not considered asking through an intermediary, since: "All of the Jewish people are partners, one body and one soul. When a person is in pain, his friend senses it and feels the pain vicariously... Since both of them are in pain, it would be better for the head to enter (and seek



*When he thinks that he too has a head, and this is how he comes to the Rebbe to give a pidyon, then the question about an intermediary arises...*

mercy) than the foot – the Torah scholar being the head, etc.”

This is especially so with regard to the N’siim of the Jewish people, who are the “heads of thousands of Israel” ...

From this we understand that the principle, “the prayer of the ill person for himself is preferable to the prayers of others for him,” does not apply here. For this principle refers to “others,” and Jewish leaders are not “others” but “heads of thousands of Israel,” and their prayer is as efficacious as “the prayer of the ill person for himself,” just as the head prays for the foot.

In fact, the prayer of Jewish leaders is better than the prayer of the ill man, because the Nasi, who is the head, feels the sickness more than the ill person. This is because, 1) the head is above the foot in that it is the repository of the intellect, 2) the fact that the foot feels the illness is only because of nerves that extend from the brain, since all sensations are derived specifically from the brain.

However, all this is when one knows that he is the foot and is totally devoted to the head, the Rebbe. But when he thinks that he too has a head, and this is how he comes to the Rebbe to give a pidyon, then the question about an intermediary arises. When it comes to asking the Rebbe for advice – well, you can get advice from any Jew. But when it comes to giving a pidyon, the question arises about an intermediary.

*(Toras Menachem vol. 4, p. 31-2)*

### **THE MITZVA OF AHAVAS YISROEL**

Thank you for writing about the farbrengen that took place during the auspicious days that we just had. Certainly in the future you will conduct yourself with this fine



custom.

This too is part of G-d's commandment, which is a great principle in the Torah, of loving your fellow as yourself, to give inner nachas ruach to a Jew. Among the many letters received, as of now there are few letters among them that provide nachas ruach, which makes every such letter precious.

May it be that this farbrengen, as well as those in the future, also lead to good actions in addition to their inherent value, for although this too is beyond explaining, still greater is action, as the Mishna states, "action is the main thing."

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 13, p. 164)*

### CAUSES SIMCHA

Certainly when he has good news in this matter he will not refrain from informing me. As this is one of the details of the basic mitzva of loving your friend as yourself, to cause simcha to a Jew. For if in all eras we yearned for this. All the more so in our times with its manifold hardships and great suffering, wherein every matter of goodness and happiness is especially precious.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 14, p. 422)*

### THE ACT OF WRITING IS EFFECTIVE

In this matter (overcoming the descent), each person should not go his own way. Rather he should come and ask the Rebbe, Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation, and according to his instructions he should be strengthened and aspire towards the ascent that will come after and as a result of the descent.

Furthermore, even when the Rebbe doesn't explicitly tell us what to do – whether it's because this is something the Rebbe cannot instruct him since it's a matter of "one who comes to consult, you don't instruct

him," or because the Rebbe wants him to do things on his own – by asking the Rebbe and giving oneself over to him, he will know and understand the Rebbe's views even in those things that the Rebbe did not say explicitly.

As we find regarding a pidyon nefesh: It is known by chassidim that when you write a pidyon and send it to the Rebbe, it has its effect even before the pidyon is [physically] received by the Rebbe, and before anyone has seen it. A chassid has to do what he has to do, to give himself over to the Rebbe and rely on him, and when

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he does his part, and from his end there are no obstacles, then the matter is already taken care of by the Rebbe.

*(Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 237)*

### WRITING NEGATES NEGATIVE THINGS

I've already written to some individuals of Anash that if they made the effort and eventually grow accustomed to writing letters with good news, then surely from time to time this would exempt them from encountering various bizarre circumstances which result in letter

writing.

Being that we don't know everything, perhaps the whole matter occurred in order for two Jews to connect once again, in a way of bringing hearts close together, something that causes nachas ruach up Above, as is understood from what is explained in *Likkutei Torah*, section beginning with "Heichaltzu," and in *Derech Mitzvosecha*, the Mitzva of Ahavas Yisroel, etc.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 12, p. 174)*

\* \* \*

I think I already told you or wrote you once that *halevai* Anash become accustomed to inform me when they have good news, for by doing so they would diminish up Above the need for writing about negative things, even though that even in the time of the Alter Rebbe they complained about the silence regarding good news, etc.

But in matters such as these, [past behavior] does not make permissible or even allow the illusion of permissibility to the next generation, since even then our Rebbeim strongly protested against this practice.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 52)*

### "TZAROS-CHASSIDIM"

As the Rebbe, my father-in-law, put it, there are "tzaros-chassidim," who don't come [to the Rebbe] when they have it good. When they are assigned a shlichus in spreading the wellsprings, they disappear, etc., and only when they find themselves in some difficulty, Heaven forbid, do they come with demands, etc., that they need a miracle.

*(Likkutei Sichos, vol. 11, p. 174)*

### ENCOURAGING JEWS TO WRITE TO THE REBBE

Perhaps there is room to say, after your lectures, that those who want can correspond with me to



clarify their quandaries, etc. Obviously, it's up to you to guarantee that this is not the place for raising funds, etc.

It is also obvious that this needs to be done by your own volition and not as a shlichus from here. Simply mention that you know of a number of people who do this, and even if sometimes an answer is delayed, one receives an answer. If you see fit, give a *Tanya* to those who excel in some matter of Judaism, etc., among the soldiers, in addition to giving a *Tanya* to the clubs in the camp or

the military library, if there are institutions such as these in a suitable location.

*(Igros Kodesh, vol. 10, p. 62)*

## THE ADVANTAGE OF WRITING LEADS TO INCREASE

You should also try to write good news from every place you visit, and the desire to convey good news will encourage and hasten you to find additional opportunities to do so.

## AN ACTUAL INCREASE

It is surprising that you are so brief – to the point of saying nothing – regarding the activities of Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, especially in spreading the wellsprings. May it be the case that this is merely a deficiency in the writing but not in the activities. Although I have already written that one sees that knowing that you will eventually write, leads to an increase in the activities, whether in quantity or quality, or both. May you convey good news in this.

*(Igros Kodesh, vol. 10, p. 368)*

\* \* \*

It is surprising that throughout this time there were no letters from you. You know the p'sak of our holy Torah that each day has its work that must be done. And when you know that you must inform someone about this, it increases your energy and efforts to increase the activities, as our Sages write, if Reuven knew, etc. [that is, if Reuven knew, if Boaz knew...what the Torah would write about their good deed, they would have done even more]. Even in this letter you are extremely brief.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 32)*

It is surprising that you don't inform me at all about these activities. One sees clearly that the policy of being modest in these matters, leads to a decrease in activities. And even if you want to say that this is good for a person's own avoda since it diminishes the concerns of personal egotism, what significance does this have – as opposed to the benefit that one can bring to many by spreading the wellsprings... One can say that regarding this it says: don't be overly righteous.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 353)*

\* \* \*

Obviously, the main thing is not to tell me what was done but to actually do it. Still and all, human nature is such that when you know ahead of time that you will report to others, this also spurs them on to do things with increased effort, energy, and courage. Additionally, when you report good news you make others happy, and fulfill thereby the mitzva of loving your fellow as yourself, which is a great principle of the Torah.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 476)*

## CORRESPONDENCE IS NOT A BURDEN FOR ME

Certainly those sh'luchim are correct that the letters are not a burden for me, and if only we merit, amongst all Jews, that the contents

of the letters to one another are happy, both materially and spiritually, and with visible and open good.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 49)*

## HOW TO WRITE

### DETAILS

It is surprising that you don't write in more detail about the dissemination of the s'farim. It is explained in a number of places in chassidus, and we see ourselves, that when you write in general terms, it doesn't increase one's energy in the activities. Since describing a situation in general terms doesn't demand a change in the description, even if the activities increase a number of times over, or the opposite, if they decrease a number

of times over. But when you know ahead of time, that in a little while you will write in detail...that x number of copies of this book were sold, and x number of copies of that book, it changes the approach from the start.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 14, p. 36)*

### WRITING OFTEN

After a long break, I received your letter – without a date – in which you write the highlights of what is happening with you. The long break between letters is surprising, and if the reason is that you have nothing to report, then that is even more surprising. For we know the command that each day has its work to be done, especially in our times, the generation of the “heels of Moshiach,” when the

## EVEN THE ROUGH DRAFT – AFTER MIKVA

The chassid, R' Ben-Tzion Raskin was very mekushar to the Rebbe Rashab, and he wrote a letter to the Rebbe every Erev Shabbos. It happened that the Rebbe did not receive a letter from him for a few weeks. When he came to the Rebbe, the Rebbe asked him why he hadn't received letters for a few weeks. R' Ben-Tzion said that he had been in a place that did not have a mikva, and that is why he did not write.

The Rebbe Rashab said: “Even a pidyon that was copied from a pidyon that was written before one went to the mikva is difficult for me to read.”

In other words, even the rough draft should be written after one goes to the mikva.

*(K'far Chabad)*

## IMMERSING BEFORE WRITING

A Tamim wrote a letter to the Rebbe and the Rebbe asked Rabbi Chadakov to ask the bachur when he had last gone to the mikva before writing the letter. It turned out that the bachur hadn't gone to the mikva in a long time.

*(From a reshima of a member of Anash – in a t'shura)*

Someone from Eretz Yisroel wrote to the Rebbe and the Rebbe wrote back to him that he mentions all names in the letters at the gravesite, and therefore, from now on, he should go to the mikva before writing a letter...

*(ibid)*

wellsprings must be spread outward. And if everybody is supposed to be involved in this, all the more so a Tamim and a Bas-Tamim.

And if you say there are hindrances, etc., it has already been explained in chassidus that every hindrance is there to be vanquished and overcome, and not to actually stop you.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 471)*

## THE CONTENTS

### DAILY LIFE

Bracha V'shalom,

Once again, a long time has passed without my receiving any letters or reports. Chassidim have been accustomed, even in previous generations, that when things go well they don't write, and even though the Alter Rebbe complained about this, as we see from the generations that followed, his complaint was ineffective and the custom remains.

I truly wanted to interpret your silence in this way, yet since I can find out, I won't rely on what has become a prevalent practice, and would appreciate your writing both about yourself and your husband, as well as your mother, the rebbetzin. May you have only good news to impart in your letters.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 21, p. 247-8)*

### EMPHASIS ON HIDDEN MATTERS

A person who attended the Rebbe, my father-in-law's, seider, once said – after Shulchan Aruch when it came time for Tzafun [eating the Afikomen] – that it was time to bentch already. Hearing this, the Rebbe said: "You have to look in the siddur and then you know where you are up to."

This line is applicable to all: When it comes to "Tzafun" – hidden

matters – a person cannot rely on himself; he must ask the Rebbe (which is what is meant by looking into a siddur). And even if you think you know, because you heard a number of directives already, you should always ask the Rebbe.

Even regarding open matters it is better if you ask the Rebbe, but when it comes to hidden matters (Tzafun) – you must ask the Rebbe.

*(Leil 2 of Pesach 5711)*

### IMPARTING GOOD NEWS

If you relate matters that do not cause nachas ruach (because you must, yet you still inform), all the more so should you report those things which cause nachas ruach, as it is known (and notwithstanding the fact) that the Alter Rebbe complained about the opposite way of doing things.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 18, p. 416)*

### ALSO ABOUT UNDESIRABLE MATTERS

In response to your letter of 19 Teives in which you write the consideration that there are those who wonder whether they need to write about negative things, and that there were heated debates about this.

Doubts in this matter are very surprising since I wrote a number of times about this, especially after informing them that this information ends up coming from others on the side, and therefore they exaggerate, etc., and the results are the opposite of what those who incline to not writing had intended.

I am mainly surprised because we have received a clear instruction from our holy Rebbeim to measure considerations like these, to know the source from where they come, if there's a doubt in this (printed in the *HaYom Yom* of 23 Sivan). [One must see] if it will increase or diminish in matters that assist one to act and do



*As the Rebbe, my father-in-law, put it, there are "tzaros-chassidim," who don't come [to the Rebbe] when they have it good. When they are assigned a shlichus in spreading the wellsprings, they disappear, etc., and only when they find themselves in some difficulty, Heaven forbid, do they come with demands, etc., that they need a miracle.*

actual avoda. There is **no doubt** that when one knows that they are not reporting the negative matters it will not lead to a diminishing of the negative matters, but the opposite.

As the Sages clearly state, “If only your fear of Heaven was like your fear of human beings.” May it be that such writing be less and less, though not because of the **inappropriate** reasoning, but because the undesirable matters and their causes decrease until they no longer exist, as it says in *Igeres HaKodesh* at the end of chapter 26: They should write detailed letters, not as part of the birurim process, but in a way of increasing the lights, etc.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 18, p. 161-2)*

## SAYING IT THE WAY IT IS

Obviously, there is no reason to apologize about the contents of previous letters. As I wrote a number of times and to a number of Anash, that saying it the way it is, without cosmetics, even if the situation is not the way it should be, and therefore the contents of the report are in accordance with this, not only do you not need to apologize for reports like these, but obviously, you should not conceal things as they really are.

As you know the practice in this regard of chassidim and Anash in previous generations, especially in our generation, an orphaned generation – that in addition to the reasons up until now, there is also the matter of ultimately being informed about unsatisfactory matters by those who as of now are not friends and thus do not refrain from exaggeration and additions. From this it is understood that if this were preceded by having been informed by beloved ones and friends, this would prevent additional distress. There is no need to go on at length about something obvious. This is obviously also

intended for the rest of Anash in your holy camp.

*(Igras Kodesh vol. 14, p. 368)*

## REPORTING AN IMPROVEMENT

Thank you for the good news about the improvement in the health of... It is surprising that he himself did not report about this, as this is one of the ways of fulfilling the mitzva of loving your fellow as yourself, by making Jews rejoice with good news, especially when he reported about the condition before the treatment... Apparently the saying of the Alter Rebbe that loving your fellow as yourself is the vessel, and is also one with loving Hashem your G-d, has not yet penetrated all

circles.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 358)*

## REPORTING SIMCHOS

It is pleasant for me to know you, at least in writing, and to receive the happy tidings about your upcoming marriage. All of Israel is like one structure, and the joy of each Jew is the joy of everybody. Especially when chassidus greatly emphasizes ahavas Yisroel, to the extent that ahavas Yisroel, ahavas ha'Torah, and ahavas Hashem are all one.

Especially regarding the simcha of a wedding, which is something that affects generations, as the wording of the accepted and holy blessing, “an everlasting edifice.” The

## DOING, IN ORDER TO FILL OUT A REPORT – IS NOT THE POINT

Rabbi Groner relates: The Rebbe once said to me, “They write me a *duch* (report), and they do things just in order to be able to write it down and send in a *duch*. The...write me a *duch*, why? Since they know they have to send me a *duch*, they have to do something so they'll have something to write. They do things in order to fill out a *duch*, and this is not what is intended! They are not supposed to do in order to write a *duch*, but they are supposed to write a *duch* because they did something!”

## THE REBBE'S HEALTH

Rabbi Groner also relates: In 5706, the Rebbe Rayatz sent us to Chicago, where there was a rosh yeshiva by the name of Rabbi Hershberg (who later became the Chief Rabbi of Mexico). He was a talmid of the Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin. We left for Chicago the day after Simchas Torah, and after Pesach Rabbi Hershberg told us he was going to the Rebbe, and we asked him to give the Rebbe our regards.

He spent two weeks in New York, and when he returned he said, “Yungeleit, I want to tell you something, but we need a chassidishe *farbrengen*. Bring some *mashke* and I'll tell you.”

This is what he told us: I went to the Rebbe and said, “Lubavitcher Rebbe, how do you feel? How's your health?”

And the Rebbe answered, “When I get news that a Jew put on *t'fillin*, that a Jew keeps Shabbos, my health improves and this is my health. If you can tell me that a Jew put on *t'fillin* and kept Shabbos, this is my health. If the *bachurim* learn well, this is my health.”

*(Kfar Chabad, issue #900)*

point here is also with respect to the analogy of a building, where the main thing is that the foundation be strong, and passersby's opinions don't matter, etc. The foundation of a Jewish home which guarantees that it will be an everlasting edifice is Torah and mitzvos, for the happiness of a Jew is dependent on them – not only spiritually but materially, too. For the Torah is the Torah of Life – literally too, in this physical world.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 14, p. 493)*

### HE WILL FIND A WAY TO RESPOND

You ask about not being able to ask the Rebbe, my father-in-law, when you have a question about what to do – if you strongly maintain your connection to him, without paying attention to the enticements of the Inclination, and you send your question to the gravesite of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, the Rebbe will find a way to answer you.

*(Igras Kodesh, vol. 3, p. 266)*

### NO NEED TO GIVE AN ADDRESS

Regarding the wording of the pidyon that you give to the Rebbe – if I was able to, I would abolish the wording that they write, “from the source of mercy, etc., as per [the prayer] *machnisei rachamim* as explained in the response of Mahari Bruna, z”l.” The reasons being because:

1) This reference is the explanation of why it is permissible to give a pidyon to the Rebbe (when he may seem to be an intermediary) based on what is explained in the response of Mahari Bruna, z”l, regarding the saying of *machnisei rachamim* [a request to the angels of mercy]. This does not relate or apply to the wording of a pidyon, whose substance is a request for mercy

(“please arouse great mercies”), and not the explanation of the permissibility of this request.

2) Regarding the wording “the source of mercy” – there is no need to give the Rebbe an address from where to arouse mercy. He knows himself from where to arouse mercy ... and perhaps he wants to arouse mercy from a higher level than “the source of mercy.”

3) The Rebbe, my father-in-law, used this wording. It is his custom, and this is no proof that we too, who do not understand “Rebbishe” things, should write like this.

*(Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 40)*

### TO BE COMPLETELY UNIFIED

Your letter arrived in its time, and I was very, very happy about what it said. Thank you for it. I will repeat that your words were a pleasure and revived my soul, for it is very, very precious to me the love and the *hiskashrus* of Anash in particular and G-d-fearing Jews in general. If only those who love me and those who are my friends, would know how great is the pleasure when they write about how they and their families are, they would write more often.

It is true that my time is devoted to unceasing work (may Hashem strengthen my health among that of all of our brethren, and make me successful materially and spiritually). [And yet] brotherly love is one of the crowns that goes above the rest, so until Hashem grants me the merit of meeting in the satiety of joyous occasions, we must maintain utter unity at least through writing. For this is love and true *hiskashrus*, location is no barrier, and so too with time – that at every moment one needs to be connected in thought.

*(a letter from the Rebbe Rayatz)*



*Your words were a pleasure and revived my soul, for it is very, very precious to me the love and the *hiskashrus* of Anash in particular and G-d-fearing Jews in general. If only those who love me and those who are my friends, would know how great is the pleasure when they write about how they and their families are, they would write more often.*

# THE MIGHTY GAON RABBI SHLOMO ZALMAN AURBACH

Part 2 of 2.

*From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha*

BY RABBI SHALOM DOVER HA'LEVI WOLPO  
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



(Continued from last week.)

## WE ARE EXTREMELY SMALL PEOPLE

Rabbi Yehuda Levy (son of Rabbi Yehoshua Levy, director of *HaMerkaz HaArtzi L'Maan Taharas HaMishpacha B'Yisrael*) relates the following story:

"I once left Eretz Yisroel to meet with a certain wealthy man from abroad, who I hoped would help us with the building of a women's mikveh. This was during 5749 (1988-89), when there were strong tensions between the various *chareidi* factions in Eretz Yisroel. When I told this man that Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Aurbach was the head of the *Merkaz*, he said, 'In that case, I don't want to give a donation because I heard he spoke against the Lubavitcher Rebbe.'

"I was shocked at his words, and I told him that it's not true, and that as one who knows the *gaon* quite well, I guarantee him that the reverse is true – he admires and respects the Rebbe very much, and this is a well known fact. When I saw that he was not satisfied with my words, I said that during his visit to Eretz Yisroel I would take him to Rabbi Shlomo Zalman to hear it from the *gaon* himself.

"When the man arrived in the Holy Land, I took him to Rabbi Aurbach *zatzal*, and the *gaon* said as follows: 'You should know, we are extremely small people. How can it enter your mind that I would dare say

*Rabbi Shlomo Zalman responded, "The Rebbe's shlichus mitzva should not be pushed off." They then approached the yichud room, and asked me to give the dollar to the gaon right away.*

anything against such an enormous *gaon*, who is a leader of tens of thousands of Jews, and who disseminates Torah throughout the entire world!?"

"When the man heard these

words, he immediately decided to give a donation that far exceeded the amount we had originally discussed."

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE ESOTERIC

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman's nephew (his sister's son), Rabbi Avraham Yosef Leizeron, deputy director of *Chinuch Atzmai*, relates the following in the newspaper *Hamachneh Hachareidi* (21 Adar II 5755 / March 23 1995):

"Twenty-one years ago, I visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and he asked me why the manuscripts of my grandfather (the *gaon* Rabbi Chaim Yehuda Leib Aurbach *zatzal*) on Kabbala were not being published. After all, said the Rebbe, his son (Rabbi Shlomo Zalman) is renowned as an immense *gaon* in the revealed dimension of Torah, and without a doubt, is knowledgeable also in the Torah's esoteric dimension."

## AN EVERYDAY THING

The *gaon* and chassid Rabbi Shabsai Slavtitzky of Antwerp relates the following episode:

"When I was learning in the Kol Torah yeshiva in Yerushalayim (about twenty-five years ago), there was one

student who, *rachmana litzlan*, always ridiculed Lubavitch and the Rebbe. It once happened that Rabbi Shlomo Zalman overheard the mockery, and it hurt him very much. He said to the student, 'I want to tell you a story.' This is the story he told him:

'Back in the years when my father, the *gaon* Rabbi Chaim Yehuda Leib served as a *rav*, he was visited late one night, very suddenly, by a woman crying hysterically. "Rebbe, Rebbe, help me! My daughter is in labor right now, and she's having problems delivering the baby. She's in life-threatening danger and the doctors want to do surgery. I am asking you whether they should do this, and I want you to pray for my daughter, Rebbe."

'When my father *zatzal* – who was a very compassionate person by nature – heard these words and saw her great distress, he automatically said, "Tell your daughter not to have the surgery done. Instead, she must trust Hashem to help her give birth with ease and without complication." The woman left the *beis midrash* in relief, and ran to the hospital to tell the doctors not to perform surgery.

'But after she left, my father *zatzal* begin to reconsider his reaction, and he realized that he hadn't given the matter proper thought before giving the woman advice that could prove to be dangerous – after all, his advice ran contrary to the doctors' advice. He began to look for the woman, in order to tell her that since the doctors thought her daughter might be in danger, perhaps the surgery *should* be performed; but to his great distress, he could not find her. He went home, awakened the entire family, and instructed all of us to recite T'hillim the entire night. Never did I see my father *zatzal* cry like he cried that night. The next day, the woman came back and told my father, 'Thank you very much, honorable *rav*. In the merit of your advice and blessing my daughter had an easy delivery.'

'Now,' Reb Shlomo Zalman said to

the *bachur*, 'just think about it for a moment. This occurred to my father only once, and yet, he was at a total loss. To the Lubavitcher Rebbe, these things occur on a daily basis. If he is able to take upon himself this kind of responsibility on issues concerning health, and so on, with tens of thousands of Jews accepting his advice like the advice of the *Urim* and the *Tumim*, he is certainly an immense *tzaddik!*'"

(I once sent this story to *Kfar*

***I don't understand what they want – the Rama himself justifies those who do not sleep in a Sukka. So what's the big uproar? And aside from that, how is it possible to speak against a leader of tens of thousands of families in every part of the world?!"***

*Chabad Magazine*. Here I have made some emendations, after verifying and corroborating the facts.)

Rabbi Slavitzky also told me the following: "When I was learning in the yeshiva, there were some differences of opinion among the heads of the school about whether to permit the establishment of a class in *Tanya*. Some were opposed to it, but Rabbi Shlomo Zalman permitted it, provided we would avoid friction by not publicizing it excessively."

## I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WANT

As mentioned, *Rebbetzin* Aurbach was from the Ruchamkin family of Yerushalayim. Her nephew, Rabbi Avraham Ruchamkin is a respected Chabad chassid of Bnei Brak. (He is the head *gabai* of the central *shul*, Beis Menachem, on Rashi Street). He and his son, Rabbi Meir, were fortunate enough to deliver the Rebbe's blessings to Rabbi Shlomo Zalman, and the latter's blessings to the Rebbe, a number of times. Rabbi Avraham told me the following:

"During Tishrei of 5749 (September 1988), I traveled to the Rebbe. Before I left, my uncle the *gaon* asked me to give the Rebbe his warm regards and his blessing for a good year. On Hoshana Rabba, when I passed before the Rebbe to receive *lekach*, I gave the Rebbe the message. The Rebbe asked, "You are his nephew?" Then the Rebbe gave me a piece of cake for the *gaon* and said, "Length of days and good years." When I went back to Eretz Yisroel, I immediately went to visit my uncle the *gaon zatzal*. **He took the *lekach* with great excitement and trepidation – literally**, and said, "Thank you very much."

"By Divine providence, this event took place the day after the disgraceful gathering in *Binyanei HaUma*, where words were spoken against the *Nasi* and leader of the generation in connection with the matter of sleeping in a *Sukka*. As the *gaon* held the Rebbe's *lekach* in his hand, he said to me these exact words: 'This morning, I heard on the radio the words that were spoken yesterday in connection with the matter of sleeping in a *Sukka*. I don't understand what they want – the *Rama* himself justifies those who do not sleep in a *Sukka*. So what's the big uproar? And aside from that, how is it possible to speak against a leader of tens of thousands of families in every part of the world?!'"





With the Gerrer Rebbe, the Lev Simcha

## NOT TO PUSH OFF THE REBBE'S SHLICHUS MITZVA

His son, Rabbi Meir Ruchamkin, told me the following:

"In Elul 5748 (August/September 1988), I traveled to New York to learn in 770 with the Israeli *bachurim* who study in the yeshiva there. Before leaving, I went to my [great] uncle *zatzal* to bid him farewell. He asked me to convey his 'regards and blessing for a good year' to the Rebbe. When I arrived at 770, I gave over the message through Rabbi Binyamin Klein, of the Rebbe's secretariat. (The story with my father and the *lekach* happened just a few weeks later on Hoshana Rabba.)

"On Sunday, the fifteenth of Sivan, 5749 (June 18, 1989), I went back to Eretz Yisroel temporarily, to attend my sister's wedding. That morning, before I left, I asked the Rebbe for a bracha for my great-uncle, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman. The Rebbe gave me a dollar and said, 'May he lead for many long days.' A few days later, at the wedding, I gave Rabbi Shlomo Zalman the dollar. He rejoiced as though he had just found a great treasure, and asked me to give the Rebbe the following message: 'A great thank you, and may the Rebbe enjoy length of days and good years.' When I went back to New York, I approached the Rebbe on Sunday, 6 Tammuz, (July 9, 1989), and gave over the *gaon's* message. The Rebbe

asked me to repeat my uncle's message. Then he said, 'Thank you. Whoever blesses [another], becomes blessed with the blessing of G-d, which is greater than the original [blessing]. That is what the Torah says. May he lead for many, long days.' [I started to leave, but] the Rebbe called me back, and gave me a dollar for the *gaon*.

"On twenty-four Adar, 5751 (March 13, 1991), I traveled back to Eretz Yisroel for my own wedding. Before I left, I told the Rebbe that the *mesader kiddushin* would be my great-uncle Rabbi Shlomo Zalman. The Rebbe gave me a dollar, and said, "May he lead for many, long days." After the *chuppa*, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman approached my father and said, **"I heard that the *chosson* brought me a dollar from the *Admur* of Lubavitch."** My father confirmed this for him, but added that since the *chosson* and *kalla* were now in the *yichud* room, he would bring him the dollar afterwards, or the following day. Rabbi Shlomo Zalman responded, "The Rebbe's *shlichus mitzva* should not be pushed off." They then approached the *yichud* room, and asked me to give the dollar to the *gaon* right away.

Parenthetically, on the day of our *chuppa* we were delayed, and did not manage to get to Rabbi Shlomo Zalman for the *kesuba* writing while it was still daytime. The *gaon* later told

my grandfather (Rabbi Shmuel Zelig Ruchamkin, his brother-in-law) "You are not a real Chabadnik – in Chabad they are particular about writing the *kesuba* during the day."

## THE TANNA OF THE HOUSE OF THE NASI

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman's son-in-law, the *gaon* Rabbi Zalman Nechemiah Goldberg *shlita* is one of the illustrious Torah scholars of Yerushalayim, one of the great halachic authorities of our generation, the *rosh ha'kollel* of Shevet Umechokek, and head of a rabbinical court for monetary disputes. Rabbi Goldberg is a great admirer of the Rebbe and the Rebbe's greatness in Torah and holiness, and he speaks at many Lubavitch Torah gatherings.

Rabbi Goldberg sent a Torah essay for inclusion in the following Lubavitch *s'farim*: *Hadras Melech* – a collection of Torah essays published in honor of the first *Siyum HaRambam*; *Mikdash Melech* – a *seifer* published in 5746 (1988/89) in honor of the *Siyum HaRambam* in Yerushalayim; *Kevod Chachamim* – published in honor of the Rebbe's eightieth birthday; *Ginass Bissan HaMelech* – published in 5748 by Chabad of Bayit Vegan, Yerushalayim; *Kevod Chachamim, Ateress Paz*, published in 5749.

When I sent Rabbi Goldberg my book, *Daas Torah B'Inyanei HaMatzav B'Eretz HaKodesh (The Torah's Perspective On The Situation In Israel)*, which sums up the Rebbe's talks on the prohibition against giving land to the Arabs, he wrote to me the following: "I thank you for sending me your *seifer*. In the part of the book that I managed to look at, I saw that you explain very well the danger in giving territory to gentiles who wish to annihilate us. Certainly, there should be no delay [in following] this law, for it forbidden to put oneself in danger with the intention of being saved through a miracle.

# THE BIRTHDAY CAMPAIGN ON KIBBUTZIM

BY NOSSON AVRAHAM  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY, TZFAS

*On the 25th of Adar 5748, the birthday of the Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, of blessed memory, the Rebbe MH”M first came out with his “Birthday Campaign.” He called upon every Jew to mark his or her birthday in a special way through the fulfillment of various customs, particularly the acceptance of good resolutions and strengthening in Torah and mitzvos. HaRav Yaakov Tzvi Ben-Ari, Chabad House director on kibbutzim, who has been involved in this campaign for several years with kibbutznikim throughout Eretz Yisroel, has seen the amazing and emotional reactions to his activities, and the fruits of success that have come as a result. Presented in honor of Yud-Alef Nissan.*

This past Yud Shvat, after Shacharis in the Rebbe MH”M’s minyan, I met R. Yaakov Tzvi Ben-Ari at the entrance to 770, as he was in the midst of a friendly chat with a member of the Crown Heights community. When he noticed that I was waiting for him, he asked me what I wanted. I proceeded to tell him that I was interested in conducting an interview with him about his Birthday Campaign activities on kibbutzim in Eretz Yisroel.

Before I could finish my sentence, he exclaimed excitedly, “What *hashgacha pratis!*” It turned out that the friend with whom he was speaking while I was waiting had just told him that today is his birthday, and now I come along to ask him to be interviewed on his birthday activities.

Before we take a look at Rabbi Ben-Ari’s very special and unique activities (see box on the campaign’s inception), it would be appropriate here to mention that they are now being conducted on a wide and comprehensive scale, extending from Hadera in the north, down to Beersheva, through the Gaza Strip, and to Eilat in the south – a total of 170 kibbutzim nationwide.

As a former member of Kibbutz Maayan Tzvi in the Carmel, Rabbi Ben-Ari felt the tremendous lack of Jewish outreach activities amongst kibbutznikim. Thus, he decided one day to develop programs geared for the kibbutzim and to focus specifically upon them.

The primary motivation behind this decision came in 5750, when he coordinated a most successful trip to the Rebbe MH" M for a large group of dozens of parents of children who learn in the Chabad kindergarten system in Tzfas, headed by its director, Rabbi Aharon Eliezer Ceitlin. When he passed by the Rebbe for Sunday dollars, he asked for a bracha that his activities should be on the level of "nisei nissim" (most miraculous). The Rebbe responded, "Amen, v'sheyihye b'hatzlacha rabba b'chol ha'inyanim sham" (Amen, all matters there should be with much success).

### THE BIRTHDAY CAMPAIGN STARTS IN EARNEST

"In the initial days of the outreach activities on the

## *Every shliach has a certain outreach activity that is most characteristic of his personal approach. In R. Yaakov Tzvi Ben-Ari's case, it's the Birthday Campaign.*

kibbutzim," R. Yaakov Tzvi recalled, "I had already encountered problems in maintaining contact with the people with whom I had arranged my activities. At first, I sent reading material on Judaism by mail. As Pesach approached, I distributed shmura matzos to all kibbutz family members with whom I had contact. After a while, I pursued other methods, not only to strengthen the connection, but also to make it deeper.

"On one of my visits to Lubavitch Youth Organization headquarters in Kfar Chabad, I came across a pamphlet of the birthday campaign that was being conducted at that time by the mashpia, HaRav Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg. I was most enthusiastic about the idea, and I thought that this could be the best way to maintain the connection.

"Things didn't seem to go as planned, and practical application was delayed for a number of years. In the meantime, the pool of names of people with whom I had contact during my continuing activities was constantly growing – activity coordinators, secretaries, and other important individuals on various kibbutzim. What started as a few dozen families had reached several hundred, and thus, the problem of maintaining contact with all these people resurfaced.

"At this point, I decided to adopt the Birthday Campaign format. Each night, I called these people and inquired about their birthday. To my surprise, the majority of those that I



asked did not have the slightest idea when their Hebrew birthday was. I took their secular birth date, and with the help of a special application, I succeeded in converting it into Hebrew, and updating it on the computer. Within a relatively brief period of time, I had obtained everyone's Hebrew

birthday.

"With great effort, I succeeded in arranging a list of all the birthdays. Each Erev Shabbos, an Anash couple would make phone calls – the *avreich* to other men, and his wife to the women. They would gently mention to them about their birthday according to the Hebrew

calendar, and would utilize the enthusiasm generated during those brief few moments to speak about the Rebbe MH" M's instructions on the special customs connected with such an auspicious occasion, especially making good resolutions in matters of Torah and mitzvos.

"As the years passed, the list of Chabad House contacts grew dramatically, from the hundreds to several thousand. Calling each and every one of them was simply no longer possible.

"I went to a graphic artist and asked him to design a decorative birthday certificate. The certificate included the celebrant's personal chapter of T'hillim, the Rebbe MH" M's chapter, and all the Rebbe's instructions regarding the customs pertaining to birthday celebrations. I arranged the customs in clear and easy language, followed by a few words of congratulations and good wishes. We laminated each certificate, and the result was an attractive and respectable gift to commemorate the event.

"The reactions were very positive and filled with emotion. When I paid visits to the homes of people to whom I had sent the certificates, I could see them quite often displayed proudly on the wall."

Every shliach has a certain outreach activity that is most characteristic of his personal approach. In R. Yaakov Tzvi Ben-Ari's case, it's the Birthday Campaign. "This is a terrific way to bring Jews back to their roots," R. Yaakov Tzvi comments. "When someone receives an elegant birthday certificate that reminds him how one reflects upon such a day according to Judaism, there cannot be the slightest doubt that he will experience a certain sense of spiritual awakening, even if this cannot be perceived right away.

## WHEN AND HOW DID THE BIRTHDAY CAMPAIGN GET STARTED?

The Rebbe Rayatz was the first to arouse interest in a birthday as a day of *cheshbon nefesh*. In a answer to one of the chassidim, as printed by the Rebbe MH" M in the *HaYom Yom* for Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe Rayatz writes: **"A person should seclude himself on his birthday, contemplate upon his memories, and whoever requires repair and t'shuva should repent and repair them."**

In a sicha delivered on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of Adar 5748, in honor of the birthday of the Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, of blessed memory, just one month after her histalkus, the Rebbe founded the Birthday Campaign.

The Rebbe discussed at length the great and meritorious nature of such a day when "a person's fortune becomes stronger", sharpening the aforementioned words of the Rebbe Rayatz by stating that he had revealed things that previously had been known only to a select few. The Rebbe expanded on this point with an emphasis on the chassidic *farbrengen* that a birthday celebrant should conduct: **"It is appropriate and correct for everyone to make a joyous farbrengen on his birthday, together with the members of his family or his friends and acquaintances, etc."**

Throughout that year, the Rebbe spoke forcefully about the customs that a person should fulfill on his birthday. On Acharon Shel Pesach 5748, the Rebbe established a set of ten customs for birthday celebrants.

During the abovementioned sicha, the Rebbe even refuted those who expressed their opposition at that time to the Birthday Campaign. Some people had complained that the only place in Torah where a birthday is mentioned is in connection with Pharaoh. As a result, they drew the conclusion that there is a need to make a big deal about such a day. The Rebbe categorically rejected such claims: **"Even if this matter had not been a known and accepted custom until now, etc., this is similar to numerous matters in Torah and mitzvos that were revealed at special times, particularly those established by the Sages and by Jewish custom etc. that were revealed by Talmudic scholars etc., and by numerous "tens of Jews" who have actually been so accustomed for many years. This is certainly preferable to one Talmudic scholar, and in our case, the main thing is that it has already been accepted by many Jews – and their numbers are growing."**

## REACHING OUT TO A SOUL ON A REMOTE ISLAND

“Two years ago,” R. Yaakov Tzvi recalls, “I received an urgent telephone call from the secretary of a kibbutz near the Sea of Galilee, with whom I maintain regular contact. He began to tell me a sorrowful story about his son, who had been living for some time on a remote island somewhere between Australia and New Zealand. From there, he would send sad letters that reflected upon the deep depression that engulfed him. In a voice choking with tears, he spoke about his son’s most recent letter, in which he writes that he is sick of life and has lost the will to live. ‘You have to help me; I simply don’t know what to do,’ the kibbutz secretary concluded in an undisguised flood of emotion.

“I wasted no time, and within a few minutes, I was in my car en route to the kibbutz. When I arrived, the secretary showed me his son’s last letter. Shivers ran up and down my spine. I explained to the parents about writing to the Lubavitcher Rebbe via *Igros Kodesh*. They made a good resolution, and then sat down to write. In the Rebbe MH”M’s answer, he responds to someone who is concerned about his son, who wants to leave his yeshiva studies in Eretz Yisroel, and return to the United States. The Rebbe writes to the man that he has nothing to worry about. His son will remain in Eretz Yisroel, and will complete his studies.

“I was thrilled by such a clear answer. I assured the parents that the Rebbe is saying that not only will he come back, but when he does, he will go to learn in yeshiva. In the postscript, the Rebbe suggests that t’fillin and mezuzos should be checked. I immediately checked all doorways in the house, and discovered that only the front entrance had a mezuzah, and it was not kosher. As a result, I affixed brand new kosher mezuzos on every doorway.

“A few days later, this kibbutz secretary heard about a resident of Kibbutz Ayelet HaShachar named Cherut Lapid, who dealt with Israelis in states of deep depression or entangled in serious legal problems overseas. He called him, told him the whole story, and asked him for his help.

“That very day, Lapid purchased an airline ticket to that island, even though he didn’t have any indication as to where to find him in such a remote location. He arrived after a flight of several hours, and miraculously, after a brief search, he found the son and began to talk with him.

“For whatever reason, Lapid believed that the son’s emotional state was sufficiently stable. Furthermore, he

said that the son wanted to return to Eretz Yisroel in the coming weeks. He called the father, told him what he thought, and then caught a plane that same day back to Eretz Yisroel.

“A few hours later, the father’s sense of calm had turned into worry. A psychiatrist, who lived on the island, had just had a conversation with the son. He told the father that in his professional opinion, he must return to Eretz Yisroel immediately, otherwise, he may do something suicidal.”<sup>1</sup> Terror seized the father. He quickly called Cherut Lapid, who had just returned from the exhausting trip to the island, and told him about the call from the psychiatrist that morning. ‘You must save my son,’ he pleaded. Cherut is truly a wonderful person, and within a few hours, he had bought another airline ticket and was on his way back to the island. Soon after his arrival, he met with the son, and after a penetrating talk, he succeeded in convincing him to accompany him on the trip back to Eretz Yisroel.

“When the son returned, his parents considered placing him in a psychiatric hospital. When the son heard this, he scuttled their plans by telling them that he wanted to learn Torah and was interested in studying in a yeshiva. Two months later, he was doing just that. Today, he is a fine young Torah scholar, stringent in all matters, great and small. The Rebbe’s answer had been fulfilled, right down to the letter.

“Time passed, and I had totally forgotten about the story,” R. Yaakov Tzvi continued. “Then, last month, I made a birthday party at Kibbutz Ayelet HaShachar for Cherut Lapid’s wife. That day was very rainy, and I was extremely busy. Nevertheless, I was determined not to miss the opportunity.

“During a very interesting and fascinating party, I asked him to retell the most interesting story that had happened to him in connection with his activities on behalf of Israeli imprisoned overseas. He thought for a moment, then exclaimed, ‘Something amazing happened to me about two years ago,’ and he started to give over the story about the young man on the island, describing how he miraculously found him virtually without a search, despite the fact that it was the equivalent of looking for a needle in a haystack.

“I could not contain my excitement upon hearing this incredible case of *hashgacha pratit*, and I then proceeded to tell him about the answer received from the Rebbe via *Igros Kodesh* about this young man.”

***“That very day, Lapid purchased an airline ticket to that island, even though he didn’t have any indication as to where to find him...”***



“I know an older man who lives on a kibbutz in the southern part of the country. Every time I come to visit him, he tells me proudly about his progress in Judaism and how everything began in the merit of the birthday certificate that I send him each year.”

### DEVELOPMENTS IN A MANNER OF “U’FARATZTA”

“At the advice of one of my friends in Crown Heights, who is also a major supporter of our Chabad House activities, I decided to develop “U’faratzta Kibbutzim” activities in a manner of true “U’faratzta.” He was so impressed and excited about what we were doing that he decided to accept upon himself a major portion of the expenses of our activities. This gave us new momentum in our outreach work, and so we decided to initiate direct contact with our kibbutznik friends.”

\* \* \*

How do you manage to reach

**them all, when there is no time to call each person individually?**

For this purpose, I have enlisted the help of kollel students from the Chabad community in Tzfas. Each

night, they go to kibbutz homes, equipped with *mashkeh* and other refreshments, and surprise the people there with a chassidic *farbrenge*. Some of these young rabbinical students are former

### FROM KIBBUTZ AYIN HASHOFET TO BANGKOK

“A few months ago, I found myself in Bangkok, Thailand for three days. During my stay, I decided to go out into the city streets to meet Israeli tourists. I was walking along the famous Kwasang Street, when suddenly, I saw several locals involved in their trade – selling insects.

“I almost moved on completely, when I suddenly came across an Israeli couple conversing in Hebrew. I approached them and we began to chat. In the course of our pleasant conversation, I asked them where they’re from, and the young woman responded that she lives on the northern kibbutz of Ayin HaShofet.

“The conversation wore on, and I told her casually that I know several people from that kibbutz. She inquired about who I know, and I answered as an example, ‘Batya Resnick’. When she heard the name, she smiled and said, ‘That’s my mother’. Now it was my turn to surprise. I asked her if she remembers me. She thought for a moment and said, ‘Just a minute, are you the one who sends me a certificate every year on my birthday?’ When I responded affirmatively, she became most excited and told me that she hangs the certificates in her room, and periodically reads the chapter of T’hillim printed on each one...”



kibbutz members who have become baalei t'shuva, thus they can relate to the kibbutz mentality. In the event that the birthday celebrant was not available, the students would stay and make a birthday farbrengen in his honor with the members of his family.

It's difficult to describe the powerful impression left by such an activity upon the kibbutz residents. It literally opens the hearts of people who were totally oblivious of anything connected with Yiddishkeit, and brings them to make good resolutions in Torah and mitzvos.

We don't miss anyone. There are those who work overseas on missions with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the United Kibbutz Movement, and I make certain to reach them on their birthday by sending them a certificate wherever they may be...

Enthusiastic responses have also been received by the students of Yeshivas Chassidei Chabad – Tzfas, who give over Torah classes via telephone – another one of Rabbi Ben-Ari's successful outreach activities. Not even the phone's receiver can hide the feelings of emotion and appreciation on the

other side of the line. During the class, they offer their sincere thanks to those who remembered their birthday, and to the Rebbe, who sends his shluchim everywhere out of concern for every Jew.

\* \* \*

This campaign is just one link in a chain of marvelous activities organized by HaRav Yaakov Tzvi Ben-Ari. However, anyone who knows Rabbi Ben-Ari understands that each link is a major program unto itself – in every sense of the word.

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# WHY DOZENS OF CHASSIDIM LEFT YERUSHALAYIM EREV PESACH

BY SHAI GEFEN

*On Pesach 5728, less than a year after the Six Day War and the conquering of the Temple Mount and the Old City, the Rebbe delivered a surprising sicha. In that sicha he said people should refrain from being within 15 “mil” of Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach and Pesach Sheini, since it was possible to bring the Korbon Pesach, and being in Yerushalayim at that time and failing to bring this Korbon possibly entailed the Heavenly punishment of kareis! \* Eight years later, the Rebbe said the situation had changed, and it was no longer possible to bring the Korbon Pesach. \* Read on about the halachic issues, and about the chassidim who left Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach and Pesach Sheini.*



בט"ר, קטע משיחת אחרון של משה, מ"חשב"ח וכו' כענין זה  
 - הנחה. בלתי סודת -

א. אמרו"ל בניסן גבאלו ובניסן עמידין להבאל<sup>1</sup>, ושאלו חלכה למעשה  
 כשנבנה בית המקדש בין משה ראשון לסני<sup>2</sup>, אם נחייבו כעשיית משה שני.  
 וזנה מלוגמא דהנאי היא בירושלמי<sup>3</sup>. "ניחן לישראל למנוח בית המזרח  
 (בין ג"ר למ"ט) בו", ולדעת ר' יודא - קוטיין ס"ט.

The Rebbe's call to leave Yerushalyim, with a special handwritten dedication to the gaon, Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin, a<sup>h</sup>

בצאל לודי

ונשלמה פרים שפתינו מאמר שני

**פסח ראשון ופסח שני  
 לאלה שהיו בדרך רחוקה**

פסח שני לאלה שהיו ב"דרך רחוקה" מירושלים - דרך רחוקה עד היכן - סדרת  
 בירורים בהלכתא למשיחא לקראת פסח שני - גם בימי השואה נידונו עניני פסח שני  
 בבתי המדרש בהונגריה - הצעת הארמו"ר מניבאויטש להימצא בדרך רחוקה -  
 בירורי הלכה עם הרב ש"י ויין - במסקנה הלכה למעשה: "המצב השתנה כיום"

The headline of the article in *Hamodia* about the Rebbe's position about leaving Yerushalayim

## LEAVING

Every year, on Erev Pesach, when last-minute preparations are being made for the seider, dozens of Lubavitchers used to leave their homes in Yerushalayim for any location, as long as it wasn't Yerushalayim. This trek began on Erev Pesach 5729 (1969), the second Pesach after the Six Day War, by explicit instruction from the Rebbe.

The Korbon Pesach may be sacrificed in a state of *tuma* (spiritual impurity) if the majority (or all) of the Jewish people are impure. Thus, even while in exile, when all the Jewish people are spiritually impure, it would seem that there is no reason why we shouldn't bring the Korbon Pesach as they did in the time of the Beis HaMikdash.

## HALACHIC DEBATE

It was after the Six Day War, when Israel had supremacy and ruled the Temple Mount, that the halachic questions about bringing

*When we are sovereign rulers, then the obligation to bring the Korbon Pesach is in force.*

the Korbon Pesach came up. All the poskim, led by the Rambam, agree that even when there is no Beis HaMikdash, the Korbon Pesach is sacrificed. As far as the problem of not having a prophet to tell us the exact spot where the altar was, the poskim say that the Korbon Pesach can be brought anyway.

The halachic discussion was fascinating and amazing. A number of halachic works and s'farim were published on the subject. Some maintained that the Korbon Pesach must be brought at all costs and under all conditions, though thousands of G-d-fearing Jews did

not even deal with this serious issue, which has the specter of kareis looming over it.

Even those who supported the position of bringing the Korbon Pesach no matter what, did not address the basic issue of what to do when we are not permitted to bring the Korbon Pesach. It's clear that if it's possible to bring the Korbon (but one doesn't actually bring it) then it's prohibited to be within the boundaries of Yerushalayim, since someone who is *b'derech rechoka* (far away) is exempt from bringing this Korbon.

This issue was made more acute since many people, among them rabbanim, have the custom of going to the Kosel on Erev Pesach after midday, in order to read the "order" of the Korbon Pesach, "to remember the Korbon Pesach that our fathers sacrificed." These people didn't realize that their special custom possibly made them transgress a Biblical prohibition!

As in all matters, halacha is what guides the Rebbe. In a sicha of Acharon shel Pesach 5728, the Rebbe gave a lengthy explanation about Korbon Pesach nowadays, after the Six Day War. The Rebbe connected this not only with Pesach but with Pesach Sheini, for someone who did not bring the Korbon Pesach on Erev Pesach had to bring it on Pesach Sheini.

The Rebbe's surprising sicha had a wide ripple effect. In that sicha, which was approved for publication by the Rebbe, the Rebbe declared, **"In my humble opinion one should refrain from being within fifteen mil of Yerushalayim on 14 Iyar."**

In that sicha the Rebbe referred only to Pesach Sheini since they were already past Pesach Rishon. In this lengthy sicha, the Rebbe concluded that on Pesach Sheini too, one can bring the Korbon Pesach in

a state of tuma, which raises the halachic question: how can Jews remain in Yerushalayim on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Iyar without sacrificing the Korbon Pesach? If there's an obligation to do so but one does not bring the Korbon, the punishment is kareis!

The Rebbe's conclusion was that they must leave Yerushalayim on Pesach Sheini, "...certainly do not travel to Yerushalayim on 14 Iyar, even if you want to say it's nothing but a safeik and a s'feik s'feika (doubtful and highly doubtful situation)."

In editing this sicha, the Rebbe added that obviously everything he said about Pesach Sheini applied to Erev Pesach.

### WHAT HAPPENED THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS, SINCE THE CHURBAN?

In an unusual move, the Rebbe sent the sicha to the gaon, Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin, a"h, with a special dedication in which the Rebbe wished him a refua shleima. In the margin of the sicha, the Rebbe wrote, "To Rabbi S.Y. shlita, shalom u'v'racha, thank you for the regards by way of R' C.L., and may you have a refua shleima u'krova and relate good news" (see facsimile above).

Rabbi Zevin whose own prowess in halacha was legendary, had a lengthy halachic give-and-take with the Rebbe about whether one was obligated to leave Yerushalayim or not. In a letter dated 3 Sivan 5728, Rabbi Zevin sent a long letter to the Rebbe enumerating many halachic questions on the Rebbe's conclusion. Among other things, he asked, "This would mean that all those dwelling in Yerushalayim, about a quarter of a million people, need to leave the city on Pesach Sheini?"

Rabbi Zevin dwelled on many points raised in the sicha, and at the end of his letter he added the following, "I ask the Rebbe's forgiveness for daring to express my surprise. 'This is Torah and I need to learn it' [a Talmudic expression used here to explain why he was raising questions that challenged the Rebbe's position]."

Rabbi Zevin received a response from the Rebbe in which the Rebbe answered each of his questions (the letter, including Rabbi Zevin's letter, are printed in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 24). Regarding the question about thousands leaving Yerushalayim, the Rebbe answers, "Thousands and tens of thousands, G-d-fearing and complete, who are punctilious in their mitzva observance... It is a foundation in my deliberation that since this matter entails 1. the possibility of kareis, 2. on the other hand, for males from the age of 13 and up to have to spend a few hours far from Yerushalayim is not such a big deal – all the more so that those who are anyway on a distant road should not press forward to enter Yerushalayim at precisely this time."

The Rebbe adds the following: "My conclusion is that there is a safeik and a s'feik s'feika, etc., in this matter. Therefore, those who are far away should not go up [to Yerushalayim] and preferably, those who are there [in Yerushalayim] should leave."

The Rebbe also spoke of those residents of Yerushalayim who were particular about never leaving the city: "As far as those who never left Yerushalayim, that's a separate discussion."

In response to Rabbi Zevin's question as to what changed now, "What an enormous question it is that throughout the generations, from the churban until now...we have not found that they uprooted themselves Erev Pesach to go out of Yerushalayim," the Rebbe responded, "Until after last year's war, the hand of the nations was strong, etc." In other words, when we are sovereign rulers, then the

obligation to bring the Korbon Pesach is in force, which is why the Rebbe said they should leave Yerushalayim so as not to possibly transgress a prohibition that entails kareis.

### THE HALACHIC DISCUSSION GOES PUBLIC

For eight years, starting in 5728, a year after the Six Day War, and until Pesach 5735, the Rebbe's instruction to leave Yerushalayim was in effect. The well-known writer, Rabbi Betzalel Landau, a"h, who wrote for



*Hamodia*, and whom the Rebbe held in great esteem (at “dollars” the Rebbe told him, “I read your articles in *Hamodia*”) devoted two articles to discussing the bringing of the Korbon Pesach nowadays. The article was printed in *Hamodia* on Yud-Alef Nissan 5750, and the next article addressed the Rebbe’s suggestion that people leave Yerushalayim at that time.

One line from his article is, “Many of us still remember the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s suggestion at that time, to those who live in Yerushalayim, to be at a distance from Yerushalayim on 14 Iyar (Pesach Sheini).”

Rabbi Landau went on to discuss all relevant details and presented the Rebbe’s position at length. When writing about what actually was done at that time, he said, “The Lubavitcher Rebbe dedicated a special sicha on Acharon shel Pesach 5728 to this. After establishing that ‘many are those who forbid bringing the Korbon Pesach nowadays and have pushed aside the proofs of those who permit it,’ he gives his opinion, ‘in my humble opinion one should refrain from being within 15 mil of Yerushalayim on 14 Iyar.’”

Rabbi Landau also referred to Rabbi Zevin’s objections and quoted the Rebbe’s answers to these objections, one by one: “Regarding Rabbi Zevin’s final question about where do we find the din of ‘being far away’ on Pesach Sheini, the Rebbe offered an answer surprising in its simplicity.” Rabbi Landau quoted the Rebbe’s answer to Rabbi Zevin from the Mishna in P’sachim where it discusses the differences between Pesach Rishon and Pesach Sheini, and how being far from Yerushalayim is not one of those differences.

Rabbi Landau concluded his article with the Rebbe’s letter to Rabbi Zevin from 5735, in which the

Rebbe writes, “the situation changed and there is no possibility of building now.”

Two years ago, before Pesach 5762, there was an article by Dr. Neria Gotel in *HaTzofeh*, where he explains the Rebbe’s position regarding leaving Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach.

### WHAT LUBAVITCHERS DID

Dozens of Lubavitcher chassidim left Yerushalayim Erev Pesach so as not to be stuck with the halachic question regarding bringing the Korbon Pesach on that day.

*it was definitely no simple matter to leave the house on Erev Pesach. But there were dozens who did leave. On Pesach Sheini though, many more Jews left Yerushalayim.*

The well-known mashpia, Rabbi Moshe Weber, spent the first Pesach after the Rebbe’s horaa (Pesach 5729) by Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzal, one of the founders of Nachalat Har Chabad. His presence also served to strengthen the new neighborhood. Rabbi Weber spent the entire Pesach with Rabbi Hertzal and did so every year until 5735, when the Rebbe said it was no longer necessary.

Rabbi Shmuel Shneersohn, head of Kollel Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, was one of those who left Yerushalayim, and he made sure to publicize this and the reasons for

doing so. He would go to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Gruzman, in Kfar Chabad, or sometimes he would go to Hadassah Ein Kerem, which is considered far enough as far as the Korbon Pesach is concerned.

Although the Rebbe wrote many letters on this subject, he did not go out with a formal campaign about it. Perhaps the reason is that it wasn’t something that could be instilled within tens of thousands of Jews, telling them to leave their homes on Erev Pesach. The Rebbe made his view known, and whoever was concerned about the halachic position the Rebbe presented, understood on his own that he had to be outside the vicinity during the few hours the Korbon Pesach could be sacrificed.

Rabbi Yisroel Glitzenstein remembers that period: Not all of Anash were able to leave, for it was definitely no simple matter to leave the house on Erev Pesach. But there were dozens who did leave. On Pesach Sheini though, many more Jews left Yerushalayim. I remember that as a bachur I left to learn in Kfar Chabad on 14 Iyar from midday until evening. Many others did the same. There were groups of Anash who would return before sunset so that they returned by foot from Motza to Yerushalayim, thus fulfilling the obligation to be outside of Yerushalayim at the time the Korbon Pesach would have been sacrificed.

Rabbi Zevin did not leave Yerushalayim as it was no simple matter for him to leave, but what I can tell you is that he stopped going to the Kosel to read the section about the Korbon Pesach there. The first year [1968], Rabbi Zevin went to the Kosel, as did many Yerushalmi residents, in order to read the section about the Korbon Pesach.

Rabbi Zevin’s grandson, Rabbi Nachum Zevin, told us that he once

asked his grandfather why he didn't leave Yerushalayim as the Rebbe had suggested. "My grandfather said, 'If the Rebbe had said it as a horaa of a Rebbe, we would have gone immediately; but since the Rebbe wrote about it as a halachic concern, and it was a case of safeik and s'feik s'feika, it was possible to be lenient in this.'"

Rabbi Tuvia Blau, rav of the Chabad community in Neve Yaakov, said he also remembers those days when they left Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach. "For a while, we went to Nachalas Har Chabad, but then what we did was leave Yerushalayim and before sunset we would walk to Yerushalayim and arrive in Yerushalayim at a time when it was prohibited to bring the Korbon Pesach.

"The Rebbe is a pure man of halacha," in the words of Rabbi Blau, "and the Rebbe measures things based solely on halachic considerations. Halacha, and only halacha, is the means by which he assesses the situation. Here too,

when the possibility of a prohibition entailing kareis arose, the Rebbe pointed this out. For as soon as there is the theoretical possibility of bringing the Korbon Pesach because Israel is in a position of power, it becomes an issue.

"I think that from here we can see how particular the Rebbe is about the minutest details of halacha and even s'feikos in halacha, when not one other rav or posek thought this was an issue.

"There's no question," concluded Rabbi Blau, "that when you examine the Rebbe's surprising horaa to leave Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach, that you can see and learn a great deal about being particular about halachic observance, that there shouldn't, Heaven forbid, be a situation in which a Jew transgresses what might possibly be a prohibition entailing kareis."

It's interesting to note that the Belzer Rebbe, Rabbi Aharon Rokeach, zt"l, was particular about not being in

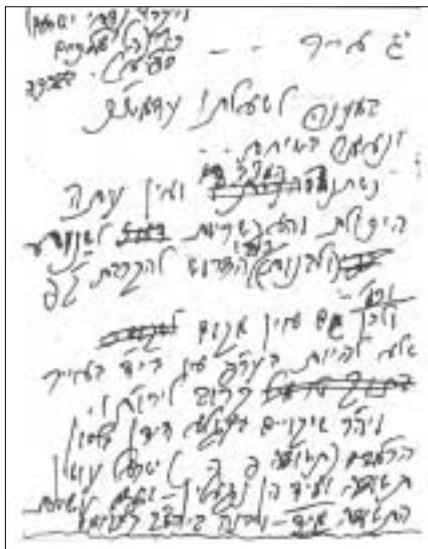
Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach, even long before the Six Day War, on account of the safeik regarding the Korbon Pesach. This is brought in a book about him, where it relates that in the winter of 5704 the Belzer Rebbe arrived in Yerushalayim and shortly thereafter, he expressed his desire to leave Yerushalayim, but it didn't work out. As Pesach approached, the Belzer Rebbe insisted on leaving before Yom Tov, and he said he must leave before Pesach.

His brother, Rabbi Mordechai of Bilgoray, zt"l (father of the present Belzer Rebbe), explained that his brother was afraid of being in Yerushalayim at the time that the Korbon Pesach was brought, and preferred being *b'derech rechoka*.

The Rebbe of Bilgoray goes into detail, explaining the halachic issues involved.

## NO NEED TO LEAVE ANYMORE

In a general letter that the Rebbe wrote Erev Pesach Sheini, 13 Iyar



"The situation has changed" – the letter with the Rebbe's handwritten note to Rabbi Zevin

(Above) The entire letter in the Rebbe's handwriting.

(Right) Corrections to the typewritten letter.



5735, the Rebbe said there was no longer the possibility of building on the Temple Mt. The Rebbe sent a similar letter to Rabbi Zevin, and added a handwritten note, which explained as follows:

“Regarding the discussion, from the time of the events written about and discussed in the sichos of Acharon shel Pesach 5728, due to our many sins (including beginning on the 7<sup>th</sup> day (mamash, declaring) “he is my brother...and they raised him up, etc.”...the situation changed and there is no longer the ability and possibility to institute the changes (and build) as would be required to bring the Korbon Pesach, etc. Therefore, there is no reason not to be near Yerushalayim on Erev Pesach or the 14<sup>th</sup> of Iyar. May it be fulfilled in our time, as the Rambam writes, ‘Yisroel does t’shuva and is immediately redeemed’ – and also the doing of t’shuva immediately – and the Beis HaMikdash will be built in its place, and the outcasts of Israel will be gathered.”

The Rebbe makes it clear that from the 7<sup>th</sup> day, i.e., the day after the conclusion of the Six Day War, Israeli leaders wanted to give back the Temple Mt. and Yerushalayim to the Arabs. Therefore, *ein yad Yisroel takifa* (the hand of Yisroel is not powerful, i.e., the Jews do not rule over the land and its gentile inhabitants). The Rebbe not

***“There hadn’t been a need to leave since it turned out that this was the intention of the leaders of Israel from the very start, but as long as there was still the possibility of yad Yisroel takifa, the Rebbe said people should leave.”***

only cancelled his horaa but in his great love for the Jewish people, he retroactively excused all the thousands who should have left Yerushalayim in previous years but didn’t by saying that “already on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, they said to Edom, “he is my brother...and they raised him up.”

Rabbi Tuvia Blau: “In 5735, when it was already clear beyond a doubt that *yad Yisroel lo takifa*, as the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Zevin, ‘now it is clear that starting from the 7<sup>th</sup> day, in other words, right after the Six Day War, they want to give away land and Yerushalayim the holy city, r”l.’ It was

only at this point that the Rebbe said they should stop leaving Yerushalayim. The Rebbe said that there hadn’t been a need to leave altogether since it turned out that this was the intention of the leaders of Israel from the very start, but as long as there was still the possibility of *yad Yisroel takifa*, the Rebbe said people should leave Yerushalayim.”

Rabbi Berel Walles remembers the years they left Yerushalayim. “Every year, before Pesach, the shtiblech heatedly discussed the issue of leaving. Dozens of Lubavitchers would leave. Those to whom the Rebbe’s position was important, understood that they had to leave even though it wasn’t a publicized instruction. As the Rebbe himself put it, ‘it would be good if those within [Yerushalayim] would leave.’ I remember how we would calculate the minutes before reentering Yerushalayim to ensure that indeed there was no time remaining to bring the Korbon Pesach, and only then did we walk into Yerushalayim.”

We will conclude with what the Rebbe wrote in the sicha of Acharon shel Pesach 5728 (the Rebbe referred to it as “my reshima”) **“[may we merit] quite a bit of time before Pesach Sheini and afterwards, to see the good of Yerushalayim, our holy city, and the location of our holy Temples.”**

Amen v’amen!

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# CHILDREN BAKING MATZOS

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

*Thousands of children of all backgrounds visit special matza bakeries hosted by Chabad houses throughout Eretz Yisroel, specially geared for children. \* Rabbi Zimroni Tzik originated the idea in Eretz Yisroel and others copied it. \* It's an unforgettable experience!*

Here's how the first matza bakery for children in Eretz Yisroel came to be, as told by Rabbi Zimroni Tzik, director of the Chabad house in Bat-Yam:

"It was Chol HaMoed Sukkos 5740, and I went from 770 to New Haven to participate in a Simchas Beis HaShoeiva for the mekuravim. That year, the Rebbe had said a guest from Eretz Yisroel should go along to every place where mivtzaim would be done, and I was the Israeli representative to New Haven.

"After a long trip in stormy weather we arrived at the Chabad house where we were welcomed by the shliach, Rabbi Boruch Sholom Cohen. However, the bad weather kept all the people away. We waited three hours and were very disappointed when no one showed up. We were about to leave but Rabbi Cohen asked us to follow him to one of the rooms in the Chabad house, where he showed us a matza bakery he had set up for children.

'This is where the children bake matzos and where they learn the halachos of Pesach in a very special way.'

"The group of us who had come for the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva was very disappointed that it was cancelled but I was taken by this original idea of a matza bakery for children.

"Some months went by and before Nissan I decided to make a bakery like that, but in a larger format, in my city of Bat-Yam. In those years the Chabad house had various exhibits on Jewish topics, as part of our Hebrew School program. Thousands of schoolchildren visited the "School for Judaism," and learned and enjoyed. We put the matza bakery together with the School for Judaism in the Chabad house, on the Chabad house grounds.

"There was a tremendous interest in the project. Thousands of

schoolchildren began to come. The counselors greeted them and gave them a brief tour, in the course of which they explained about the holiday of Pesach and how matzos are made.

"After the lecture, the children went to bake matza. The counselors showed them how to make the dough, and the children rolled it out themselves. 'The children were so excited as they rolled out the dough. What an unforgettable scene!' says one of the counselors.

"While rolling and baking, they sang Pesach songs and the 12 P'sukim with the children, and explained how matzos are prepared. As each child finished rolling his dough, he brought it to the oven. After the matzos were baked, the children were told that this matza was really **chametz** since it was made slowly, and not within 18 minutes."

\* \* \*

"We got the idea of making a matza bakery from Rabbi Tzik," says Rabbi Mordechai Kastel, director of the Chabad house in Rechovot. We adopted his fantastic idea and got tremendously positive feedback."

Eight years ago, a cable TV reporter came to the matza bakery. He was very interested in the goings-on and one of the organizers asked him what made him so interested in the matza bakery. He said, "I visited this matza bakery when I was a boy,

and that's why I'm interested in doing a program about it, because this project gives children a real sense of what it's like to bake matzos."

The bakery in Rechovot was part of a changing exhibition, run by Rabbi Yitzchok Arad. After they set up the bakery, word got out, and thousands of children from many different schools came to visit, even from cities outside of Rechovot such as Rishon L'Tziyon, Mazkeret-Batya, and Givat Washington.

### What are the children's backgrounds?

Rabbi Kastel: "The schoolchildren include chassidim, Shas (i.e., religious Sephardim), and public school kids. The demand is enormous and so we decided that they should only be from grades three and four, so that they don't come two or three times, which would cause too much overcrowding. Despite limiting it in this way, about 3000 children come every year."



At first, the props were minimal and the oven was only a wide griddle attached to a gas balloon. Today, a visitor to the matza bakery

in Rechovot enjoys spacious rooms, a large oven, and attractive décor, almost the real thing.

They put a lot into the educational messages they convey. "Before baking, the children listen to a talk and watch a slide show, and after the baking they tour an exhibit of items connected with Pesach and Yetzias Mitzrayim."

\* \* \*

There's a matza bakery for children in Kiryat Arba too. About 1500 children visit this bakery, set up by the director of the Chabad house, Rabbi Victor Ettia, every year. He also adopted the idea from Bat-Yam.

Rabbi Ettia: "Before we made our bakery, the children visited the large matza bakery in Kfar Chabad. Due to the security situation and the distance, we decided to make a matza bakery here, in Kiryat Arba. A professional carpenter built the bakery structure and the oven was ordered from an Arab tinsmith in Chevron. My brother-in-law, Rabbi





Yosef Nachshon (who is now program director in the Chabad house) is a talented artist (like his father, Boruch Nachshon), and he drew the ‘mayim sh’lanu,’ and the ‘flour,’ and other pictures associated with Pesach. These pictures decorate the matza bakery.

“The enthusiasm and warm reactions spurred us on to improve the bakery which is visited not only by children from Kiryat Arba and Chevron, but from all the yishuvim south of Har-Chevron.

“The demand is enormous. At first we asked that the children be only from grade 5 so that they wouldn’t come every year and make it too much work for us, but the principal of the public school requested, even demanded, that all the grades be allowed to come. He explained that there are many Russian children who don’t know a thing about Pesach. We agreed and set it up so that the youngest children hear explanations, bake matzos, and sing Pesach songs, while the older children watch a Pesach

video about Pesach in the Mikdash that explains what Pesach is about on a higher level.

“The children leave the bakery armed with lots of information about Pesach. One of the teachers once announced at the end of the matza baking, that on the thin cracker-like

*The kids in the public schools were not allowed, by the administration, to wear yarmulkes. I solved that problem in a creative way. I ordered 1000 chef hats in the smallest possible size to fit the children’s heads.*

matzos Ashkenazim will say *HaMotzi*, and Sephardim will say *mezonos*.”

\* \* \*

Kiryat Arba got the idea from Bat-Yam and the Mobile Mitzva Tanks got the idea from Kiryat Arba. Rabbi Yoel Mull, who was actively involved in the Mitzva Tanks, tells us about it:

“After I saw the matza bakery in Kiryat Arba, I thought it was a great idea and suggested it to the directors of the Mobile Mitzva Tanks in Natzeret Ilit. Unfortunately, they didn’t have the money for it. In the end, the chief of mitzvaim Rabbi Shmarya Harel, gave me his personal checks so that I could begin getting the project off the ground.

“As opposed to the other cities, the project of the Mobile Mitzva Tanks was unique. It was not just a Chabad house on wheels, but also a Matza Bakery on wheels! After some complicated logistics, we prepared a compact matza bakery that was easy to assemble and take apart. We used tarps for the rooms and the oven





was made by the vocational school in Kfar Chabad according to our specifications.”

The first year, 5752, there was only one mobile matza bakery, but within a few years, they had four bakeries like this one.

“We went to the first school and it was very successful. Little by little, we learned how to do things and then we went from school to school. We covered a lot of ground, visiting two schools every day, and in the afternoon, we were at Tzivos Hashem clubs run by Mobile Mitzva Tanks around the country. Each day about 1000 children participated in the baking.

“The teachers, children and the parents who came to watch, were all thrilled by the idea.”

**Was the bakery well received wherever it went?**

“Before Pesach, we went to many schools of different backgrounds. In the area where I worked all year round, there was a yishuv whose secretaries sent me an official letter in the name of the residents there, telling me they forbid my religious vehicle, i.e. the Mitzva Tank, from entering to work in the yishuv. But the mobile bakery arrived at the local school which the children of that yishuv attend, and so the children learned about Pesach despite the anti-religious letter I had received.

“We once had a problem with yarmulkes in that we were allowed to enter a school to give a lecture about Pesach but the kids in the public schools were not allowed, by the administration, to wear yarmulkes. I solved that problem in a creative way. I ordered 1000 chef hats in the smallest possible size to fit the children’s heads. The hats had “Mobile Mitzva Bakery,” printed on them near our symbol. The kids happily wore the hats, and



the staff was satisfied by the originality and the professionalism.”

\* \* \*

The work has expanded greatly in yishuvim in the northern Negev. Rabbi Lior Malka, director of the Chabad house of this area was one of the first counselors at the matza bakery in Bat-Yam. When he got older and became a director of a Chabad house himself, he adopted the project as his own since he knew how successful it is.

“In 5753 I set up the bakery that operates every year in the youth sports center in Netivot. We set up a huge modern oven, which has bricks drawn on the sides so that it looks like a real oven. The whole structure is constructed in an attractive and unique way.”

Rabbi Malka added a variety of activities to the bakery. “Before the

baking process, the children hear a lecture and watch a puppet show about Yetzias Mitzrayim. The children watch a large-sized Haggada shel Pesach, four meters square, and see exhibits that depict the Pesach story. When I turn the pages of the oversized Haggada, the children see huge pictures of the simanim of the seider along with brief explanations.

“Similar to the giant Haggada, we also built three matzos a meter and a half high, which have pictures on them about Yetzias Mitzrayim, as well as a huge picture of Miriam’s tambourine which symbolizes the bitachon in Geula.

“In recent years we built work stations for the children where they learn related topics like *hagalas keilim*, etc. The children play computer games on the topic of chametz and matza.”

Each day, over 500 preschool children and children in grades

1-9, come from yishuvim, near and far, to visit the matza bakery.

\* \* \*

A veteran educator can’t stop praising the matza bakery initiative, “The idea is a simple one, but ingenious and educational in a highly unusual way. While kneading, rolling, and baking, the children personally experience what matza baking is all about, learn the laws of the holiday, and the importance of the holiday symbols. Learning it this way makes the information get into their bloodstream, so to speak, and they won’t easily forget it.”

The matza bakery project has spread to dozens of Chabad houses around the country, and each year, thousands of children visit these unique matza bakeries and acquire much knowledge about Pesach, chametz and matza, the role of the child at the seider, and much more.

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# TRACK RECORD OF RETREAT

BY SHAI GEFEN

*[Note: The following article was prepared for publication prior to the assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and the ensuing events.]*

## WHAT DOES AMERICA THINK OF US?

Even *considering* uprooting every Jewish community beyond the Green Line is insane. The United States is not interested in this proposal. President Bush is avoiding a meeting with P.M. Sharon; senior security officials are warning of the terrible consequences of implementing such a proposal; yet Sharon forges ahead and announces that we have reached the point of no return.

For decades, as Israeli leaders blamed the concessions they made on American pressure, the Rebbe negated this and said that America is actually surprised by the outlandish concessions Israel makes. In this latest chapter of our history, we see clearly how “those who destroy you” come from within our own camp. None of the concessions and withdrawals have anything to do with pressure. The fear is not of what the goyim will say, but about “the goy within you.” The same was true with the Oslo Accords. The ones who sold Arafat as a peace-broker to the Americans were the Israelis, who brought them a finished deal. The Americans were shocked.

Two years ago, there was an interview with Dennis Ross by one of the newspapers. He said, “You

have no reason to come with complaints to the Americans regarding Arafat when you forced him on America.”

On a few occasions, the Rebbe mentioned that Washington itself did not believe that Israel would concede and retreat, and even when it looked as though Washington was exerting pressure, it was only superficial. The truth has always been that they want Israel to stand proud. During the present war, we see how, time after time, all the concessions come from inner weakness and not from outside pressure. As the Rebbe put it:

**It is known, and was even publicized afterwards, that the reason for the desire to withdraw was they wanted to find favor in the eyes of Washington, who asked for it. Now what somebody in Washington said has already been printed – that they never imagined that Israel would act so foolishly [by withdrawing from the Suez Canal], which only opens a breach before the enemy, and the sole reason they exerted pressure was because they had no choice.**

**If he thinks that concessions will increase their favor in Washington’s eyes, he should know that the “finding favor” remains as before, since the reason America pressures them to return land is that they have no choice – they want oil. But they themselves hope that the Jewish**

**nation will act as “a wise and discerning nation,” and do precisely as logic dictates.**

*(sicha 15 Tammuz 5739)*

**A representative came here from Israel. When he was in the capitol, in Washington, when the representative of the journalists wasn’t near him, they asked him: How is it possible? What are you talking about? We never dreamed that you would concede because of our demands. We said it just for appearances’ sake!**

*(sicha VaYeitzei 5740)*

**We are now in a strange time and in a terrible situation: when an Israeli delegation came to Washington and expressed their agreement to give Egypt the oil wells at Alama and the like, the Americans were very surprised: How is this possible? How could you possibly give that up?**

**Even Egypt didn’t imagine that Israel would fulfill the agreement, which from the very start had no authority since the contents are against Jews wherever they are to be found. And whoever signed it is not in charge of that land, for “to Hashem is the land and its entirety,” “and He desired to take it from them and gave it to us.” Even though it is not within the borders of Eretz Yisroel, it is a portion outside of the Land, which protects Eretz Yisroel, and by giving it away it can, Heaven**

forbid, create a situation of “the land will be open before them.”

Even the time established to return the land – they moved it up by a few months. Not only that but they treat it like an “achievement,” since returning the land earlier will cause peace to happen earlier. And they have already calculated that moving the agreement up by some months costs another few million liros, since it was agreed that the oil that Egypt will get from the wells that the Jews themselves dug (and operated with machinery that was bought with Jewish money), they’ll sell back to the Jews, and at a higher price than the usual price for oil.

In general, the entire agreement is against Washington and its allies, who are not interested in the strengthening of Egypt, since then Egypt won’t need the U.S. as much.

They used the quality of “a stiff-necked nation” in order to be stiff-necked against simple logic, against straight thinking, and most importantly, against Torah logic. And they don’t just hand them the territories; they are “mehadrin min ha’mehadrin,” giving it some months earlier than agreed so that they’ll say that Israel are “pursuers of peace.”

The United States is not at all interested in Israel’s standing by the agreement, and not because of “love of Mordechai,” but simply because they don’t want Egypt to manage without its help. (sicha 19 Kislev 5740)

Hashem helped, and that one whom they rely on now published his memoirs. There he writes explicitly (orally, one can argue whether he said it or not, but here he prints it explicitly) that giving away the land (what they gave already and what they plan on giving) is a threat to security (“the land will be easy for them to conquer”). Therefore, he concludes,

they may not give away any more!

The writing of these memoirs, specifically now, is by Divine providence. Since their printing now does not bring him honor and won’t help in the next elections. The reason for printing them is in order to show us from Above, in a clear way, that now everybody knows (since it was written and printed) what America’s real opinion is that from a security standpoint, they cannot give away land. Therefore, the rav cannot explain to his students that he paskens that they should give away land, since this is what the other nation thinks!

On the contrary, the other nation claims that (for security reasons) it is forbidden to give away land!

(sicha Tzav 5741)

#### CONCESSIONS GO UP A NOTCH

A ten-year-old tried to blow himself up with an explosive belt, so people spoke about the intensifying of terror with the Arabs using children to further their aims. This followed their attempt to blow up the port at Ashdod.

If you examine things closely, you see that it’s not only the Arabs who are using extreme methods to attain their goals, and anyway, the Arabs are merely “an axe in the hand of the hewer.” The Arabs are stunned by the madness that has taken hold of the Prime Minister, who is ready to give them everything in exchange for nothing, not even a piece of paper. They are reacting accordingly.

The stepping up of activity is because of us. The Arab reaction is appropriate when you consider our own moves. Today, they state explicitly, that fleeing Gaza is not enough, but they want Ashdod too, since it’s a “conquered city.” The attack in Ashdod proved this clearly, with Hamas saying they will not stop attacking until the



*They used the quality of “a stiff-necked nation” in order to be stiff-necked against simple logic, against straight thinking, and most importantly, against Torah logic. And they don’t just hand them the territories; they are “mehadrin min ha’mehadrin,” giving it some months earlier than agreed so that they’ll say that Israel are “pursuers of peace.”*

Jews leave Ashdod, too.

When talking about upping the ante, let us first talk about ourselves, and our own apathy. It's a frightening apathy, and who knows where it will lead us. We fled from Lebanon because of Hezbollah terror, but don't worry, just as Hezbollah has already entered our country, with Fattah and Hamas it will be that much quicker.

### WHO IS CRAZY?

Knesset member, Professor Aryeh Eldad said last week, at a gathering in Yerushalayim, that he is afraid that Sharon is crazy. This pronouncement made waves, though I didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. Sharon is crazy? Not at all! We all know who he is, what his past is, and how he destroyed 17 yishuvim in Sinai. Chazal say, "when he repeats it, it becomes permissible to him."

Furthermore, Sharon is in a tight spot because of the investigations and indictments. Sharon coolly makes his political moves and is not at all crazy. The one who is crazy, or more accurately, criminal, are those members of Ichud Leumi and Mafdal who give Sharon public support and give the government the ability to carry on. Everybody begs them to leave the government immediately, and not to legitimize and provide a stamp of approval to a government that can do things that won't be able to be remedied. Instead of this, members of Ichud Leumi give him their support and don't participate in no-confidence votes.

What are they waiting for? For him to go to Washington and get America's approval? For soldiers to go there with bulldozers? Then their leaving won't be worth anything. Instead of overthrowing his government and pulling the rug out from under him so he cannot uproot and destroy the yishuvim in the Gaza Strip, Mr. Aryeh Eldad and his

colleagues are giving him the support he needs so badly.

As for you, members of Ichud Leumi: Don't worry, in the end he'll throw you to the dogs too and take the chareidi parties and Labor in order to finish the job of destruction. But this plan will be **inscribed in letters of blood and fire and smoke on your names**. You gave him the support!

Sharon is not crazy. You are. Think about that, Mr. Eldad.

### TRICKSTER AND ROGUE

Remember: "He's good for the Jews?" The fellow who was deified even as he gave away Chevron and went to Wye?

This week, he also joined the plan of withdrawal, though naturally he's playing his own games. He wants certain conditions met – reciprocity, that old magic word with which he sold all of Eretz Yisroel and gave Arafat an infusion. Now he officially joined those who encourage the Prime Minister. He is sure that this is what will put him back in the Prime Minister's seat.

We never placed our trust in this man, and we know that what the Rebbe said – that someone who is willing to concede a foothold in the land is ready to give it all away applies to Mr. Good-for-the Jews, too.

Whoever thought there was a political solution to the situation, sees time and again that there is no natural political solution. The cry that bursts forth from the depths of our hearts to Hashem is that He should immediately bring us the Rebbe, for this will save millions of Jews from danger. As the Rebbe emphasized: Galus is pikuach nefesh.

In these crazy times, we must unite under the clear message of Moshiach.

### WHY DOESN'T ANYBODY SAY ANYTHING?

Back with Camp David, the Rebbe cried out about the silence and lack of reaction about the uprooting of settlements. Look at what happened in Spain after the attack there, when eight million people took to the streets. Spanish citizens quickly threw their head of state out of office, but us? We accept things quietly. We go like sheep to the slaughter.

Our silence is far more serious than what Sharon is doing, because when we are quiet and we don't have the strength to fight, that's when we begin to fall. The Rebbe asked, in an unusual letter from Elul 5741, in the midst of the withdrawal from Sinai, why people sit quietly:

**As far as what you wrote, and without taking away at all from the importance of the plans which you wrote about, you surely know and see yourself how the withdrawing before the goyim continues and at a dizzying pace. And I refer to the retreat of Jews in Eretz Yisroel who also determine the policies as per the territories and the "Camp David" accords (the absolute opposite of the camp of "Dovid"), especially giving away oil wells in exchange for a piece of paper, etc. And as far as my investigating among various groups (a secret investigation, naturally): how is it possible and why doesn't anybody open their mouth? I was told that the people are tired of 33 years of non-stop tension, and there is a (subconscious) response of defensiveness and "desensitization." This applies to leaders and all "the rest" – "he shall sit under his grape vine and his fig tree." The time has come to wake up, since it's our lives.**

The month of Nissan is the month of miracles and salvation. May we see this now!

# SHABBOS WITH CHABAD FOR 300 RELATIVES OF TERROR VICTIMS

About 300 people, relatives of terror victims from Yesha, participated in a “Shabbos with Chabad,” at a hotel in Yerushalayim. Many of these families became personally acquainted with Chabad, following the murder and maiming of family members by terrorists. During the course of the Shabbos, an effort was made to uplift them from their daily sorrows and involve them in true, chassidishe simcha.

The Shabbos was organized with funding from the Jewish community in Rome, thanks to the shliach in Rome, Rabbi Yitzchok Chazan. The Shabbos was organized by his brother, Rabbi Avrohom Chazan, rav and shliach in Lud, and Rabbi Yosef Klein of the Yeshivas Bucharim in Kfar Chabad.

The guest mashpia of the Shabbos was Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gurevitz, mashpia of Yeshivas Ohr Simcha in Kfar Chabad.

During the course of the Shabbos, the participants enjoyed shiurim in chassidus, Friday night and Shabbos day farbrengens, and

most importantly – lots of chassidishe simcha. The children of the guests were taken care of by girls from Beis Rivka in Kfar Chabad and B’nos Menachem in Lud.

On Motzaei Shabbos after Havdala, there was a festive Melaveh Malka emceed by Rabbi Yitzchok Chazan. Representatives of the families spoke and warmly thanked Chabad for their work on behalf of families of terror victims. Mr. Eli Marciano, a police officer from the yishuv Neve-Tzuf, told about the miracle he experienced. His car was sprayed by 26 bullets, he was hit by one of them, and baruch Hashem, he has recovered from his injury.

Mrs. Miki Miller moved the audience with her simple and direct delivery. She said that her husband was killed, leaving her with three children. She remarried Mr. Chaim Miller, whose wife was murdered in an attack, leaving him with three children.

“We did not allow terrorism to destroy our lives, and we built our lives anew. I’m telling you this because I think that my personal

story can give strength and hope to other families. That is the purpose I see in this event, in that we can see how families that went through similar tragedies, have overcome the pain.”

Rabbi Menasheh Yomtov, rav of yishuv Morag in Gush Katif, told of the daily miracles experienced there. He himself was wounded by a mortar and his wife sustained a head injury in a shooting incident. Nevertheless, they happily raise eight children and are about to celebrate their son’s bar mitzva.

The large group from Gush Katif was organized by Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft, director of the Chabad house in Neve Dekalim. He and his family were injured a few months ago in a shooting incident, and baruch Hashem were miraculously saved (as publicized at the time in *Beis Moshiaich*).

Mr. Neeman, representative of the Jewish community in Rome, said he was very moved by seeing the families and he promised to continue helping them.

The Melaveh Malka ended with music and dancing.



The dais at the Melaveh Malka



Rabbi Avrohom Chazan with Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft

# MOSHIACH NOW MAMASH, IN LONDON

At the Beis Moshiach Shul/Chabad House in Stamford Hill in London, run by Rabbi Chaim Yitzchok Cohen with the assistance of Yaakov Shneidman, they are busy year-round with various projects, the most important one being spreading Inyanei Moshiach and Geula. As Purim and then the month of Nissan approached, about which it says, “in Nissan they were redeemed...in Nissan they will be redeemed in the future,” it was decided to initiate a most unique hafatza project.

After much consideration, they thought of an idea for hafatzas ha'Geula. Chazal say, “great is tz'daka for it hastens the Geula,” and the idea is along these lines.

There are three ways to give tz'daka. The first way is to give cash. This is the easiest way, but people don't always have it on hand. Even a Jew who truly desires to hasten the Geula by giving tz'daka is sometimes unable to do so in this manner.

The second way is to write a check. This is simple enough, but everybody agrees that it entails some bother, finding a pen, writing out the words and numbers (which sometimes, is not worth the paper it's written on), signing it, etc. Once again, a Jew wants to hasten the Geula by giving tz'daka but is discouraged from doing so.

The third way is tz'daka coupons or vouchers. These coupons are printed up by tax exempt institutions. The institution is allowed to deduct from taxes of someone who gave coupons to tz'daka that they printed, which enables

you to give tz'daka from tax money. For these reasons and others, most people prefer hastening the Geula by giving tz'daka this way, over the other two options. The mosdos which people generally buy their tz'daka coupons from, in order to distribute, are divided among Agudas Yisroel, Belz, Bobov, and Satmar, among others.

These mosdos charge 10% more than the amount on the coupon as a service charge so that the mosad can pay the costs of printing, etc.

In light of the difficult economic situation in London lately, and the large numbers of fundraisers who enable Jews to hasten the Geula, the minimum value of a coupon is 50 pence or \$1.

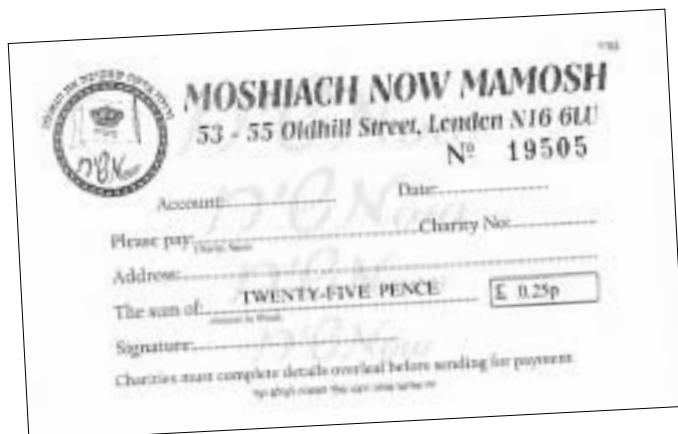
This is where the Chabad house's idea comes in to the picture. Beis Moshiach Shul decided to print coupons (see illustration) worth 25 pence with “Moshiach Now Mamash” written on them, and “Yechi,” of course. Hundreds of people have bought coupons for large amounts of money.

“The fact that we haven't charged a 10% service charge like other mosdos do, when we too are an official tax-exempt charity, has motivated contributors to buy coupons from the Chabad house, thus publicizing the Geula in a unique way,” says Rabbi Chaim Yitzchok Cohen. “A number of distinguished askanim in London who

previously opposed Beis Moshiach Shul, called our office to order coupons. When it comes to money, there's no problem with 'Yechi.'”

Indeed, “great is tz'daka that it hastens the Geula!”

*As Purim and then the month of Nissan approached, about which it says, “in Nissan they were redeemed...in Nissan they will be redeemed in the future,” it was decided to initiate a most unique hafatza project.*



# CHIDON SEIFER HA'MITZVOS

Nearly 3000 children from the United States and Canada participated in the "Chidon Seifer HaMitzvos of the Rambam," a project of Tzivos Hashem in the U.S. which is run by Rabbi Yerachmiel Benjaminson. Tzivos Hashem had booklets prepared for the children to study, and after the early rounds of testing, about 100 talmidim from 77 schools advanced to the finals.

The finals took place in Pittsburgh this year, on Friday, Shabbos, and Sunday – 20-22 Adar. The children were hosted by Lubavitcher families, and the first part of the test, 100 questions, took place Friday morning at the local Chabad center. The children also enjoyed sports and ice-skating.

Before kabbalas Shabbos, Rabbi Yosef Rosenblum, dean of the mosdos in Pittsburgh, addressed the children and thanked them, the principals of the mosdos, and the organizers, for allowing them to host this special event.

On Motzaei Shabbos the children were taken to a sports center where they swam and used the gym, which was followed by pizza and ice cream.

Sunday morning was the big day, when the final stage of the Chidon took place in a hall with the children on the dais facing the judges, principals, and the audience. The Chidon was divided into two parts with the first level for those in grades 5 and 6, and the second level for those in grades 7 and 8. Each level was given the option of picking from three levels of difficulty, with 15 seconds given for the hardest level, 30 seconds for the intermediary level, and 60 seconds for the easiest level.

The children impressed everybody with their vast knowledge of the material and the winners were:

## **CHASSAN HA'MITZVOS OF LEVEL 1:**

Levi Yitzchok Cohen of Cheider Lubavitch in Morristown;  
Chaim Friedman of Cheider Oholei Menachem in Postville, Iowa

## **RUNNERS-UP:**

Yechezkel Eisen of Achei Tmimim in Pittsburgh;  
Yosef Yitzchok Mayahel of Oholei Torah in Crown Heights

## **3RD PLACE:**

Mendy Zirkind of Cheider Menachem in California

## **CHASSAN HA'MITZVOS OF LEVEL 2:**

Shneur Zalman Minkowitz and Meir Pariz of Tomchei Tmimim in Montreal;  
Yosef Levi Wilhelm of Oholei Torah in Crown Heights

## **RUNNERS-UP:**

Shmulik Reitzes of Cheider Lubavitch in Chicago;

Menachem Mendel Sharuf of Cheider Lubavitch in Chicago;

Alter Cohen of Achei Tmimim in Pittsburgh

## **3RD PLACE:**

Menachem Altein of Oholei Torah in Crown Heights;  
Yitzchok Epstein of Achei Tmimim in Pittsburgh;  
Levi Zirkind of Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Crown Heights

## **CHASSAN HAMITZVOS OF LEVEL 3:**

Levi Marinovsky of Torah Academy in Texas;  
Yosef Rivkin of Torah Academy in New Orleans, Louisiana



The children on the dais being tested in the Chidon Mitzvos



# STUDENTS SHOW OFF KNOWLEDGE AT MITZVAH CONTEST IN PITTSBURGH

BY STEPHANIE SIEGEL – PITTCHRON.COM

Three students from Pittsburgh's Yeshiva Schools were among the winners of last weekend's Chidon Sefer HaMitzvos, a contest that brought together students from across the United States and Canada to answer questions about Judaism's 613 mitzvot.

Yescheskel Eisen was a second-place winner for Darga Aleph (level 1), the division for fifth and sixth graders. In Darga Beis (level 2), for seventh and eighth graders, Yitzchok Epstein was a third-place winner and Alter Cohen was a second-place winner.

Seventeen students placed either first, second or third for all divisions.

"It was so close," said Rabbi Yossi Rosenblum, principal of Yeshiva Schools boys school and a national coordinator for the weekend-long event. "Just one or two questions separated the winners."

Students from 13 schools traveled to Pittsburgh for the event, which was sponsored by the Brooklyn-based organization Tzivos Hashem. The contest included a two-and-a-half-hour individual written test and teamwork that consisted of student-created skits that were supposed to incorporate as many commandments as possible and a Jeopardy-style trivia game, which closed the weekend.

The game show, which for many was the highlight of the weekend, packed the Jewish Community Center's ballroom on Sunday afternoon. It was a multimedia production, complete with a computer-generated question board, flashing lights, buzzers, sound effects and music.

Darga Aleph competed first, answering every single question correctly in the first of two rounds.

Darga Beis answered more difficult questions, coming up with some answers that even the judges – three widely respected rabbis – had not thought of.

Rabbis Sholom Ber Baumgarten, Eliezer Wenger and Yitzchok Zirkind judged the quiz show.

Students studied for the competition since the beginning of this school year.

Tzivos Hashem has held the Chidon Sefer HaMitzvos contest (contest on the Rambam's Book of Mitzvot) each year for the past 10 years, but this was the first time a game show format was used. This was the second time Pittsburgh has hosted the event, which is held in a different city each year.

Yeshiva Schools' finish last weekend was in line with past years, according to Rabbi Yisroel Rosenfeld, dean of Yeshiva Schools.

"Over the years Pittsburgh has always been among the first, second and third," he said.

Yeshiva Schools President Bill Rudolph attributed the school's strong finish over the years to the teachers and the community.

"The teachers and the rabbis do a great job," he said. "It's a tribute to Pittsburgh. It's a special community. The teachers are really devoted. It's a nationally renowned school."

He also said that the community benefits from hosting the competition. "Any time you have hundreds of people come to the community it's a plus," he said.

Last weekend's contest was for boys only. The girls' contest is this weekend in Los Angeles.

In addition to the tests last weekend, the students went ice

skating in Schenley Park and participated in a Shabbaton. Everyone visiting from out of town was housed with local families.

"It's more than just the competition," said Chanie Rosenblum, Rosenblum's wife, who also helped coordinate the event. "It's the whole friendship aspect of it."

## **DARGA ALEPH – LEVEL 1**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Rochel Hecht Bais Rivka – New York  
Sara Abelsky Bais Rivka – New York  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place Mushka Korf Bnos Chaya Mushka – Toronto  
Muska Rosenblum Pittsburgh  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Elisheva Guitta Bais Rivka – Montreal  
Chaya Kalmanson Bais Rivka – New York

## **DARGA BEIS – LEVEL 2**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Itta Barber Bais Rivka – New York  
Mussie Lustig Bais Rivka – New York  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place Rochel Leah Gershon Chicago  
Miriam Hyman Pittsburgh  
Bas Sheva Shneur Bais Rivka – Montreal  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Rivka Halperin Bnos Chaya Mushka – Toronto  
Rivka Mussia Rosenthal Pittsburgh  
Fruma Lurie Bais Rivka – Montreal  
Mushka Karp Bais Rivka – New York  
Chanie Eichenblatt Bnos Chaya Muska – Los Angeles

## **DARGA GIMMEL – LEVEL 3**

Chaya Mushka Nemes Torah Academy – New Orleans, LA  
Devora Levin Torah Academy – Palo Alto, CA  
Simcha Benayoun Maimonides Day Schook – Lake Grove, NY  
Yocheved Hecht Torah Academy – Palo Alto, CA

## RABBI CHAIM ARYEH SILBERSTEIN, Z"l

On Wednesday, 10 Adar, Rabbi Chaim Aryeh Silberstein, a distinguished member of Anash in Belgium, passed away at the age of 89.

R' Silberstein was born in Margareten, on the border of Hungary and Romania. His family moved to Belgium where he was raised. When he grew older, he went to study at the Nitra Yeshiva, where he was beloved by all his Rebbeim and friends. He learned with outstanding diligence and combined Torah with yiras Shamayim.

During the Holocaust, when his family fled to France, he became close with Lubavitcher chassidim and even knew the Rebbe before he became Rebbe. He was active in the yeshiva and mosdos of Rabbi Zalman Schneersohn, z"l, and was a madrich and melamed, instilling in his talmidim pure faith and fear of Heaven, despite the difficulties. Among his talmidim of those days are distinguished baalei battim who live today in Belgium, Canada, and the U.S. They owe R' Silberstein both their spiritual and physical lives.

Once, R' Silberstein asked the manager in charge of the hotel where the Rebbe stayed for some time what he could tell him about the Rebbe. The manager said that when the Rebbe first came to the hotel, he suspected him of being a spy. He decided to keep tabs on the Rebbe's comings and goings, and he noticed that each night, a light was on in the Rebbe's room and he could hear voices.

Before reporting him to the police, the manager decided to surreptitiously enter the room and then turn him over to the police. When he opened the door, he saw the Rebbe sitting at the table with s'farim and talking to someone! A fear fell upon him and he could not enter the room. This happened a few nights until he decided not to report him.

\* \* \*

R' Silberstein sat and learned with some

bachurim, when suddenly the Rebbe walked in and sat down, and after the shiur the Rebbe farbrenge with them. That's how R' Silberstein was present at the famous farbrenge in Paris, in which the Rebbe made a Siyum Mishnayos and connected the names of those who learned with the mesechtas they learned.

R' Silberstein married Sarah Masha Sofer, a"h, in France, who was a Holocaust survivor. After a few years, the family returned to Belgium where he raised all nine children with Torah and yiras Shamayim. He was moser nefesh for every detail, loved Torah and

esteemed those who learned it, and always yearned to raise generations of yerei Shamayim and talmidei chachamim. Indeed, he merited to see sons and sons-in-law all outstanding in learning, fear of heaven, marbitzei Torah and Yahadus and askanim.

R' Silberstein had a number of yechidusin with the Rebbe. The first yechidus took place in 5712 and lasted two hours!

He was a businessman with integrity, who was considered one of the distinguished baalei

battim of Antwerp, and a pillar of support of the Chabad community there. He gave Daf Yomi shiurim for decades and completed Shas seven times.

He devoted himself to building the local Yeshiva and was a member of the Vaad HaRuchni. He was known as a special Baal T'filla and served as Baal Korei in the Ousten Beis Midrash in Antwerp for many years.

He was close to, and was esteemed by, all the rabbanim in the city, particularly by Rabbi Chaim Kreisworth, z"l. He also enjoyed a special relationship with Reb Itzikel of Pshevorsk, z"l, who wanted to appoint him as Baal Korei in his beis Midrash. He was also mekurav to Rabbi Koppelman of Lucerne, Switzerland who honored him and even stood up for him when he saw him at a simcha for one of his



grandchildren.

In 5731, before Yom Kippur, he asked one of his children to ask for lekach from the Rebbe for him. Then he decided to go to 770 for Simchas Torah and to ask the Rebbe for lekach himself on Hoshana Rabba.

The Rebbe said to him with a big smile: I already gave your son for you on Erev Yom Kippur. Then the Rebbe gave him lekach and blessed him: You should have a freiliche Yom Tov (as opposed to the usual "g'mar chasima tova").

On that trip, during the farbrengen on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe wanted rabbanim and poskim from all countries of the world to declare as a psak din that Eretz Yisroel belongs solely to the Jewish people, and nobody has permission to give any parts of it away. The Rebbe asked R' Silberstein to represent Belgium. In his great humility, R' Silberstein said that he wasn't a rav, but the Rebbe said: "So be a rav, and I mean this seriously." As a result, R' Silberstein studied for smicha.

R' Silberstein hosted many Lubavitchers in his home. R' Ben-Tzion Shemtov of England was one of the first, and he brought the first pamphlets of *Likkutei Sichos*. From then on, not a Shabbos meal passed without R' Silberstein reviewing a sicha at the table. R' Shmuel Gurevitz of Kfar Chabad, R' Efraim Wolf, R' Yuda Chein, R' Hillel Pevsner from Brunoy, R' Nissan Nemenov, and Rashag, enjoyed his hospitality.

When R' Saadya Lieberov arrived in Antwerp, R'

Silberstein arranged for him to give a *Tanya* shiur after his own Daf Yomi shiur.

When his son, R' Zushe, became engaged, the chassan asked the Rebbe what he should do after he got married. His father had suggested that he live in Belgium and spend half a day working in his diamond business and most of his time on hafatza. The Rebbe accepted this offer and said he should go "for a certain amount of time." This is how a new impetus in shlichus and spreading the wellsprings took place in Belgium.

Many projects took place at of R' Silberstein's home. Some broadcasts of the Rebbe's farbrengens took place there, the Gan Israel day camp was run by his wife, and thousands of mishloach manos were packed in his home.

R' Silberstein also helped fund his son Zushe's Moshiach projects.

Eleven years ago, R' Silberstein moved to Eretz Yisroel with his late wife, a"h, where he continued to learn Torah with simcha and chassidic chayus, as was his way.

He is survived by respected sons and sons-in-law:  
Rabbi Dovid Weiss – Moscow  
Rabbi Moshe Aharon Silberstein – Antwerp  
Rabbi Yisroel Yaakov Katz – New York  
Rabbi Yoel Zushe Silberstein – shliach in Montreal  
Rabbi Moshe Gluziem – London  
Rabbi Moshe Vassershtrom – London  
Rabbi Meir Meyer – Basel  
Rabbi Yonoson Borenstein – Yerushalayim  
Rabbi Eliyahu Yitzchok Silberstein – London

*R' Silberstein had a number of yechidusin with the Rebbe. The first yechidus took place in 5712 and lasted two hours!*

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