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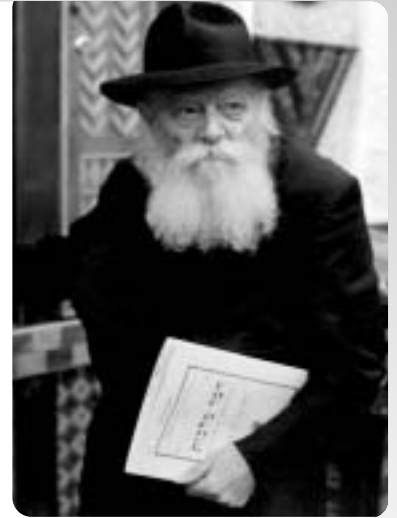
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LONG LIVE THE KING!

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS BALAK; 14TH DAY OF TAMMUZ, 5750

1. Yud-Beis Tammuz, in addition to being the Previous Rebbe's day of redemption, is also his birthday. This year there is a unique dimension to this aspect because it is the 110th anniversary of his birth. The Torah associates the number 110 with Yosef who lived for 110 years, mentioning that fact in two separate verses.

Yosef's lifespan has raised several questions. On one hand, the Talmud states that "the years of Yosef's life was reduced," and indeed, he did not live as long as his father or grandfather. On the other, the Midrash chooses Yosef as an example of long life, stating:

Since he worked hard to honor his father in Egypt, he merited the crown of old age... as it is written: "And Yosef saw Ephraim's great-grandchildren."

It can be explained that there is no contradiction between the two: Compared to his brothers and his ancestors, he did not live long. When compared to an average person, however, his life was prolonged. In addition, Yosef possessed the unique aspect of seeing the third generation of Ephraim's descendants and Menasheh's grandchildren (B'Reishis 50:23; see

The Living Torah). The Torah does not explicitly describe any other figure as being blessed with the fortune of living together with that many generations of his descendants.[124]

Despite this dimension, Yosef's life was, in fact, shorter than that of his brothers and, indeed, less than 120 years. Furthermore, Yosef's life was shorter than that of his father.[125] This fact can be clarified by another concept.

It can be explained that the reason that Yosef merited to see a continuity of his descendants is a result of the fact that Yosef was the first Jew to serve as a king. With the exception of the fact that he did not sit on the throne, he fulfilled all the functions of the monarchy.[126]

Thus, Yosef serves as the source of monarchy for the Jewish people and we find the expressions, "the kingdom of the House of Yosef" and "the Moshiach of the House of Yosef." Even though the ultimate dimension of monarchy is associated with the House of David, who will come from the tribe of Yehudah, that dimension will not be revealed until the Messianic age. Until then, Yosef is supreme and Yehudah receives from him.

[The ultimate expression of

monarchy is seen in the crown. For this reason, the sign of whether a monarch of the House of David was fit for his position was whether the crown fit him or not. A crown, Kesser, in Hebrew, is identified with the S'fira of that name.

There is a connection between this year's commemoration of Yud-Beis Tammuz and the attribute of Kesser. This is the 63rd anniversary of the Previous Rebbe's release from prison. 63 can be divided into 50 (a number identified with Kesser) and 13 which stands for the 13 Attributes of Mercy and the drawing down of their influence to the Jews who are divided into twelve tribes and the tribe of Levi.[127]

The concept of prolonged years and continuity from generation to generation is integrally connected with the concept of monarchy as it is written, "Prolong the king's life, extend his years from generation to generation." Therefore, the Torah explicitly associates these qualities with Yosef. Nevertheless, since the ultimate aspect of monarchy will be revealed in the House of David, Yosef's life was actually not as long as that of his brothers. Furthermore, the Zohar explains that Yosef did not live to be 147, the age to which his father

Yaakov lived, because he gave 37 years of his life to King David, implying that ultimately, the Kingdom of Yosef will lead to the Kingdom of David.[128]

On the basis of the above, we can appreciate the unique dimension of Yud-Beis Tammuz in the present year, the 110th anniversary of the birth of the Previous Rebbe – the Yosef of our generation. Here, it is possible to see the continuity of the generations whose service he inspired, a service that will bring about a spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward and thus, lead to the coming of Moshiach.

This concept can be associated with the redemption of Yud-Beis Tammuz which was of a collective nature, strengthening and encouraging Torah and Yiddishkeit, not only in the Previous Rebbe's generation, but in the generations that follow until the present day. Indeed, we see that as a result of his redemption, the Previous Rebbe was able to reach America, "the lower half of the world." There, he continued to spread Torah and mitzvos and transferred this mission to the coming generations who have expanded this service. This will lead to the ultimate expression of monarchy, the coming of Moshiach whose sovereignty will spread throughout the entire world.

The above concepts receive greater emphasis due to the fact that the Previous Rebbe is the sixth generation[129] of the Chabad N'siim who spread the wellsprings of Chassidus outward, reaching the furthest reaches of the world.

Our Sages relate that there will be six millennia to the existence of the world in its present state: two thousand years of chaos, two thousand years of Torah, and two thousand years of [preparation for] the Messianic age. Thus, the sixth millennia is intended to prepare us for the seventh millennia, the age which is "all Sabbath and rest for eternity."

2. Each year, on one's birthday, it is customary to study the chapter of Psalms associated with the number of years of one's life together with its commentaries. Similarly, this Psalm is recited each day throughout the year. Because of the attachment of Chassidim to the Previous Rebbe, it is proper that they study and recite the Psalm associated with his birthday.

Psalm 111 contains the verse, "He has made a remembrance of His wondrous works." The Tzemach Tzedek comments on this verse:

The concept of prolonged years and continuity from generation to generation is integrally connected with the concept of monarchy as it is written, "Prolong the king's life, extend his years from generation to generation."

Whatever G-d does for the righteous in this world is only a "remembrance" of what He will do for them in the world to come.... Even the miracles of the exodus from Egypt are only a "remembrance" when compared to the miracles which will be in the Messianic era as implied by the verse, "As in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders."

The above receives even greater emphasis this year, 5750, "a year of miracles," which will lead to 5751, whose letters form an acronym for the

Hebrew words meaning, "May this be the year of 'I will show wonders.'" This is further intensified by the connection to this week's Torah portion, Parshas Balak, which contains several allusions to the Messianic redemption. For example, the Rambam writes that the verse, "A star will shoot forth from Yaakov and a staff will arise in Israel," is a reference to Moshiach's coming.

The above concepts can be applied in each of our lives since each Jew has a connection to royalty as our Sages declare, "the Jews are like the sons of kings." Similarly, the Jewish people as a whole are called Yosef and thus, particularly, our generation whose Nasi is named Yosef – and "the Nasi includes the entire generation" – share a connection to the Previous Rebbe, the Yosef of our generation.

Each Jew, within the context of his life in the physical world, receives a crown[130] of kingship from G-d. This gives him the potential to live in a manner of redemption, without being hindered by any of the obstacles of the exile. On the contrary, he rules over his environment and reveals G-d's sovereignty in the world.

To allow a Jew to carry on this service, G-d grants him manifold blessings so that he can live a life of peace and prosperity – in Eretz Yisroel or in the Diaspora – and thus, further his service of Torah and mitzvos. The celebration of Yud-Beis Tammuz this year grants further potential for such service, endowing each Jew with the potential to spread this service to others, "raising up many students," and thus establishing continuity with the generations to come.

When each Jew lives in "a manner of redemption,"[131] the world will be prepared for the ultimate redemption. Then, this, the last generation of exile will become the first generation of redemption.

On a practical level, resolutions should be taken regarding the

following: a) Gifts should be given to tz'daka in multiples of 110 and in multiples of 63; b) The farbrengens of Yud-Beis Tammuz should be continued and, in every place, farbrengens should be held on the 14th and 15th of Tammuz, in the hope that this will transform the 17th of Tammuz into a day of celebration, c) The campaign of public sessions of Torah study should be reinforced, d) The maamer, Asara Sh'Yoshevim released by the Previous Rebbe in connection with Yud-Beis Tammuz should be studied, e) Psalm 111 should be studied together with its commentaries.

These activities will lead to the fulfillment of the promise, "And you shall spread westward, eastward, northward, and southward," spreading G-dliness throughout the world. This will lead to the coming of Moshiach. May it be in the immediate future.

3. At present, the affluence enjoyed by the Jewish community allows the possibility for Rabbis to study Torah without disruption and thus, penetrate to the depth of Torah, deriving practical halachic decisions. It must, however, be emphasized that although, from an abstract perspective, the most challenging aspect of Torah study is to deal with the application of halacha, before actually putting into practice – or advising others to put into practice – one's decisions, it is proper to consult with a Rabbi who has experience in rendering decisions in applied halacha. Indeed, we find that in previous generations, before a Rabbi was allowed to render halachic decisions, in addition to having Smicha, "ordination," he had to have shimush, "internship," during which he assisted a practicing Rabbinical authority.

The influence of the practical application of halacha is evident from the following story concerning an important Rabbi (whose name will not be mentioned lest some of the particulars in the story are not

accurate) who was being tested to see if he was fit for a Rabbinical position. He was asked many questions which he answered correctly with the exception of one, to which he gave an answer that contradicted the views of most other authorities. When questioned about this point, he explained, that G-d has helped him to, as of yet, never err in regard to an actual halachic question. Apparently, the question was being asked merely from a theoretical perspective with no intent of being applied to actual behavior and therefore, his answer was lacking.

May today's Rabbis render the halachic decision of immediate relevance: that the exile has lasted too long and may G-d carry out their decision and bring Moshiach.

Notes:

124. This runs contrary to the popularly accepted belief that there exists – and should exist – a gap between the generations. Judaism has always emphasized the importance of the continuity of tradition, denying the basis for such a gap. Rather, every family should be a single integral entity, communicating and passing down true values from generation to generation.

125. This is somewhat problematic because, of all Yaakov's son's, Yosef is the one most frequently associated with the forefathers as a group. This is brought out by Yosef's inclusion as one of the Ushpizin on Sukkos. According to one order, he follows directly after the forefathers. According to the other order, he is associated with the S'fira of Yesod whose quality is to bring down the revelation of Atzilus (the forefathers) into the lower three spiritual realms.

In this context, it must be noted that Yaakov also did not live to the age of his father or grandfather and made a point of this in his conversation with Pharaoh. (It is, however, problematic how Yaakov knew that he would definitely not live that long. Even if he saw through prophetic vision that he would not reach their age, he should not have made a definite statement to that effect for a positive change can always effect the reality perceived by prophetic vision. Indeed, we find though Yeshayahu, the prophet, had prophesied that King Chizkiyahu would die, through his prayer, he prolonged his life for fifteen years.)

126. There are two aspects to a king. On one hand, the king is uplifted over all his subjects as personified by King Saul, Israel's first king, whose "shoulders were above the heads of the people." On the other hand, the king sits on a throne. This implies that rather than remain upright and thus, above the people, he sits down, implying a process of descent which allows him to address himself to their needs.

Although Yosef did not actually sit on the throne, it can be explained that this quality was lacking in him and found only in kings of the Davidic dynasty.

127. This division is justified by the fact that 13 of the 63 years where in the fifth millennia (from 5687 to 5700) and fifty in the present millennia (5700-5750).

The number 63 is also connected with the Kabbalistic Name of G-d numerically equivalent to 63. This name is associated with the service of refining the world, the task of our generation, to prepare for the revelation of the Name numerically equivalent to 72 in the Messianic age.

128. This will also have a positive influence on the House of Yosef. The Midrash relates that the Moshiach from the House of David will resurrect the Moshiach from the House of Yosef and bring him to his ultimate fulfillment.

129. In the S'firo, the number six is associated with the S'fira of Yesod which is also associated with Yosef, the Previous Rebbe's namesake.

130. This quality is associated with "the crown of Torah." Though this dimension lifts a Jew above the limits of the world, it does not take him away from connection to his fellow Jew. This concept can be explained as follows: The Hebrew word for crown, "keses," is numerically equivalent to 620. The Rabbis connect this with the 613 mitzvos of the Torah and the 7 mitzvos instituted by the Sages. Significantly, there are also 620 letters in the Ten Commandments. The last seven letters spell out the words, "belonging to your fellowman," which emphasize how the concluding aspect of the Ten Commandments and thus of the crown, is not to be lifted above others, but rather to show concern for them.

This concept is related to the fact that the verse, "a star will shoot forth from Yaakov," is associated with the coming of Moshiach and yet, is also interpreted as a reference to each individual Jew. Within each Jew, there is a spark of Moshiach, the level of soul referred to as yechida. The revelation of many individual sparks of Moshiach will prepare the world for the revelation of Moshiach, the ultimate yechida of the entire world.

עזל-טו ב עזל-טו ב

On behalf of the staff of the English and Hebrew departments of *Beis Moshiach Magazine* and its readers all over the world, we would like to congratulate and extend our warmest blessings and wishes to our beloved editor of the English department

Rabbi **Boruch Reuven HaLevy Merkur**

and his dear wife **Channa** sh'yichyu

on the birth of their daughter

Chaya Mushka tichyeh

May you merit much Chassidishe nachas and joy from all your children and may they grow up to be true chassidim, yerei Shamayim, and lamdanim, true soldiers of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach shlita, and may we merit to see the true and complete Redemption NOW!

Long live the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach forever and ever!

The Beis Moshiach Family



AS ONE IN THE LIGHT OF HIS COURTENANCE

BY RABBI SHAUL AXELROD
SHLIACH, GIVAT OLGA, HADERA, ERETZ YISROEL

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

When the Rebbe says that Moshiach Tzidkeinu is already here – this is absolutely clear. The Rebbe shlita’s words are the ultimate truth, no doubt about it. Our question is: What about us? How do we fit into the picture?

There is a story about a chassid who spent Shabbos in a town where the residents were misnagdim. The chassid asked to daven before the amud on Shabbos, but the congregants first wanted to know if he was a chassid or a misnaged. They posed their question in a polite manner, asking him “his opinion on chassidim and misnagdim.” The chassid understood that he had to be very shrewd to get along with these people, and responded cleverly, “The chassidim think about themselves, while misnagdim think about G-d.” They were satisfied with the answer and let him take the amud.

During the final t’filla, the chassid could no longer restrain himself, and he gave himself away in the Kaddish in saying, “V’yatzmach purkanei vikareiv M’shichei.” At the conclusion of davening, they angrily surrounded him and demanded an

explanation in light of what he said on Erev Shabbos.

“I said only the truth,” the chassid explained. “The chassidim are certain about the existence of G-d, but regarding their own existence, they’re not so sure. So, chassidim think about themselves – whether they exist or not. The misnagdim, on the other hand, are quite sure of their own existence, but about G-d, “they think”...

When the Rebbe MH”M says that Moshiach Tzidkeinu is already here, this is absolutely clear. The Rebbe shlita’s words are the ultimate truth, no doubt about it. Our question is: What about us? How do we fit into the picture?

When the Rebbe instructs us “Do everything in your power,” this doesn’t mean that the Rebbe is *ch”v* removing the yoke from his neck,

rather, the Rebbe is bringing us also into the picture, so that we will simply do everything in our power to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

Many have asked about the directive “Do everything in your power”: What exactly should we be doing? How can we bring Moshiach? It seems as if we’re talking about a heavy and sizable task to fulfill, however, the truth is that the answer is much simpler, and is even alluded to in the words, “*Tut altz vahs ir kent.*”

The word “*altz*” (all) symbolizes the concept of unity, and when the Rebbe asks that we do all, it means for us to unite. It’s quite simple: unity brings Moshiach.

During S’firas HaOmer we remember the plague that engulfed the students of Rabbi Akiva, underscoring the importance of having respect for one another. This also serves as a fitting preparation for the holiday of Shavuot, as expressed by what is learned from the Torah Reading for that day: “And Israel encamped” – as one man with one heart. It is important to note that it is this specific detail that connects the Rebbe shlita with bringing the Redemption, as the

well-known saying goes: “*B’ahavas Yisroel navi es ha’goel*” (We will bring the Redeemer with ahavas Yisroel).

It is also appropriate to mention that we even see this on *mivtzaim*. The first mitzva campaign was ahavas Yisroel, and the last is the Moshiach Campaign. This literally represents the concept of “their end stems from their beginning, and their beginning from their end,” i.e., the Redemption will come specifically through ahavas Yisroel.

It’s a clear fact that from the outset, the Rebbe gave this very message to the world. In his first maamer, he outlined the path of the seventh generation: to draw down the Sh’china into this world through the service of *shtus d’kedusha*. The Rebbe shlita states that the Rebbeim carry out themselves what they ask from their chassidim. The Rebbe

shlita illustrated this point by relating to the tremendous ahavas Yisroel of each of the Rebbeim, to the point of total self-sacrifice, as is known.

This fact stands out as we try to understand why the Rebbe MH”M specifically chose this example. Why couldn’t he have brought an illustration in the avoda of *t’filla* displayed by the Rebbeim, or some other expression? It turns out that the Rebbe shlita was giving a clear message here: the *shtus d’kedusha* and all the other lofty matters must be achieved specifically through ahavas Yisroel, in order to draw the main aspect of the Sh’china down into the lower realms.

It is fascinating to note that when we look much deeper into this matter, we reveal that in the earlier generations, the respective leaders

would act in all their strength to bring the Redemption, placing their greatest emphasis upon ahavas Yisroel. Among the most distinguished cases was Rabbi Akiva, who toiled arduously to bring the Redemption, to the point that he declared regarding Bar Kochba: “*Din Hu Malka M’shichei*.” Rabbi Akiva was the one who was known for the famous saying, “Love your fellow as yourself – this is a major principle of the Torah.” Specifically through loving your fellow as yourself brings redemption to the world. Therefore, Rabbi Akiva emphasized this in his battle to bring the Redemption.

In essence, this concept appears in *Tanya*, Ch. 32, where the Alter Rebbe explains that the revelation of G-dliness in this world occurs specifically in an “*asar shalim*,” a place that is whole, without disunity.



Thus, in connection with our discussion, in order to draw down the Sh'china into this world – the True and Complete Redemption – the world must be whole and united.

We find this in connection with Yaakov Avinu, who also worked with all his effort to bring the Redemption, to the point that he even made a vow to build the Beis HaMikdash. It is also important to note the special relationship hinted between Yaakov Avinu and the Third Beis HaMikdash, as is written, “Not as Avrohom, who called it a mountain, not as Yitzchak, who called it a field, but as Yaakov, who called it a house” – the Third Beis HaMikdash.

Yaakov Avinu expressed this ambition when he sent messengers to his brother Eisav to see whether he was ready for the Redemption. Even when the messengers returned with the sad news that “we went to your brother, to Eisav, and he is even coming towards you with four hundred men” – i.e., he is not ready – Yaakov did not give up. He maintained his yearning, as he indicated in his meeting with Eisav, “until I will come to my master at Seir,” something that will only occur, according to Rashi, in the days of Moshiach.

Yaakov saw that Eisav was not ready, yet he continued the avoda of bringing Moshiach on his own. Yaakov wanted to dwell in tranquility, in its proper terms as he knew them, not in the conventional terms of a higher salary or a newer car. He wanted real tranquility, the True and Complete Redemption, and then “there came upon him the wrath of Yosef.”

What was “the wrath of Yosef”? Quite simple – disunity! “and Yosef brought evil reports on them to their father,” and thus on the part of the brothers, “and they could not speak with him peaceably.” The disunity among Yaakov’s sons prevented *ch*”v

the coming of the Redemption.

This is the reason why Yaakov sent Yosef, “Go now and see the welfare of your brothers,” go and see the good in them, find good things instead of “and Yosef brought evil reports on them to their father.”

Here, we observe an amazing connection to our times, “And he sent him to the valley of Chevron.” Rashi explains: “From the deep advice from that tzaddik who is buried in Chevron.” Deep advice, remind you of something? Looking for advice, deep advice – devise a plan on how to bring the Redemption.

Yosef made a conscious effort, however, “And he came to Sh’chem,” and Rashi explains that the kingdom of Dovid HaMelech was divided there. The division remained there, and this drove away the Redemption.

Again, it’s interesting to see the connection to our times. The division of the kingdom of Beis Dovid in Sh’chem began with the prophecy of Achiya HaShiloni, who prophesized on the dissolution of Jewish rule. In connection with this prophecy, the Rebbe explains this as the reason why specifically Achiya HaShiloni had the merit of revealing himself to teach the Baal Shem Tov. Since he was the one who prophesized about the division of the kingdom, it was necessary for him to be the Baal Shem Tov’s teacher, thus beginning the idea of “and there will be one *nasi* for all, and they will be divided no more...”

We continue to accompany Yosef on his journey, when “a man found him...and he said, ‘What do you require?’ – What are you looking for in your brothers? Yosef responded, “I want my brothers,” I want the brotherly love, for this reason, my father sent me. However, the angel replied, “They have traveled on,” according to Rashi, they have

removed themselves from the feelings of brotherhood. It has had no effect.

The happy continuation comes in Parshas Mikeitz, when “Yosef recognized his brothers,” Yosef had truly found the good in his brothers, and even they said, “We are all sons of one man.” They sat together at a chassidic farbrengen, after several years of not seeing one another, and then in Parshas VaYigash: “Please approach me,” and they approached! “And he kissed all his brothers,” “And afterwards, his brothers spoke with him” – the absolute opposite of the days of, “and they could not speak with him peaceably.” Thus, when Yosef saw that the goal had been achieved, and Yaakov Avinu’s desire had been realized, he sent them to say, “And you shall tell my father of my glory,” show him that we have changed from the time of “and they could not...” Indeed, this resulted in, “And the spirit of Yaakov their father was revived (*vate’chi*) from the same root as “Yechi” – *Yechi Adoneinu*.

We then conclude Seifer B’Reishis with Yaakov Avinu’s call to his sons, “And Yaakov called to his sons, and said, ‘Gather together, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the end of days.’” Yaakov Avinu wanted to reveal the ending to them and bring the revelation of Moshiach. How? ‘Gather together, and I will tell you’ – how do you reach the “*hechste tzait*” (ultimate moment)? By gathering together and uniting, and thus bringing the Redemption.

This lengthy interpretation is not for naught. The Rebbe MH”M notes the well-known words of the Arizal, that our generation is a *gilgul* of the souls of the generation that went out of Egypt. We are going through the same trials that they did. Of course, foremost among them is the main trial of, “For this man Moshe, we do not know what has become of him” – we don’t see the leader of the

generation.

We must distinguish here, however, a basic difference. In the generation of the Exodus, there were those who were not privileged to leave Egypt; many died during the plague of darkness. As their trek continued, there were those who didn't make it through the wilderness. For example, there was the stage at the trial of the Golden Calf, when Moshe Rabbeinu told them, "Take each man his sword..." Whoever did not stand up to the test was not privileged to continue. In those days, that's the way things worked – no rationalizations. Later on, we also have cases such as when the Jewish people went back eight stages on their journey, as is known.

However, in our situation, everything is different. It's all the same, yet different... We are undergoing the same trials, yet the manner in which we deal with them is entirely different. In our case, the Rebbe shlita gives up on no one. This parallels the famous response to the Wicked Son in the Pesach Hagada: "If he had been there, he would not have been redeemed." Back in Egypt, there were those who were not privileged to be redeemed, but in our generation, everyone merits the Redemption. The Rebbe even wants those from the plague of darkness. He also wants the spies and the men of Korach. Moshiach wants everyone.

We can see a marvelous expression of this in the D'var Malchus of the past few weeks, beginning with Shabbos Parshas B'Haalos'cha, where the Rebbe describes the leader of the generation: "...the Aharon HaKohen of our generation – my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, leader of the generation – showed openly his love for all the Jewish people."

In Parshas Shlach, the Rebbe continues to explain with amazing clarity and simplicity how the spies

should be given the benefit of the doubt. He explains that they actually fulfilled their mission. True, they made a mistake and added greater detail, but the mission was carried out. They came back and told the Jewish people about the beauty of Eretz Yisroel, exactly as Moshe Rabbeinu wanted them to do when he sent them. They showed them the giant fruits, and spoke about Eretz Yisroel with the utmost praise, thus giving the Jews a longing desire to enter the land. The problem was when they added details regarding the possibility of conquest, "How the people are fierce..."

Yet, they did what Moshe had

***We all want to
succeed in bringing
the long-awaited
revelation, and the
Rebbe shlita has given
us the solution, tut
altz – unite.***

requested. Their description of Eretz Yisroel's beauty was so vivid that Yehoshua bin Nun did not need to send spies for this purpose, since the spies of Moshe had already done so. The Jewish people still remembered well the endearing description of the first spies.

(It is interesting to see this explanation as it appears in the D'var Malchus of the 28th of Sivan 5751: "For it simply cannot be that Moshe Rabbeinu sent spies and *ch"v* the mission was not carried out...")

In Parshas Korach, the Rebbe continues this line of thinking by even defending Korach. He explains that Korach was on a tremendously

high spiritual level and a man of great wisdom, who saw the revelation beyond all measure and limitation, as it will be in the Future to Come – although he too made a mistake. Similarly, we find in other well-known sichos, such as the one regarding Miriam bas Balga, where the Rebbe shlita comes to the defense with a wondrous approach.

The Rebbe essentially illustrates for us the degree to which we can and must give the benefit of the doubt and see the good in everyone with true ahavas Yisroel. The emphasis here is that we should not give up on anyone. This is particularly so in our generation, for the Rebbe emphasizes that now everyone has already done *t'shuva*.

It is interesting to note that in the famous Midrash the Rebbe quotes in connection with the revelation of Moshiach, "the year that Melech HaMoshiach is revealed," it describes how Moshiach agrees to suffer afflictions in order that not one single Jew will be left behind, even those who have yet to be born, etc. We see once more a fascinating side to the conduct of Melech HaMoshiach so that no Jew will be lost.

We all want to succeed in bringing the long-awaited revelation, and the Rebbe shlita has given us the solution, *tut altz* – unite. It is important to explain that we are not talking about coming to agreement on everything. On the contrary, sometimes we have to state openly and clearly that we don't agree on certain issues (*ch"v*). However, it is vital that we think and speak well of one another; this is required of us. It is clear that not everyone has the same opinion, but there must never be a situation where Jews fail to show respect for one another. These two must go together.

However, the question is still asked – How? How is this possible? The Rebbe responds with the

conclusion of the sentence – *vahs ir kent*. It is within your ability.

The Rebbe Rayatz brings a marvelous explanation on this point from the famous saying of the Alter Rebbe in *Tanya*: “And this also I demand from you (*m’maalas’chem*), my beloved friends, please make an effort with all your heart and soul to place love of one’s fellow in your heart. And do not harbor evil feelings against your friend in your heart.”

The Rebbe Rayatz explains: “The section opens with the words ‘And this also I demand from you (*m’maalas’chem*),’ i.e., the Rebbe demands that we bring out and reveal our virtues (*maalos*). The strength flows in a chassid’s bloodstream, the power of *ahavas Yisroel*. The chassid can bring it out and reveal it upon demand. “Do everything in your power” – we have the ability.

This is also apparent from the depth of the Rebbe’s words: “I give the matter over to you!” The Rebbe brings us towards the matter of

The Rebbe MH”M notes the well-known words of the Arizal, that our generation is a gilgul of the souls of the generation that went out of Egypt. We are going through the same trials that they did. Of course, foremost among them is the main trial of, [“For this man Moshe, we do not know what has become of him” – we don’t see the leader of the generation.

Moshiach, the Rebbe awakens within us the inner strengths in order that we can carry out the mission. The Rebbe emphasizes, “I have done my part,” i.e., the Rebbe shlita’s portion in fulfilling the task of drawing down the Sh’china has already been done. However, the revelation of the Sh’china and opening our eyes depends upon us. The world is waiting for us, and thus we have been provided with the necessary strengths.

This is also the meaning of *kabbalas p’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*. What is *p’nei Moshiach*? The *p’nimiyus*. And what is the *p’nimiyus* of Moshiach? *Ahavas Yisroel!*

We must strive with all our ability for unity, as it is within our ability. In the well-known words of the Rebbe, by the very fact that we decide to unite, we will merit to envision the hisgalus of our King, our Moshiach, the Rebbe MH”M, for all see, and we will proclaim before him:

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



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THE HOLY ADMUR: RABBI YISROEL ALTER ZATZAL OF GER (GUR)

From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha

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



PART II

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE REBBE RAYATZ AND THE GERRER REBBE AFTER THE LATTER ARRIVES IN THE HOLY LAND

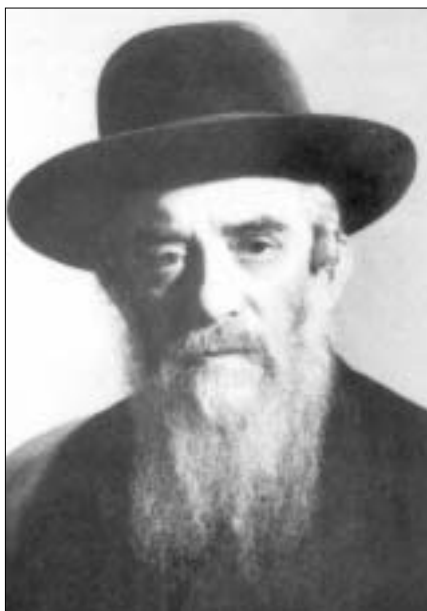
Beginning in 5703 (1942-43), the Rebbe Rayatz and the Gerrer Rebbe, who was already in Jerusalem, worked together in rescuing the children of Jewish refugees from the hands of the Jewish Agency, which would brainwash them into abandoning their religion. This struggle finds expression in numerous letters printed in the Rebbe Rayatz's *Igros Kodesh*. The Rebbe's references to the Gerrer Rebbe in these letters reveals the extent of his deep friendship with him, and his great esteem for him:

On Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5705 (1944-45), the Rebbe Rayatz writes to Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Levin o.b.m, son-in-law of the Gerrer Rebbe. "How is the well-being of my very close friend, his honor, your holy father-in-law *shlita*. Please convey to the *Admur shlita* my blessing for a recovery, length of days and years, and *nachas* from the Jewish people. I ask that he should be so kind as to bless me and my family, for physical and spiritual

well-being.

In a letter dated 7 Menachem-Av 5707 (July 24, 1947) the Rebbe Rayatz writes to the Gerrer Rebbe:

"Your honor and holiness, the friend of G-d and very close friend of mine, the rav and tzaddik, the rav and holy one, the renowned and celebrated . . . son of holy ones, his honorable holiness, our teacher Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai *shlita*." In the letter, the Rebbe blesses the *Admur* on



Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim

the marriage of his granddaughter to the rabbi and chassid Rabbi Moshe Zev Shcheinfield.

In a letter to the chassid Rabbi Chaim Yosef Rosenblum, dated 10 Teives 5708 (December 23, 1947), the Rebbe writes: "I received the latter of the honorable and holy *Admur shlita* of Gur concerning his financial situation, and the financial situation of his followers, and their state of affairs. Surely my friends, *Anash*, are meticulous in their honor of him, and participate in everything that concerns his health. May G-d give him long, good, and pleasant days and years."

"WELCOME"

With the passing of the holy Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai of Ger *zatzal*, on Shavuos 5708 (June 13, 1948), and the succession of his son, Reb Yisroel, followed by the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rayatz, there began a new era of outstanding friendship between the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and the Beis Yisroel (and later, the Beis Yisroel's successors).

In 5716 (1955-56), the Rebbe sent twelve shluchim to the Holy Land to strengthen the study of chassidism there, and the dissemination of the wellsprings outward, and to encourage and uplift *Anash* after the

tragic murder of some yeshiva students of Kfar Chabad at the hands of terrorists. On Sunday, 21 Menachem-Av 5716 (July 29, 1956), the twelve young men visited the Gerrer Rebbe. In a report they later sent the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, they wrote:

“At 8:00 in the evening we visited the Gerrer Rebbe *shlita* together with Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim and Reb Nachum Shmeryahu Sossonkin,. We were there for about ten minutes. He was dressed in silk, a hat, and black socks. He stood the entire time. He went out for a moment, and asked one of the attendants to bring wine and *mezonos*. He cut the *mezonos* and poured the wine himself. We conveyed the Rebbe *shlita*’s regards, and he asked if this was our first visit to the Holy Land. We said that it was, and he said, ‘But not the last.’ He asked why the Rebbe *shlita* does not visit the Holy Land. We answered that on an obvious level this is because of the tremendous amount of work the Rebbe has – work that he cannot abandon for even a moment.

“At one point we told him that we had not yet davened Maariv (and, therefore, could not partake of the refreshments.) He said, ‘A small taste doesn’t matter.’ We then gave him another reason [why it is not a problem]: when there is a group of people, they remind each other [to daven]. One of us mentioned that he heard in the name of a certain chassid that the drinking of *mashkeh* before davening causes one to daven with more enthusiasm. The Gerrer Rebbe said that he heard the opposite – that one should drink *mashkeh* after davening, for the verse says, ‘The ox knows its owner, and the donkey the trough of its master,’ which implies that, after davening, when one sees that he is still an ox, he busies himself with the trough (i.e., *mashkeh*) ...

“We told him that the purpose of

our shlichus is to disseminate the wellsprings outward, and he said, ‘This is something that needs to be inspired and encouraged here.’ When we departed, he said, “May you succeed in your shlichus,” and he asked that we give his regards to the Rebbe *shlita*. One of the shlichim standing near him heard him say quietly: **‘May G-d help that we should be able to say ‘bruchim ha’ba’im’ [welcome] to the Rebbe himself.’**

“We later heard that after we left,



the Gerrer Rebbe told a few of his disciples: ‘You are chassidim!? You are dry wood. *Those* are chassidim!’

“From there we went to visit his yeshiva, S’fas Emes, and we davened Maariv there. A few people asked us to say some word of chassidus. At first, we declined, in order to avoid controversy. But when they persisted, we said that if the *mashgiach*, Rabbi Wexler, would give permission we would say something. Rabbi Wexler gave permission, and Reb Shalom Ber

Shemtov spoke about the learning of chassidus, and the learning of Chabad chassidus in particular.”

“THEY SHOULD NOT STEP OVER THE THRESHOLD OF MY HOME”

When the Rebbe launched the T’fillin Campaign, the Beis Yisroel instructed that an announcement be made in his *beis midrash* about the obligation to assist the campaign through charitable donations. He gave a donation himself for the purchase of *t’fillin* for the activists of the T’fillin stand at the Kosel.

One Torah scholar, who serves today as a Gerrer *rosh kollel*, related to me that at the time, the Gerrer Rebbe said that the Gerrer *bachurim* need not stand in the streets and put *t’fillin* on people. Upon hearing about this, a certain American *Misnaged* was overjoyed, thinking that he could now include the Gerrer Rebbe in his war against the Rebbe.

One day, representatives of this individual came to the Beis Yisroel with a request that he affix his signature to a proclamation against the T’fillin Campaign. When the *Admur*’s attendants told him about the purpose of their visit he said: “I do not want to see them at all. They should leave immediately, and let them not dare step over the threshold of my home.” He then added: “The Lubavitcher Rebbe is a great man; even though this is not the path for our students, he has power to accomplish this with his chassidim. G-d forbid that anyone should treat his great deeds with scorn or worse, issue a proclamation against the campaign.”

When the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach conducted his great struggle against Israeli boats traveling on Shabbos, the Beis Yisroel supported it to such an extent that when he heard that a certain [Gerrer] Torah

scholar was planning to publish a pamphlet containing halachic arguments to permit the boats to travel on Shabbos, he instructed him not to publish it until he received his permission. He relaxed only after the Torah scholar told him, some time later, that he had to hide what he had written.

THE BLESSING OF THE GERRER REBBE

My grandfather, the rav and chassid Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim *zatzal*, related that early one morning, on his way to the mikva in Shikun Chabad in Jerusalem, he met the Beis Yisroel on the sloping street of the Tchibener yeshiva, Koachav Yaakov, in Jerusalem. The *Admur* was taking a pre-dawn walk. The *Admur*, who was taking a pre-dawn walk, greeted him, and inquired about the building and development of Shikun Chabad and its educational institutions. After listening to what my grandfather had to say, the *Admur* gave him a hearty blessing, and said, "Let it be *U'faratzta, U'faratzta!*"

"My grandfather would regularly send a report to the Rebbe, and so, he immediately reported to the Rebbe his encounter with the Gerrer Rebbe, and the blessing that the *Admur* had given him. About two years later, my grandfather had a private audience with the Rebbe, and before he left, the Rebbe said to him: **"Let it be 'U'faratzta, U'faratzta,' like the Gerrer Rebbe said!"**

CONNECTION TO THE REBBE THROUGH THE ELDERLY OF ANASH

In the outstanding forward to *Seifer HaTzetzaim*, the gaon and chassid Rabbi Shmuel Halprin writes as follows:

"The holy gaon, Reb Yisroel of Ger

zatzal, the founder of Gerrer chassidim in Israel following the Holocaust, directed the young men to study certain specific chapters of *Tanya*; the gifted among them even studied *Likkutei Torah*. He once said that there is no *seifer* that compares to the *Tanya* in its awe of G-d. He was very friendly with the Rebbe *shlita*, and very interested in his talks. Many of the Rebbe's [published] talks were later found in his apartment in Chaifa. (I heard this from my friend, Reb Sh. Z. Cohen.) In the period prior to his



passing, the *Admur* told his chassidim that they must learn from Chabad chassidim how to listen to one's Rebbe. (This I heard from Gerrer chassidim.)

"Twice, I had the good fortune of being part of a Chabad contingent that visited him on behalf of the Rebbe *shlita* in connection with the Rebbe's struggle to rectify the 'Who is a Jew?' law. The first time was before the holiday of Shavuos 5731 (May 30, 1971) together with my great uncle,

the rav and gaon, the rav and chassid, Rabbi Ezriel Zelig Slonim *zatzal*. We suggested that the Gerrer Rebbe hold a demonstration in this regard by the Kosel. The foremost speaker at the time was the *gaon* Rabbi Yaakov Betzalel Zulti, the chief rabbi of Jerusalem. At our request, the Gerrer Rebbe promised to help us in this regard, and, on Shabbos, he instructed that an announcement be made in his *beis midrash* that everyone should go to the Torah address of Rabbi Zulti at the Kosel.

"I later participated in another visit to the Gerrer Rebbe *zatzal*, with the gaon Rabbi Schneur Zalman Garelik *zatzal*, who was the rav of Kfar Chabad, and other Chabad rabbis. This visit was made in connection with proclaiming a day of fasting to annul the law." (Forward, *Seifer HaTzetzaim*.)

"Orally, Rabbi Halprin told me that whenever my grandfather, Rabbi Slonim *zatzal*, would come to him the Beis Yisroel would stand up his full height, in my grandfather's honor. He would call him affectionately, "Reb Zelikel."

In *He'aros HaT'mimim V'Anash Melbourne, Australia* (Shabbos VaYechi, 5755) it is related in the name of the gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Fisher *shlita, rosh kollel* of Ger in Brooklyn: 'Our master, the Beis Yisroel, davened according to the *nusach* of the Alter Rebbe (this practice was not seen by the other Gerrer Rebbes.) He did this even when he led the congregation. One of his chassidim once asked if he could emulate his Rebbe and daven with this *nusach*. The Beis Yisroel replied: 'If you daven with this *nusach*, then you also may not open nuts on Shabbos. In other words, if one davens in the *nusach* of the Alter Rebbe, one must also follow the rest of the rulings in his *siddur*.'"

MEMORIES FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

*This was the first time that R' Yosef Menkin reminisced about the Chabad chassidim in Moscow under Soviet rule, when fulfilling any mitzva entailed mesirus nefesh. * After more than 70 years, R' Menkin describes the lives of chassidim in detail, reliving his experiences. * This was the last interview R' Menkin gave, for he passed away on 11 Sivan, at the age of 93, as the article was being prepared for print. * Presented for the Chag HaGeula, Yud-Beis-Yud-Gimmel Tammuz.*

“For seventy years I’ve been guarding my memories of the Chabad chassidim in Moscow. This is the first time that I’m telling about the lives of Chabad chassidim in Moscow before the war.”

This is how R' Yosef Menkin z”l began relating his memories of those terrible years. There was something surrealistic about our sitting together in Rav Menkin’s pleasant home in Kfar HaRoeh, which is near Chadera. We went back in time to Moscow, to those

dark and dreadful years.

One by one, R' Menkin described R' Yisroel Neveler, R' Nissan Nemenov, R' Avrohom Maiyor, R' Chaim Elozor Garelik, and other greats. R' Menkin was 92 when I spoke to him, and he spoke about people and events of long ago, but his memory was clear.

Beis Moshiach readers will remember the article about Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neria, formerly Menkin (issue #441 English section), founder and rosh yeshiva of B'nei

Akiva. Some people suggested that I interview his brother, who knew the chassidim in Moscow, and even met them in labor camps in Siberia.

“He was a witness to the lives of mesirus nefesh of the great chassidim who lived in Moscow. He is one of the last ones who knew that generation of giants,” said one reader.

A few days later, I went to Kfar HaRoeh, where I sat with Rav Menkin, not knowing that this was to be the last interview of his life.

Those were extremely difficult days for the Jews of the Soviet Union, and especially for Chabad chassidim. Arrests, persecution, and exile to Siberia – that was only part of the story. The harassment was daily fare for the chassidim, who had to go underground in order to preserve Torah and mitzvos.

The chassidim, who were a sort of clique unto themselves, managed to preserve Judaism, whether it was because of the education of mesirus nefesh they received in Tomchei T'mimim, or because of the chassidic fraternity, wherein the chassidim strengthened one another with farbrengens and davening together. There were only very few Jews who were *not* Chabad

chassidim who remained Torah observant with mesirus nefesh. One of them was Rav Menkin.

How did you establish a warm relationship with Chabad chassidim at a time when people feared strangers?

The truth is that my connection with Chabad chassidim began with my father, Rabbi Pesachya Menkin, who learned in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch for a year. He learned b'chavrusa with the well-known chassid, Rabbi Yankel Zuravitzer (Moskalik).

Then my father served as rav in the community of Sena for twenty

years. This was a town in Byelorussia, where most of the Jews were Chabad chassidim. Even though he was not a chassid, he was beloved and accepted by all.

I know that when my father wanted the position of rav there, the Chabad chassidim didn't know whether to accept him or not, and they asked the Rebbe Rayatz. The answer was positive. I remember that my father committed to putting on Rabbeinu Tam t'fillin every day, since he was the rav of a Chabad community.

When my father served as rav there, I didn't live in the town, but

in the home of the Chabad rav, Rabbi Gershon Krolik, in Mohilev. I learned sh'chita and bedika from him for three years, and I became acquainted with Chabad customs.

After I finished learning sh'chita in 5689 (1929), I couldn't find work because the government forbade sh'chita. I was 18 years old and had to decide what to do next. I finally decided to go to Moscow in the hopes that something would work out there. I knew that Moscow had a large Jewish community, and there were still shuls that were open. There in the big city I could keep out of the way



“The Rebbe Rayatz had already left the country, but the chassidim kept in touch with him via coded letters. It wasn't easy to send or receive letters from abroad, but when a letter arrived, it was a day of rejoicing. The letter was secretly passed from chassid to chassid, so everybody could read it and touch it.”

of the secret police.

I took the train to Moscow before Rosh HaShana 1930 with the addresses of some Chabad chassidim who knew my father well. I hoped for the best.

* * *

On the train, R' Yosef Menkin met with a Chabad chassid by the name of Rabbi Avrohom Abba Bunin. R' Yosef was amazed to see a Jew with a full beard on the train, for in those days, having a beard was dangerous.

R' Yosef got to know the stranger and quickly discovered that he was a Chabad chassid who lived in Moscow and secretly shechted chickens. R' Avrohom Abba learned that the young bachur wanted to live a religious life in Moscow. When he was convinced that R' Yosef was genuine, he said to him, "Whenever you want, come to my house for a hot and kosher meal."

Young Yosef Menkin lived in an apartment that belonged to his mother's sister, who had left Moscow. The first problem he had to deal with was food. It was difficult to obtain kosher products, and for a while he could only get bread and vegetables.

At his first opportunity, he took up the offer he had gotten on the train, and went to the Bunin home. "Aside from R' Avrohom Abba and his son, R' Alexander, I found some other Chabad chassidim, including shoachim from various cities and towns. Thus, I became acquainted with other chassidim who were constantly in hiding.

"I had to work in order to exist, but I needed to find work that would enable me to be free on Shabbos. Generally speaking, religious Jews worked at home so

they could observe Shabbos, or they found work that didn't conflict with Shabbos observance, such as being watchmen in factories.

"After looking around, I found work in Rabbi Shmuel Velvel Rabinowitz's factory. He was a Chabad chassid whose wife was from Sena. He helped me when I lived in Moscow. The employees of his factory were off on Shabbos, even though this was a dangerous practice, since there could be a



R' Yankel Moskalik-Zuravitzer

sudden inspection.

"I remember R' Shmuel Velvel, who had a long beard which he used to roll up so as not to stand out. He lived in the center of Moscow, and hosted numerous guests. There were chassidim who ate at his house every day. Although he wasn't financially well off, he was gracious to one and all.

"Another chassid who welcomed

me in Moscow was my father's good friend, R' Yankel Zuravitzer. When he first met me, he rejoiced and said, 'Your father was my chavrusa. He was a big *masmid* (diligent student).'

"Rosh HaShana approached and R' Shmuel Velvel invited me to the Yom Tov meals. I davened in the Bolshia Brunia Shul. Today it is a Chabad shul, but in those days it was non-denominational. I met a number of Chabad chassidim there who lived in the area and davened there: R' Shneur Pinsky, R' Zalman Nimotin, R' Simon Yaakovashvili, etc."

* * *

The years R' Yosef spent in Moscow made a deep impression on him. He not only made friends with the chassidim, but he became very close with them. No wonder then that he kept up with them even when he left for Eretz Yisroel. He often attended farbrengens or Chabad simchas. He always wanted to know who had come to Eretz Yisroel and where he lived. Sometimes he traveled north or south in order to meet old friends from Moscow, Chabad chassidim.

What was life like for the Chabad chassidim in Moscow?

"Every move you made was fraught with danger and fear. Every mitzva that was done entailed mesirus nefesh. I lived that life for years and I remember it well.

"Take for example, the chassidim who raised children without having bread in the house, but when it came to *maamud* for the Rebbe, they happily paid. I can picture Rabbi Simon Yaakovashvili who would raise money from everyone and send it to the Rebbe. Everybody gave unhesitatingly. The money ended up going to melamdin who



R' Yosef in his youth in Russia, standing on the right

secretly taught small groups of children throughout the Soviet Union.

“All of them were generous and gave whatever little they had. I



As a child, R' Yosef dreamed of going to Eretz Yisroel, which is why he had this picture taken

“I was released before Sukkos, and when I said goodbye to R' Dovid at his new job, I saw that he had built a little sukka for himself! A sukka in Siberia! I couldn't believe it.”

remember that R' Zalman Nimotin was hospitalized after being in an accident and injuring his leg. Since his father had died and his mother and sister had already left the country for Eretz Yisroel, he had nobody to care for him.

“I went with R' Chaim Romener a”h (Volovik) to Jews who opened

their pockets and hearts and donated money. I bought bread, vegetables and other things, and we brought him the food. I relate this matter-of-factly but nearly everybody was very poor.

“You asked about living with mesirus nefesh. Today it's hard to understand what it was like back then. To go to daven on Shabbos, even on Yom Kippur, you had to be daring. Not everybody could do it. Some Jews had to show up at work, at least to be there, and they came for a quick davening early in the morning, or they went to shul after work and davened with a broken heart. I am not talking about those who gave up on working and earning money so as not to desecrate the Shabbos.

“Every chassid lived a life of mesirus nefesh in his own way. R' Avrohom Abba and R' Boruch Sholom Cohen were shoctim with mesirus nefesh. R' Yankel took care



On a recent visit to Moscow

They exchanged the money and then went on their way. They had walked only a few meters when a car stopped near them and two plainclothes policemen jumped out. They were arrested for having foreign currency. Apparently, the moneychanger had been a secret agent. A few months later, R' Yosef was judged and sentenced to three years in exile.

R' Yosef wasn't willing to describe the interrogations, his suffering while incarcerated, or his exile to Siberia. He only agreed to relate the Chabad part of his story:

"After my arrest, they took away my t'fillin. When I was placed in a cell, I demanded my t'fillin. I don't know why I merited a miracle but they gave me back my t'fillin.

"When I was in the labor camp, I was relatively well set up as a manager in a wood storehouse. I was the only religious Jew there. A half a year later, I heard that among the new prisoners that had arrived, there were three rabbis. I discovered that the three rabbis were three distinguished Chabad chassidim from Rostov: Rabbi

Moshe Medalia, the rav of Rostov, and his two

of the mikva with mesirus nefesh. I remember that he went everywhere with a notepad in his pocket, with the address of the mikva in Moscow written on each page. When he traveled by tram or walked in the street and noticed a Jewish woman, he would hand her a page with the address and disappear. He put himself in real danger in order to promote family purity."

* * *

In 5694 (1934), R' Yosef was exiled to Siberia for three years. He had asked one of the chassidim for financial assistance. The chassid was willing to help, but he said that he had dollars and he needed to exchange them. He suggested that R' Yosef accompany him after Shacharis to the local moneychanger and then he would give him the money.



At their parents' gravesites

Rav Neria on the right and Rav Yosef Menkin on the left



R' Yosef and his brother, R' Neria, at a family gathering

brothers-in-law, Rabbi Mordechai Aharon Friedman and Rabbi Dovid Lobak.



With President Chaim Herzog

“Since I was an old-hand in the camp and had connections, I tried to help them out. I could only see R' Mordechai Aharon and Reb Moshe through the fence, yet I managed to give them sugar and bread. I got R' Dovid work as a watchman in the wood storehouse that I managed. This enabled him to keep Shabbos too.

“He spent a lot of time in my cubicle, where he said T'hillim. We put on t'fillin early in the morning, those t'fillin I had gotten back from the N.K.V.D. guards in Moscow. We obtained kosher food – i.e. bread, fish, and vegetables. Together, we made it through, supporting one another.

“Two years later, as I was going to be freed, I knew that the gentile that would replace me wouldn't treat R' Dovid properly, so I found R' Dovid another job.



“I was released before Sukkos, and when I said goodbye to R’ Dovid at his new job, I saw that he had built a little sukka for himself! A sukka in Siberia! I couldn’t believe it.

“So to answer your question – this was how Chabad chassidim lived lives of mesirus nefesh in Russia!”

* * *

Two of those chassidim who were in the labor camp with R’ Yosef, never left. Rabbi Labak, who had learned in Tomchei T’mimim in Lubavitch, died in the labor camp, while R’ Medalia was killed. May Hashem avenge their blood. R’ Yosef’s account testifies to the lives of these two chassidim who were cut down in their youth for being Chabad chassidim.

In 5697 (1937), R’ Yosef was released after two and a half years

of exile. He returned to Moscow, but it wasn’t the same Moscow he had left.

“Many chassidim had been arrested, imprisoned, and exiled. People were terrified. Nobody dared to go to official shuls and davening took place in secret minyanim.”

Do you remember the connection chassidim had with the Rebbe Rayatz?

“The Rebbe Rayatz had already left the country, but the chassidim kept in touch with him via coded letters. It wasn’t easy to send or receive letters from abroad, but when a letter arrived, it was a day of rejoicing. The letter was secretly passed from chassid to chassid, so everybody could read it and touch it.

“The fear was so great that even I, who frequented the homes of chassidim, was not able to see the

letters.”

* * *

R’ Yosef was constantly followed. The secret police knew that he wasn’t “glatt,” and that he was connected with Chabad chassidim. In 5701 (1941), he was exiled to a labor camp for another three years, where he spent the war. In hindsight, he thanks G-d for being exiled at that time, because it saved him from the war. Furthermore, he had food to eat at a time when tens of thousands perished from starvation.

After WWII, he smuggled across the border via Lvov, and from there he went to Eretz Yisroel. He constantly kept in touch with Chabad chassidim, keeping up with old friends from Moscow and with Chabad families. At every opportunity, he would talk about the mesirus nefesh of Chabad chassidim in those dark days.

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RUSSIAN MELBOURNE

BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

*The F.R.E.E. Chabad house for Russian Jews in Melbourne has an authentic chassidic atmosphere, and above all else, real simcha. * In recent years, they've begun holding programs for young people, and students pack the Chabad house every day of the week. * Rabbi Chaim Elozor Gorelick tells us about the beginning of this shlichus as well as plans for the future.*

The Chabad house for Russian Jews is located in a quiet neighborhood in Melbourne, and is run by Rabbi Chaim Elozor Gorelick. It is housed in a building that can't be missed, mostly because of the large sign on the front which says, "The Lubavitcher Rebbe says: Moshiach is on the way!"

It is not a large building, but it contains quite a bit, starting with a spacious shul, a library, classrooms, a game room for children, and a room used for brissin. The office is located near the entrance to the building, and that is where I met Rabbi Gorelick, a man who radiates warmth.

COMING TO AUSTRALIA

Rabbi Gorelick: My connection

with Australia began with my connection with my wife. She's a Gorevitz from Australia, so even before the wedding in 5733, we considered Australia as a shlichus option.

As was customary in those days, I had a yechidus before my wedding and I asked the Rebbe where I should go on shlichus, since I was from Eretz Yisroel and my wife was from Australia. The Rebbe said we should stay in New York and I should work at F.R.E.E.

In the beginning of the 80's, Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner, shliach in Australia, suggested that I move to Australia in order to teach Russian children in a small yeshiva in

Melbourne, and to work with Russian families.

Since I worked at F.R.E.E. in New York as per the Rebbe's instructions, I wrote to the Rebbe, telling him what Rabbi Groner suggested, and asking whether I should move to Australia.

The Rebbe's answer left no room for doubts: **In Australia, obviously.**

The Rebbe added a list of detailed instructions: **At first (learn with the talmidim in the yeshiva), and after getting acquainted with the situation, you must (get involved with the families with regard to Yiddishkeit). It is not desirable that the yeshiva do this (even if they were able to, since it is necessary that there be kiruv, and therefore the work must be done step by step – and the yeshiva cannot "sanction" this – as is readily understood). And it must a separate organization, (in full cooperation, but unofficially, with the yeshiva, etc.).**

Note: **Speed is praiseworthy... I will mention it at the tziyun.**

GETTING TO KNOW HUNDREDS OF FAMILIES

I began teaching in the yeshiva, a job I still have today, and I began checking out the Russian families in the area. I quickly realized that a huge amount of work awaited me, and I enthusiastically threw myself into my shlichus. I began with the

families of my students, but I quickly met other families.

Within a few months I realized how important it was that the work be structured in an organized manner. You cannot operate under the name “Gorelick.” You need to represent some organization. I asked the Rebbe what to call the mosad, and within a few minutes I got a call from the secretary with the Rebbe’s answer: call the mosad by the same name as the mosad you worked for in New York – F.R.E.E.

And that’s how F.R.E.E. of Melbourne began. As the Rebbe said it should be, it was a separate organization that worked along with the yeshiva. Under the auspices of this organization, we started the first minyan for Russian immigrants. In the first months, the minyan met only on holidays, and we had farbrengens on special days. All this took place in

a room the yeshiva set aside for us.

For nearly seven years, this is how we operated, and since we didn’t have our own building we focused on house-calls and registering children for Chabad schools. We made large public sedarim on Pesach, and performed dozens of brissin throughout the year. Over the years, we managed to reach all the Russian families. I can honestly say that there is no family that doesn’t know me at least by face.

Here is a story about one of these families:

WHAT DOES G-D WANT OF ME?

One of our first mekuravim had a baby boy, and he came to us to make the bris. He was very advanced in his learning about Judaism, and put on t’fillin and kept Shabbos, so it didn’t occur to us to ask him if he himself

had had a bris.

Ten years later, in 5750, his sister came from Russia with her husband and two children. We made a bris for the children, but the husband wasn’t interested in a Jewish connection. A few days later, her brother called me at four in the morning to tell me that his sister was in the hospital with a serious infection, and was attached to machines; the doctors had given up on her.

I immediately sent a fax to the Rebbe, and at Shacharis we said a *Mi Sh’Beirach* for her.

After the davening, I went to the hospital. I met him at her bedside with the entire family. Her condition was critical and they were sure these were her final moments.

The brother turned to me in despair and asked me what we could do. I said that apparently Hashem wanted something from him. Maybe her husband should commit to a mitzva. He said that the husband was completely uninterested in these things, so I said that maybe Hashem wanted *him* to undertake something. I asked him about a number of mitzvos, but he did them all already, so he didn’t understand what Hashem wanted from him. I said he should think about it and surely he would come up with something he needed to do.

Two days later, I had to be at his place of work, and he asked to speak to me privately. How do you do a bris mila, he asked me. At first, I didn’t understand why he was asking. I said – you were at the bris of your son, and you saw what they do, to which he said – yes, but how is it done for an adult? And he told me his secret.

I was shocked. He hadn’t had a bris in Russia, where he was born, and when he came to Australia he was sure that brissin weren’t done on adults. “When you said that Hashem was waiting for me, I was suddenly struck by the thought that perhaps I



could have a bris after all. Maybe *this* is what Hashem is waiting for.”

I told him that brissin on adults were done by a mohel who was also a doctor. The next day he called me and said he was ready, and we did the bris that day. The doctor who did it was amazed by the fact that there was hardly any blood, and he told me to tell this to the man in Russian. The mekurav didn't understand what was so amazing for “Hashem is watching me now.”

That same day, his sister's condition improved, and a few days later, the doctors told the family that she was no longer in danger. The doctors could not explain how she got the infection and what made it disappear. It was an open miracle, they said.

BUYING A BUILDING

In 5747, after the Rebbe spoke a great deal about building Chabad houses, Rabbi Gorelick bought the current building and the work doubled. Rabbi Chaim Serebryanski, then living in Australia, was one of the main people who helped him buy the building.

Once he had a building, Rabbi



Rabbi Chaim Elozor Gorelick

Gorelick set up a large Jewish library, and hundreds of families enjoy the Jewish books in Russian, as well as audio tapes and videos.

The minyan, which had only been held on Shabbos and Yomim Tovim, began operating daily, and included shiurim twice a day, after Shacharis and between Mincha and Maariv. In recent years, there is a chassidus class before davening, and after the davening there is a class on inyanei Moshiach and Geula.

The davening on Shabbos is a

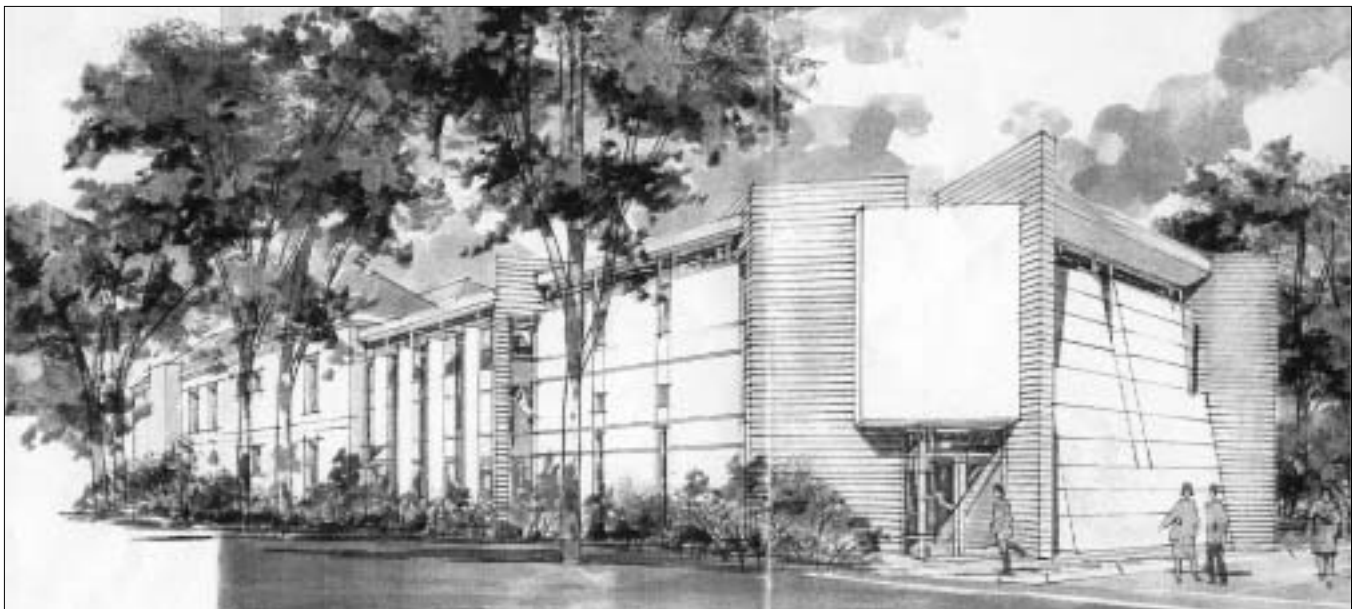
special experience. The shul is packed, and it sometimes happens that there is simply no more space and people stand outside the shul. The members of the community feel that it is their duty to go to shul.

“We reached the point where even young people, who don't attend shiurim and other programs, feel obligated to come to shul on Shabbos,” says Rabbi Gorelick.

Since not all the worshippers are familiar with the davening, and Rabbi Gorelick doesn't want to announce page numbers in the middle of davening, he prepared placards with large numbers, which he changes as they daven. This way, everybody can follow along.

There is a special atmosphere Friday night when dozens of men sing *Lecha Dodi* to the tune of “Yechi.” “It's like 770,” says Rabbi Gorelick happily.

In recent years, the mosad began publishing a weekly brochure for the members of the community, which contains Jewish teachings and daily halachos. A special edition is published before holidays, packed with Jewish content.



Plans for the new building



A pidyon ha'ben at the Chabad house (Rabbi Gorelick is on the left)



Rabbi Boruch Shapiro farbrenging with students at the Chabad house

RETURNING THE HEARTS OF FATHERS THROUGH THEIR CHILDREN

The new building has rooms set aside for a talmud Torah, for children who don't attend Jewish schools. There is also a special program for students. Jewish youth who, in other locations, wouldn't be interested in hearing a word about Judaism, are drawn to the Chabad house. They find the shiurim fascinating.

Additionally, there is a special study program for all Russian-speaking students. The young people who are presently studying at the

Chabad house undertook this project.

The director of the learning program is Russian-born Rabbi Boruch Shapiro, who learned in Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch in Moscow at the end of the 80's. In Tishrei 5751, he went to the Rebbe and then continued studying in Morristown. A year later, his parents moved to Australia. He followed them and enrolled in the yeshiva g'dola. This is when he became acquainted with F.R.E.E., and since he speaks Russian he often helped out.

Then Rabbi Shapiro returned to

New York, where he got married, and right after his wedding he went on shlichus to the kollel in Melbourne. He continued helping out, until Rabbi Gorelick decided that the time had come to expand the mosad and to get young blood to run the learning program.

"We're talking about young people with not even a minimal Jewish background. It's here that they get all their Jewish knowledge," says Rabbi Shapiro. "The classes make a deep impression on them, for they see the beauty in Judaism and get explanations for everything in a pleasant atmosphere. Many of them change direction and switch to Jewish schools, and many more change their entire family's attitude towards Torah and mitzvos.

"A family came here with two children. They asked us to make brissin for the children. I spoke with them and saw that aside from the fact that Shabbos is considered a holy day in Judaism, they knew nothing about Judaism.

"Thanks to the brissin, we got acquainted, and I suggested that they come to classes. The younger brother learned with me for a short time, and then decided to leave. But two years later he came back and decided to become a baal t'shuva. He explained to me that what he learned here didn't allow him peace of mind. For two years, he tried to avoid making a decision, but in the end he decided to live as a Jew in all respects.

"His older brother came here after a trip to the United States. I arranged a shiur with him, but he wasn't interested in organized, ongoing classes. Nevertheless, even the class that took place now and again, had an effect, and he too eventually ended up in yeshiva. We could see the prophecy of "and he will return the heart of the fathers through the children" fulfilled through these brothers. Thanks to them, their father got interested in Judaism and had a

bris at the age of 47.”

Rabbi Shapiro adds, “Another student studied with us for three years but didn’t keep in touch afterwards. After a few years of not seeing him, he came to shul on Rosh HaShana and after Maariv he asked to speak with me. I told him to come home with me and we would talk there.

“When we got to the house he began to tell me that since he left the classes at F.R.E.E. he always wanted to get more involved in Judaism but he couldn’t find the opportunity. He decided that the time had come, and he wanted my guidance.

“For some reason I didn’t get too excited, and I pointed out that on Rosh HaShana everybody wants to improve. The question was: what was he actually doing to get more involved in Yiddishkeit?

“He was insulted by the question and he exclaimed: What do you mean? I put on t’fillin every day. I didn’t forget what I learned with you, including saying Modeh Ani every morning!

“From stories like these I learn how powerful classes in Judaism are,”



The large sign that hangs in front of the Chabad house

concludes Rabbi Shapiro.

Rabbi Gorelick has another story which shows the extent of how close these Jews have become:

“Somebody who got interested in Yiddishkeit opened a dental clinic. A short while later, in the middle of Rosh HaShana, some friends of his came to shul and told him that one of the windows in his clinic had been broken and people could enter and steal expensive equipment. I was very worried by how he would react. After

all, he was a recent baal t’shuva and I thought that despite the holiness of the day, he would go to the police.

“I was very surprised when he continued davening. I figured that, after the davening, he would go take care of the situation, but he didn’t! He finished davening and calmly walked home.

“The next day, the second day of Rosh HaShana, when he came to shul, his friends asked him what the police had done. He looked at them uncomprehendingly and said in utter seriousness, ‘What police are you talking about? On Rosh HaShana there’s no clinic and no police!’

“When I heard that, I realized how strongly connected he was, and I was very touched.”

* * *

In recent years, as their programming grew, the venue became too small, and Rabbi Gorelick started a building campaign. The plans are ready, as are the permits, and a contract was signed as well.

He hopes to complete the work soon and wishes that he can immediately greet Moshiach, now!

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THE DOCTORS AGREE: A MEDICAL MIRACLE

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

“From the Rebbe’s answer, I was sure that my father would recover,” says Refael. “But when I got to the hospital things looked very different. The nurse said, ‘He’s in critical condition. The doctors are very fearful. Hurry, go see him.’”

Sunday evening, Motzaei Rosh Chodesh Sivan, at the Cheirutu home in Nachalat Har Chabad. The phone rang and Refael Cheirutu glanced at the clock as he picked up the phone. On the line was the head (male) nurse at the senior citizens home where his elderly parents lived. Refael immediately tensed up.

“What happened,” he wondered. “If the head nurse is calling me at this hour, it can’t be good.”

The nurse told him that his father, Avrohom Cheirutu, had lost consciousness and was taken to the Ichilov Medical Center in Tel Aviv, unconscious and not breathing.

Refael was shaken up. What happened? When? How is he now? The nurse patiently told him what had happened.

“Your mother left the room for a minute, and when she returned, she saw your father sitting with his head bent over. At first, she thought he was sleeping, and she tried to help him lie down, but then he fell to the floor, his body convulsing. She called the medical staff. We knew the situation

was grave.

“We sent him to the hospital, accompanied by some doctors from the home. The doctors are afraid for his life. I already told your sister, and I am trying to reach your brother. It would seem highly advisable for you to rush to the hospital to see him.”

Refael understood that his father, who would be ninety in another half a year, was in critical condition. Before leaving for the hospital, he wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha that his father recover. He put his letter in volume 14 of the *Igros Kodesh*, and on page 262 it said:

I just received the news about the operation and that his condition improved, and may it continue to improve... The Jewish body is, as our Sages put it, G-d’s holy possession. Indeed, the Creator of the world chose the physical body [of the Jew] over all the other nations, and drew it close with great and extra compassion... May you relate good news...with blessings for a refua and good news.

“From the Rebbe’s answer, I was sure that my father would recover.

Feeling more calm, I left for Tel Aviv, strong in my faith that my father would soon recover and be released from the hospital,” says Refael.

“But when I got to the hospital things looked very different. I quickly went to his ward and in the entrance to the department I met a nurse. I asked her where Avrohom Cheirutu was and she replied with a question, ‘Are you his son?’

“I said that I was, and she said, ‘He’s in critical condition. The doctors are very fearful. Hurry, go see him.’”

“I went to his room where I met the doctor. She explained to me what was going on. ‘We found water in his lungs, which is a serious medical condition that can have an immediate impact on the functioning of the respiratory system. He is unconscious and is not breathing on his own. Add to that his advanced age... It is hard to say this, but there isn’t much we can do. And we still haven’t found the reason why he has water in his lungs, which is why his treatment is being delayed.’

“Before she left the room she said, ‘I say this sadly, but you should expect the worst.’”

“I didn’t know what to think. The doctor had given her learned opinion, but the Rebbe had said the situation would improve. The Rebbe had given his blessings for a refua and good news!

“I could see that my father was attached to many machines. He was on a respirator because he couldn’t

breathe on his own, not even partially. It was painful to see him lying there like that, attached to machines, in critical condition.

"I sat near my father's bed and spoke to him. I knew that even if he couldn't hear me with his ears, his neshama heard me.

"Abba, you have a bracha from the Rebbe MH"M, and with Hashem's help your condition will improve, as the Rebbe said."

"I began saying T'hillim with great emotion, pleading that the Rebbe's bracha be realized immediately. It was a great test for me. The Rebbe had said things would improve, and I believed that the Rebbe's bracha would be fulfilled, yet other thoughts plagued me as well. I tried to get a hold of myself, saying: Think positively, and it will be good. I must believe in the Rebbe's bracha that Abba will get better.

"However, the evil inclination didn't give up on me that quickly; he tried again and again to break my wall of faith. In the meantime, I went to my car and brought a picture of the Rebbe and the pushka, which I put near my father's bed.

"Two more hours of saying T'hillim, as my thoughts raced. Then I heard a movement from the bed. I pinched

"I didn't know what to think. The doctor had given her learned opinion, but the Rebbe had said the situation would improve. The Rebbe had given his blessings for a refua and good news!"

myself to be sure I wasn't dreaming. Abba was moving in bed! I went closer and the unbelievable happened: Abba was regaining consciousness!

"It's too early to get excited," said the doctor, 'because he's still not breathing on his own.' The doctor could not explain why he had regained consciousness, but stressed that his condition was still critical.

"Towards morning I tried to catch a nap. I drowsed, unable to sleep properly while my father was in this condition. As I drifted, I thought I could hear my father breathing. I went

over to him and saw that he was breathing on his own.

"I called the doctors and after they checked him thoroughly, he was taken off the respirator and began to talk to me. It was hard to believe that just hours before, they had told me to anticipate the worst. I could see the Rebbe's bracha coming true!

"I told Abba what had happened since he had lost consciousness, and when I told him about the Rebbe's answer, he was very pleased. As time went on, his condition continued to improve, as the Rebbe said it would.

"In another few hours I met with the doctors, who told me that his condition had improved rapidly, and now they would try a certain treatment in order to extract the water from his lungs. The first treatment didn't work, but the second one worked faster than the doctors had hoped. Only two days had passed since he was hospitalized and Abba was released from the hospital!

"The doctors told me that they could not explain how a man of his age, who had just been unconscious and on a respirator, with water in his lungs, was now fine. 'A great miracle happened here,' they said in unison.

"And I knew that the Rebbe's bracha was fulfilled."

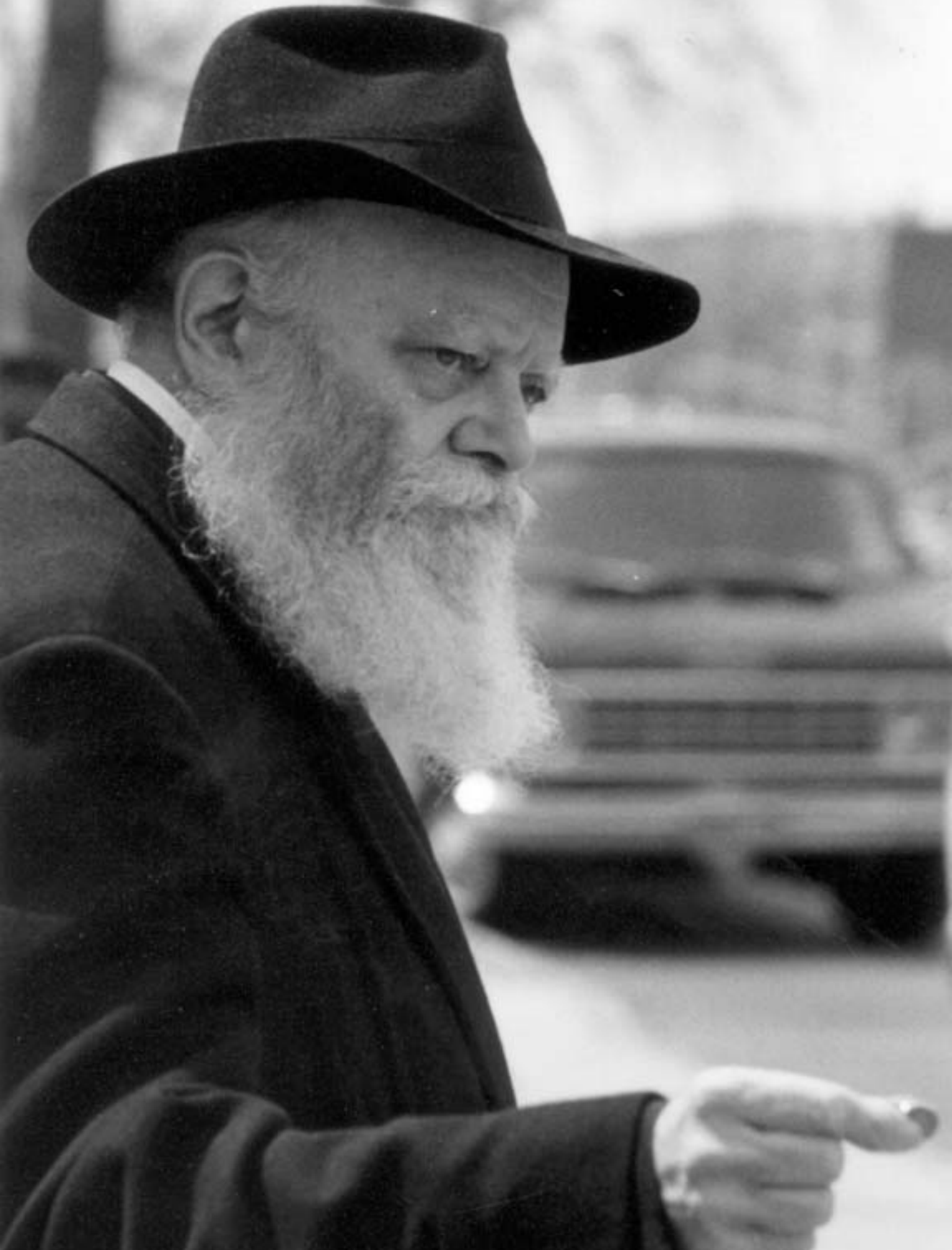


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BECOMING A LUBAVITCHER CHASSID – AFTER GIMMEL TAMMUZ

BY YISRAEL YEHUDA

*They are four young men who look like long-time Lubavitchers, but are actually recent baalei t'shuva. Each of them experienced Divine providence that led them to Chabad and the Rebbe MH"M. * The four men share their personal stories, and explain what attracted them to Lubavitch after Gimmel Tammuz. * They describe their feelings of hiskashrus to the Rebbe, despite their never having seen the Rebbe, and how the topic of Geula played a role in their being observant * They also respond to the question: Does identifying the Rebbe as Moshiach turn people off or appeal to them?*

PARTICIPANTS:

Nir Pinto
Roy Elitzur
Ofer Krifur
Chaim Chadad

Please describe your backgrounds.

Ofer Krifur: I was born in Yerushalayim and raised in a religious-nationalist home. I eventually left religion behind because I saw it as a system of illogical laws with G-d as the taskmaster. I switched to a secular school for twelfth grade. In the army, I served in the paratroopers division, a routine service, and then, like many Israelis, I decided to go out and see the world.

I went to Switzerland, where I worked in security, and after saving up enough money, I went to South America, where I toured for eight months. I spent some time in the U.S. too. Then I went back to Eretz Yisroel, where I was accepted at a technical school, though I hopped over to Switzerland every now and then to make money.

In Switzerland, I became friendly with one of my co-workers, a gentile.



From right to left: Chaim Chadad, Ofer Krifur, and Nir Pinto

We spent a lot of time together and each time I went to Switzerland, he was happy to see me. One day, he said to me, “You know, Jews are the chosen people!” He even backed up what he said and quoted verses from Tanach to prove it.

I explained to him that Jews are like everybody else, and there is no difference between them and other nations. After many arguments, the gentile convinced me that we are in fact the chosen people.

I was amazed by his knowledge of Tanach, and this motivated me to start learning. I took a Tanach and began studying it, starting from the beginning, from B'Reishis. I quickly realized that it needed to be learned with a commentary, so I began learning Rashi.

In addition to Tanach, I found other Jewish books, which I studied avidly. Naturally, I knew nothing about Jewish literature, and so when I came across a volume of the Rambam's *Guide for the Perplexed*, I regarded it as an ordinary book. I was particularly impressed by the Rambam's explanations in which he describes Hashem as not only divested of materiality but also alive and active. It ignited a spark of closeness to a great and impossible-to-describe Being.

I went back to school. In 5759 (1999), I was part of the big student strike that took place at that time. It was a huge strike of all the students around the country, and they were talking about a citizen's revolution. I was captivated at the time by what

seemed to me a pure ideology of aid to the weak and the poor, and I was enthusiastically involved. Yet it was through this ideology that I began to realize that I was living in a world of lies. I saw that they all lied – the media, the government, and even the student leaders. They all spoke big, but thought solely of their own interests.

Chaim Chadad: My family is not religious, though it's a terrific family, and very warm. Our connection to Judaism was expressed in our simple faith in G-d, in the uniqueness of Judaism, and Jewish pride. Hashem was a simple reality in our house. We made Kiddush (still do) and observed the holidays, etc. When I studied for my bar mitzva I was really inspired and I put on t'fillin for a while, but it

was “Judaism-lite” and not seen as obligatory.

I served in Givati in the army, and towards the end of my army duty I had an additional inspiration. This was because I was down about my environment and the guys I lived with, and I began to keep some mitzvos in the hopes that Hashem would extricate me from my situation. For a while, I kept Shabbos, t’fillin, etc., but in the army it was very difficult to keep mitzvos without a serious commitment, and I stopped after a while.

When I finished my army service, I went to India, which had been the land of my dreams since I was fifteen. I had always dreamed of the spirituality of India and the fascinating life there. I had ritual at home, but I considered it burdensome. I began working to save up money for my flight and trip.

I went to India, Nepal, and to Thailand and Laos. I encountered Chabad for the first time in Delhi. At that time, Judaism held no interest for me, so I paid it no attention. I continued traveling until I got to Dramsala. I lived with friends in a picturesque village called Baksu, which was below the city, a half hour walk from the city.

Nir Pinto: I had an ordinary life in which I went to elementary school, high school, and the army. After the army, I began learning computer programming, hoping to make this my lifetime profession. I expected my future to be the same as that of any other normal person: I would own a car, go to work, get a degree. Although I led such an ordinary life, I didn’t feel good inside. Whatever I did to feel good, didn’t give me the anticipated peace of mind.

One day I decided to go to the land of mysticism and spirituality – India! You can be swallowed up among the millions of Indians and live in peace. I was there for half a

year and that is where I discovered my inner world of emotions.

I am generally very intellectual. I had applied my intellect constantly in science and math, and therefore, even my spiritual seeking was intellectual.

In India I discovered various cultures and meditation, and I found them enthralling. They even fit with my intellectual world. It also led me to discover my emotional world, and this was new and very interesting to me.

When my visa expired, I returned to Eretz Yisroel, hoping I could live like a normal person after discovering my emotional world. But that which was lacking in my world didn’t allow me to rest, and this led me, after only two months, to the Indian embassy and the travel agent, with no plans on returning!

Since I had left behind structure and time and I wanted to remain in India forever, I leisurely made my way from place to place. I didn’t recognize the concept of “wasting time,” especially since everything moves slowly in India.

I struggled through intellectual realms that I hadn’t known about previously, and pushed to the limits of my abilities. I finally arrived at the conclusion which in Judaism is called “G-d’s unity,” though naturally, this wasn’t my exact line of thinking. I slowly came to understand that reality has a source, but I couldn’t work it through intellectually to know whether it was one source, or two, three, or four.

Since my intellect couldn’t figure it out, this was the first time that I used my free choice, and in a totally arbitrary way I decided that the Being that runs the world is One. It just seemed that way to me.

Apparently, this is what eventually led to the revolution in my life, but at the time, this conclusion didn’t lead to anything practical; it remained an intellectual exercise.

Roy Elitzur: I am from Kfar HaNagid, a wonderful place – not religious. I was a bit “crazy” as a kid, but I went through the system, Nachal, Intelligence. After the army, I worked, and then I went to the Far East and Europe and returned home. I grew bored again and went to Africa, Europe, and the Far East. That’s when I began really connecting to nature.

What was it that brought you to Judaism and Chabad?

Ofer: Following my disappointment with the failed student uprising, I continued studying Judaism, which I had begun before. The greater my awareness of the lies around me, the more I realized that there is truth somewhere. I decided to seek it and to explore different cultures.

I went to India and Nepal, where I participated in various cultures, until I got to Arachim [a non-chassidic kiruv organization]. They gave me rational answers to questions that bothered me, though their answers lacked the depth of chassidus. Nevertheless, I felt that I finally had firm ground to stand on.

I went back to Switzerland to work, and then returned to India. It was there that I met Chabad. Rabbi Shimmy Goldstein and Rabbi Dror Moshe Shaul were in Dramsala. Through Dror I met Nir, who is sitting here with us today. I stayed there a while, and like many other tourists, I visited the Chabad house every now and then. I had long conversations with the shluchim, and this led to my final decision to leave my lifestyle and go to yeshiva.

I returned to Eretz Yisroel and was accepted in the yeshiva in Tzfat, but I had a hard time with the “Rebbe worship,” as I called it then. I understood that there is a G-d and we need to pray to Him and obey Him. Okay, so there is a Rebbe, but I couldn’t make him into something



OFER KRIFUR: Among other groups, they learn that Geula will occur one day. In Chabad, you experience Geula in sichos, maamarim, and encounters with shluchim. It's all about getting ready for Geula, which will happen imminently.

central in my life. I left Tzfas and transferred to Yeshivas Ohr Yakar. Then I tried my luck in the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, but it was intercession and hardly anybody was there. I couldn't get into things because there was no learning atmosphere. I finally

went to the best Litvish-Sefardi baal t'shuva yeshiva, yeshivas Netivot Olam, in B'nei Brak.

In order to be accepted there, you have to be interviewed by the rosh yeshiva. When he asked me where I was coming from, I told him that I

had previously learned in Chabad. He asked me why I had come to him, and I said that it hadn't worked out for me there.

The rosh yeshiva smiled, and naturally, he was happy to accept me in his yeshiva. He made one condition though, and that was that I shouldn't learn chassidus in yeshiva. I agreed.

I stayed there a while and enjoyed the learning very much, but after having had a taste of chassidus, I found it hard not to learn it. I finally couldn't take it anymore and I began learning *Tanya* in my room. My roommate was an extremist and every time he noticed me with the *Tanya*, he made a fuss and tried to disturb me. Apparently, he also snitched to the hanhala about my crime. It may sound a bit funny, but in our generation, I had to learn chassidus underground!

At a certain point, I began to feel uncomfortable about disobeying the hanhala, so after much hesitation, I approached the rosh yeshiva and told him that I was learning *Tanya*. I told him that if this was unacceptable, I was ready to leave yeshiva. The rosh yeshiva said I could learn *Tanya* on condition that I learned it by myself, in my room. He said that he didn't want others to learn chassidus and "fly the coop," as he put it.

I continued learning in yeshiva, but I didn't keep my promise. I influenced others and began going to Heichal Menachem in B'nei Brak to learn there. Occasionally I would go to Rechovot to attend shiurim given by Rabbi Dror Moshe Shaul, who spent some time in Eretz Yisroel and some time in India.

When I delved deeper into chassidus, I understood that you can't learn chassidus alone, so I decided to leave that yeshiva and look for another place where I could learn chassidus openly. I left yeshiva with the excuse that I needed money, and I

went to Switzerland, where I worked again. Tishrei time, I suddenly decided – and I have no idea where this desire and decision came from – to fly to the Rebbe.

It was a week after the Twin Towers were destroyed. All flights to the U.S. were grounded and the list of people waiting for flights was enormous. I called an Israeli travel agent in Switzerland and asked him to arrange me a ticket to the U.S. He said he would try.

A short time later, he got back to me and said there was absolutely nothing. I asked him whether he could check the American airline Continental, because their flights were the cheapest. The travel agent laughed at me and said it was pointless to try but he would do so anyway.

Apparently, the Rebbe wanted me with him for Tishrei, for the travel agent found me a flight! I regarded this as incredible *hashgacha pratis*, and a sign from Heaven that my plans were good.

I arrived at 770 and stayed there all of Tishrei. From that point on, things went smoothly. I met the Arad family that runs the yeshiva Daat in Rechovot, and I went to that yeshiva. Since then, by the way, I managed to work again in Switzerland and organize two seminars on chassidus, in conjunction with the local Chabad House.

Chaim: As I said earlier, I lived in a little village in India, near Dramsala. One day, one of my friends needed something from the Chabad house, and we went over there. He spoke with the rav, while I stood there and looked around. A flyer that announced a course in Kabbalistic Meditation caught my eye. I was very curious about it and asked what it was about. I was told that the course had already started, but another course would begin in a week. Since I was going to be leaving in a week,

the next course wouldn't work for me. I said thanks and left.

I ended up staying another week, and so I decided to check out the course. I went to the Chabad house, but for some reason it was strangely quiet. The rav's wife told me that her husband would be available shortly, and a few minutes later he came in. He told me that they had moved up their flight to Eretz Yisroel, and had canceled the next course.

His wife refunded my money, but the rav suddenly suggested, "Maybe – until my flight five days from now – the two of us should have a course for ourselves, alone?"

I liked the idea and agreed. (Smiling): Hashem knows that I don't like a tumult, and He arranged a private course for me that was peaceful and quiet.

Every morning I rode my motorcycle from the village to the city where I sat with Rabbi Dror Moshe Shaul for a private course. He did a great job explaining the nature of the soul, etc., from a book whose name I can't remember.

After five days of learning, the rav left and I continued touring. The course had given me back the spark for Judaism that I had lost during my travels. Rav Dror had given me a Kiddush cup, a bentcher, a *Tanya*, and a picture of the Rebbe.

I began making Kiddush on Friday night. I remember how on Fridays we would go to the Indians and ask them to arrange two *chapatim* (Indian bread) for us to use as challa, we would light candles, and I would make Kiddush on grape juice or beer. Those were special days of avodas Hashem with real *t'mimus*.

As I continued traveling, I met a fisherman by the name of Shimon, who had thirty years of experience in fishing. He was a very serious person, and he also had a simple faith in G-d. We spoke a lot about the subject, in very simple terms, and it was a

probably another step along the way for me towards religious observance.

I had mixed feelings, as the date for me to be heading back to Eretz Yisroel approached ever closer. I looked at the world around me in a different way, recognizing a spiritual reality. I tried to search and understand myself and the world from my new vantage point.

I once took an Indian tour bus. The radio was on, as usual, and it played very loud Indian music. Hordes of Indians were packed on the bus. I remember that I closed my eyes for a moment and suddenly pictured a religious bachur wearing a hat and suit, standing and davening, and I could see that it was me...

When I got home, the first thing I did was look for the t'fillin I had left in my room, and put them on. For the next month, I went through a process of inner change. I still didn't fully understand what was happening to me and what I felt. My brief encounter with Breslov chassidus didn't calm me down.

One day, I went to the Chabad house in western Rishon L'Tziyon, run by Rabbi Pinchas Mamon, to have mezuzos checked. Pinchas and I hit it off immediately. We kept up with each other for over a year with classes and farbrengens. I got more involved. I knew what a Rebbe is, and D'var Malchus, but I still felt that something was missing.

They kept pressuring me to go to the Rebbe since it was a Hakhel year, but for some reason it didn't sit well with me. Yet I felt I was standing in one place when it came to avodas Hashem. I kept having ups and downs and I felt that I had to do something additional in order to clinch things.

Finally, around Tammuz 5762, I went to the U.S. where I stayed with a good friend whom I hadn't seen in two years. It was 3 Tammuz when I told my friend that we had to go to



NIR PINTO: It was only after my last trip that I began to recall what I had always believed, that Judaism is the truth. The real beginning, on the level of thought and action, was the simple feeling that Moshiach is coming. I felt that the movie, which is this world, is ending, and that everything up until now is about to end and change.

the Rebbe that day. Although this friend lived in New York for two years, he had never gone to the

Rebbe. The Tamim, Shai Ramati, would regularly visit him on Fridays and put t'fillin on him. We decided to

go to 770 where we were sure to meet Shai who would take care of us.

We took the subway to Brooklyn, and as soon as we emerged from the station our feelings changed. It was a different atmosphere. We felt that even the light of day was different than ordinary light. We walked towards the entrance of 770, where there were many people, and we stood there, about to enter. But something stopped us. Even now, I cannot explain it, but we just couldn't enter 770. We became very emotional and broke into a sweat.

We took a walk and then returned to 770, and finally entered. I remember that as soon as we entered, we felt an inner happiness come over us. We simply felt at home. We davened Mincha and from then on, I didn't leave the place. I went there a few times a week in order to learn with the bachurim there.

When I returned to Eretz Yisroel, I went to yeshiva, feeling spiritually alive.

Nir: As I said, my life in India was extremely slow-paced and I traveled over nearly all of India. I went to Calcutta where you can get daily flights to Thailand. I wanted to go to Thailand but something stopped me from paying for a ticket. I kept feeling that I had to return to Dramsala where I had spent a long time at the beginning of my tour, (there, at least, I wasn't as turned off by the environment). I finally gave in to that feeling and took a train to Dramsala, a three day trip. I went to a café, which was the main hangout for all the tourists. Naturally, 90% of them are Israelis, and they have nicknamed the café "HaKibbutz."

I noticed a chareidi Jew with a hat and jacket, walking with a cute redheaded baby, about a year old. The man came up the steps, went to the balcony of the restaurant, and wanted to hang up a flyer on the notice board. Since he was holding

the baby, he wasn't able to hang the flyer, and he asked me to hold the baby, which I did. Later on, I learned that this was something Dror Moshe Shaul did regularly, in order to play on our heartstrings.

As he hung up the sign, he asked me, "Why don't you come to the Yud-Alef Nissan farbrengen we're making?" I gave him a non-committal answer, "If I can, I'll come." I ended up going to the farbrengen where the shliach greeted me warmly. At the end of the farbrengen, he told me that he planned on starting a course. This was the first course he offered. I knew that I had nothing to do during the day that nothing interested me, and that this sounded intriguing, yet Dror wanted me to come for five days, from morning to night, and I knew there was no way I could commit to that kind of schedule.

The day the course began, I woke up late, much later than the time the course was scheduled to begin. I met a friend and we decided to go to the city and stroll around. On our way down, we met a group of people, headed by Dror. When Dror saw me, He smiled and suggested that I join them for "meditation on the greatness of G-d in nature."

Back in Eretz Yisroel, Dror is known as an experienced nature guide, as well as a survivalist instructor. Since I am also a nature-lover, I decided to join them. This didn't obligate me in any way, and I extracted a promise from him that I could come and go as I pleased. After that, I took another seven courses.

During my stay at the Chabad house, I finally met someone on a level with whom I could debate. I actually met someone who could answer me, providing reasonable explanations for the meaning of life.

When I left India, Dror supplied me with t'fillin, tzitzis, a *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* and a *Chitas*. The fact that he gave me a pair of t'fillin made

me put them on for a week, but no longer.

I returned to Eretz Yisroel with no plans on living a life of Torah and mitzvos, but I knew that chassidus was a deep spiritual world worth exploring further. I had to undergo additional instances of amazing Divine providence before I realized that I had to go to yeshiva, and then I ended up in the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv. You can say that I had no choice but to be in yeshiva, due to my circumstances, but baruch Hashem, it was a great chesed that was done for me.

Roy: Throughout my life, I knew that Judaism was the truth, but as I traveled, I began to forget this, as I took a great interest in eastern cultures. It was only after my last trip that I began to recall what I had always believed, that Judaism is the truth.

The real beginning, on the level of thought and action, was the simple feeling that Moshiach is coming. I felt that the movie, which is this world, is ending, and that everything up until now is about to end and change. This came from deep contemplation of what is going on in the world.

At this time, I had many conversations with friends about G-d, and about an otherworldly reality. This was still without meeting anybody religious. From these conversations, I realized that this is what I believe, but believing it didn't get me anywhere.

In one of these conversations, a friend said: if you believe in this, why do you live the way you live? This question hit home and from that point on I began looking at things differently. I realized that I was living a contradiction.

Following this began a period in which I actively looked into Judaism, and went to Shorashim and Arachim. I had begun keeping Shabbos before that. I didn't know exactly what

Shabbos is or how to keep Shabbos, but at least I didn't travel or light a fire.

Then I attended a session at Arachim, after a friend recommended them to me as a group of scientists who prove the existence of G-d through science (today, baruch Hashem, I don't believe in G-d because of rational explanations alone). At Arachim they really did prove there is a G-d, and I began to look for a place to do more serious learning.

They sent me to a yeshiva of Lev L'Achim, where I learned for a while. I remember that at first I was taken aback by the fact that there are so many different groups among Jews, but then I learned that each one has its particular approach and I began to pray that I would find the right path.

I didn't last there too long, and tried other yeshivos, but I didn't find my place there either. I decided to go to Shorashim on Sheinken street in Tel Aviv, where they also learn chassidus. I met Micky Yosefy who gave a very interesting shiur. After the shiur, we spoke at length, and when he heard that I live near Rechovot, he sent me to Yeshivas Daas.

At this time, I had a question that had bothered me for a long time, and when I got to Daas and joined the first shiur, I got the answer I was looking for! I realized this wasn't happenstance, and began to attend more often. I'll tell you the truth – I loved learning chassidus but the whole idea of the Rebbe didn't appeal to me. I was considered a misnaged in this yeshiva.

This went on for a year, and at a certain point, I felt that I was stagnating in avodas Hashem. Friends began pressuring me to go to 770. I still opposed the idea but I knew that I had nothing to lose. I went, and obviously, everything was resolved there. From then on, I knew I was a



CHAIM CHADAD: *We took a walk and then returned to 770, and finally entered. I remember that as soon as we entered, we felt an inner happiness come over us. We simply felt at home. We davened Mincha and from then on, I didn't leave the place.*

Chabadnik. I realized that if I hadn't been there, in the Rebbe's presence, I would never reach the point where I'm at now.

What about Chabad did you find compelling?

Chaim: I remember the first day

that I learned the D'var Malchus. That is when I saw a Jew who didn't account to anyone, who said the truth exactly as it is. He put out all his cards. Finally, there were real answers. Nobody tried to dissemble or hold back. They provided true

answers in an appropriate manner.

Nir: That's what I came to see too. It was clear to me that if it was Chabad that revealed chassidus to me, obviously I would search there, and nowhere else.

Ofer: Before becoming frum, I didn't know what a Rebbe is; I just knew that there was someone called the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and that was the extent of my knowledge of the subject. I hadn't seen the Rebbe either.

Today I think a Jew needs to do t'shuva twice: once, in order to realize that there is a Torah of truth, and a second time, in order to know that there is a Rebbe! When I learned the maamer "*Basi L'Gani*," I realized that the one who is "calling the shots" is really the Rebbe, and nobody else.

Roy: What attracted me to Chabad was the love of chassidus. It was only later that I realized that the Rebbe impacts on us, much more than we think, but we don't always feel it right away, at the beginning.

When you became involved in Chabad, you heard about "eternal life" and that the Rebbe is chai v'kayam. What do you think of this?

Chaim: I don't think we have any idea what Gimmel Tammuz is about. I can only tell you that when my little niece came to our house and looked at the little T'hilim with the Rebbe's smiling picture on it, she took the T'hilim and – without being taught anything about this – looked at it for thirty seconds, smiled, and then kissed it.

When you look at the Rebbe's picture, you know that the Rebbe is the leader of the generation, and that he is chai v'kayam, and is truly with us.

There are the Rebbe's sichos that prove this point in intellectual terms too, but the truth is, this is something beyond intellect. Simply put, when you look at the Rebbe's picture, it is far more than a picture.

You simply understand that the Rebbe is here!

Nir: The truth is, that on 3 Tammuz 5754, I was in the army, and the only thing that interested me then was when was my next scouting mission. But when I came to this topic, I had no opposition to the idea, and I never had to struggle in order to accept it. They said that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam*, and why should I argue?

Chaim: Why is it taken for granted that millions of people will arise at the Resurrection of the Dead, but the idea of the *Nasi HaDor* being alive is not so simple? Is resurrection any less wild to the human intellect?

Nir: According to the mindset I lived in before I learned about Judaism, the existence of G-d was as wild an idea as the Rebbe being alive. It was never something irrational to me. I never dealt with issues like these.

I think that when a Lubavitcher feels attacked and feels he has to convince someone that the Rebbe is here, it is a sign that something is problematic with his *emuna*. Nobody feels attacked if someone comes over to them and says there is no G-d! If someone feels uncomfortable about it, it is a sign that he has to strengthen his *emuna* in the Rebbe.

The same is true for those who get angry about someone who doesn't believe yet. Nobody gets angry at someone on the street for saying he doesn't believe in G-d. They simply try to explain it to him, and even if he doesn't accept it, they realize that he is lacking vital information and simply needs to be treated lovingly.

At the Chabad house in Dramsala, where I got interested in Judaism, nobody felt the need to convince anyone the Rebbe is alive. It was a given, and was felt in the atmosphere of the Chabad house.

Ofer: On Gimmel Tammuz, I was in South America and didn't know



that this date had any significance at all.

I had many debates with Shimi Goldstein. After all, I was born into a Mizrachi-pro-Litvish background. I also debated a lot with another guy at the Chabad house by the name of Shmulik, who was also from a Mizrachi background. It was hard for me to accept this idea. It wasn't clear to me as an accurate portrayal of the situation, but when you learn *chassidus* and live it, it makes sense. The light within *chassidus* lights the way.

From the perspective of young people who were on the "other side," do you think that publicity about Moshiach turns people off or helps draw them in?

Ofer: Chabad is always the locomotive at the head of the Jewish train. They once fought Chabad over pictures of the Rebbeim, and today there are "g'dolim pictures" all over the place. The same is true for *mivtzaim* and *kiruv*, and of course, *Geula*.

At first, they all spoke against it, but today they all speak about *Geula*, sing songs and have lectures, even the *misnagdim*. The idea has gained widespread acceptance, but only partially, and everybody has to be

ROY ELITZUR: *The real beginning for me was the simple feeling that Moshiach is coming. I felt that the movie, which is this world, is ending, and that everything up until now is about to end and change.*

given the right dosage.

Chaim: As soon as it's clear to everyone, it's accepted. Naturally, you can't force it on anyone without allowing a person the space to think it through. There is no question that if it's done wrong, it can turn people off.

Nir: I don't think that saying that the Rebbe is Moshiach turns anyone off. It depends on how you go about it. If it is said in a way that leaves the person with free choice to decide and to absorb it in his own way, then it will definitely lead to questions and further interest in the subject, as well as understanding. You definitely have to be sensitive to people and what they can handle.

Again, the pure concept – that the Rebbe is Moshiach – doesn't turn people off, but it has to be presented properly.

Roy: I personally found it hard to accept. It was only when I was in the atmosphere of 770 that I accepted it. There are people who if you tell them that the Rebbe is Moshiach, it will help in their *kiruv*. But then there are other kinds of people... In principle, the idea can also be accepted by someone who is just starting out. It is accepted far more than I would have guessed an idea like this could be

accepted. I don't know how to explain it, but it's the reality.

How do you see yourselves in comparison to older chassidim who saw the Rebbe, heard sichos, received dollars, etc. ?

Ofer: I once went to Tzfas by train and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Groner, one of the roshei yeshivos of Kiryat Gat, sat opposite me. I was learning the maamer, "*BaYom Ashtei Asar*," which focuses on the topic of choosing the king over anyone else. When he realized what I was learning, he said that he was present when the maamer was delivered. I was thrilled to be sitting with someone who had seen the Rebbe and had been present during the delivery of the very maamer that I was learning. I looked at him in wonder and then he said, "You are the ones who will bring Moshiach!"

Until Gimmel Tammuz, chassidim relied on the Rebbe. Now, people understand that they must do the job themselves, as it were. This doesn't diminish the desire and yearning to see the Rebbe though.

Chaim: When I learn a sicha of the Rebbe's, or the D'var Malchus, I feel that the Rebbe is with me, as it says, "the master of the teaching sits and reads, facing him." It makes my longing grow stronger. It's funny to say this, because how can I miss someone I never saw? Yet, there is no question that we are all connected to the Rebbe, the "general soul," and it creates a deep soul connection to him, a connection expressed in yearning too.

I don't have the tools to be able to tell whether, if I had seen the Rebbe, I would be a better chassid, or whether because I did *not* see the Rebbe, I am a lesser chassid. I believe that if you see the Rebbe, it changes you. On the other hand, for those who didn't see the Rebbe personally, their avoda has an additional measure of truth to it, without the "candies" of

giluyim.

Yet, we are definitely lacking for not having seen the Rebbe, not having heard him say a sicha, and it is this specifically, this lack, that makes us yearn for him.

Nir: I look forward to seeing the Rebbe and not to yearning for him, since yearning for the Rebbe is a Galus-thing. I look forward to seeing the Rebbe with the true and complete Redemption.

As to your question, every chassid anticipates seeing the Rebbe in the true and complete Redemption, and it makes no difference what his background is, and how much he saw or didn't see the Rebbe in the past.

Roy: I think that of the two types of chassidim, the old-timer and the newcomers, there are both advantages and disadvantages. There is definitely an added quality to someone who faced the Rebbe with bittul and heard Torah from him. Yet, whoever is in 770 today and has an inner desire to connect to the Rebbe and to receive *hashpaos* from Above, has no less an advantage than someone who actually saw the Rebbe all the years, because his *hiskashrus* is not limited by having seen the Rebbe; it goes way beyond that. *Hiskashrus* today, if it's done properly, is *atzmutit*, essential.

As you were getting involved in Judaism, how important was the topic of Geula?

Ofer: Among other groups, they learn that Geula will occur one day. In Chabad, you experience Geula in sichos, maamarim, and encounters with shluchim. It's all about getting ready for Geula, which will happen imminently.

Chaim: Chabad changes your way of thinking. I always thought of Geula as something scary – there is going to be such a great G-dly light, etc. Chassidus changed my perspective on this.

Nir: One of the problems that

bothered me all along was the lack of perfection in the world. The more I looked into it, the stronger the feeling I had that things were corrupted to the point that they couldn't be fixed, and this really depressed me. The reason I am here today is because I realized that this is the way to Geula and to *tikkun olam*.

When you look at the world today, you see that if one person profits then the other person has to lose. Chabad opened up to me what Geula is and how to achieve it, but above all else the desire for Geula – *tikkun* – is what brought me to Chabad.

Roy: It is also what brought me to Judaism. Later on in the kiruv process it disappeared, until I realized that everything the Rebbe says is true. That's when it came back to me.

You go on Mivtza T'fillin, etc. When you see young people who are looking for something, how do you feel?

Nir: I know that I need to feel like someone standing in front of an absolute treasure, but how do I actually feel? I'm not sure...

Chaim: I look at them the way I look at my friends who are still like that. I know that they need lots of love, and when we come to them with lots of *ahavas Yisroel*, things will advance.

Ofer: I look at the young person in front of me like a Jew who is missing vital information. If I give it to him, he will accept it happily and change. And I try to give it to him...

Roy: Basically, if I look at them as I once was, I see it as hopeless, because they are caught up in their own world. You need lots of *bitachon* to know that when you do something down here, you are helped from Up There. Although you don't always see the results, and it doesn't always look as if it's possible, with the proper avoda you can see results.

A 'FRIENDLY' FINAL SOLUTION

BY SHAI GEFEN

EUROPE IS HERE!

In June of 2004, the European Union convened all its members to discuss the problem of anti-Semitism in Europe. In recent months, violent incidents against European Jews increased significantly. Molotov cocktails were thrown at Jewish schools, monuments were desecrated, Jews wearing yarmulkes were attacked on the streets, etc. Most of these crimes were perpetrated by Moslems.

Consider the following scenario:

The E.U. decided to end anti-Semitism, and at the end of a long meeting, they held a press conference in which the director of the E.U. announced their "final solution." About 250 members of the press from around the world quoted what he said. "We have decided to defend the Jews," he said happily, "and to immediately call a halt to the attacks against them. We have devised a plan whereby the Jews will be removed from Europe and sent elsewhere!"

A journalist was quick to ask, "Are you planning on sending millions of Jews to Israel?"

The director of the E.U. smiled and said, "G-d forbid. In order not to disturb the demographics in the Middle East, we have decided to do all we can so that European Jews do not go to Israel, but will be sent to desolate areas, like the Sahara Desert. Additional details regarding the precise location where Jews will be transferred to will be forthcoming, but one thing is certain, by the end of 2005, Europe will be Judenrein. Thus, there will no longer be any anti-Semitism in Europe and Jews will no longer be attacked."

The director's assistant added more details to the shocking plan. "The Interior Ministry of every European country has completed a list of its Jews, the number of

people in each family, and their addresses. From today until August 2005, Jews can leave on their own and receive fixed compensation in exchange for their businesses and homes. Jewish property will be transferred to the Moslem community in Europe, in the hopes that this large community will acclimate to their surroundings and will want to co-exist peacefully with their European neighbors.

"As of September 2005, the remaining Jews who refuse to leave willingly will be expelled from their homes. Special military units from Germany were selected for this sensitive task, due to their great experience acquired over the years."

The E.U.'s plan was warmly received by the U.N., which announced that it would do all it could to help. The U.S. announced that it was officially against the expulsion of Jews from Europe, and therefore it would make every effort, within the framework of international relations in the U.N., to try and change the decision.

Who knows, said the American president, maybe by 2005 we will be able to limit it only to Jews of France and Belgium, so that not all European Jews will be expelled. This will serve as a compromise and will prove how important it is to remain as members of the U.N. so that we serve as an influence from within.

The Israeli government, as expected, is strongly against this plan, and it condemned the E.U. for hypocrisy and disingenuousness. The official Israeli statement said as follows: The E.U. is pretending as though it's devising a plan to defend Jews, but the truth is that this is an anti-Semitic plan to forcibly evict Jews, thus ethnically cleansing Europe. This plan is designed to appease the Moslem community in Europe, which is growing at

a frightening rate, and threatens to take over all of Europe. We call upon the western world to torpedo this plan immediately in order not to give victory to terror.

The director of the E.U. reacted to the Israeli pronouncement by saying: "It is the Israelis who are hypocrites. We are just implementing in Europe the very same plan that Ariel Sharon is planning on implementing in Israel. If a Jewish prime minister in Israel can throw Jews out of their land, why can't we do the same thing in Europe?"

LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY!

It didn't happen in the 50's during Ben Gurion's lifetime, and not in Stalin's era either. This is what is going on right now, during the reign of Ariel Sharon. Thus, the prime minister gave us a wonderful lesson in democracy: the ministers and their deputies must support his withdrawal plan. He said that in light of the principle of joint responsibility, he expects that all the ministers and deputies come and vote in the Knesset, and he would not allow them to be absent. He expects them to vote with the Coalition. The P.M. said he would not allow ministers and their deputies to take trips abroad while the Knesset is in session. The P.M. said this at a government meeting at the beginning of the week, adding that he would not allow criticism of the withdrawal plan nor actions taken against it.

AS FAR AS MAFDAL...

To tell you the truth, we were not exactly surprised by what has been going on with Mafdal lately. The resignation of Effy Eitam and Rabbi Yitzchok Levi from their ministerial posts is definitely a good thing. They



are to be commended for not continuing to debase themselves while being collaborators to the historic crime of expelling Jews from their land.

On the other hand, what is happening now with Mafdal, with Orlev and his pals remaining in the Coalition and the government, raises tough questions about their characters. Do they really love Eretz Yisroel? If they do, why are they destroying it?

Uri Elitzur wrote the following about the astonishing conduct of Mafdal:

“There is no way to understand why Mafdal volunteers to be the town idiot. The claim that it is blocking Labor from entering the government is so childish that you don’t know how to begin to respond to it. What can you say to someone who puts a box of matches on the street and says: ‘Now I have blocked the bus from entering.’

“The Labor party has still not entered the government because of difficulties with Likud and because of problems within Labor itself. In order to deal with these problems, in other words, in order to get Labor in and to throw Mafdal out, Sharon desperately needs time. Who is giving him the time? Mafdal, the party he is going to throw out! I have no idea what amazing promises Orlev managed to extract from Sharon in exchange for Orlev’s being the official state sucker. One thing I do know for sure is that Sharon won’t keep most of his promises.

“Sharon promised to honor the Likud referendum. Sharon promised Netanyahu that he wouldn’t take any steps towards uprooting Jews before the Partition Fence is completed around Ariel. Sharon doesn’t even feel the need to keep the promises he made to the president of the United States.”

ORLEV’S BROKEN FINGER

Just a couple of weeks ago, Mafdal was very powerful. Now, Mafdal’s

influence has shrunk dramatically. By next week, its power will be even less.

If Mafdal had firmly decided to leave the Coalition at the right time, it would have prevented the government’s decision to withdraw. Nothing forced Sharon to make this decision now. He set an arbitrary date in order to pressure the system and to frighten the rabbits. He had no external pressure to make a quick decision. If he knew he would remain with a Coalition of 55 Knesset members at a time when plans to include Labor were not completed, he would have done everything possible to postpone a decision. But someone in Mafdal promised him that he had nothing to worry about because Mafdal would remain.

That’s how Mafdal began the destruction of yishuvim in Gush Katif. To Mafdal’s credit we can say that they don’t do this out of malice but out of stupidity.

Now, with that same stupidity, the Mafdalniks explain that while they are in the government they can save the yishuvim or minimize the destruction, and who knows, perhaps at the critical moment, their vote will prevent the beginning of the destruction.

Either way – if Sharon has a majority in the government, Orlev’s voting finger won’t help, and if it’s Orlev’s finger that will make a difference, Sharon can throw him out tomorrow, just as he threw out Lieberman and Alon. Those who entered the game need to know what cards they hold and when to use them.

Naïve thinking, which is characteristic of Mafdal, is that if we will be okay with him, he will be okay with us. This shows an absolute lack of understanding of the reality of Sharon’s totalitarian regime.

THE WITHDRAWAL BEGINS WITH AS’CHALTA D’GEULA

Many people wonder what

A practical suggestion to all those who support the as’chalta and who wave the blue and white is to make a unilateral withdrawal from all those symbols of as’chalta and to promote the real thing, i.e. Moshiach. This is the only way that we will manage to overcome the doubled and redoubled darkness. It’s when we recognize the darkness as darkness that we can attain the true light and merit the revelation of the Rebbe MH”M now, with kindness and mercy.

happened to Mafdal. This is the party that represents, more than any others, the settlers of Yesha. Many of its members are residents of Yesha, yet this party supports giving away land. It makes no sense!

The Rebbe MH" M anticipated this when he said that it will be those who promote the idea of *as'chalta d'Geula* who will ultimately support giving away land. In a letter to Rabbi Zevin in Kislev 5729 the Rebbe writes:

They added issue upon issue to publicly announce that it is now the middle of *as'chalta d'Geula*, the opposite of an explicit law in the Rambam ... It is specifically amongst them that there is an increase of those who want to return territories, or parts of them, etc. etc. I don't want to expand on this.

When you call darkness light and light darkness, in the end, they are ready to give up even the basic thing for which they fought with a wave of the hand, and to be actual collaborators in expelling Jews from their land. This is also understood logically because those who take a secular and heretical government and say that it is carrying out the *as'chalta d'Geula* have no reason to think that same government is not correct.

A practical suggestion to all those who support the *as'chalta* and who wave the blue and white is to make a unilateral withdrawal from all those symbols of *as'chalta* and to promote the real thing, i.e. Moshiach. This is the only way that we will manage to overcome the doubled and redoubled darkness. It's when we recognize the darkness as darkness that we can attain the true light and merit the revelation of the Rebbe MH" M now, with kindness and mercy.

CANAANITE SLAVES – THIRD CLASS PEOPLE!

Mafdal's shameful conduct was definitely the last straw. The Rebbe already dealt with the shameful

conduct of this party in a *sicha* he said thirty years ago. Some things just don't change.

This fact [that they give them these portfolios] in and of itself is very upsetting. For as a result of receiving these portfolios, they are bound and must do what they are told. It is just that the Left themselves are interested that it go through the religious ones, because then, when there will be complaints, the Left can say that the religious are at fault.

When the religious suggest something, they spit in their faces. And as usual, the religious don't regard it as spitting, but as "rains of blessing." This is the case with every proposal they present – they don't consider them at all – to the point that they call them (and it was even printed in the paper) "second class people." But the truth is that this is just a euphemism, because they're far worse than this. They should really be called, "third class K'naani slaves."

As far as their claim that for entering the government they were promised that they wouldn't return Yehuda and Shomron (without a referendum) – nonsense! For quite some time ago they decided to return part of Yehuda and Shomron; it's just that it's possible that they "still" didn't tell this to the religious representatives.

When they entered the government, a certain *rav* defined that day as a black day. The truth is, it was only black for them, but for everybody else it was the opposite. It was light, because by entering the government, matters became clear and everybody could see what they are: people full of lies.

It is a great pity on them since they cause the exile to be lengthened. What is clear is, the *as'chalta d'Geula* definitely did not begin. Their claim that a situation in which a Jew who puts on t'fillin and has a ministerial position is *as'chalta d'Geula* is just the opposite, since he uses the t'fillin to

sell Judaism and do things which are the opposite of the fulfillment of Judaism, r"l.

By entering the government they have made clear (aside from the fact that they're liars) that now we can't say that this is the *as'chalta d'Geula*, but an intensifying of the darkness of Galus!

(Ki Sisa, Shushan Purim, 5734)

WHAT A SIMPLE GOY UNDERSTANDS

A year ago, Egyptian president Husni Mubarak said that only Sharon could destroy settlements. It is not that he is a prophet, but as a straight-thinking gentile who makes no excuses or personal calculations, he said the truth to the media. What a pity that those representatives who are supposed to promote settlements didn't listen to him.

Mubarak said this eleven months ago, and it was quoted in the media: "Only Ariel Sharon can solve the Middle East crisis. He is the only one with the courage necessary to do so."

We heard this today from a surprising source: The president of Egypt, Husni Mubarak, is the one who flattered Sharon on the eve of the P.M.'s trip to Washington. "Despite the violence ingrained in him, Sharon is the only man who can solve the crisis," Mubarak said in a meeting with students in Alexandria. "Sharon is the only Israeli politician with the necessary political courage to advance the peace process and the Road Map." The Egyptian president, who usually criticizes the P.M., said, "We must not forget that Sharon is the one who evacuated the settlements in Sinai."

We know he is right. It is a pity that those who present themselves as *tzaddikim*, prefer to stop up their ears in order to enjoy their government positions. Not one of those who gave Sharon the ability to attain his present position can say: our hands did not shed this blood.

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