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The international weekly heralding the coming of Mashiach
BEIS MOSHIACH

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FROM 'HOPELESS' TO THE GREATEST HEIGHTS

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS MATTOS- MASSEI; 28TH DAY OF TAMMUZ, 5750

1. The three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha B'Av are referred to as the Three Weeks of Retribution and Bein HaMeitzarim, "between the straits," names whose connotation is not openly positive.

This presents a conceptual difficulty. The number three is generally connected with positive themes, e.g., the three Patriarchs, the three pilgrimage festivals. Similarly, our Sages associated the giving of the Torah with the number three, praising G-d for giving, "a threefold light to a threefold people... in the third month." Furthermore, the number three has the implications of permanence as expressed in the verse, "the threefold cord will not be snapped speedily." Similarly, in halachic terms, the number three is connected with a chazaka, a presumption that can be assumed to continue. Accordingly, it is difficult to understand: Why is the concept of retribution and destruction, the direct opposite of holiness and permanence,[163] associated with the number three?

Generally, the concept is explained as follows: The awesome descent of the

Three Weeks is intended to allow for an ascent. When a person wants to reach a level which is much higher than his present rung, it is necessary for him to undergo a descent first. Similarly, for the Jews to reach the peaks of the Messianic redemption, a redemption which will not be followed by a descent, it is necessary that they first undergo the descent of exile. In this context, the Three Weeks are associated, not with exile, but rather with the Third Beis HaMikdash that will be built after this exile.

This explanation, however, is insufficient for the Three Weeks connect the aspect of descent (and not the subsequent ascent) with three. When a descent is intended for the sake of an ascent, the descent itself is not desired. Indeed, it will ultimately be nullified and all that will remain is the ascent. If so, why is three which is, as above, usually connected with permanence, associated with a dimension that has no self-contained purpose and which ultimately will be nullified?[164]

The question can be reinforced: Generally, the number three expresses an ascent which follows a descent. For example, in the narrative of creation, the first day, is referred to in the Torah

as yom echad, "one day," i.e., a day of oneness, to quote the Midrash, "the day that G-d was at one with His world." It was followed by the second day, "the day on which strife was created," as reflected in the separation of the higher waters from the lower waters. Accordingly, the expression, "And G-d saw that it was good," is not mentioned in connection with the second day since division, even when necessary for the world, cannot be called "good."

This was followed by the third day, which compensated for the division of the second day, creating peace and unifying the two opposites. For this reason, the expression, "And G-d saw that it was good," is repeated twice, revealing a compound goodness which qualitatively exceeds the goodness of the other days.

This is reflected by the attribute of Tiferes ("beauty," which was expressed on the third day of creation) which unifies Chesed ("kindness," expressed on the first day of creation) with G'vura ("might," expressed on the second day of creation). This reveals a unity which surpasses that of the first day. On the first day, the unity existed on a level above division. Thus, there is the possibility that division will

ultimately arise. In contrast, the unity of the third day is established within the context of division, bringing about a true state of unity.

The same concept is reflected in Torah where we find the concept of “a controversy for the sake of heaven,” the controversy between Hillel and Shammai. This division has its source in the division which came into being on the second day of creation and, in turn, serves as the source for subsequent differences of opinion within Torah.

A “controversy for the sake of Heaven,” is obviously not a simple matter of strife or conflict. Nevertheless, it – even the controversy between Hillel and Shammai – brought about a descent. Ultimately, however, it serves a positive function.[165] The debate between a thinking process that favors leniency (since its source is the attribute of Chesed) and a thinking process which tends to severity (since its source is the attribute of G’vura) leads to a clarification of Torah law.[166] A third opinion emerges which reconciles and unifies both conflicting perspectives.[167]

Thus, both in the world at large and in Torah, the concept of descent and division is associated with the number two and three is associated with the ascent and unification that follows. Similarly, in regard to the Battei HaMikdash: The first (associated with the Patriarch Avrohom, and the attribute of Chesed) and the second (associated with the Patriarch, Yitzchok, and the attribute of G’vura) Battei Mikdash were destroyed, while the third Beis HaMikdash (associated with the Patriarch Yaakov and the attribute of Tiferes) will be an eternal structure. Thus the original question is reinforced: Why are these weeks which are connected with mourning, destruction, and exile associated with the number three?

This question can be resolved by developing a different understanding of

the concept “a descent for the purpose of an ascent.” To explain: A Jew should be in a constant process of ascent, “always ascending higher in holiness,” “proceeding from strength to strength.” If so, what is the reason for a descent? To proceed to a higher and more elevated rung that could not otherwise be reached. To give an example from every day life, when faced with obstructions and difficulties, a person summons up inner strength that brings out greater achievements that would otherwise be impossible.

In this process of descent for the

On the surface, there is no way in which it is apparent how such an exile will lead to the Redemption. Nevertheless, this itself is an indication that it will lead to an ascent which is totally beyond our comprehension.

sake of ascent, there are two levels: a) a descent which is limited within the context of the natural order, b) a descent which cannot be fathomed by the rules of nature.

In the first case – which reflects the progression from two (descent) to three (ascent) – just as the descent is limited, so, too, the ascent has certain limits. In contrast, when the descent is unlimited, as in the Three Weeks, the ascent which follows is also unlimited in nature.

The first type of descent was

implanted by G-d in the natural order of the world. In contrast, the second descent is brought about by man, through his sins. Thus, in the first instance, there is a direct connection between the descent and the ascent which will follow. In contrast, when a person sins, on a revealed level, there is no apparent connection between the sin and the ascent through t’shuva which will ultimately follow. In particular, when the descent that is brought about by sin is connected with three – and thus, has the power of permanence – the ascent becomes even higher.

To rephrase the matter: The process of ascent that is brought about by descent is a natural phenomenon. Since the descent into the realm of division brings about a higher sense of oneness, the division is not genuine. On the contrary, even on the level of division, it is felt how it is temporary in nature, with no purpose in and of itself, and that it exists only to bring out the higher level of unity. When is there genuine division? When there is an approach that possesses the aspect of permanence associated with three and yet appears to be totally negative in thrust with no connection with the ascent that will follow. When unity is established in that context, then it is true and complete.

In this context, we can understand the Three Weeks. This period, brought about by our sins, reflects the lowest possible descent, a descent that would not be possible within the order of nature, and reflects the aspect of permanence associated with the number three. Thus, we see that this exile continues indefinitely, to quote our Sages:

In the first generations, their sin was revealed and the end [of the period of retribution] was also revealed. In the later generations, their sin was not revealed and the end [of the period of retribution] was also not revealed.

Even after our Sages declared, “All the appointed times for Moshiach’s coming have passed,” the exile continues. Furthermore, on the surface, there is no way in which it is apparent how such an exile will lead to the redemption.

Nevertheless, this itself is an indication that it will lead to an ascent which is totally beyond our comprehension that it will surpass even the peaks of holiness that were attained previously, establishing an entirely new framework of reference.

Furthermore, since this is the purpose of the descent of the Three Weeks – although it is not consciously felt – we must appreciate that the Three Weeks themselves have a positive dimension. The Three Weeks are associated with the revelation of the three powers of intellect.

In that context, the word “Puranusa” rendered as “retribution” can be reinterpreted in a positive context. The Zohar associates Pharaoh (whose name shares the same Hebrew root as “Puranusa”) “with the revelation of all the sublime lights.” Similarly, these Three Weeks can be the source for a revelation of light that transcends all limits, the light that will be revealed in the Third Beis HaMikdash.[168]

In this context, we can explain the connection between the Three Weeks and this particular Shabbos, the Shabbos on which the Book of BaMidbar is completed.[169] The process of descent for the sake of ascent which is revealed in the Three Weeks goes beyond the limits of nature. Thus, it brings about a strengthening of the Jews in Torah, as evidenced by their calling out in powerful tones, Chazak, Chazak, V’Nis’chazeik, (“Be strong, Be strong, May you be strengthened”).[170]

The concept of an immeasurable ascent which comes because of the descent into exile is also alluded to in each of the parshiyos of Mattos and

Massei.

The name Mattos refers to a branch which has become strong and hard because it was cut off from the tree.[171] There is a parallel to this in our service of G-d. The Jewish soul as it descends into a body, particularly as it exists in exile, is, on an apparent level, cut off from its source. This brings about a hardening and strengthening process. On the surface, the hardening is negative in nature, intensifying the challenges which a Jew faces. Through confronting these challenges, however, a Jew attains

The study of Torah law gives a Jew control over the entire world and enables him to experience the World to Come within the context of his life in this world. This will lead to the era of the Redemption.

added strength and power in his service of G-d which enables him to endure the challenges of exile without being affected.

Similarly, the parsha of Massei shares a connection to the exile. Massei meaning “journeys,” in an extended sense can refer to all the journeys undergone by the Jews in their departure from Egypt (the place of boundaries and limitations) with the intent of reaching Eretz Yisroel in the Messianic era. These journeys add strength to the Jews as expressed in the

exclamation, Chazak, Chazak, V’Nis’chazeik.

Thus, the extended exile which is felt acutely in these Three Weeks should not bring a Jew to despair, but rather to an appreciation of the heights to which the exile will bring us. This realization should, in turn, bring about a strengthening of Torah and mitzvos which will lead to the Messianic redemption. This should be expressed in “spreading the wellsprings outward,” extending the influence of Torah to places which by nature have no connection to it.

In particular, this should be expressed in making siyumim, conclusions of the study of Talmudic tractates or Torah works. These siyumim should be made in every place possible. May this lead to a siyum of the exile.

{There is a connection to the above in the beginning and the conclusion of the Talmud: The Talmud begins, “From what time may one recite the Shma in the evening?” “Evening” refers to exile. Within the exile there can be the recitation, i.e., the revelation, of Shma, the Oneness of G-d and His unique connection to the Jews. This is brought about by “m’eimasai,” which as the Maggid’s son Rav Avrohom explained, can also be rendered as, “Out of awe,” i.e., the fear and awe of G-d.

This leads to the conclusion of the Talmud: “The School of Eliyahu [i.e., the prophet Eliyahu who will announce Moshiach’s coming] taught: Whoever studies Torah laws every day is assured of life in the World to Come.”[172] The study of Torah law gives a Jew control over the entire world and enables him to experience the World to Come within the context of his life in this world. This will lead to the era of the redemption.}

This must lead to the ultimate decision of Torah law, that the exile has endured for too long and the Messianic redemption must come now.[173]

NOTES:

163. This is evidenced by the fact that in the Messianic age, exile and everything associated with it will be nullified entirely.

164. Even at this level, the intent is not that the descent is merely intended for the good, but that, its own nature is essentially good. This good, however, is not (at present) revealed and on an apparent level, these Three Weeks are connected with descent and destruction.

165. In this context, we can understand Pirkei Avos' statement: "Every controversy which is for the sake of heaven will endure." This statement provokes two obvious difficulties: a) A controversy is by nature negative and thus, seemingly should not endure. b) After the halacha is decided according to one opinion, how does the other opinion "endure"?

Nevertheless, according to the above explanation, one can resolve these problems. Since the intent of this controversy is not, ch"v, strife, but rather the attainment of a deeper understanding, both sides of the argument will endure. Both sides reflect perspectives which are true ("These and these are the words of the living G-d") and are ultimately intended to be unified.

Accordingly, there will be an era when each of the perspectives will be accepted as halacha. Thus, though at present, the halacha follows the School of Hillel, in the Messianic era, the halacha will follow the School of Shammai. Nevertheless, even in that era, the perspective of the School of Hillel will be perpetuated for the study of Torah in the Messianic era will be dependent on our study at present in which priority is given to the School of Hillel.

166. The association between the number three and the arrival at a final halachic decision is also alluded to in the form of the letter Hei, which has three lines alluding to the three means of expression: thought, speech, and action. There is a gap between the line associated with action and that associated with thought, implying that before one actually carries out a decision in deed, one should hesitate and reconsider the matter.

Our Sages state, "This world was created with a Hei." This implies that our world, the world of Asiya, which is the third world below Atzilus, is also separated by a gap from the higher spiritual worlds. Hence, there is room for hesitation and doubt when arriving at a halachic decision. The higher spiritual realms were created with a Yud, a letter which is a single point that leaves no possibility for discord. In contrast, in our world, there is the potential for confusion and strife, but also for the determination of binding halacha. This is only possible in this realm.

[The association of this world with the letter Hei is also reflected in this week's chapter of Pirkei Avos which teaches that: "Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai possessed five students."]

167. This concept is alluded to in the last of the thirteen principles of Biblical interpretation: "When two Biblical passages contradict each other, their meaning can be determined by a third text which reconciles them."

The intent is not that the third text supports one of the two

opinions and thus, outweighs the other, but rather, the third text creates a common point that can be shared by both conflicting perspectives. This is the reason why "the halacha follows the reconciling opinion," for it creates a basis of understanding between the two conflicting opinions.

Thus, after a halacha is decided in this manner, it is accepted by everyone. Furthermore, the acceptance is not merely a willingness to act in a specific manner, but an intellectual acceptance as well, an appreciation of the motivating principle.

This concept is reflected in the Megaleh Amukos' interpretation of the name Moshe as an acronym for the Hebrew words meaning, "the controversy of Shammai and Hillel." Moshe represents the third and unifying perspective that combines and unifies the opposing views of Shammai and Hillel.

168. This reveals that the dimension of permanence possessed by the Third Beis HaMikdash will not be the permanence of the natural order (when three follows two). Rather, it will be a permanence that surpasses all limits as obvious from its emergence from a situation where permanence (three) was expressed in (an apparently) negative fashion, exile.

169. The intrinsic connection shared by the two is emphasized by the fact that the Book of BaMidbar is always concluded on the second Shabbos of the Three Weeks. Thus, it is always in the middle of that period, influenced to a greater degree by neither the beginning or the end.

Similarly, the fact that the Book of BaMidbar is being completed is significant. There is a difference between the first four books of the Torah and the fifth book which is referred to as Mishneh Torah ("the review of the Torah").

170. In particular, there is added significance this year when both parshiyos, Mattos and Massei are combined in a single reading. This produces an extremely long Torah reading and it is well known that quantity (kamos) and content (eichus) are interrelated.

171. The above differentiates the Hebrew word "matteh" from the word "shevet." Shevet also means a branch. It, however, can also be used to refer to a branch which has been recently cut off and is still soft and pliable. In contrast, matteh refers to a branch which has already become dried out and hard.

172. There is an interesting point connected with this teaching. It was not included in all the texts of the Talmud. Rashi, however, includes it his text. Tosafos, who often differ with Rashi, in this instance, agree and explain that the teaching should be included to "conclude with a positive dimension as the prophets concluded their statements with words of consolation." Thus, Tosafos connects the conclusion of the Talmud with consolation which includes consolation for the exile.

173. This is reflected in Shlomo's decision concerning the child which was claimed by two mothers. Though he had considered cutting the child in half, symbolic of the difficulties experienced by the Jews in exile, that was only a preliminary and preparatory tactic, intended to bring out the final decision, that the child should live and that it be returned to its mother.

BROTHERS, TAKE A PROPER LOOK!

BY RABBI YOSEF HECHT
CHIEF RABBI OF EILAT, MEMBER OF CHABAD RABBINICAL COURT OF ERETZ YISROEL

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

Those of us who have been privileged to experience the taste of truth as soldiers in the king's legion must look at things in a totally different manner, not based on mere intellect, but based on the truth of the Rebbe. Those of us who have been educated in the seventh generation, heard all the sichos and maamarim, and exposed by the Rebbe to the true approach must know that the Rebbe is not just another tzaddik and Gimmel Tammuz is no hilula. Excerpts from a chassidic farbrengen.

FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT AS YOUR THOUGHTS

It was a Friday in the depths of winter, freezing to the bone. Many residents of the tri-state area chose to remain in their homes, warming themselves by the heater.

It was Erev Shabbos Parshas Noach 5731, and I was then a bachur learning in 770. I had just entered the main hallway, when I

heard loud coughing coming from the Rebbe's room. Apparently the intense cold had seriously affected the Rebbe's health...

We were shaken to the core, and we preferred not to be in the general vicinity at that moment. We surmised that there would be no farbrengen that Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh MarCheshvan, as it would prove too difficult for the Rebbe under the circumstances.

Everyone shared this doubt, with the possible exception of the Rebbe himself...

On Shabbos afternoon at the regularly set hour, to everyone's surprise, the Rebbe came down to farbrengen as if nothing had happened. The farbrengen was conducted in exactly the same fashion as any other Shabbos – discussion of the day's importance, maamer, Rashi sicha, instructions, etc. The Rebbe's voice was extremely hoarse, and it was most difficult to hear. But the farbrengen lasted for several hours.

Another more famous incident was the heart attack on Shmini Atzeres 5738. Even then, there were those in the realm of “*daas tachtan*” who thought that the Rebbe should take a rest (a brief one, at least) from his heavy workload. However, the Rebbe waited for no one, and on Motzaei Simchas Torah he already made a farbrengen in his room, and on the following day he asked that they bring him the piles of letters from all over the world. While he was lying in bed, connected to various machines, the Rebbe read letter after letter.

Everyone – doctors, secretaries,

family members, chassidim, etc. – said that the Rebbe needs rest. But the Rebbe had entirely different plans; nothing can possibly change the Rebbe's daily schedule. The Rebbe continued in his holy work, answering questions and correspondences from countless fellow Jews, and giving sichos from his room. Once again, nothing could stop the Rebbe.

We have seen many other examples over the years of the Rebbe's leadership of the Rebbe never giving a thought to any expression of hiding and concealment. The Rebbe would make farbrengens during Sukkos outside in the sukka under driving rain. He would regularly travel to the Ohel in the heat of the summer or during inclement winter weather, standing there for hours upon end without protection from the elements (until during the *Lameds*, when they built a small room – who had even thought of such a thing before then?). For the Rebbe, it makes no difference what's happening outside, if the weather is pleasant or not. If now is the time to farbreng, he'll farbreng; if now is the time to go to the Ohel, he'll go – and nothing will stand in his way.

Such examples briefly illustrate for us (based on our limited intellect) what it means that the Rebbe gives no recognition to hiding and concealment.

Throughout the years of his leadership, people saw that this was the Rebbe's approach in connection with his role as Rosh B'nei Yisroel. Not even blistering heat, biting cold, an upper respiratory infection, or a heart attack can stop the Rebbe from using the G-dly light that has been placed in his hands.

TO KNOW HOW TO LOOK AT THE HIDING AND CONCEALMENT

If we proceed along this path, we can draw similar conclusions in connection with the frightful state of concealment stemming from the events of Gimmel Tammuz 5754:



A true chassid must accept the Rebbe's approach as a given fact. Concealment is simply not a factor – neither from the Rebbe's point of view nor from ours!

The Rebbe never gave any recognition to a state of concealment that would prevent him from doing what must be done. As long as the Rebbe has not finished repairing the world for the Kingdom of Heaven, as long as he has yet to sit on the throne of Malchus Beis Dovid, the avoda has not yet been completed, and thus, there is no logical reason to presume that any hiding and concealment can keep him from finishing the job.

The Rebbe also expects us to understand that there is no hiding and concealment, and that we must live with the clear knowledge that you are the one before the creation of the hiding and concealment, and you are **the same one** after the creation of the hiding and concealment.

Many of us can recall the *tahalucha* of Shavuos 5749, and the pouring rain that did not stop for a moment. I remember that we returned to 770 totally drenched. The Rebbe began the farbrengen, saying that all those who came back from the *tahalucha* should say "Echaim." The Rebbe then added, "*Ubifrat az m'haht mir ibergegeben az zei haht baglait gishmei bracha*" (particularly since they informed me that they are accompanying rains of blessing).

As long as we see rain as a burden that keeps us from walking as normal people, the Rebbe tells us, "*Rabbosai, these are gishmei bracha!*"

I then realized that we simply don't know how to look at the hiding and concealment. What we perceive to be problems and inconveniences, the Rebbe calls blessings and lofty spiritual influences.

THE REBBE TEACHES THE CHASSIDIM HOW TO SEE

There have always been things that chassidim accepted as given and established facts, whereas those who had not been privileged to be chassidim, even G-d-fearing chareidim, viewed them as new innovations. They simply couldn't digest this, and they looked upon such matters as totally irrational and unacceptable. This takes expressions in a variety of ways: davening, Torah study, and other forms of avodas Hashem. In short, there have always been two completely different approaches: the approach of someone who has been privileged to be a chassid and the approach of those who have not.

How can it be that there are two Jews who learn the same Torah, keep the same mitzvos, and believe in the same Creator, yet, there are things that the chassid accepts as irrefutable fact while his friend deems them to be totally groundless. What causes this expression of such polar opposites?

A chassid has a motivating force to think in a way that the average person doesn't – he has a Rebbe! The Rebbe bestows upon the chassid an outlook that pertains to an entirely different level, one that has no relevance to someone stuck in the physical world. This is a pure and refined outlook that enables a person to see things as they really are.

In 5647, the Rebbe Rashab was involved in a deep and theoretical study of the Mittlerer Rebbe's *Imrei Bina*. During that same time period, in the city of Kremenchog, there lived a community of Torah scholars

who had acquired considerable knowledge in the study of chassidus. Once the city's rav, R. Yitzchak Yoel Rapolovitch, traveled to Lubavitch to see the Rebbe Rashab. When he went into yechidus, the Rebbe told him that he had sent a letter to one of these "*maskilim*," asking him the simple interpretation of a particular section in *Imrei Bina*. The chassid had not replied, and the Rebbe wanted R. Yitzchak Yoel to ask him why.

R. Yitzchak Yoel returned home and immediately approached this *maskil*, asking him why he had not responded to the Rebbe Rashab's letter. "The Rebbe can manage on his own," the *maskil* said.

R. Yitzchak Yoel went back to the Rebbe and gave over the chassid's answer. "I didn't ask him in order to receive his interpretation," the Rebbe Rashab replied, "I only wanted to know how he could possibly reach such a level based on intellect alone..."

We learn from this that the Rebbe sees the absolute truth of the matter, not merely in terms of human intellect but according to G-dliness. The Rebbe also instills this vision within chassidim who are truly connected to him, in order that they should also feel and see things as they are in their truest sense. This is what creates the profound difference between the outlook of a chassid and anyone else who has yet to reach that level.

If the thought process of a chassid who is properly connected to the Rebbe is wholly different regarding Torah and mitzvos in general, then surely this is the case regarding the outlook on Moshiach and Redemption. A true chassid must accept the Rebbe's approach as a given fact. Concealment is simply not a factor – neither from the Rebbe's point of view nor from ours! Just as the Rebbe never gave any recognition

to any concept of hiding and concealment, we also have no right to do so. This intense faith in the Rebbe for all these years must continue to accompany us no less than before.

GIVING OTHERS A TASTE OF THE TRUTH

A few days after Gimmel Tammuz, I was asked to give an interview to a certain chareidi newspaper in connection with the situation. The message I gave was that everything continues as it did before, and just as we knew clearly, beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Rebbe would take us out of Galus, it is just as clear today.

Not long afterwards, I received a call from a chareidi who said, "Have you no shame? How can you say such a thing?"

"What's the problem?" I replied. "I merely expressed what the Rebbe said himself."

But the person would not relent. "You're robbing the Rebbe of what he's entitled to. The Rebbe was a tzaddik, and he has all the honor due to him as is fitting with all the appropriate honors and titles that come to every tzaddik after his passing. He should have a proper yahrtzeit. It bothers me that you are preventing the Rebbe from getting what he deserves."

"If this is what you're blaming me for," I responded, "then I'm prepared to accept all the guilt upon myself..."

I didn't come to him with complaints. He couldn't be expected to understand things any differently. That's how he was educated. He never experienced what a Rebbe is, what G-dliness is. Why shouldn't he think that the Rebbe is just another tzaddik entitled to a hilula?

However, those of us who have been privileged to experience the taste of truth as soldiers in the king's

legion must look at things in a totally different manner, not based on mere intellect, but based on the truth of the Rebbe. Those of us who have been educated in the seventh generation, heard all the sichos and maamarim, and exposed by the Rebbe to the true approach, must know that the Rebbe is not just another tzaddik and Gimmel Tammuz is no hilula with all its titles and unique qualities, etc. The Rebbe is interested in only one thing: redeeming the Jewish people in its most basic terms: building the Beis HaMikdash in its (his) place, and gathering together Jews from all over the world. This is what the Rebbe wants and this is what he strives to achieve with total self-sacrifice, day and night.

The Rebbe once sent my father, of blessed memory, to participate in an American-based rabbinical conference. The organizers had requested that my father speak at the conference (they allotted him seven minutes, but he ended up speaking for forty-five minutes...). In those days, it was truly an innovation for a Lubavitcher rabbi to speak at such a gathering. When he returned from the conference, the Rebbe requested that he come in for yechidus, In the yechidus the Rebbe asked about his speech. My father replied that he spoke about chassidus, explaining how chassidus is the “additional soul” of the Torah. The Rebbe listened, smiled broadly, and then responded with a tinge of surprise: “That’s what you said?”

In fact, the Rebbe was most pleased with the content of what had been said, but he was also quite astounded, as it was considered most unusual to speak in such a manner to ordinary Jews who had never learned chassidus before. What a chassid may consider to be something familiar, to them is completely foreign. What do they understand about chassidus, an

additional soul, etc.? In any event, the Rebbe was happy that things were said and explained in a proper manner, inasmuch as it is also our job to reach these people, instill the light of the truth within them, and encompass them with this same intense faith.

During the leadership of the Rebbe Maharash, many of the chassidim who worked in agriculture were having serious financial difficulties, to the point that they were in danger of eviction. In

***R. Yitzchak Yoel
returned home and
immediately
approached this
maskil, asking him
why he had not
responded to the
Rebbe Rashab’s letter.
“The Rebbe can
manage on his own,”
the maskil said.***

contrast, there were chassidim in neighboring towns who were living quite comfortably.

At one point, the farmers turned to their wealthier friends to ask for their help in covering their outstanding debts. When they received negative responses to their appeal, they went to the Rebbe Maharash to ask that he intercede on their behalf.

The Rebbe Maharash agreed, and he traveled to the town where the

rich chassidim lived. The Rebbe gave a drasha on the pasuk in T’hillim, “Prayer of the poor when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before G-d.” The Rebbe explained that G-d created poor people and rich people in the world in order that the rich should give the poor what they need, and thus fulfill acts of kindness in the world. So the poor person comes and pours out his complaint before the Creator: Ribbono Shel Olam, if your entire objective was only that there should be kindness, why do I have to be the poor one, while my friend is wealthy and has to give to me? Why can’t it be the reverse: let me be the rich one and he’ll be poor, so I can give to him?

After the Rebbe’s heartfelt sicha, the wealthy chassidim opened their hearts and gave most generously to their poor friends. (Apparently, they understood somehow that if they don’t help their friends in need, the “prayer of the poor” would materialize...).

We can say the same thing regarding our situation:

The king needs an army in order to conquer the world. The army has a limited number of soldiers, chosen specifically by the king, to fight the final war that will conquer the world and bring the Redemption. Anyone who is privileged to be a soldier in this army, anyone who is privileged to be the Rebbe’s chassid, is on the level of a “rich person.” However, with all the great merit that falls in the portion of those privileged to be so wealthy, it is forbidden to forget that this is both a privilege as well as an obligation.

There is still a sizable percentage among the Jewish people who have yet to be so privileged, and these Jews are on the level of “poor people.” G-d wants kindness in the world. He doesn’t want us to worry only about ourselves; He wants us to

make certain that no Jew will remain in exile. Every Jew must be privileged to experience the light of truth, to lift himself off the ground, and feel what intellect alone can never possibly feel.

* * *

Sometimes we are inclined to think that if we could see the Rebbe, everything would be different. Thus, in our present situation, how can we be expected to live with the same faith and the same enthusiasm as there was when we could actually see the Rebbe?

The truth is that it is much harder, for far more is demanded of us today than in the past. However, first and foremost, it is important to remember that if we had some correct feeling in the past, it was never from our point of view, but only from the Rebbe's. Since we were with the Rebbe, he gave us the opportunity to get a taste of the real truth.

As such, it is abundantly clear that even today the Rebbe gives us

It is important to remember that if we had some correct feeling in the past, it was never from our point of view, but only from the Rebbe's.

the exact same opportunity to live as we should, and to know and recognize the ultimate truth and make no mistakes along the way *ch"v*. Yet, we must always be aware that if a chassid has *ch"v* a feeling of weakness in his faith, he must arouse mercy upon himself and request that the Rebbe should help him by placing the proper feeling within his heart.

If R. Hillel Paritcher said that all his avodas Hashem was "*az es zahl*

zich ahpleign a vahrt chassidus" (in order to be realized through a word of chassidus), then in our times, we must say that all of our avodas Hashem is in order for the Rebbe to place the proper outlook within our hearts, so we may be privileged to see things as they really are – not merely as perceived through the intellect. We must see things as the Rebbe does.

The Rebbe Rayatz used to say that when his father, the Rebbe Rashab, would say "Lchaim," he would wish "*az ohr ha'neshama zahl laichten in guf*" (that the light of the soul should shine within the body), i.e., we should always wish to see not according to the materiality of the body, but according to the **ultimate truth**.

We also should wish one another that we should see things as they truly are, and know how to look correctly at the hiding and concealment as we prepare as is fitting for the imminent revelation of our king, our Moshiach, immediately, mamash, NOW!

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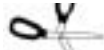


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“ONE IS SILENT AND EVERYBODY LISTENS”

A compilation of stories that were told by chassidim of previous generations, from the reshimos of Rav Uri Nosson Notte Berkhan a”h.
* Part 2 of 2

was hard to understand, since his speech wasn't clear. Then he went back to the beginning of the maamer, and within a few minutes, his speech was clear and he said chassidus for three hours. It was very deep haskala.

(heard from Rabbi N. Goralnik)

WHY SHOULD YOU STOP?

In 5730, R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman asked the Rebbe about someone who contemplated chassidus for an hour. Should he be stopped, since this wasn't where he was holding?

Answered the Rebbe: If he is doing a good thing, why should you stop him?

WHOEVER DOES NOT LEARN CHASSIDUS

At the beginning of the winter of 5688 (1928), after the Rebbe Rayatz left Russia, the elder chassidim got together to farbreng, including R' Itche the Masmid.

They began talking about the weakness in avodas ha'kodesh in general and in learning and spreading chassidus in particular (because the Rebbe had left). R' Itche spoke about this sadly and said that whoever did not come and learn chassidus would not live out the year!

The impression of that farbrengen was very powerful, and throughout that winter, they learned chassidus with a

tremendous chayus.

(heard from R' Dovid Chein)

THREE HOURS OF DEEP HASKALA

At the Simchas Torah farbrengen of 5681 (1921), the Rebbe Rayatz said l'chaim many times on mashke, drank a great deal, and said amazing things.

Chassidim were nervous about the Rebbe's health, and they called his mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, who asked him not to take any more mashke.

The Rebbe Rayatz said, "Yes, Mother," and she left.

After she left, the Rebbe continued saying l'chaim, and the chassidim called the Rebbetzin back. The same scene repeated itself, and the Rebbe continued drinking copious amounts of mashke.

At about nine o'clock, he looked at the time and said, "We have to say a maamer."

The chassidim sang a niggun before the maamer, and the Rebbe began saying a maamer. At first, it

AS THE MUSIC PLAYED

The Rebbe Rayatz was once sitting on the porch (I think it was at a vacation home) and he heard someone playing exquisite music before an audience. After he finished playing, the Rebbe had someone call him over, and the Rebbe pointed out that he had left out a small part of the tune.

The musician was amazed that the Rebbe noticed this, and he said that he had indeed left it out, but he had done so on purpose because he knew that if he played the tune in its entirety that his audience would go "completely crazy."

It was a great wonder: how did the Rebbe know that he left out that tiny part?

(heard from R' Dovid Chein)

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

R' Avrohom Persohn, a chassid of the Rebbe Maharash, was a big businessman and he knew many languages. By virtue of his position, he interacted with many high officials, using his contacts to help his fellow Jews. He would spend a

few hours a day on his business and on communal work, and the rest of the time he spent learning nigleh and chassidus.

Since he often met with ministers, etc., he dressed in the manner of the well-to-do. He had three suits and three types of top hats, and he always wore gloves, etc.

The Rebbe Maharash said about him, "His clothing fit him like *arbes tzum vant*" ("as chickpeas stick to the wall," a Yiddishism denoting an absurd association).

(*ibid*)

THE ROSH YESHIVA IS RIGHT

In one of the Litvishe yeshivos in Yerushalayim they gave shiurim in chassidus, and one of the roshei yeshiva was very opposed to these shiurim. One of the men who learned in this yeshiva had a yechidus with the Rebbe and told

The Rebbe cried too and said, "I have the same problem, but can we sit with our arms folded?"

him about this opposition.

The Rebbe said, "The rosh yeshiva is right, because he thinks they want to take the bachurim away from him. And not just any bachurim, but the top bachurim, the ones who sit and learn..."

The Rebbe added, "They should send a delegation of Chabad rabbanim who will explain to him that they only want them to learn chassidus and not to take them out of the yeshiva."

A delegation of rabbanim, led

by Rav Shlomo Yosef Zevin, Rav Zelig Slonim, and others, went and spoke to the rosh yeshiva, and he agreed to this.

A long time later, there was a chassidus shiur in the yeshiva, attended by about forty bachurim who learned chassidus with R' Yehoshua Lipkin. They wanted to establish an official time for chassidus in the yeshiva, but it didn't work out.

(*heard from Rabbi G.*)

THAT WHICH I RECEIVED FROM MY FATHER

Once at a farbrengen, someone referred to R' Chatshe as "the acting menahel." The Rebbe Rayatz heard this and said, "I am the acting menahel (and he placed his hand on his chest). That which I received from my father, I don't give to anyone. Chatshe is an assistant."

(*ibid*)

A WISE MAN SUPERSEDES A PROPHET

R' Itche the Masmid was learning Megillas Esther in *Torah Ohr*, where it says that despite Haman's decrees against the Jews, not one Jew even considered converting to save himself from the decree.

A chassid of the Rebbe Maharash said in wonder, "The Rebbe knew what every Jew was thinking two thousand years ago?!"

R' Itche explained that it wasn't that the Alter Rebbe prophetically knew this, rather, he knew the nature of Jews at that time, and therefore he knew that not one Jew considered converting.

Then R' Itche added, "Since Mordechai HaYehudi was there, he certainly affected all the Jews so that they did not convert!"

(*ibid*)



Rav Berkhan farbrenging with chassidim in Leningrad in 1988

WHO IS EMBARRASSED?

A man came to the Rebbe Maharash and told him that his friend asked him to ask the Rebbe what he should do to rectify his sins, and he listed all the sins.

The Rebbe asked, "And why didn't he come himself and ask me?"

The man answered, "Because he is ashamed."

Said the Rebbe, "But he could have said it all, and said that *you* did it!"

Hearing this, the man understood that you can't hide things from the Rebbe, and he broke down and admitted that he was the sinner, and he asked for a tikkun. He eventually became a baal t'shuva.

(from R' M.)

A REFUA AND TIKKUN IN T'HILLIM

A man who did many sins asked the Tzemach Tzedek for a tikkun. The Rebbe told him to say T'hillim, and explained that sometimes a horse gets sick with a contagious disease, and it has to be sent away so as not to infect all the horses in the village. The horse is sent to the forest and eventually becomes prey to the wild animals there.

But sometimes the horse recovers, because in the forest among the foliage, there are herbs with medicinal properties which can cure the horse that eats them. The same is true with T'hillim: there are words that contain the properties of healing and *tikkun* (correction), and therefore T'hillim should be said.

(ibid)

HE CRIED TWICE

The mashpia R' Chatshe Feigin (may Hashem avenge his blood) did

not cry, not even on Yom Kippur, because his nature was such that he could not cry. He cried only twice in his life.

One time was after his wedding, when he was a businessman and he had shiurim to learn nigleh and chassidus. He had a yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz, and the Rebbe asked him to leave his business and to be a mashpia in Tomchei T'mimim.

When the Rebbe saw that he was not inclined to accept the job, he said to him, "Nu, we'll postpone it for another time."

On Yom Kippur, when the Rebbe Rayatz read Maftir, R' Chatshe was standing near him. The Rebbe read the Haftora in tears, and when he reached the words, "for from before Hashem he is fleeing," the Rebbe emphasized these words.

R' Chatshe understood the message. He could not restrain himself and so he left the room and cried copiously. He immediately accepted the position of mashpia.

The second time was after the Rebbe Rayatz left Russia. The Rebbe appointed R' Chatshe as his secretary and loaded him with work to the point that R' Chatshe had no time to learn, and this pained him greatly.

In a yechidus, he complained about the workload and asked the Rebbe to allow him a certain time of the day for learning. When R' Chatshe finished speaking, the Rebbe told him that in the city of Globoka there was no talmud Torah, and he should go there and found a branch of Tomchei T'mimim. R' Chatshe understood that the Rebbe did not accept his complaints and he began to cry.

The Rebbe cried too and said, "I have the same problem, but can we sit with our arms folded?"

When R' Chatshe saw that the Rebbe was crying, he cried even more and left the room. R' Y. Perlow was present at the time, for he was waiting for a yechidus, and R' Chatshe told him why he was crying (and R' Y. Perlow told R' Mendel Futerfas).

(from R' Mendel Futerfas)

YOU WON'T GET KAVOD

It's told about R' Zalman Moshe, that when a scholar would come to him, and he realized that the man had come to him to receive honor, he would say to him:

"Why did you come here, for honor? You won't get it here!" He would then motion with his hand as if he was throwing something over his shoulder.

(ibid)

FROM THE HEART OR THE HEAD?

Early chassidim would say:

In chapter 9 of *Tanya*, the Alter Rebbe writes that the animal soul resides in the heart. Why do we need to know this?

It is to teach us the following rule: that which comes from the head to the heart comes from holiness, whereas that which originates from the heart comes from the animal soul.

PERHAPS R' CHONYE REGRETS IT TOO

R' Chatshe Feigin lived far away from the home of the Rebbe Rayatz in Otvosk. Although he arrived at work early in the morning and stayed until seven in the evening, he never entered the Rebbe's home to eat something.

The Rebbetzin once met him and begged him to come in and eat something, but he adamantly refused. The Rebbetzin tried to convince him and said that R'

Chonye Morosov would come in and eat. R' Chatshe said, "Perhaps R' Chonye regrets that now."

NOT A MENTSCH

When the Rebbe Rayatz was in Otvosk, one of the T'mimim had to enter the Rebbe's room for yechidus, and he asked one of the chassidim to write a note for him, since he did not know how to write. [This was because, at that time, there were many chassidim in Poland who did not allow their children to learn how to write].

The chassid said to him that he had no time to write for him, and he added that someone who cannot write is only half a man, because the superiority of a man over an animal is that a man can speak, and when the person he wants to speak to is far away, he writes.

The chassid wrote the note for him anyway, and when he entered for yechidus, he told the Rebbe what the chassid had said to him. The Rebbe's reaction was, "And I think that **he** is not a man – a mentch – at all!"

(I heard this from R' Shmuel Tzvi Polles from the city of Dessna, in the Vilna district, and a talmid of Tomchei T'mimim in Otvosk, who heard it from the chassid in the story.)

CHILDREN, HEALTH, AND A LIVELIHOOD ARE DEPENDENT ON G-D

One of the Rebbe Maharash's chassidim was a seasoned businessman who lost his money and had to stand in the market with a small table and sell notions in order to support his family.

There was a misnaged in the city who owned a large store, but it wasn't well-organized and this lack of order interfered with the running of the business. He asked the chassid to be his partner, and the chassid happily agreed and

began to organize the store. He brought in good merchandise and used his good name to get goods on credit. The business began taking off.

At this point, the misnaged began to wonder, "What do I need this partner for? What did he invest in the business? I did this chassid a favor by taking him in..."

He told the chassid that it wasn't fair that he should get half the profits since he hadn't invested anything in the business, but he would be generous and allow the chassid a section of the store where

If he is not well ch"v, he understands that it is an act of G-d. But why is it that when it comes to money a person eats himself up over not having done this or that?

he could sell as he pleased, but without being a full partner.

The chassid was very insulted by the injustice, and he became sick from the aggravation. Among those who came to visit him was a chassid of the Rebbe Maharash who told him what the Rebbe said:

"We ask for children, health, and a livelihood, but when a person doesn't have children, he consoles himself and says it's an act of G-d. He understands that it is in G-d's hands. So too with health, if he is not well ch"v, he understands that it is an act of G-d. But why is

it that when it comes to money a person eats himself up over not having done this or that?

"We must believe and know, said the Rebbe, that all three – children, health, and a livelihood – are dependent on G-d, and we can't mix in."

(R' Mordechai Kozliner)

THE WORK OUTSIDE OF GAN EDEN IS HARD

A mekurav of R' Shmuel Levitin, who was sent to run a mosad, ran into major difficulties. In addition, he had other, better offers, and he accepted them.

When they met, R' Shmuel said to him, "Adam's work in Gan Eden was easy work. All he had to do was 'work it and guard it.' After the sin, he was expelled from Gan Eden, but his work didn't end, it was just harder. We need to know that despite the difficulties, we are not excused from the work."

(I heard this from R' Chadakov)

ARE YOU FORGIVEN?

R' Yekusiel Dokshitzer and R' Chanoch Hendel once sat farbrenging until late at night. When R' Yekusiel got up to say the bedtime Shma, as soon as he began to say, "Master of the Universe, I forgive...", R' Chanoch Hendel yelled and began banging on the table.

"You say that you forgive? Did you ask whether you are forgiven? How dare you say you forgive?"

"As far as what it says in the siddur, the answer is printed right there, 'whether in this incarnation or in another incarnation,' and perhaps in a previous incarnation he was a misnaged and was insulted by someone, and that is why he is forgiving..."

CONNECTION TO THE REBBE – THE GREATEST PRIVILEGE

INTERVIEW BY DAFNA CHAIM

In this fascinating interview, Rebbetzin Bassie Garelik tells us about her childhood on shlichus in the 40's and 50's, about her yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz, the Rebbe being her mesader kiddushin, and about her own shlichus. She also tells us how to have hiskashrus to the Rebbe now, ten years after not seeing or hearing the Rebbe.

Although we have grown accustomed to the revolution that is shlichus, the fact that thousands of shluchim and shluchos are out there is no less incredible. When shluchim were first sent out, it wasn't like it is today, when there are dozens of couples waiting for a position. Back in the 50's some people rejected the idea of shlichus, saying that their wife wasn't interested or their mother-in-law protested.

Bassie (Posner) Garelik was an exception to the rule. Not only did she express her willingness to go on shlichus, she yearned for shlichus. She was born into the world of shlichus, with all the difficulties and constant mesirus nefesh that shlichus in America in those days entailed, yet

she knew that when she married, shlichus would be her life. The only question was where she would go.

Today, after 46 years of shlichus in Milan, Italy, Rebbetzin Garelik can bask in four generations of shlichus. She was kind enough to share some of her experiences with our readers.

BORN TO SHLICHUS

Her shlichus with her husband Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, was given special treatment by the Rebbe.

Where did your enthusiasm for shlichus come from – after all, shlichus wasn't as popular then as it is now, and many fine people did not go on shlichus?

I was born into and raised in a family that was all about shlichus

and the Rebbe, so the concept and reality of shlichus were not foreign to me. My parents were sent to Pittsburgh by the Rebbe Rayatz, and they lived and breathed the Rebbe every minute of their lives.

Fortunately, they bequeathed this beautiful heritage to their children. My parents didn't need to make speeches or give orders. They simply lived lives of mesirus nefesh for the Rebbe's inyanim, and this was amidst the materialism and estrangement of America of that time. We children absorbed their dedication.

When I got married, it was only natural to go on shlichus. I had grown up with all the problems of kashrus, the foreign environment, spreading the wellsprings, and bittul to the Rebbe. I'll give you an example so you can understand what kind of home and atmosphere I grew up in.

In 1946, Rashag asked my brother and another bachur from the yeshiva (Mendel Baumgarten) to go to Europe to help Anash who had just left Russia. My brother was 21 years old and was still in yeshiva, in the middle of learning for smicha. My mother wanted him to finish his studies. You have to remember that in America at that time there weren't many yeshiva bachurim, and my mother thought that the request

came from Rashag, so she didn't like the idea at all.

My father said he would call the secretariat in New York to find out what this was about. I remember the moment clearly, as though it happened yesterday. My mother was standing in the kitchen and crying, finding it hard to accept the idea that her son would leave yeshiva and travel to Europe. My little brother (R' Zushe Posner) and I were playing in the kitchen, and my father was on the phone with the Rebbe's secretariat.

When my father finished the conversation, he said only a few words to my mother, "It comes from the Rebbe." That is all it took. My father didn't have to say another word. My mother dried her tears and her face changed instantly. If the Rebbe said so, then there was nothing to discuss. It would be done, and happily too.

I was only ten years old at the time, but the scene is engraved deep within me. What I saw at home was more powerful than words.

My mother was an extraordinary woman, completely given over to the Rebbe. Although since 5748, the Rebbe hardly ever participated in funerals, when my mother passed away the Rebbe left his room in order to accompany her aron.

Generally, when the Rebbe went out to a funeral, he would walk near 770, cross Kingston Avenue, and walk another few meters and stop at a certain point where he would wait until the aron and accompanying cars passed by. Then he would return to his room.

At my mother's funeral, the Rebbe walked until the corner of Kingston and Eastern Parkway and remained there for nearly half an hour after the

aron went by. When you see the video of the funeral, you can see that the Rebbe looks like he is in another world.

On my mother's gravestone it says, "She was moser nefesh to live all her days according to the instructions of the Rebbe shlita."

My father was also a big chassid who merited to be one of the first shluchim. He was one of those who planted the first seeds of shlichus in America.

In 5702 (1942), my father wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz about the many difficulties he experienced in



shlichus. The Rebbe answered, "You plow and sow and I will pour tears so it will grow."

My father once wrote to the Rebbe that there weren't always people to listen to him review chassidus Shabbos morning. The Rebbe answered: You must always review chassidus, even if there is nobody present. Arrange the tables and chairs and review chassidus as though people are sitting there.

As a girl growing up in a chassidic home in America, did you visit the Rebbe?

Yes I did, and I even had the privilege of yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz. The first time was when I was twelve. I remember that I was very overcome when I entered the Rebbe's room with my mother, to the point that I couldn't utter a word (by the way, my mother had yechidus many times).

When the Rebbe asked me something, I didn't answer. The Rebbe asked my mother whether I understand Yiddish, and my mother said, "She understands but she's overwhelmed."

I had another yechidus with my entire family, which was the day my brother got married in Kislev 5710, a few weeks before the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz. I remember that the Rebbe spoke and it was very hard to understand him. My father repeated what the Rebbe said, word by word. My older sister was also getting married, a week later. The Rebbe spoke to her and first said that one needed to beware of the yetzer ha'ra because he is very wise. Then the Rebbe spoke about the importance of wearing a sheitel (though even before the yechidus, she was planning on wearing a sheitel). After the yechidus, they went to Rebbetzin Nechama Dina for her blessing.

THE FLYING WEDDING

In 5711-5712, at the beginning of the Rebbe's nesius, my parents sent me to high school and seminary in New York, since there was nothing for me in Pittsburgh. I lived with relatives in Williamsburg, and on Shabbos, we walked to Crown Heights to participate in the Rebbe's farbrengens. The ezras nashim was tiny and I remember that on Rosh HaShana 5714 there were barely 15 ladies there.

I heard you had a "flying wedding" – can you tell us what

happened.

In 5718 (1958), I became engaged to my husband, Gershon Mendel Garelik. The wedding was set for Sunday, 4 Tammuz. My husband was learning in 770 and he wanted to get married in New York so the Rebbe could be our mesader kiddushin.

I had always anticipated a wedding in Pittsburgh, where we lived on shlichus, knowing how important it was for Pittsburgh to see a chassidische wedding, but I also wanted the Rebbe to be our mesader kiddushin. After much deliberation, we decided to have the chuppa at 770 and the wedding meal in Pittsburgh.

On the Shabbos before the wedding, there were three grooms in 770. After the davening, the parents of the grooms asked the Rebbe to farbreng. The Rebbe said, "After all, today is Gimmel Tammuz..." and the Rebbe farbrenged. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first time that the Rebbe publicly referred to the special quality of Gimmel Tammuz.

The Rebbe spoke about marriage and mentioned wedding customs of the Rebbe Rayatz at his daughters' weddings.

Our wedding began in the early afternoon. The kabbalas panim took place in the home of Rabbi Jacobson. At around three o'clock, we went to 770, where the chuppa took place in the yard, and the Rebbe was mesader kiddushin. After the chuppa, I went back to the house and changed my clothes, and we went straight to the airport to get our flight to Pittsburgh.

Apparently, our pilot was encountering chassidim for the first time in his life. This was when we arrived at the airport in New York. There was a group of bachurim from 770 who were not going to the wedding in Pittsburgh, but they

came to accompany us with song and dance. They managed to get all the way to where we would board the plane, and they rejoiced and celebrated with us until we actually boarded.

Earlier that day, another group of bachurim had driven to Pittsburgh, to participate in our wedding over there. When we landed in Pittsburgh, they were waiting for us in the airport, singing and dancing.

When the pilot saw them he asked in amazement, "How did they get here so fast?!"

The wedding meal was an extremely modest one. In those days, there was no catering, and my

To the best of my knowledge, this was the first time that the Rebbe publicly referred to the special quality of Gimmel Tammuz.

mother and aunts cooked the meal. At the yechidus before the wedding, my mother told the Rebbe that it would be a modest wedding so as not to go into debt. The Rebbe was very pleased by this and said, "If only others learned from you and did the same."

LEAVING

When did you leave on shlichus?

Right after the Sheva Brachos we went to camp Gan Yisroel, where my husband was the learning director. In Elul, we went to Newark, New Jersey, where my husband was appointed mashpia temporarily in the yeshiva. A few months later, we

left for Italy.

Right after the wedding, we wrote to the Rebbe that we want to go on shlichus, and were ready to go wherever the Rebbe sent us. We eagerly anticipated an answer from the Rebbe. It came a short time later.

Rabbi Chadakov called my husband and asked him if he was willing to go to Europe. My husband agreed immediately, and then asked where in Europe. Rabbi Chadakov asked him why that information made any difference, and my husband answered, "Since I don't have official papers and I'm not sure that we can enter just any country in Europe." Rabbi Chadakov said, "To Milan, Italy."

On Motzaei Simchas Torah 5719 (1959), my husband went by the Rebbe for kos shel bracha and the Rebbe gave him a bottle of mashke and said, "For overseas."

A few weeks later, on Sunday the 11th of Kislev, after we finished all the arrangements, we left on shlichus. The day before we left – on Shabbos Parshas VaYitzei – the Rebbe farbrenged, and spoke about the inyan of shlichus.

The idea of shlichus was new at that time, and our going created a great excitement among Anash. You could feel the excitement in the air. Whoever was present that Shabbos, felt that special atmosphere.

The next day, shortly before we took off, we had a yechidus and received instructions regarding the shlichus. Among other things, the Rebbe said that the purpose of shlichus is to be mekarev the coming of Moshiach. At the end of the yechidus, the Rebbe gave us volumes of *Tanya* to give to friends of Chabad in Milan, and another *Tanya* "because you never know who you will meet on the flight ..." (which was a story in itself).

When we left the yechidus, there was a festive goodbye party in our honor and the dancing went on for quite some time in 770. Suddenly we noticed that the Rebbe was standing and watching the entire time. We quickly got into a cab that took us to the airport.

We first went to France, where we stayed for a week until our visas were arranged. A week later, on Yud-Tes Kislev, we arrived in Milan. A letter from the Rebbe was already awaiting us. Later on, we also received Chanuka gelt, two dollars from the Rebbe, which was unusual at that time. We felt that the Rebbe was with us on this shlichus and that we weren't alone. This feeling only grew stronger as time went on.

At the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen in 770, the Rebbe mentioned my husband and said, "Today Rav Gershon Mendel Garelik arrived in Milan." Then the Rebbe told a family member to say l'chaim for us. That is how it was throughout that first year of shlichus. At every farbrengen, the Rebbe told a family member to say l'chaim for us.

After Purim of that year, the Rebbe sent us a tape of the Yud Shvat and Purim farbrengens.

THE REBBE DESCRIBES THEIR WORK

In the summer of 1959, we opened camp Gan Yisroel, the first one in Europe, and the Rebbe referred to it at the farbrengen of 13 Tammuz in a very special way. The Rebbe said:

On the Chag HaGeula, 13

Tammuz, Rav Gershon Mendel Garelik, with all the distinguished titles he deserves, along with his wife, the Rebbetzin, with all the distinguished titles she deserves, opened the first Gan Yisroel in Europe, in Italy.

From this we see how much can be accomplished, as the Midrash says, "one of you exiled to Barbary ... it's like all of you were exiled."



A letter Rebbetzin Garelik received from the Rebbe

Just one couple went, and they started a school for boys, a school for girls, and classes for adults, etc.

What all the chassidim of Europe could not accomplish – along with the shpitz Chabad – they accomplished. A girl born in America and a boy born in Russia... Hashem makes matches and He had them meet in the U.S., and then sent them "wandering" to Italy. There they

accomplished all the inyanim of the world, and they have yet more to do, in a way of "you shall break forth west and east and north and south."

He didn't have a penny with which to buy the camp, but it was bought with loans. There were no children [registered] for the camp, but with strength, with a strong hand, with a great hand, and with an uplifted hand, he gathered children, and now they are full of joy, along with their parents.

Thus, in the environs of Rome – "from the destruction of Yerushalayim was Tzor filled," which refers to the Kingdom of Rome – a Gan Yisroel was opened on 13 Tammuz 5719, a Shmita Year, in order to spread the wellsprings, in such a way that through the children, the parents will be affected.

READING MINDS

You merited many kiruvim from the Rebbe over the years, some of which are well-known. Please share a special moment you had with the Rebbe with us.

Beginning with the Rebbe's 70th birthday, I began going to 770 every year for Yud-Alef Nissan. I generally went just for one day. Over the years, I

merited various kiruvim from the Rebbe, like the story about the Hagados and general letters that I got from the Rebbe for the entire family on Yud-Alef Nissan 5734 (1974).

In 5748 (1988), the year the Rebbetzin passed away, the Rebbe said sichos and distributed dollars in his house. That year, as always, I went to the Rebbe for Yud-Alef Nissan. I was staying with my

daughter when we suddenly heard the siren go off, announcing that the Rebbe was about to say a sicha or give out dollars. We ran to the Rebbe's house and stood in line with everyone else.

While I stood there and waited, I thought about how large the crowd was and how each person would pass by the Rebbe for just a second, and how the Rebbe would certainly not notice that I had come.

When our turn came, I went first, got a dollar, and continued walking, and then my daughter went by with her son. The Rebbe said something to her and she continued walking. Then Rabbi Klein called me back and repeated what the Rebbe had said to my daughter, "Apparently, she thinks that I don't recognize her," and then the Rebbe turned to me and said, "It seems to me that you are in doubt as to whether I recognized you..."

So if anybody wonders whether the Rebbe reads minds, here's your answer!

CHINUCH FOR HISKASHRUS

Ten years have gone by and we don't see or hear the Rebbe. How do we develop *hiskashrus* in our children, those who didn't see the Rebbe, or don't remember seeing the Rebbe? How do we instill in them the belief that Moshiach is about to come?

Right after Gimmel Tammuz 5754, I was in Eretz Yisroel and I was asked to strengthen the ladies there. I said at that time, and I repeat it again now, as *chassidim* we are certain that everything the Rebbe said will come to pass! The Rebbe promised that "behold, Moshiach is coming," and we have no doubts about it – this is what strengthens us and this is what we live with.

One of the reasons that we teach little boys about the sacrifices (and this is what we start with) is in order to teach them that the *Geula* is

A SPECIAL CONNECTION WITH REBBETZIN CHANA A"H

The Gareliks had a special relationship with Rebbetzin Chana, the Mother of Royalty, from when R' Gershon Mendel was a child, and his parents were together with the Rebbe's parents in Alma Ata.

When the Gareliks' first son was born, they named him Levi Yitzchok after the Rebbe's father and this made Rebbetzin Chana very happy. In a letter dated Iyar 5722, she thanks them for the pictures they sent her of the children, and wrote, "Levi Yitzchok is, bli ayin ha'ra, a *gantze bachur*."

Rebbetzin Garelik was expecting twins at the time, and after she saw the special affection Rebbetzin Chana had for the child named after her husband, she wrote her a letter and asked whether Rebbetzin Chana had any other relatives for whom she should name her children.

In response (see copy), Rebbetzin Chana wrote:

"Regarding your question, I don't say, 'do as I wish,' but like the Rebbe *shlita* says, when it comes to naming children it's up to the parents to decide. I think that your mother or father certainly had relatives that they would want their grandchildren to be named after. Such a decision would certainly be pleasing to one and all."

In a letter of 8 Cheshvan 5726 (1964), the Rebbe added in the margin: "As you described in your letter, the building can be named 'Bais Chana.'"



imminent, and in another moment the *Beis HaMikdash* will be built and we must be knowledgeable in all the laws of sacrifices so we can be ready for the *avoda*.

This is also how we must educate the children regarding the Rebbe. We must instill in them the belief that the Rebbe will be revealed to us

momentarily and we must be ready. We must continue to live with the Rebbe every minute of the day – to think about the Rebbe, to speak about the Rebbe, and to do what the Rebbe wants us to do.

Just as before Gimmel Tammuz when a personal or a communal problem came up we asked the

Rebbe, we must ask the Rebbe everything now as well. Just as before Gimmel Tammuz sometimes we received answers and sometimes we didn't, the same is true now. But we must always remember that the Rebbe knows, listens, and sees everything.

My husband always says that the first thought that must fill your head right after Modeh Ani, needs to be about the Rebbe. And this must continue throughout the day.

When you celebrate a private event, for example, or at any family gathering, like a Shabbos meal, you have to begin with the D'var Malchus (and certainly at public gatherings).

In our family, we have an interesting custom. Over the years, my husband received many answers from the Rebbe. He has an answer from the Rebbe from just about every day of the year, and this is his personal *Igros Kodesh*. At every family

My mother told the Rebbe that it would be a modest wedding so as not to go into debt. The Rebbe was very pleased by this and said, "If only others learned from you and did the same."

event, my husband reads the letter that he got on that date, or from a date close to it. Often these are long answers that you can't understand from just a simple reading, but he reads them even if they're not always understood.

This is an example of how we can (and should) convey the central role the Rebbe plays in our lives to the next generation, how the Rebbe takes part in whatever is going on in our lives, and in the most natural manner this strengthens our love and his Kashrus to the Rebbe. The Rebbe must be alive within us at every moment, in thought, speech, and action. When you live like this with the Rebbe, you feel that the Rebbe is alive. If we live like this, naturally, it will be transmitted to our children.

Another thing that can strengthen and arouse his Kashrus is a picture of the Rebbe. At one of my husband's yechidusin, the Rebbe told him to have his picture in his pocket. Our home in Milan is full of pictures of the Rebbe. Wherever you go, there is a picture of the Rebbe. Pictures of the Rebbe definitely strengthen one's his Kashrus to the Rebbe, and may we soon merit to greet him b'simcha!

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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 III

THE GREATEST LEADER IN OUR GENERATION

The *gaon* Rabbi Nachum Kornbisser, *rosh yeshiva* of the Chiddushei HaRim *yeshiva* related' the following:

"During the month of Shevat 5730 (January-February, 1970) when letters were being sold for the Torah scroll of Moshiach, I was staying with the Beis Yisroel at his home in Kfar Shmaryahu. Some Chabad *shluchim* came to visit the *Admur* in connection with the matter of the Torah scroll. The *Admur* later told me: 'I inscribed a letter, and I also gave

them money. I heard a rumor that there is someone who opposes the Rebbe's declaration that this Torah scroll can bring the Redemption; I am completely incapable of fathoming this opposition.'

"At that time, there was also a rumor that a certain individual described the matter of the Torah scroll as idolatry, G-d forbid. In reaction to this, the Beis Yisroel told me: "I find it very hard to believe that so-and-so said this; but if I were to find out that he did indeed say it, I would no longer wish to meet with him. I once had a visitor who called Breslov "idolatry"; after that, I was no longer prepared to meet with him. You should

know that the Lubavitcher is an awesome person [*a moradiker mentch*], leader of Israel.' I heard many times from the *Admur's* holy mouth that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is the greatest leader of our generation." (Kfar Chabad Magazine issue 127.)

I heard from prominent Gerrer *chassidim*, relatives of the Gerrer *Admurim*, that when the Beis Yisroel received "complaints" that Lubavitcher *chassidim* are calling their Rebbe Moshiach, he said, "As long as he comes already."

AT THE HEAD OF AN ARMY OF THOUSANDS OF JEWS

At the *Siyum HaRambam* of 5747, the *gaon*, Rabbi Yisroel Piekarski *zatzal*, related the following:

"I remember how over twenty years ago, when I was by the *Admur* of Ger, the Beis Yisroel *zatzal*, and we spoke about the greatness of Lubavitch, the *Admur* spoke in glorious terms of the activities of Lubavitch in bringing Jews back to the folds of Torah. He said: "When the complete Redemption will come, the *tzaddikim* of all the generations will be called upon to demonstrate their achievements. One can easily imagine the awesome scene, when his holy honor, the *Admur* of



Lubavitcher *shlita*, will approach at the head of an army of tens of thousands of Jews whom he brought back to Torah and mitzvahs, and to their Father in Heaven.”

ENCOURAGES THE YESHIVA STUDENTS TO STUDY TANYA

On 25 Nissan 5755 (April 25, 1995), the *gaon* and *chassid*, Rabbi Shabsai Slavitzki of Antwerp, wrote to me as follows:

1. “When I was learning in the Kol Torah yeshiva in Jerusalem (about twenty-five years ago), there was a *bachur* who came from a Gerrer family. When a match was proposed for him, he went to ask the Beis Yisroel about it, and the Beis Yisroel gave him his blessings. Since this *bachur* studied Chabad *chassidus*, and had a connection to Chabad, he also asked the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach about the proposed match. The Rebbe answered him that based on his written description of the woman in question she is not for him.

“The *bachur* did not know what to do. As a good friend of this *bachur*, I suggested that he go back to the Gerrer Rebbe, tell him what the Rebbe said, and ask him what to do. He followed my suggestion, and the Beis Yisroel told him to as act in accordance with the Rebbe’s advice because, ‘He sees high.’¹ Another match was subsequently proposed for the *bachur*, and again, he went to receive the Beis Yisroel’s blessing. The *Admur* asked him: “Did you ask the Lubavitcher Rebbe for a blessing?” When the *bachur* replied that he had not, the *Admur* instructed him to ask the Rebbe do so.

2. “During that time, there used to be a *Tanya* class late at night for the students of Kol Torah, in the home of the Amshinover Rebbe, in Bayit Vegan. The Gerrer Rebbe used to visit the Amshinover Rebbe from time to time, and on one such occasion, he saw us studying the *Tanya* in a large group. He was very pleased, and he said, “Fine, fine, learn, learn,”² indicating his pleasure by tapping us with his cane.



3. “One of the *bachurim* who studied in this *Tanya* group came from a Gerrer family, and he had asked the Beis Yisroel if he should join our class. The *Admur* told him to participate because “it is impossible to be G-d fearing without learning the first twelve chapters of *Tanya*.” When the *Admur* heard that there were yeshivas that did not permit the study of *Tanya*, he responded with very sharp words – words that I do not wish to repeat.”

THE REBBE STANDS UP

In the *seifer Rosh B’nei Yisroel*,³ the *gaon* and *chassid*, Rabbi Yosef Segal relates an amazing story:

Towards the end of Elul 5720 (September, 1960) he traveled to the Rebbe. Before his departure, he asked

the Beis Yisroel – with whom he was very close – for a blessing. When the *Admur* heard that he was traveling to the Rebbe, he said, “Give the Rebbe my regards, and bless him, in my name, with a *k’siva va’chasima tova*.”⁴

When he later had a private audience with the Rebbe, and he began to relay the Gerrer Rebbe’s blessing, the Rebbe suddenly rose from his chair, and listened to the blessing while standing. When Rabbi Segal completed the blessing, the Rebbe responded “Amen!” sat back down, and said, “G-d should help that all the blessings that Jews give one another should be fulfilled.” (See there the rest of this awesome story, which reveals the deep soul connection the Rebbe and the Beis Yisroel shared.)

ENDING ON A POSITIVE NOTE

In the *seifer Beis Yisroel* that is housed in the Rebbe’s library it was discovered that at the end of Parshas Massei (the last *parsha* in the book of BaMidbar), after the words, “Otherwise, the waters will sweep [you away] . . .” with which the *seifer* concludes, the Rebbe MH”M wrote, “One concludes on a positive note.”

NOTES:

1 “Er zeht hoich.”

2 “Fien, fein, lerent, lerent.”

3 P. 215

4 I.e., to be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

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UNCONDITIONAL COMMITMENT

My name is Chaim Moshe Muzar, and I became mekurav to the Rebbe in 5751. My wife is originally from Afula, and since the closest shul to where she used to live is the Baalei Melacha Chabad shul, I got to know Chabad that way. I became a mekurav to Judaism and chassidus through Rabbi Chaim Sholom Segal and the Chabad community in Afula, and thanks to them I am connected with the Rebbe MH"M.

I got married on 12 Tammuz 5751, without knowing that it was the Chag HaGeula, and I moved to Chaifa. As an employee of the Chaifa municipality, I founded, with the help of Rabbi Dov Ginsberg, a shliach in the city, a sort of Chabad house at the municipality. I try to be mekarev the employees to the Rebbe and do Mivtza T'fillin, Mezuzah, etc., with them. Of course, I also make sure to tell them that we have a Rebbe now too, and we can get his advice and blessings through the *Igros Kodesh*.

One of my friends, A.K., is a G-d-fearing Jew from Kiryat Ata who was married for a number of years and did not have children. On a few occasions I suggested that he write to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha, but he rejected the idea of writing to the Rebbe and even made fun of it.

On Erev Rosh HaShana 5760, after many conversations, he agreed to come with me to the Chabad house and write to the Rebbe. He figured he had nothing to lose.

I told him that he had to make a

positive commitment of some kind. He wrote the letter asking for a bracha for children and included his willingness to contribute a nice amount of money to Chabad if his request was fulfilled.

He said "Yechi" and put his letter into volume 5 of the *Igros Kodesh*. As soon as he opened it and read the page he had opened to, I could see he looked about to faint. "This is unbelievable ... it can't be," he mumbled.

The letter was #1353, which says as follows:

"This is not pleasing to me, your writing it like this, for why should you make conditions with G-d?"

I received your letter and pidyon nefesh on behalf of your daughter and son-in-law for a bracha for children. When I will be at the tziyun of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, I will read it there.

At the end of the letter it says:

"G-d willing, I will give a large amount of money to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch when they have children." This is not pleasing to me, your writing it like this, for why should you make

conditions with G-d? We know from Chazal that he who gives a coin to tz'daka [so his child becomes well], etc., is a perfect tzaddik, yet we don't find them referring to conditions about giving after the request is fulfilled. Surely you yourself realize that when there is a question about who is more reliable, then certainly Hashem is completely reliable and omnipotent.

I would like to know about your learning schedule in nigleh and chassidus, and surely you are also careful about saying the daily T'hillim.

My friend started to cry, and I won't deny that tears came to my eyes too. The answer was a double-whammy: a bracha for children as well as a response to his commitment to give tz'daka to Chabad if he had children, and the Rebbe admonished him for making conditions and suggested that he give a symbolic sum to tz'daka.

After he calmed down, he took 100 shekels out of his pocket and gave it to the Chabad house. He also bought a large *Ohel Yosef Yitzchok T'hillim* and committed to saying the daily T'hillim.

Five months later, he told me his wife was expecting a child. Nine months after receiving the Rebbe's bracha, he had a son whom they named Mattan. A.K. has become a loyal chassid of the Rebbe.

May we immediately see the Rebbe with the true and complete Redemption!

TO SERVE G-D AND PROTECT

BY SHAI GEFEN

*Meet Iddo Rahav, a police officer by profession, who is in charge of the police outpost in the religious city of Elad. He has transformed his workplace into a real Chabad house! * In this interview, he tells us how he became a Lubavitcher, about how he combines his profession with mitzvaim, his thoughts about promoting inyanei Moshiach and Geula, and about some miracles he has experienced.*

Iddo Rahav grew up in Ramat Aviv. Judaism didn't speak much to his family. "We didn't know anything," he says, "not even about Yom Kippur." He lived in the agricultural dormitory in Kfar HaYarok after his father died when he was a child.

Although Iddo knew nothing about Judaism, something always attracted him to it. "In a way that I can't explain, I always searched for Judaism. I wanted to hear Kiddush on Shabbos. In the army, I wanted to put on t'fillin.

"A few years ago, I met a Lubavitcher in Beis Menachem in Kfar Chabad, and in the course of our conversation we realized that he was the one I had asked to put t'fillin on me when I was in the army. He was in the tent near me and he put t'fillin on me. He wasn't even a Lubavitcher at the time, and there we were, meeting again, both as Lubavitchers!"

Iddo served in the paratroopers. After three years of army duty, he went to the U.S. to make money, as do many Israelis after their army service. It was there that he became more involved in Judaism.

"It was when I was in Los Angeles that I met someone who began teaching me how to put on t'fillin, to say brachos, and to daven."

His more serious involvement in Judaism began nine years ago, when the Rebbe's shliach, Rabbi Yosef Ginsberg, went to Ramat Aviv on shlichus. Iddo met him back then on the street. "I was walking with a friend when I met Rav Yossi. He invited us to his home Friday night, and since then, I've stuck with him and helped him as much as I can with his work in Ramat Aviv."

After Iddo married, he joined the police force.

Why did you choose this profession?

"I was always attracted to this sort of work. I thought I was suited for this unique challenge. Today I can say that baruch Hashem, the outreach I do in the course of my work, definitely justifies my being there."

Iddo isn't only busy with tracking down robbers or investigating bomb scares, which happens a lot these days, but with spreading the wellsprings outward. Lots of people are charmed by the Lubavitcher police officer from Ramat Aviv. Even tough cops know it is hard to turn Iddo down.

Actually, it turns out that his chassidic garb sometimes helps him on the job. "A few years ago," Iddo says with a smile, "we had to run a stakeout for a car thief at the cemetery in Gush Dan. They asked me to come with my hat and jacket in order to follow him surreptitiously. In the end, he was caught."

Iddo is now in charge of the police outpost of the new chareidi city of Elad, which is officially under the jurisdiction of the police station in Rosh HaAyin, where he went a few years ago. When he arrived in Elad, the religious Jews of the city looked at him in astonishment. Today, many of them know that they have someone they can turn to, a sort of Chabad house within the police. "Whoever wants a bracha from the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh* comes to me.

"When I arrived at the police station in Rosh HaAyin, I wanted to

meet the shliach there, Rabbi Binyamin Akiva. Then it turned out, most amazingly, that the first police work I had to do was connected with the shliach.

“One day I was standing in the station when a message came in about a break-in in someone’s home. I went to check it out, accompanied by two detectives. We met a girl who told us about an Arab who entered the apartment and emptied it out. We drove around the city, and after getting some information, we managed to catch the Arab at work.

“The next day, the shliach, Rabbi Binyamin Akiva, came to the station to thank us for a job well-done. He was a relative of the family whose home had been broken into. So I ended up meeting the shliach much faster than I had anticipated!”

What does your job consist of?

“Routine police work these days is definitely not routine. I can say that in the past year and a half, we are buckling under from the workload. The police was enlisted, full force, for security work, in an unprecedented way. According to the number of incidents taking place in recent years, you can understand what kind of work we have to deal with.

“Everybody has to put in additional hours. The number of hours has risen 30-40%. From this perspective, things are really bad. We are operating around the clock, and there’s

no day nor night.

“However, when I want to refresh myself and decide what I want of myself, I know that I also have the Rebbe’s shlichus. When I am pressured at work, I start doing mitzvaim, despite the time it takes. If I was talking to



friends this week about how we are swamped with work, the next day I had tremendous satisfaction. A group of volunteers came to the station from abroad in order to help out. Naturally, I asked them to put on t’fillin.

“One of them had no idea what I was talking about. He was 58 years old. I asked him whether he had put on t’fillin at his bar mitzva, and he said he hadn’t. So I had the z’chus of putting t’fillin on a *karkafta* (someone who has never put on t’fillin), and this definitely reduced the tension of my work.

“At our police station, most of the policemen put on t’fillin. We also have volumes of *Igros Kodesh*. Police officers, chassidim, and non-chassidim come and ask the Rebbe for brachos, and many miracles result from these brachos.

“We had a policeman who asked the Rebbe for a bracha through the *Igros Kodesh*. He

opened the volume and after reading the answer, he left the room looking like a ghost. We didn’t know what had happened to him. A few minutes later, when he had calmed down a bit, he told us that he asked the Rebbe for a bracha regarding his kidney

stones. All the doctors had told him that he needed an operation. The answer he opened to was in volume 22, p. 259:

In response to your letter in which you write about health and the opinion of the doctors. You are correct in what you write that in some similar cases to your own, and perhaps even more serious ones, by doing the proper thing the stone came out without an operation... May Hashem, the Healer of all flesh, Who does wonders, heal you through the proper treatment and the proper doctor.

“Needless to say, the policemen in the station at the time were awestruck, and this led many more of them to write to the Rebbe. It has reached the point where today, every policeman with a problem asks the Rebbe for a bracha. You can definitely say that I have become a Chabad house within the police station.”

* * *

Even the tougher guys go to Iddo to put on t’fillin.

“Some time ago, we got a new commander. I asked him to put on t’fillin, but he wasn’t interested. He finally said to me, ‘If you catch a robber red-handed, I’ll put on t’fillin.’”

“At that time there was an epidemic of robberies in Elad, and nobody knew how to stop it. I decided that if this is what it took to get the commander to put on t’fillin, I would do my best to catch the robber red-handed. I asked the Rebbe for help.

“One evening, I got intelligence information about a robbery in Elad. We caught an Arab who admitted to many other robberies. I went over to the commander and asked him to put on t’fillin, but he refused, saying that I hadn’t caught him red-handed.

“I waited for the next opportunity, and one month later we got advance warning that there was going to be a break-in at a warehouse. That very evening we apprehended two crooks “in-the-act,” as they were taking computers out of a warehouse. This

time the commander had to agree to put on t’fillin, and since then he no longer refuses when I ask him to put them on.”

* * *

Despite his workload, Iddo also does mitzvaim in Ramat Aviv. He moved to the Ne’ot Ofka neighborhood and began working for shliach Rabbi Dovid Oshaki. The fact that he wears a police uniform, at a time when the country is besieged by terrorists, makes Iddo a welcome figure even among the Ramat Aviv crowd, which isn’t exactly enamored of religious Jews. There’s something about a policeman with a long chassidic beard and tzitzis that works wonders.

Iddo is very busy with his neighbors: checking and changing mezuzos in dozens of homes, t’fillin, inviting guests for Shabbos meals,

weekly classes, house calls, etc. One year, on Gimmel Tammuz, he made 15 house calls, did an extensive Mivtza T’fillin throughout the area, and distributed the booklets called *To Change the World*.

“During every Mivtza Mezusa, I personally bring the mezuzos to the house and get to know the family. I once had an amazing thing happen with an open miracle of the Rebbe.

“When I first started working in Ne’ot Ofka, I went to a house to return mezuzos that had been checked. The woman told me that her niece has been married for a number of years but did not have children. I suggested she write to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha, and she did.

“A month or so later, I got a phone call from the woman, who said emotionally, ‘It’s thanks to the bracha



Mivtza Chanuka



Simcha shel mitzva



With colleagues at the police station

that my niece is expecting...'

"For Mivtza Chanuka I got a lot of guys from the Kfar to help me. We knocked on door after door and suggested that people light Chanuka menoros. In one home lived a single fellow who had no idea that it was Chanuka. He was very moved by the menorah, and today he is one of our serious mekuravim."

That's Iddo's approach: to create a personal connection with people. His personal connection with families brings about real changes in the lives of many of them.

"I think that this is what makes a shliach successful," he explains.

How do you handle the pressure at work with overtime, in addition to mivtzaim in Ramat Aviv?

"When you go with the Rebbe's kochos, nothing stops you," he explains matter-of-factly.

Iddo is one of those shluchim and chassidim who did not yet merit to see the Rebbe, but whose hiskashrus definitely illustrates the fact that the Rebbe is alive:

"For us, the Rebbe is someone absolutely unbounded. The yearning to see the Rebbe is tremendous, as we learned in Parshas Chukas, 'the nasi is

"The more we instill emuna and bitachon in Hashem, the more we will understand the seriousness of the situation here. The Arabs are not only terror threats but are also involved in unprecedented levels of robberies, and other crimes. All the problems stem from having given them authority, and they take advantage of whatever we give them.

everything.' I definitely realize that this is an extremely challenging time, and not everybody withstands the great darkness surrounding us, even those who saw the Rebbe many times.

"I must say that regarding publicizing the topic of Moshiach and Geula, I see how it's accepted today with almost no problems. You can see how the topic penetrated the world, and the opposition is not what it once was. It all depends on us. The more clearly we state the message, the more we inspire others to have a strong emuna in the hisgalus of the Rebbe shlita."

Getting back to what you mentioned earlier – the security situation – what can you tell us about it?

"As a policeman who constantly works on security-related matters, I can clearly say that we see that the Rebbe is the prophet of the generation, whose words are being realized before our eyes. The Rebbe said 'the land will be open before them,' and this is only a metaphor for what is going on here.

"What the Rebbe said is so true and foresighted. We see the great disgrace in all the mistakes our leaders make, because they go contrary to what the Rebbe said. Yet people's eyes are still not open, and some people still debate whether Oslo is alive or not.

"In my opinion, it all comes from a lack of faith. The more we instill emuna and bitachon in Hashem, the more we will understand the seriousness of the situation here. The Arabs are not only terror threats but are also involved in unprecedented levels of robberies, and other crimes. All the problems stem from having given them authority, and they take advantage of whatever we give them.

"Thank you, *Beis Moshiach*, for bringing us the Rebbe's views on this each week, and with Hashem's help, we will merit to see the hisgalus of the Rebbe shlita Melech HaMoshiach, now!"

SUDDENLY, THE MASTER WILL COME

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM
FROM HIS BOOK *U'MAIVI GOEL*

*How will Moshiach come suddenly? How will we dance in Yemos HaMoshiach? How did Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld cleverly answer why we need to anticipate Moshiach's coming when Moshiach is supposed to come "b'hesech ha'daas"? Who said that Moshiach will first appear in Russia? * A compilation of short stories about Yemos HaMoshiach. * Part 1 of 2*

GERMANY, POLAND, AND RUSSIA

Once, when the Alter Rebbe was in the mikva, he asked that they enumerate those towns where Jews lived. One of the chassidim began listing towns in Germany. The Rebbe said, "Germany? Over there are lofty souls that fell into the depths of klipa. Even the Baal Shem Tov did not save them. Only Moshiach will save them."

They began enumerating names of towns in Poland. The Rebbe said, "Poland? The Jews of Poland have simple faith, and that's how Moshiach will come."

They mentioned towns in Russia and the Rebbe said, "The Baal Shem Tov came to rectify Russia."

(Likkutei Sippurim – Perlow)

CONSTANT LOVE

The Alter Rebbe once told his son, later to become the Mittlerer Rebbe, that chassidim have the trait of ahavas Yisroel engraved in their hearts. At that time, the chassidim had a great love for one another, greater than brotherly love. Chassidim would say that fraternal love should be like the love chassidim had for one another...

The Alter Rebbe was very pleased by this chassidic love. "However," said the Alter Rebbe, "it doesn't come close to the ahavas Yisroel that the Baal Shem Tov wanted, that every Jew should have mesirus nefesh for every other Jew, even for a Jew who is a stranger to him."

The Rebbe Maharash concluded: "What the Alter Rebbe said lit an

'everlasting fire' of ahavas ha'chassidim, and with this they will merit to greet Moshiach."

(Seifer HaSichos summer 5700)

A PRECIOUS GIFT

The father of the holy Rebbe Naftali of Ropshitz would sign his letters with his name and the title, "Ohev Yisroel."

One time, when he was about to sign in his customary way, the pen fell from his hand. When he picked it up and tried to sign again, the pen fell again. The tzaddik realized that this wasn't by accident, and that Heaven was preventing him from signing. He burst into bitter tears and said, "Oy, the good trait that I crowned myself with, the midda of ahavas Yisroel, was taken from me. What did I do wrong? Did I insult someone and is this my punishment?"

The tzaddik thought through everything that had happened that day, but did not find anything amiss. He called his family members and asked them, "Did I insult anybody unwittingly?"

The family remembered that in the morning, a coarse man wearing a peasant cap had come to the door, and he wasn't allowed to enter. The man was insulted and left.

The tzaddik immediately told his aides to go and find the man.



The aides searched the town but did not find him. They looked in inns and hostels, but he was nowhere to be found. They asked passersby, but nobody knew where the man was. Finally, someone said he saw the man enter a place of sin. They went there and found him.

The aides told him to hurry, for the Rebbe wanted him, but the man refused to go with them. They grabbed him and brought him to the Rebbe, and told the Rebbe where they had found him.

The tzaddik acted as though he didn't hear what they said, and greeted the man warmly. He asked

the man's pardon for insulting him, and then he asked his household to prepare a nice meal for the guest.

“Germany? Over there are lofty souls that fell into the depths of klipa. Even the Baal Shem Tov did not save them. Only Moshiach will save them.”

When the man saw how much the Rebbe honored him, he regretted his actions and became a baal t'shuva. It was only after the man departed that the tzaddik explained why he had given the man such honor.

“In the Days of Moshiach there will be Jews who do not want to greet Moshiach, and will stay where they are. Ultimately, the gentiles will take these Jews and carry them to the Mikdash in Yerushalayim.

“Who will these Jews be? Certainly not chassidim, for they will run to greet Moshiach! These Jews will be sinners who have sunk

to the 49th level of impurity, who will be brought as a gift to Moshiach. And we insulted such a gift! That is why it was so important to appease and honor him.”

I WILL RETURN TO MY HUSBAND

It is said in the name of the Maggid of Mezritch that Moshiach will come from avoda done with great desire.

The Yid HaKadosh of Pshischa likewise said that before Moshiach comes people will be rolling in the streets searching and saying, “I will go and return to my ‘first husband’” ...

When Rabbi Yitzchok Meir of Ger, the Chiddushei HaRim repeated this, he concluded by saying that it would certainly be this way.

(Siach Sarfei Kodesh)

REFINING THE MIND

Chassidim asked Rabbi Dovid of Tolna, “Why should we ask for Moshiach? When Moshiach comes, we will have to go down into caves and cellars so that he won’t see us in our degraded state of sin.”

The tzaddik replied, “You should know that when Moshiach comes there will be a refinement of the mind to the point that the lowest of the lowest Jews will be able to approach and be seen by Moshiach.

“Now that you’ve heard me say this, go and publicize it in my name so that everybody will know and believe that this is the way it will be.”

(Shaar HaChassidus)

THIS IS WHAT LEARNED, THIS IS WHAT PRAYED ...

One of the times the chassid R’ Yitzchok Isaac of Homil went to Lubavitch for Shavuos to see the

Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe called him to his room and expounded on something he had heard from his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, in the name of the Baal Shem Tov.

When R’ Isaac left the Rebbe’s room, he was obviously greatly excited and he danced and kissed every chassid he encountered. It was very surprising to those who saw him that such a *baal mochin* (i.e., a man with such a great intellectual capacity) should be so

The Alter Rebbe was very pleased by this chassidic love. “However,” said the Alter Rebbe, “it doesn’t come close to the ahavas Yisroel that the Baal Shem Tov wanted, that every Jew should have mesirus nefesh for every other Jew, even for a Jew who is a stranger to him.”

overcome by emotion. Yet nobody dared to ask why he was so happy.

After the elder chassidim went to see the Tzemach Tzedek, they sat and farbrenged. At this farbrengen, R’ Isaac said, “When Moshiach comes, they will place Izel (referring to himself) on the palm of his hand, like a tiny creature, and they will say – this thing learned, this thing davened...”

DANCING WITH SIMPLE PEOPLE

Over 120 rabbanim, among them great chassidim – such as the famous gaonim R’ Isaac of Homil, R’ Yitzchok Isaac of Vitebsk, R’ Hillel of Paritch, as well as dozens of well-known wealthy men and distinguished baalei battim – went to Lubavitch, to the Tzemach Tzedek for Shavuos 5617 (1857).

When they all met, they held a large farbrengen in the garden near the houses where the Tzemach Tzedek and his extended family lived. The elder chassidim, who were the main speakers, reviewed maamarim of chassidus which the Rebbe had expounded on the holiday, as well as divrei Torah he related at the meal on the second day of Shavuos.

The maamarim the Rebbe said that Shavuos were very deep, and other than the great maskilim, the listeners did not understand them, aside from one maamer that everyone understood – even the simple Yidden, including the wagon drivers who drove the chassidim to Lubavitch.

The Rebbe started the maamer with the words, “When the Jewish people preceded ‘we will hear’ with ‘we will do,’” which is about the power of mesirus nefesh and the strength of every Jew when it comes to fulfilling Torah and mitzvos. The Rebbe referred to various statements of Chazal and described at length the pleasure Hashem has from the simple person who fulfills a mitzva with the ardor of fear of Heaven.

The same situation repeated itself at the farbrengen. When the great chassidim reviewed the deep maamarim, the simple people did not understand any of it. However when they reviewed the maamer, “When the Jewish people preceded...” even the wagon drivers’



faces lit up with joy.

When the review was over, all the simple chassidim got up and began to dance, singing, “Blessed is our G-d who created us for His glory and separated us from those who err, and gave us the Torah of Truth, and implanted eternal life within us.” The joy intensified, and the pace of the dancing picked up speed and their voices grew louder.

This joyous dance of the simple folk, and the pleasure that shone

from their faces, made an enormous impression on the great chassidim who observed them from the side.

“What do you say about the ‘and He gave us the Torah of Truth’ of Nachum the wagon driver?” R’ Isaac of Homil asked R’ Hillel of Paritch. “My uncle, the gaon R’ Zemel Stutzker [a great Lithuanian Torah scholar], never said ‘and He gave us the Torah of Truth’ with such ecstasy!”

“And what do you think,” said R’

Hillel, “about the loftiness of the ‘eternal life He implanted within us,’ of Shlomke the leather-worker and Sholom the cobbler? Even Rothschild doesn’t enjoy such bliss from his wealth!”

R’ Isaac responded, “This dance with the ‘and He gave us the Torah of Truth and implanted eternal life within us,’ will bring these simple people to the best and most beautiful places. When Moshiach comes and the dead come to life, the holy Avos, the Shvatim, Moshe and Aharon, the Prophets, the Tanaim, the Amoraim, and the tzaddikim of all the generations will arise and they will rejoice with these simple people – these people to whom the letters of the Torah are the ‘Torah of Truth,’ without even knowing the meaning of the words, to whom a chassidic dance after a d’var Torah imbued with fear of Heaven is ‘eternal life’ to them.”

With these pearls of wisdom, and his rare talent at description, R’ Isaac described the time of Moshiach and Resurrection of the Dead, how simple Jews, baalei mesirus nefesh, will merit the esteem and admiration of the greatest of the great.

“The first dance,” said R’ Isaac, “will be Moshe Rabbeinu and them, because the holy Torah stands on them and not on the prodigies who come up with new Torah ideas. And the real dance will be danced by Dovid HaMelech with these simple people who recite T’hillim.”

(Igrois Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 6, p. 298)

HISGALUS IN RUSSIA

The holy Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin once told his chassidim that Moshiach will first be revealed in Russia.

(m’g’dolei ha’chassidus, Divrei Dovid)

(To be continued.)

A GUSH (BLOC) OF MIRACLES & WONDERS

BY SHAI GEFEN

*Rabbi Yekusiel Rapp, director of the Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land, recently toured Gush Katif in order to strengthen and be strengthened in the battle for shleimus ha'Aretz, and to bring the Rebbe's message to the residents and leaders. * Shai Gefen accompanied him on this tour, spoke with people living in Gush Katif, and was excited to see the extent of the emuna and bitachon that people have there. * A diary of a visit to Gush Katif.*

Thursday, 28 Sivan

At 9:30 in the morning, we drive towards the Kisufim blockade. The radio keeps on blasting the residents of Gush Katif in an obvious attempt to present the evacuation as a done deal. It is a brainwashing campaign that would put Pravda to shame.

We are on our way to Gush Katif with Rabbi Yekusiel Rapp, director of the *Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land*, who is presently in Eretz Yisroel to promote the war against the transfer of Jews. The day is dedicated to touring the yishuvim of the Gush, to visit the b'nei mesirus nefesh, those who guard our land 24-hours-

a-day and fulfill the p'sak din in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, siman 329*, in person.

We are warmly greeted at the Kisufim blockade by R' Dror Vanunu, one of those leading the fight for Gush Katif. On the eve of the referendum he participated in an emergency meeting in 770, the kinus organized by R' Rapp. He expresses his gratitude to Chabad for its help in turning the tide in the Likud referendum. The mood is upbeat, in contrast to what you might have thought it would be, considering the Israeli media. Steadfast emuna radiates from Dror Vanunu.

Our driver is a resident of

Netzer Chazanya, the first yishuv established in Gush Katif 28 years ago. He is also optimistic.

"Who's thinking about leaving?" he says. He promises that his grandchildren will also settle in Gush Katif. Who can oppose such emuna and bitachon?

As we enter the Gush, we see a huge sign that says, "No entry to assessors and lawyers. You are warned."

We start our tour at Yishuv Atzmona, a beautiful yishuv. We are met by the Rebbe's shliach, Rav Yigal Kirshnzaft, who works day and night with tremendous mesirus nefesh.

We visit the talmud Torah and the school for girls. A surprise awaits us, a memento of the daily miracles and wonders that the people living here experience. A Kassam missile landed yesterday (Wednesday) on the roof of one of the classrooms, an hour before the students came. We see the hole in the roof and the workers busy fixing it. The children don't seem fazed by what happened. Unfortunately, they have become used to this.

R' Rapp goes in to greet the children and he gives them warm regards from Beis Chayeinu-770. He promises that Chabad chassidim, as per instructions from the Rebbe, will do all they can to prevent Jews from being expelled from their



homes. “You are the future of the Jewish people,” he tells them.

R’ Kirshnzaft gives us a piece of the Kassam missile as a memento of the miracle that happened yesterday (see photo). He enumerates the miracles: 4613 missiles that landed in Gush Katif as of Thursday, the 28th of Sivan.

“If they wanted to stop it immediately, they could do so. The problem is they don’t want to.”

From there we continue to a talmud Torah, where we meet Rav Yuval Gavrieli, who tells us about the school.

“Construction was completed a year and a half ago by the Ministry of Education, and we moved in only a year ago. Who can uproot this? Who has the power to uproot the ‘schoolchildren who have not tasted sin?’”

There are 500 children learning al taharas ha’kodesh. “Do not touch My anointed ones” – this refers to the schoolchildren. Yigal tells us

that they expect an additional 100 children for the next school year.

R’ Rapp explains the Rebbe’s position at length, not to even talk about giving away land. He quotes the Rebbe that in the merit of the sound of Torah and the building of mikvaos, they won’t be able to uproot the yishuvim in Yesha.

Yigal makes a fascinating point when he says, “In comparison to other places in Eretz Yisroel, based on the number of people living here, Gush Katif leads the way when it comes to Torah and mitzvos.”

There are ten kollelim, a number of yeshivos, and thousands of talmidim, not to mention the bug-free vegetables grown here, which prevent millions of Jews from transgressing Torah prohibitions.

“It’s a Gush (bloc) of Torah and mitzvos,” says the principal, Rav Gavrieli.

We travel on to the greenhouses, one of the landmarks of the Gush.

Hundreds of *dunam*-worth of greenhouses grow beautiful vegetables and flowers. It is wonderful to see Jews working for a living, bringing blessings not only to the residents of Eretz Yisroel, but to the entire world, through their marvelous exports.

The optimism is quite appealing. All the talk in the media and the Knesset are irrelevant when you see the reality of life here. We stand in amazement as we see the emuna of these wonderful Jews who bring the desert to life.

From Atzmona we continue to Kerem Atzmona, what the media calls an “illegal outpost.” Dozens of families live here. A road was just paved. We can see Rafiach, where the IDF was operating a few weeks ago, but sad to say, their work stopped before they were done. The tunnels in Rafiach are still used for smuggling weapons from Egypt into Eretz Yisroel.

Yigal tells us, “Three years ago I discovered in Tirmat that a truck with sand was leaving one of the houses. I warned the commander of the post there that the Arabs were opening a tunnel from the house and the house concealed the opening of the tunnel, through which they were smuggling weapons. They weren’t interested.

“Three months after I made this discovery, a huge explosion rocked the post near the house from where they dug a tunnel. On Friday, we heard on the radio about a missile shot towards Sderot. This is the response to Israel’s inaction. Instead



Avner Shimoni with Rabbi Rapp. Rabbi Kirshnzaft is on the left

of concentrating on terrorists, they make us into the bad guys.”

Yigal takes us in his car towards Neve Dekalim. The area is huge. The people in Gush are making things bloom wherever you look. The Rebbe's pictures greet us as we enter the Gush.

Yigal continues to tell us about the past four years of attacks intended to break the Jewish people and send us running. “But the residents here are tough,” he declares. There are many miracle stories, and Yigal recounts some of them. He is reminded of them as we pass by.

“Over here, two men were learning b'chavrusa when a missile landed on the house. The shrapnel flew around them, but no one was hurt. Torah protects and saves. The Rebbe's picture on the wall was the only thing that remained whole.”

The car we drive in is part of the miracles. You may remember that at the beginning of the year, Yigal's car was miraculously saved from a shooting ambush, which left his vehicle full of holes. His family was in the car at the time.

Yes. Every step is accompanied by miracles. The holes in the roads testify to the Kassam missile attacks. We drive towards the industrial area of Neve Dekalim. Nearby is the “Berlin Wall,” which separates between Neve Dekalim and nearby Khan Yunis. This business center pulses with life, and the Jews continue to manufacture and work.

Neve Dekalim is the largest and central yishuv of the Gush. It is the capitol of the twenty-one other yishuvim in Gush Katif. It is hard to believe what the government plans on destroying here. “Who could do such a criminal act?” we wonder.

A large sign on one of the houses in the center of Neve

He promises that Chabad chassidim, as per instructions from the Rebbe, will do all they can to prevent Jews from being expelled from their homes. “You are the future of the Jewish people,” he tells them.

Dekalim caught our eye, “The One who saves us from missiles is the One who will save us from the Prime Minister.” How true.

“Over here, miracles are a part of nature,” explains Yigal, and we definitely see it in the peace and calm. It is a shocking contrast, but the reason for the calm is faith in

their doing the right thing. The war has definitely forged the residents of the Gush.

In the center of Neve Dekalim is Yeshivas Yamit, the yeshiva that was uprooted from Yamit by the person who is presently the P.M. Sad testimony from a dismal period in our history. The unusual yeshiva building is built as a Magen Dovid and is surrounded by concrete bunkers to protect it from missiles. This is the only yeshiva in the world that requires such armor. There are signs of miracles here too. At the public phone at the entrance to the yeshiva stood a bachur, and while he used the phone a missile landed near his foot. He was unhurt.

The sounds of Torah reverberate from the yeshiva. 150 bachurim fill the spacious beis midrash. R' Rapp speaks with the bachurim. One of them came for two weeks from the center of the country. “I came in order to strengthen others and I'm leaving strengthened,” he says in amazement. “We feel the same way,”



Rabbi Rapp with Rabbi Kaminetzki



With a Kassam missile at the school in Atzmona, together with the principal (on the left) Rabbi Yuval Gavrieli

says R' Rapp.

The rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Dovid Gavrieli, welcomes us. R' Rapp gives him the book, *Karati V'Ein Oneh (I called, But Nobody Answered)*, a compilation of the Rebbe's sichos on shleimus ha'Aretz. A lively discussion about the Rebbe and Chabad ensues.

R' Rapp tells the rosh yeshiva a little of what he saw and heard of the Rebbe over the decades he has been living in Crown Heights, during which time he accompanied many people on their visits to the Rebbe. He relates sichos and stories, speaking quietly, simply, from the heart.

Everybody wants to thank R' Rapp for the campaign he ran before the referendum, in which he publicized what the Rebbe said



Dror Vanunu greets Rabbi Rapp at the Kisufim blockade

about the dangers in giving away land.

We walk to the home of the rav, Rabbi Yigal Kaminitzki, rabbi of the regional council of Gush Katif. He too is happy to greet us. R' Rapp and Rabbi Kaminitzki sit down for a long talk about the issues of the day. Rabbi Kaminitzki receives a copy of *Karati V'Ein Oneh*, and responds to some questions:

Have you decided to get ready to leave?

"The Midrash says that when Avrohom made a covenant with Avimelech and conceded Grar to him (the area which is presently Gaza), he was punished for doing so. The tikkun for it today is to protect Gaza. We see that all the withdrawals and the weakness begin in the Gaza Strip. That is how it began with the Oslo Accords, and now too, when they want to leave Gaza. Our big test begins here, and if we stand strong here, we'll be victorious in the other places too."

So what has happened to Sharon?

"He was all sweetness and light. When he was Minister of Housing, not a month went by that he didn't visit Gush Katif. Just one year ago, he announced that Netzarim is like Tel Aviv. He didn't stop supporting and praising us.

"I'm not a psychologist and I can't tell you what's going on with him, but what is clear is that Zionism without Torah is doomed."

The hot topic today is "compensation for leaving." Have you hired a lawyer to negotiate on your behalf?

"Our people are strong. Most of them won't be enticed. They will never move us from here. I saw the p'sak din of hundreds of rabbis from Pikuach Nefesh about the prohibition of taking compensation. I can tell you that the people here

are strong, and they don't need the p'sak din in order to strengthen their resolve.

"We've lived in a war zone for sixteen years. There is enormous tension and economic problems, but the people are very strong. The Jews who remain here are real tzaddikim. It is a tremendous kiddush Hashem. Every Jew in Gush Katif is a big tzaddik."

Of course, the media vilifies you...

"The Israeli media is poison. It is the fifth column amongst us. But it won't help them. All the pessimism and gloom they try to spread won't help in the slightest. Am Yisroel is strong and we will be victorious."

"I came in order to strengthen others and I'm leaving strengthened," he says in amazement.

What exactly should be done?

"We had a meeting of rabbanim and we came to the conclusion that all the work we did right before the referendum has to continue now too, for the purpose of reaching every Jew. There shouldn't be a home that we don't get to. We must give the nation inner and spiritual strength. We want to shape public opinion and change the reality. In order to do that, we need help from Chabad and other groups too.

"I'd like to thank R' Rapp, head of the Matteh to Save the Nation and the Land, for the campaign he ran before the referendum. We are fighting on a number of fronts and

we need all the help we can get to continue this fight."

During the conversation R' Rapp mentioned something the Rebbe said one time at dollars to someone who built apartments in Gush Katif. The Rebbe said that "Aza" is from the root meaning "strength," and you have to see to it not to return an inch of land. R' Rapp encouraged Rabbi Kaminitzki to publicize the p'sak halacha, which should be signed by all the rabbanim of Gush Katif, against giving away land and even discussing it. "The Rebbe says that a p'sak din of rabbanim impacts the worlds," explains R' Rapp.

We are invited to a meeting of the district council of Gaza, led by the council chairman, Avner Shimoni. With the agreement of all the council members, R' Rapp received an award for his work on behalf of the nation and the land. R' Rapp said words of Torah as well as words of support and encouragement.

We asked Mr. Shimoni about the compensation plan.

"Our fight is not for our house but a fight for Am Yisroel. If we, G-d forbid, break in Gush Katif, the entire nation is in danger," he warns.

Do you also hear how you are vilified in the media?

"We are in a war against the Arabs, while we have enemies at home too. This is a psychological war intended to break us, but they won't win. You see for yourselves how strong the people are here. Am Yisroel is much stronger than their intimidation tactics.

"Before the Likud referendum, the media promised that 70% would vote in favor of the withdrawal. What actually happened? 60% voted against it!

"There's nothing to talk about



Rabbi Kirschzaft with Rabbi Rapp in front of the Chabad mikva being built in Gush Katif

regarding expulsion; we need to talk about expansion and development, and that is just what the council is addressing.”

The council chairman surprises us and takes out a dollar from the Rebbe that he always keeps on him. The council meeting turns into a farbrengen with the deputy chairman, Yitzchok Alya, telling a miracle story with the Rebbe that happened to his neighbor who didn't have children for many years.

“Within a month of her return from the Rebbe, she was expecting a child.”

R' Rapp asked the council members to make a good hachlata in order to increase the protection of the Gush and to merit *siyata d'Shmaya*. On the spot, the council decided that within a year, a Chabad house would be built in the center of Neve Dekalim.

R' Rapp wished the council leader that they double the number of yishuvim. Shimoni also received a copy of *Karati V'Ein Oneh*, and

parted warmly with the visitors.

From there we went to the headquarters of the Commander of Area Defense of Gush Katif, Eren Shalev. In his office we see dozens of shells that had landed in the Jewish yishuvim. “This is tangible evidence of open miracles,” he tells us.

R' Rapp conveys the strong and clear message of the Rebbe: We are obligated to arise and annihilate all the terrorists and all those who try to send missiles our way.

“Who knows how much bloodshed we would have been spared,” says R' Rapp, “if we had listened to the Rebbe, and ignored political considerations, and let the army do its work.”

We go to the Chabad house's large library, which serves the thousands of residents of the Gush, a library comparable to that of a Chabad house in the center of the country. Thousands of books, audio and video tapes, fill the large shelter.

R' Kirshnzaft invites us to his home for lunch, which quickly turns into a farbrengen. R' Rapp wishes the shliach that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach visit his house first, for it has become a symbol of daily mesirus nefesh.

If you want to see the Rebbe's bracha to his shluchim, go and visit the Kirshnzaft family and see the chinuch of the children, the calm, and the simcha on the faces of the children, young and old. Their father is a source of encouragement and hope to many of the residents.

We watch a video of R' Kirshnzaft's work, how he visits each yishuv and base, despite the danger. He goes to every nook and cranny of the Gaza Strip in order to visit the soldiers and bring the joy of the holidays and the besuras ha'Geula.

We go on to Kfar Darom. It is from here that the far-reaching activities of Machon HaTorah V'HaAretz spreads across the land. We meet with the rav of Kfar Darom, Rav Schreiber, who warmly welcomes us and displays his extensive knowledge of the Rebbe's teachings.

This is a war zone, but the residents here are made of iron. They are fearless. It is just as it says in the Torah, “your locks are like iron,” that the border cities need to be settled by fearless strong men.

It is late afternoon and the children are playing near the tanks that overlook Dir Al Balakh.

A day full of interesting encounters and inspiration is over. R' Kirshnzaft invites all of Anash to come and tour Gush Katif, to see the place from up-close. It is difficult to part. We will have to return soon. Who could possibly turn their backs on such a beautiful place as Gush Katif?

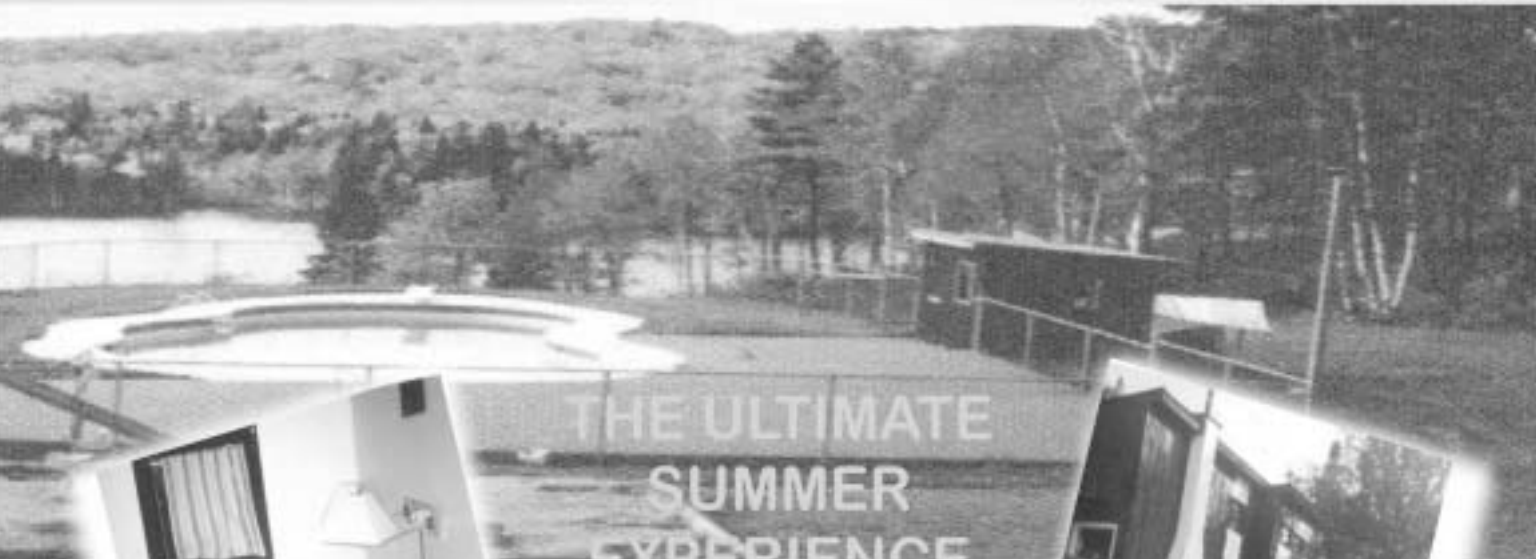
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REB YISROEL DRIZIN A”H

Crown Heights was shocked by the news of the sudden passing of Rabbi Yisroel Drizin at the age of 66. R' Yisroel's parents were the celebrated mashpia, R' Avrohom Maiyor and his wife Sarah a”h. He was born the first night of Pesach 5698 in the town of Mamintovka near Moscow.

R' Avrohom was the director of the chain of Tomchei T'mimim yeshivos in Russia for a number of years until forced to go underground, when he moved to Mamintovka. There too, he continued his holy work and his home was open to all guests (like the first Avrohom and Sarah), entailing great mesirus nefesh. This was the home the child Yisroel grew up in.

During World War II the family fled to Samarkand, where R' Yisroel began to receive his formal chassidic education in the local Tomchei T'mimim.

When Lubavitchers were able to escape Russia in 1947 via Lvov, the Drizin family was one of the lucky ones to make it out of country. They spent many months in the camp in Poking, Germany, where Rebbetzin Chana a”h, the Rebbe's mother, was too. Young Yisroel prepared wood for her stove.

As per the Rebbe Rayatz's instructions, the Drizins moved to Eretz Yisroel, where Yisroel learned in Kfar Chabad and Lud.

R' Yisroel was blessed with talent and good middos, and while still learning, he began teaching children in Kfar Chabad. He was extremely devoted, and received letters of encouragement from the Rebbe about his work.

He organized Evenings With Chabad at kibbutzim. One of Anash said that when he had a yechidus and he complained of the difficulty in spreading the wellsprings at kibbutzim, the Rebbe took one of R' Yisroel's letters out of his drawer, which contained a

report about his work on kibbutzim. The Rebbe showed it to this chassid as an example of the work that could be done.

In 5726 (1966), R' Yisroel went to the Rebbe for the first time and remained for a year. He worked as a teacher. At the end of the year, the Rebbe told him to look for a shidduch, and even told him to do so in Yerushalayim.

On his way back he stopped in Belgium, where he worked for a while to support himself. There he had a shidduch with Faige Reich of Yerushalayim, who was living in Belgium at the time. They got married in Yerushalayim in 5727, and lived in Eretz Yisroel for about three years, during which time he was drafted into the army.

Having been raised on the aphorism, “A chassid creates an environment,” he used his stay in the army to do Mivtza T'fillin among the soldiers. On Chanuka, during the height of the war of attrition, he did Mivtza Chanuka in the camp in Sinai before thousands of soldiers. He lit his own menorah, and when the commanding officer saw this, he asked him to light for all the soldiers. They brought a loudspeaker so the soldiers could hear him say the brachos. R' Yisroel took the opportunity of explaining the significance of the holiday.

R' Yisroel moved to the United States, where he worked in real estate, as per the Rebbe's instructions. He did very well and saw the Rebbe's brachos in this.

R' Yisroel had a heart of gold and was very generous with his money. Nobody was turned away empty-handed by him, whether with large loans or outright donations. He did so wholeheartedly. Many people felt that R' Yisroel shared their pain.

He was partial to the T'mimim, and when a Tamim asked him for help, he gave it immediately. Even during times when his financial situation wasn't good, this didn't stop him from doing many acts of chesed.

On one of his visits to Yerushalayim, he and his wife went to the Machane Yehuda Market. He decided to look out for needy people and to pay their bill. The first person he spoke to told him there were needier people than himself, and R' Yisroel continued looking ... His home was always open to guests who slept and ate there.

Until 5741 (1981), he lived in Boro Park, where he also had an embroidery business specializing in *tashmishei k'dusha*, and in 5741 he moved to Crown Heights. With the Rebbe's approval, he bought a house on President Street, across the street from the Rebbe. When the seller gave the Rebbe a list of names and asked to whom he should sell the house, the Rebbe said about R' Yisroel, “He is one of ours.”

Aside from his business dealings, R' Yisroel was particular about chassidic practices, such as daily mikva, Chitas, and daily Rambam. He used his free time for Torah study, and his family would see that he got up early to sit and learn. In recent years, he gave a Gemara class in his house every week.

The day before he passed away, he suggested to Yisroel Hershkop that he start a fund for T'mimim, and he gave his contribution to the fund. The family decided to follow through with this project and they ask people to contribute il'ui nishmaso.

On Tuesday, he had a stroke and he passed away shortly thereafter. The funeral took place the same day and passed by 770. He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters, grandchildren, sisters and brothers.