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### U.S.A

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

### ERETZ HA'KODESH

ת.ד. 102 כפר תב ד 72915  
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### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

### ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur  
editor@beismoshiach.org

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# THE VOLUNTARY WAR

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



## SHABBOS PARSHAS KI SEITZEI; 11TH DAY OF ELUL, 5750

1. This week's portion begins, "When you go out to war upon your enemies." Although the Torah is intended to be eternally relevant, on the surface, it is difficult to understand the lesson which can be derived from this portion which describes the conduct of the Jews in war (and in particular, a war which is not directly commanded by G-d, a milchamas reshus, which is not at all applicable in the present era).

The lesson we can learn from this portion involves the dimension of our service that is involved with material things and matters of this world, refining and elevating its physical substance, making it a vessel for holiness and thus, transforming the world into a dwelling for G-d.

This service is of a different nature than the service in the realm of holiness itself, the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvos. The latter service is characterized by peace, drawing G-dliness into the world. No "enemy" is involved. In contrast, when one is involved in refining the world at large, then one

must "go out to war upon your enemy." The nature of the material world opposes G-dliness and stands in contradiction to the establishment of a dwelling for Him. To create a dwelling for G-d, a place where His essence is revealed, within this world, it is necessary to "wage war" against this dimension of worldliness and conquer it.

The aspect of concealment within this world – and its tendency to oppose the establishment of a dwelling for G-d – was created by G-d, Himself. Thus, the power which opposes holiness does not stem from the world's material substance alone, but rather, from the nature with which it was endowed by G-d. Accordingly, it is understandable that a Jew must summon up very powerful energies to wage war against such power.

For this reason, the Torah uses the expression, "When you go out to war upon your enemy." A Jew "goes out to war," i.e., he must leave his own realm, the involvement with holy matters, and involve himself with material affairs.

When involved in this service,

he must know that he has the potential to succeed. Therefore, he is told that he must wage war, "upon your enemies."

Grammatically, it would have been proper to state "against you enemies," or "with your enemies." Nevertheless, the Torah used a somewhat awkward construction to teach us that, before the war begins, a Jew has to know that he stands above his enemies.

In microcosm, this conception of war is relevant within our own lives as well. A Jew possesses a G-dly soul and, on a lower level, an animal soul and a body. He must fight a war, the conflict with the yetzer ha'ra, to overcome the natural drives of the body and the animal soul with the intent of conquering them and thus, preventing them from disturbing his service of G-d. Furthermore, ultimately, he should reach the point where he serves G-d "b'chol levav'cha", interpreted by our Sages to mean, "with both your desires," i.e., the yetzer ha'ra will also become transformed. The potential for this service stems from the fact that, in essence, a Jew is "above your enemies."

The Torah teaches us about two types of war: milchemas mitzvah – wars which G-d commanded us to wage, e.g., the wars necessary to conquer Eretz Yisroel and annihilate the Canaanites who lived there previously, the war against Amalek, and a war to defend the Jewish people against attackers; and milchemas reshush – those wars waged by a king “with other nations to extend the boundary of [Eretz] Yisroel] and magnify its greatness and reputation.”

The war with the seven Canaanite nations – and similarly, in the Messianic age, the war to conquer the lands of the ten nations – has as its purpose, the conquest of their land and its transformation into Eretz Yisroel, the holy land. In contrast, a milchemas reshush is not a mitzvah and is intended merely to “extend the boundaries of Israel” in a place which, by nature, belongs to gentiles.

In the personal sphere, a milchemas mitzvah involves waging a war against the material dimensions of the world according to the Torah’s commands with the intent of conquering them for Torah, making them like Eretz Yisroel. It involves, however, only those aspects of the world which are necessities for life. In contrast, a milchemas reshush involves “extending the boundaries” of holiness beyond our minimum necessities. A person goes beyond the limits of the minimum which Torah allows him and elevates other aspects of the world, transforming them into holiness.

To express this concept in regard to eating: Rather than eat bread and water, one eats succulent meats and drinks aged wines, but does so for the sake of holiness. Similarly, in regard to the world at large, a person goes beyond the limits of his own environment and seeks new areas to refine by establishing a

synagogue, a house of study, or a place where mitzvos are performed.

A milchemas reshush does more than involve a wider sphere of activity than a milchemas mitzvah, it requires a different type and quality of service. To understand this concept, we must probe into the very nature of a milchemas reshush: On the surface, the concept of a milchemas reshush is problematic. In regard to a milchemas mitzvah, the reason the Jews go to war is because G-d commanded them to. He told them to conquer Eretz Yisroel and make

***The power which opposes holiness stems from the nature with which it was endowed by G-d. Thus, a Jew must summon up very powerful energies to wage war against such power.***

it their land. Thus, what the Jews are taking rightfully belongs to them. Although – as Rashi quotes in the beginning of his commentary on the Torah – the gentiles may claim: “You are thieves,” the Jews can answer, “The land belongs to G-d... and He gave it to us.”

In contrast, when it comes to conquering other lands, this rationale does not apply. On the contrary, these lands were given to the gentiles, not to the Jews. If so, how can the Jews go out and conquer these lands. Seemingly, it would be appropriate to call them

thieves for doing so.

A similar, and perhaps even deeper question applies regarding the parallels to this concept in our service of G-d. A Jew has the power to transform the material substance of this world into holiness, because of the potential granted to him by the Torah. Indeed, in an ultimate sense, these entities were brought into being with the intent that they be transformed into holiness.

Although a war is necessary to bring about that process of transformation, that is because G-d desired a dwelling in the lower worlds. Hence, even these entities were created in a manner in which they “belong” to the lower worlds and appear as an “enemy” to the service of holiness. Despite this tendency, however, they were also intended to be transformed into holiness.

We see this concept in regard to Eretz Yisroel. Although G-d had promised Avrohom that He would give Eretz Yisroel to his descendants,[275] when the Jews re-entered Eretz Yisroel, they had to assert their control over the land through war. Indeed, before the Jews conquest, the Torah referred to Eretz Yisroel as “the inheritance of the nations.” Nevertheless, at the very beginning of creation, the potential that the Jews would conquer Eretz Yisroel and transform it into a land of holiness was already granted.

This concept is easily understandable. Since G-d created Eretz Yisroel, He is entitled to give it to whomever He pleases. He granted it to the Jews, however, in a manner that will enable them to appreciate it, not as a gift given from above, but rather as something which they acquired through their own efforts. This requires that they wage a war to transform the land from being the heritage of gentiles

into Eretz Yisroel, the holy land.

The above applies, however, in regard to wars which are mitzvos. In this instance, there is an explicit Divine command to conquer this portion of the world for holiness and reveal its essential connection to the Jews. When, however, speaking of a milchemas reshush, there is no Divine command involved, nor does the land belong to the Jews. Thus, taking it away from the gentiles – or in the personal sphere, taking it away from worldliness – is seemingly improper.

This, however, is the purpose of this portion of the Torah – Parshas Ki Seitzei, which describes a milchemas reshush – to teach us that we possess the potential for a new and different service; a war fought according to the directives of the Torah, but which was not obligated by its command. This endows the Jews with the potential to conquer additional portions of the world and make them and ultimately, the entire world – not only the limited area of Eretz Yisroel – into a dwelling for G-d.

This is the purpose of the creation of all existence. Although the Torah states that only Eretz Yisroel was given to us from above – and not the world at large, this is because G-d desired that this aspect of the task to make the world a dwelling for Him be dependent totally on the service of the Jews. Torah does not give any commands regarding these matters, leaving them solely in the hands of the Jewish people.

Thus, a milchemas reshush brings out a new dimension of service, serving G-d voluntarily, on one's own initiative, and thus, reaches a more complete level in the efforts to make this world a dwelling for G-d. Through this service, even those elements of existence which belong

to the realm of worldliness – as opposed to those which were, at the outset, designated for holiness – become part of G-d's dwelling.

There is, however, a question involved: Since there is no obligation from the Torah to carry out a milchemas reshush and there is a danger involved,[276] why should such a risk be taken? Similarly, in the personal sphere, since the "war" to transform the material substance of the world requires that one become involved in material things, there is a possibility that the person's spiritual level will sink.

Though danger also exists in a milchemas mitzvah: a) We have no choice. We are commanded to wage such a war. b) The Torah's command itself protects us from danger.

In a milchemas reshush, however, there is no such command. Hence, the question arises: Why should a Jew expose himself to danger? The Torah explicitly commands us to protect ourselves from physical harm. Although this service can bring a person to a higher level, since there is a risk involved, it would appear proper that one should devote one's time and energy to the service of holiness where one will surely succeed.

Furthermore, if one fails in a milchemas reshush, there is a possibility that one will no longer be able to continue any service at all. Under such circumstances, it would seem preferable to devote oneself to the service of holiness, where one's future will not be jeopardized.

[Needless to say, we are not speaking about individuals who have nothing else to do, and because, "A person was born to toil," feels it necessary to wage a milchemas reshush. Every Jew has what to do in the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvos. Why

should this be jeopardized?]

This, however, is the lesson taught to us by this Torah portion: Despite the danger involved, a Jew must commit himself to this service. Furthermore, he is granted a Divine promise for success, "the L-rd, your G-d, will give the enemy into your hand." [277]

Thus, we see a fusion of two opposites: On one hand, the Torah teaches us that the Jew must choose to go out to war himself despite the danger involved. Simultaneously, he must fulfill the command to preserve his life. This is possible because a Jew is connected with the essence of G-d which is the source for the fusion of opposites.

This leads to a deeper understanding: The world and worldliness ("your enemy") has a power which it was granted by G-d. Indeed, it exists as an entity separate from the realm of holiness.[278] For this reason, it is necessary to wage war to conquer such an entity and this war possesses a certain amount of danger.

Nevertheless, because a Jew is connected with G-d's essence, he has the potential to bring about a new development in creation, conquer these elements of existence, and thus, have them included in the dwelling for G-d established in the lower worlds. G-d promises him success in these activities: "The L-rd, your G-d, will give the enemy into your hand." Furthermore, "you will take captives." This phrase can be interpreted to mean that even those aspects of existence which were "captured" by the "enemy" can be redeemed and transformed into holiness.

Potential for this service is derived from the fact that a Jew is essentially "upon (i.e., above) his enemies." He is one with G-d,

transcending entirely the limits of the material world. This reflects a higher dimension of soul than the service to conquer Eretz Yisroel. Although the latter conquest also involves a war, as mentioned above, from the outset, Eretz Yisroel was the part of the world destined to become included in the realm of holiness. Therefore, it involves a dimension of service which is also limited in nature and which relates to worldly matters. In contrast, the service of milchamas mitzvah relates to that aspect of the Jewish people which is “above your enemy,” transcending all aspects of material existence and one with G-d.

These concepts are also reflected in the personal realm, in a Jew’s war with his yetzer ha’ra, his struggle to refine his body and animal soul. On the verse, “And you shall... see the difference between one who serves G-d and one who does not serve Him,” our Sages comment, “ ‘One who serves G-d’ is one who reviews his subject matter one hundred and one times. ‘One who does not serve Him’ is one who reviews his subject matter one hundred times.”

In Tanya, the Alter Rebbe differentiates between these individuals and a tzaddik. A tzaddik is called “a servant of G-d,” using the past tense. He has already completed his battle with the yetzer ha’ra and hence is referred to with a title that attests to the acceptance of his service as an established fact. In contrast, the expression, “one who serves G-d,” indicates that the person to which it is referring is presently in the midst of his struggle with his yetzer ha’ra, i.e., a beinoni.

The Alter Rebbe continues, explaining the difference between “one who serves G-d” and “one who does not serve Him.” In that era, it was customary for a student to review his subject matter one

hundred times. Therefore, it was the one hundred and first time, the time when the person went beyond his habit and normal practice, which caused him to be distinguished as “one who serves G-d.” His striving (“war”) to rise above his nature and personal habits merited that he be awarded such a title.

These ideas can be related to the concepts of milchamas mitzvah and milchamas reshut explained above.

***We possess the potential for a war fought according to the directives of the Torah, but which was not obligated by its command. This endows the Jews with the potential to conquer additional portions of the world and make them into a dwelling for G-d.***

Although a person has already waged the milchamas mitzvah which is required of him and thus refined his nature and habits to the extent that he is worthy of the title tzaddik, one might assume that he need not be involved in “wars” any more. On the contrary, he should proceed from strength to strength in the realm of holiness.

Nevertheless, in order to merit the title “one who serves G-d,” one cannot remain satisfied with one’s

previous achievements. Rather, one must “go out to war,” strive to change and elevate one’s habits and nature, and reach an even higher level of holiness. This applies even to one who has engaged in such milchamas reshut previously. Although after refining his behavior to be included in the realm of holiness, he strove to seek greater heights, having attained those heights, he cannot remain passive, but must “serve G-d,” by seeking an even higher peak.

The above is particularly relevant in the month of Elul. The yetzer ha’ra may try to tempt a Jew, telling him, “Surely, you have already carried out all the dimensions of the service of Elul, observing Torah and mitzvos b’hiddur. Therefore, it is time to rest. If you want, continue your service, but do it in a regular manner, in a pattern that fits your accepted norms. Don’t risk anything. Devote your energies to holiness.”

In the present generation in particular, the yetzer ha’ra will add, “This is the last generation of exile and the first generation of the redemption. Seemingly, our energies should be directed towards preparing the world for the coming of Moshiach by devoting our energies to progress in holiness, to rising higher spiritually.”

For this reason, the Torah teaches us, “When you go out to war...” emphasizing how a Jew must constantly wage wars both against his own personal nature and in the world at large to make the world a dwelling for G-d. Indeed, even Moshiach will “fight the wars of G-d,” to bring the world to its ultimate state of refinement.[279]

Thus, in this time, each person must apply himself to the service of Elul in a manner which challenges his nature. This includes the

establishment of a bond of love and happiness with G-d as emphasized by the verse, "I am my Beloved's..."[280]

This relationship is expressed through Torah study in which a complete bond is established between a Jew and G-d. Thus, it is appropriate that each individual increase his own Torah study and also influence others (particularly, children[281]) to attend public sessions of Torah study.

Similarly, there should be an increase in tz'daka which reflects the unity of the Jews. Such unity brings about the love of G-d and

motivates the expression of His love for the Jews.

2. Our Sages state that thirty days before a holiday, we should learn the laws pertaining to it. It is already less than thirty days before the holidays of Tishrei begin and in this context, it is necessary to mention that importance of providing Jews with their holiday needs so that they will be able to celebrate Rosh HaShana and (the holidays which follow) in the manner stated in the Bible, "Eat sumptuous foods and drink sweet beverages and send portions to those who do not have prepared."

This is particularly relevant this year, when Shabbos comes directly after Rosh HaShana,[282] Sukkos, and Simchas Torah, and thus, festive meals will have to be prepared for three consecutive days.

May these activities bring each person a k'siva va'chasima tova for a good and sweet year and may it conclude the greatest blessing, the coming of Moshiach, who will "fight the wars of G-d and be victorious," and then, rebuild the Beis HaMikdash where we will fulfill the mitzvos mentioned in this week's Torah portion, bringing our first fruits as an offering to G-d.

NOTES:

275. Furthermore, that Divine promise had the status of an actual deed. From that time onward, Eretz Yisroel is considered as having been given to the Jews.

276. Indeed, the Torah itself warns of the dangers of a war, excusing a person who built a house, betrothed a woman, or planted a vineyard, "lest he die in the war."

277. This blessing is realized, however, after the Jew takes the initiative and sets out on this path of service. First, there is an arousal from below, the service on the part of the Jewish people. Only afterwards, follows the revelation of G-d's blessing. In contrast, in a milchamas mitzvah, the commandment of – and thus, the power granted by – the Torah precedes the Jews' service.

278. This contrasts to entities which, like Eretz Yisroel, were from the very beginning of creation destined to be given to the Jewish people.

279. Hence, a similar pattern must be reflected by each individual in his service. The "spark of Moshiach" which exists within every Jew must be activated and wage "the wars of G-d."

280. The love relationship between G-d and the Jewish people is relevant the entire year. For this reason, there is no Chabad custom to recite Shir HaShirim at a specific time which would imply that, at that time alone, the relationship is given greater emphasis. (After the Seder on Pesach, particularly after the second Seder, however, there are those who have the custom to recite this text.) Nevertheless, in Elul, as emphasized by its connection to the above verse and the concept of "the king in the field," greater stress is placed on this bond of love.

281. Note the following Essay, "A Tribute to Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah Hecht (a"h)," where this topic was mentioned at length.

282. In regard to Rosh HaShana, the three consecutive days of festive meals applies even in Eretz Yisroel.

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## Mivtza: HELPING THE NEEDY

**To every member of the Lubavitcher community:**

During this month of preparation for Rosh Hashonoh, the "head" of the New Year, we fondly recall our Rebbe's words that this is an especially auspicious time for strengthening our deep bond of Hiskashrus with the "Rosh Bnei Yisroel," the "head" of the Jewish people and leader of the generation.

Our Rebbeim explain that **an important way to strengthen Hiskashrus is by participating in the Rebbe's activities and concerns, consequently, by supporting an organization that brings together a number of these activities, the Hiskashrus is greater and stronger.** Such an organization is Kupas Rabbeinu, which seeks to continue many of the Rebbe's activities and concerns without change from the way he would conduct them himself.

Every year at this time, the Rebbe would call upon us to contribute generously to help needy families with their extra expenses for the coming month's many Yomim Tovim. This also coincides with the special emphasis during this month of giving extra Tzedokah, (indicated in the Hebrew letters of the word "Elul," as explained in many Sichos etc.), as a vital way of preparing ourselves for the new year and arousing Divine mercy upon us.

We therefore appeal to every individual man and woman to contribute generously to Kupas Rabbeinu, enabling us to fulfill the Rebbe's desire to help all those who anxiously await our help. The greater your contribution, the more we can accomplish.

Your generous contribution to Kupas Rabbeinu will be the appropriate vessel for receiving the abundant blessings of the Rebbe, who is its Nasi, that you may be blessed with a Ksiva Vachasima Tova for a good and sweet year, materially and spiritually. May it help to bring the full revelation of Moshiach - our Rebbe - immediately now!

Wishing a Ksiva Vachasima Tova for a good and sweet year,

**In the name of Vaad Kupas Rabbeinu**

**Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson**

**Rabbi Yehuda Leib Groner**

P.S. Of course, you may send to Kupas Rabbeinu all contributions that you would send to the Rebbe; all will be devoted to the activities to which the Rebbe would devote them.

You may also send Maimad, **Keren-Hashono** (this coming year 5765 - 383 days), Vov Tishrei, Yud Gimmel Tishrei Magbis etc. to Kupas Rabbeinu.

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# OPEN YOUR EYES AND SEE YOUR FELLOW JEW

BY RABBI MORDECHAI ROTTENSTEIN  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



*Loving a Jew whom we have never met, caring for him as if he were our only child – this is true ahavas Yisroel, which can only be born in the Jewish soul. \* Just as we don't need a reason to love ourselves, similarly, we must love our fellow without reason. Such love does not come from revealed faculties, but from the essence, which is higher than revelation. Today, the Rebbe says, this essence is in a revealed state, and all that remains for us to do is to open our eyes and see it.*

In his holy sichos, the Rebbe defines our current period as the days of Moshiach. The Rebbe says that during these days we have already completed the avoda of elevating the sparks, and the world is in a state of redemption. In other words, from its standpoint, the world has been purified, and the only thing missing is for the Jew to open his eyes properly and to live accordingly.

Many people are inclined to

think that the avoda of opening one's eyes is another lofty spiritual level that only a scant few are privileged to reach. However, it is clear from the Rebbe's sichos that quite the opposite is true. Opening the eyes has relevance to each and every one of us and is demanded equally from all, whether we are involved in mundane affairs or in matters of holiness.

As such, let's examine how the avoda of opening one's eyes is

expressed in the most central mitzva of the Torah: *ahavas Yisroel*. When we emphasize the great quality and character of this mitzva as reflected in the teachings of chassidus, it becomes a bit easier for us to open our eyes in other matters as well. The great Talmudic sage, Hillel HaZaken, said long ago that this mitzva is the entire Torah, and everything else is mere commentary. Thus, when we open our eyes in this most basic of all mitzvos of the Torah, we can also do so in connection with all other matters in the Torah.

When we walk in the street, we usually don't notice the police car driving on patrol, since we have no reason to pay attention to it. In contrast, when a thief roams around the neighborhood and hears something that sounds like a police car, he immediately takes notice, as a thief walks the street with his eyes wide open.

Similarly, we find in our interpersonal relationships. A person can spend his entire time involved with himself without taking any notice of someone standing right next to him. He can even love this person and relate to him in the



fullest and most proper manner, without paying him the slightest bit of attention.

On the other hand, when a person who walks with his eyes wide open shows feelings of love towards his neighbor, this is an expression of true love. In such a case, he doesn't see himself, just his neighbor and his needs.

All the problems we endure in our personal relationships with individuals or communities stem from the fact that our connection with them is one of selfish love, not true love. Our personality enables us to give the other person the feeling that we love him, and through this love, we take control over his life. If he does not respond to my demands, I am not only insulted; I will make him feel guilty.

If we take a close look, we notice something very interesting here. A person is usually insulted by someone only when he knows him, claiming that he doesn't deserve such a negative reaction. However, he is not insulted by some unknown person on the street with whom he has no connection. Since he doesn't expect him anything from him, he has no reason to be insulted by him.

In contrast, when someone we know and expect to meet our standards insults us, we feel as if our whole world has been destroyed.

Recently, a young kollel student, married for only a year and a half, came to me and said that he is having serious *shalom bayis* difficulties. He told me that his married life for the first six months was blissful – until the problems started:

“Every Friday night, we customarily take a leisurely stroll after the seuda. Once we happened to pass by a fancy jewelry store. When we approached the show window, my wife pointed to an attractive watch and said, ‘If you

want to surprise me sometime, just know that this is exactly the type of watch I like...’

“A light flashed in my mind. Yes, this is the perfect time. Her birthday is in another two months, and this could be the perfect gift. But I knew that as a kollel student, I didn't have the money to pay for such an expensive watch. Yet, I was willing to do anything to make my wife happy?

I decided that from next Sunday, I would try to walk every day to kollel and save the bus money. According to my calculations, two full months of travel expenses would

***“She opened the cake and saw a small envelope on the side. ‘What is this?’ she continued to ask, as her look became more serious with every passing moment...”***

be enough to buy the watch my wife wanted.

“So from that Sunday on, I stopped taking the bus and began walking to kollel. While it was not easy for me, I knew that it would all be worth it.

“Two months passed, and the long awaited day arrived. With much excitement and anticipation, I went to the jewelry store, bought the watch, wrapped it in a special box, and headed home. I made certain to pass by the local pastry shop and pick up a birthday cake (exactly the kind that she likes) in honor of the

occasion. Filled with emotion, I came to the house, opened the door, and called out joyfully, ‘Mazel tov, Mazel tov!’

“Suddenly, something happened that I was not expecting. My wife stood facing me with a frozen look on her face. ‘What is this?’ she asked.

“‘Open it and see,’ I said, as cheerfully as I could.

“She opened the cake and saw a small envelope on the side. ‘What is this?’ she continued to ask, as her look became more serious with every passing moment.

“I stood there stunned, surprised, and confused, as I tried to figure out where I had gone wrong. ‘Open it and see,’ I said.

“When she opened the envelope and revealed the watch she had wanted so much, she looked at me in utter astonishment, and added curtly, ‘Are you crazy? Isn't this a waste of money?’

“I am not embarrassed to say that I felt worse than someone who had just been stabbed in the back. I had lost all my trust and respect for the most precious person in the world to me. I was deeply offended. Since then, we speak to one another only when necessary, but no more.”

“If you really cared about your wife,” I told this avreich, “you wouldn't be insulted by her. Your problem is that when you bought her the gift, you didn't see her at all. You only saw yourself and the adulations you were about to receive. No feeling of hurt should come from someone you truly love!”

Let's tell this story from a different angle: A good little boy excels in his studies, and his father goes out to buy him an ice cream as a prize. As a result, he makes a special effort that takes up some of his time and energy. However, let's imagine what happens when the

father comes home with the ice cream in his hand, and to his great surprise, he discovers that the boy stubbornly doesn't want the ice cream.

An abnormal father would be insulted to the depths of his soul. "What do you mean 'you don't want ice cream'? I go to all the trouble to buy you ice cream, and you refuse it? Aren't you ashamed?"

But a father who really loves his son would act differently. He knows that his son always likes ice cream; so what happened this time? Apparently, there is some side factor that is bothering him. Thus, he asks his son, "What happened? Don't you feel well? Did someone hurt you? Do you want to rest for a while?"

A father who truly loves his son would not be offended by his reaction, even if he wasted much time and effort, since a normal father doesn't see himself in this context; he only sees what is good for the child.

"A correct response to your wife's reaction," I continued to tell the avreich, "would have been for you to say something along these lines: 'True, we're not making it through the month, but to buy you a birthday present is worth every penny.'

"However, when you bought her the present, you didn't see her; you just saw yourself. Thus, when you didn't get your just dessert, you were immediately offended. If you really cared about her, you wouldn't have been insulted by her."

Regrettably, things usually tend to go in the reverse order. We are offended specifically by those people whom we know, whereas, an insult from someone whom we don't know doesn't seem to bother us so much.

Why is this so? It would seem that it should be the opposite; we should be more patient and

forgiving to our acquaintances.

The established rule is that as long as we have not reached a level of true selflessness, our love for our neighbor (consciously or subconsciously) is an effort to control him to act according to our will. This is a love that begins and ends within one's own personal framework. However, if this would stem from a person's **soul**, the love would be **true and genuine!** To love someone with an *emes* means to give emphasis to what the other person needs from us, not what we need from him.

Parenthetically, this is an appropriate opportunity to touch upon a mistake that many people are liable to make:

True ahavas Yisroel does not require that we reveal weakness towards others, or in more colloquial terms, to be someone's "sucker." A true chassid lives in a state of **bittul**, but he is no **batlan** (loafer). When we let someone take advantage of us, we give him an opening that is called a "thief," for "the mouse is not the thief, but the hole."

The other person sees us as a means of escape, i.e., to express his own negative traits and to use us for that purpose. When this happens, we are the only ones who are at fault.

Another example that expresses selfish love is when a father urges his son to be an outstanding Torah scholar. Since he did not succeed in his studies when he was a boy, he wants that his son should not fail the same way he did. This is totally wrong!

Our child is not meant to compensate us for our wretched childhood. He doesn't have to learn in order to fulfill *our* dreams. He studies Torah because it is impossible to go without learning Torah. It is the best thing for him –

not for us!

Knowing how to love someone means knowing how to look out for his best interests, not to use him in order to realize our own aspirations. Helping someone because we expect him to give us nachas is the equivalent of investing in the upkeep of our car so it will always be ready if we want to take a pleasant drive...

A person's "I" only recognizes the selfish connection – "this is enjoyable, this is sufficient" – known by professionals as "the symbiotic relationship," i.e., if you're good to me, I'll be good to you; one hand washes the other.

Loving a Jew whom we have never met, caring for him as if he were our only child – this is true ahavas Yisroel, which can only be born in the Jewish soul. While this may sound a bit exaggerated, as long as we have not reached such a level, we don't know what true love really is!

The Rebbe MH"m discusses this very point in his famous *maamer* "V'Ata T'tzaveh," the last *maamer* we have been privileged to receive from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe dwells upon how the Jewish people only fully received the Torah on Purim – not Mattan Torah, as it says, "the Jews received what they began to do." That is, on Purim they fully received what began at Mattan Torah.

How can it be, the Rebbe asks, that the generation that merited to see the amazing revelations of Mattan Torah with its own eyes, the generation of knowledge that was privileged to leave Egypt and enter Eretz Yisroel, did not merit to "fulfill" the Torah, while the orphaned generation that had been exiled to Persia after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash and had partaken in the banquet of that evil king – did so merit?

The generation that left Egypt, the Rebbe explains, saw tremendous revelations. However, in spite of the great and wondrous strength of these revelations, they were unable to receive the Torah. They could only accept the revelations, but the essence of Torah was beyond them, since the “essence” is higher than “revelation.” Furthermore, the revelation conceals the essence, similar to how the radiance of the sun conceals the sun itself. While we can derive some pleasure and enjoyment from sunlight, if we try to look directly at the sun itself, it can blind us, since the source of the revelation is higher than the revelation itself.

Another example: When a rav gives over a shiur to his student, he does so in a way that the student will be able to accept and absorb the subject properly. However, in the event that he decides to teach the class on his own level, the student will not be able to grasp anything, since the source of the revelation is higher than the revelation itself.

Accordingly, the Rebbe explains, we can understand that the Jewish people received the Torah specifically on Purim, as the crushing process revealed the essence of the soul. Therefore, when the Jews were being persecuted, there was revealed the level of *yechida*, which was usually not revealed during regular *avodas Hashem*. Thus, the exile and persecution gave the Jewish people the strength for the self-sacrifice necessary in order to receive the Torah.

If it were possible for us to ask them afterwards, “Why did you have such self-sacrifice?” they would not necessarily have a logical reason for what they did. It was not dependent upon them, but upon the very essence of their soul. Once that essence had been revealed, they could also receive the essence of the

Torah.

The Rebbe continues to explain that since the reason for the revelation of their soul’s essence did not stem from them directly, but from the crushing process of persecution, therefore, the revelation did not penetrate their intellect or their emotions. In other words, the intellect could provide no explanation, and the natural emotion could not identify itself with the revelation. Since the revelation could penetrate neither

***The Rebbe is telling us: If you want Moshiach because I want Moshiach, then you must also want him as I do. It should really mean something to you; it should concern you no less!***

the intellect nor the emotions, therefore, “we are still Achashverosh’s servants.”

How does the essence of the soul penetrate the soul’s revealed faculties? Through being crushed when things are good, when there is plenty – both materially and spiritually. Being crushed simply because we are still in Galus, because “we are still Achashverosh’s servants,” grants us the power to reveal the essence of the soul in such a way that also the intellect can understand it.

Just as we don’t need a reason to love ourselves, similarly, we must love our fellow without reason. Such

love does not come from revealed faculties, but from the essence, which is higher than revelation. Today, the Rebbe says, this essence is in a revealed state, and all that remains for us to do is to open our eyes and see it.

This type of crushing can bring the soul’s essence to a state of revealed strength. In previous generations, it was totally irrelevant to think about reaching such a level. Today, however, the Rebbe says, every Jew can reach even the level of a complete tzaddik. Even though the Alter Rebbe writes in *Tanya* that “G-d saw that they are few, etc.,” and there are souls that will never reach this level, nevertheless, today, when the essence is higher than revelation, any Jew can become a tzaddik.

The fact that we are still so indifferent is due to an inner state of exile that leaves us blind in the face of such an intense state of revelation, the likes of which has never been known throughout all past generations.

A Jew who acts accordingly and sees that we have still not succeeded in achieving these goals is obligated to cry out from the depths of his soul, “*Ad Masai?!?*”

In his famous sicha of the 28<sup>th</sup> of Nissan 5751, the Rebbe said the problem is that people only scream “*Ad Masai?*” because they were so commanded. But wouldn’t it seem that there is nothing better than wanting Moshiach because the Rebbe wants Moshiach? What possibly could be better?

However, it can also be explained as follows: The Rebbe is telling us: If you want Moshiach because I want Moshiach, then you must also want him as I do. It should really mean something to you; it should concern you no less!

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

# WHAT DID THE REBBE SAY ABOUT THE OLYMPICS?

*Rabbi Elozor Reitchik compiled what the Rebbe said about the Olympics. The bottom line? The Olympic Games is an inyan of avoda zara and no Chabad outreach should be done near or in connection with the games!*

Millions of people are closely following the 2004 Olympic Games, the biggest sports event in the world. This year, the summer Olympics are taking place in Athens, Greece. The athletic competitions, from August 13 through August 29, are the focus of worldwide attention, as athletes representing hundreds of countries, compete in the games. 56 millions viewers are estimated to have watched the Opening Ceremonies, which, this year, celebrated Greek mythology.

Unfortunately, Chabad has joined in the celebration, and there have been articles about the games in Chabad publications. Naturally, they are written from the Chabad perspective, so many of you must be wondering: what could be wrong? Thousands of Jews who are in Athens for the games are able to benefit from the local Chabad

house! Is this the first time Chabad has gotten involved in outreach work at sporting events?

These questions stem from the fact that many Lubavitchers are unaware of the Rebbe's opinion on this issue, and so they assume that outreach at such an event is a wonderful opportunity to reach vast numbers of Jews.

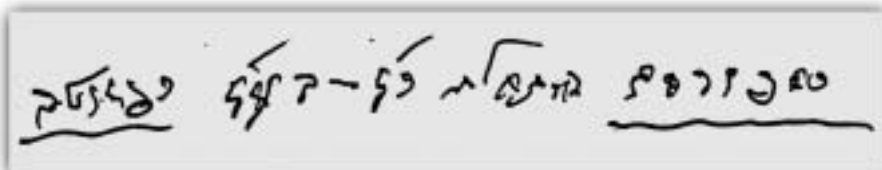
Before presenting a compilation of statements from the Rebbe about this, let us examine some historical facts:

\*The Olympic Games began over 2700 years ago and was a religious

event in honor of one of the many Greek gods.

\*The original Olympic Games took place in Olympia, where temples for idolatry were situated. The modern-day Olympics, which resumed in the year 1896, are directly connected to the ancient games since they begin with the lighting of the Olympic Torch. The torch is ignited by the sun's rays in the temple on Olympia, and from there it makes its way to the country where the Games are held.

\*Even the fact that the Games take place every four years, as well as the Olympic symbol of five interlocking rings, are connected to idol worship. The five intertwined circles represent Venus, which traces a perfect pentacle across the sky every 8 years. To the ancient Greeks, Venus became the symbol of perfection and beauty, qualities prized in athletes' bodies. As a tribute to Venus, the Greeks used "her" 8-year cycle to organize their



The Rebbe's response to Rabbi Schusterman

Olympic Games. The 4-year schedule follows Venus' half cycle.

## SOURCED IN AVODA ZARA

The Olympic Games took place in Munich, Germany in 1972. The Rebbe referred to this in a sicha on Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev, Shabbos Chanuka, 5733, and said that this was an inyan of avoda zara. Free translation follows:

The whole concept of the Olympic Games is connected with idolatry. These games began with the Greeks, who had a custom of going to a certain place and running there, jumping on stones and bones, dancing, fighting, and killing, etc. The modern version is the Olympic Games, but the source is avoda zara.

In those days, the Greeks attained very high levels of wisdom, including the wisdom of mathematics and astronomy. After reaching very high levels of wisdom, they began to think – what about faith?

There was a mountain near the city. It wasn't a high mountain, but a mountain that goats and sheep, cows and oxen, and people too, could climb. This mountain wasn't in some forsaken place in the mountains of darkness, but right near the city. The wise men of Greece declared that their two idols were there and that one had struck the other and killed him. They did all sorts of evil things there. Including [behaviors stemming from] every possible bad midda, even those you can only imagine. They claimed that these idols were their avoda zara (deities), and were omnipotent ... The name of this mountain is Olympia.

Then they decided that once every few years they would gather there, and each one would take his cat, etc., with him, and one would strike another, and jump, and celebrate a holiday there.

All this was in the time of the Greeks. In recent years, this became the Olympic Games, which take place every four years. Therefore, the Olympic Games that take place in our generation are sourced in avoda zara.

## THE OLYMPIC TORCH

On Chanuka 5732, a few months before the start of the Olympic Games in Munich, the Olympic Torch was carried through Eretz Yisroel on its way to Munich. The Rebbe spoke sharply about this and in a sicha said on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara he said:

This was the custom of the Greeks 2000 years ago. Nothing remains of the Greeks themselves, aside from their books, and among the things written in their books is the custom to take a torch and to run with it from place to place. Now they want to take this Greek custom and celebrate Chanuka with it!

The whole point of Chanuka is the Jews' victory over the Greeks, and as we see and all know, nothing remains of the Greeks aside from their language and their books. Now they want to dig up an ancient custom from the cemetery – not from the "beis ha'chayim" but from the "beis ha'kvaros" – and resurrect this Greek custom – the opposite of the whole point of Chanuka!

In 5748 (1988), before the bar mitzva of Eliyahu Schusterman, his father, Rabbi Gershon Schusterman of Los Angeles, prepared a speech in which he derived Jewish lessons to be learned from the Olympic fire which burned on Mt. Olympia in Greece, from which the Olympic torch was lit to open the Olympic Games.

When he sent in the speech to the Rebbe, the Rebbe crossed it all out and wrote (see box): *as was publicized*, the origin of all this was *actual avoda zara*.

*Thousands of Jews who are in Athens for the games are able to benefit from the local Chabad house! Is this the first time Chabad has gotten involved in outreach work at sporting events? These questions stem from the fact that many Lubavitchers are unaware of the Rebbe's opinion on this issue, and so they assume that outreach at such an event is a wonderful opportunity to reach vast numbers of Jews.*

## CHABAD OUTREACH AT OLYMPIC GAMES

I remember that in 5736 (1976),  
when the Olympic Games took

place in Montreal, the Chabad  
Chassidim there *did not go to do  
mitvzaim or any Jewish activities in  
the area.*

This week I spoke with

Lubavitchers in Montreal and they  
all remembered that they did not  
participate in any outreach efforts  
at all in connection with the  
Olympic Games, even though the



Games took place at a time when the Rebbe was “storming” about the importance of the mitzvaim, which began in the summer of 5734.

Eight years later, in 5740, the Olympic Games took place in Los Angeles. Lubavitchers wanted to open a kosher restaurant in the area of the Games in order to reach the thousands of Jewish spectators, and to speak to them about Judaism. There was also a plan to advertise the mitzva campaigns.

They were sure that this outreach would garner them terrific publicity, and would be a kiddush Hashem, for they would be disseminating Judaism within the *hamona shel Romi* (lit. multitudes of

*Just as no Chassid would consider setting up a stand near the big churches in Manhattan which attract many tourists, so too, no Chabad outreach should take place near the Olympic Games.*

### THE MASSACRE IN MUNICH COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED!

In a sicha said on Shabbos Chanuka 5733, in which the Rebbe explained the connection between the Olympic Games and avoda zara, the Rebbe also referred to the fact that a group of Israeli athletes were called “Maccabi,” the opposite of what the Olympic Games are about:

**The name “Maccabi” is for Yehuda HaMaccabi, who fought the Greeks and everything they stood for; he defeated the Greeks and killed them. How could a group called “Maccabi” participate in Olympic Games and dance before the Greeks of our time?**

**It’s a general question about the whole issue: what do they need this for? Especially when doctors say that running is not healthy for the head and heart? The whole thing is illogical! What do they want from these men? They take away the time they could have used to sit and study wisdom.**

The Rebbe also focused on the fact that the Games took place in Munich, Germany. He said that if Israel insisted on sending athletes to the Olympic Games, at least they should have announced that since the Games were taking place in Germany, which is responsible for the murder of millions of Jews, the Israeli athletes would not participate.

During the Olympic Games in Munich, eight “Black September” terrorists abducted 11 Israeli athletes. After killing two of them, they began negotiating. The terrorists and their captives were flown by helicopter to a nearby airfield. There, the West German police tried to overpower them and failed. The other 9 Israeli athletes were killed.

Rome).

But the Rebbe thought otherwise, and I remember the Rebbe’s clear and sharp answer, “**not to participate in any manner, shape, or form. And since they knew the Rebbe’s opinion – that this was an inyan of avoda zara – how could they have considered such a plan?!**”

I don’t have the Rebbe’s answer in writing, but all the askanei Anash in Los Angeles with whom I spoke this week, remember that after receiving this scathing answer from the Rebbe, no Chabad outreach was done in connection with the Olympic Games.

*The bottom line is: the Rebbe completely negated any Chabad activity in connection with the Olympic Games, since they are sourced in avoda zara. And the Games today are connected and associated with the symbols of Greek idol worship.*

Just as no Chassid would consider setting up a stand near the big churches in Manhattan which attract many tourists, so too, no Chabad outreach should take place near the Olympic Games. When newspapers write up Chabad activities taking place at the Olympic Games, it appears as though Chabad approves of the Games. Innocent people are likely to think that if Chabad is there then the Games are “kosher,” and there is no religious objection to participating in them.

Since the Games are still ongoing, at least from now on, Chabad activities there should cease, and should certainly not be publicized any longer.

In the merit of fulfilling the Rebbe’s directives, we will merit to eradicate all avoda zara in the world, with the true and complete Redemption NOW!

# HE'S COMPELLED TO SPREAD THE NEWS

BY SHLOMO ROKEACH

*They often ask me, how is it that a Sefardi rav spreads the news that the Rebbe is Moshiach. I always tell them that Moshiach and Geula are not associated with a particular group. \* The story of Rabbi Meir Drori, resident of Emanuel and a rosh kollel, who wants to bring Moshiach now!*

It's not always easy to identify those Jews who work with mesirus nefesh on the Rebbe's shlichus, in order to bring about his hisgalus. Some work quietly, working at home, when traveling, and in yishuvim, without the official "uniform" of a shliach. Yet, they try to do all they can to bring about the Rebbe's hisgalus.

That is what Rabbi Meir Drori of Emanuel is like. He is a Sefardi Jew and a rosh kollel. I met him for the first time in Beis Moshiach in Florida. He was invited to speak at a Siyum HaRambam, and I walked in to the hall in the middle of his speech. From what he said, I could tell he was quite a Lubavitcher. He connected what he was saying to the daily *Chitas* and brought in Chassidic ideas, but something about his appearance was reminiscent of a typical Sefardi rav. I was intrigued and decided to get to know him.

He ended his speech on a hopeful

note, referring to the hisgalus of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach shlita... This was an interesting fellow, and I looked forward to speaking to him.

My opportunity came quickly. He impressed me as a talmid chacham, and I learned that he came to Chabad fairly recently, though surprisingly, he was involved in hafatza from a very young age.

Later on I heard from some of his Chabad acquaintances that Rabbi Drori is someone who constantly works on helping many Jews with their spiritual needs, that his circle of influence is very large, and that he spreads the besuras ha'Geula.

\* \* \*

Rav Drori was born in Teveria to a chareidi family which was known for its chesed. Neighbors and acquaintances, whoever was in need of help, found a listening ear at the Drori home. Rav Drori grew up in this atmosphere and it became part

of his way of life too.

Even while he was still learning in yeshiva, he began giving shiurim in various places, especially to young people. "Something inside pushed me to go out and teach Torah," he says. He organized mesibos Shabbos, shiurim, and many Torah projects.

Even after he married, when he lived in Kfar Shalem, in southern Tel Aviv, he was involved in giving evening classes to the local youth. Many young people became religious, thanks to him, and went on to learn in yeshivos.

His wife was also involved in outreach, organizing classes for girls. The neighborhood they lived in was receptive to Judaism.

"We connected with many people," R' Drori says.

When the couple moved to Emanuel in the Shomron, R' Drori learned in the local kollel. There too, he found many opportunities to spread Torah and he helped bachurim who were having a hard time with their learning.

"Within a short time, I had formed them into a study group and I began giving lectures all day. A year later, we decided to open an independent kollel. A special individual promised his support, at least for the beginning.

"As the years went by, we got financing from a central organization in Emanuel, and then we took on the



support of the kollel. I also started giving shiurim in various places around the country. In each place we sowed ruchnius and harvested gashmius, i.e., those who participate in the shiur help support the kollel, and everybody benefits. I am up to thirteen ongoing classes, as well as numerous other shiurim.

“It’s amazing to see the t’mimus and tremendous thirst that Jews have, and you see results, with participants trying to implement what they learn. Many participants now lead a chareidi life in every respect.

“The shiur in Hod HaSharon, for example, had an impact on the entire neighborhood. The shul has turned into a night kollel with daily shiurim. The shiur in Ariel turned into a full yeshiva program for about a year (and we hope, with Hashem’s help, to continue with that), and within this period of time, talmidim have gone to some yeshivos. One of them, with the help of his brother who is a Lubavitcher in Ariel, even became a Tamim in the yeshiva in Tzfas. He learned in K’vutza and just got married.

“In 5749, I went on a fundraising trip to New York. I stayed with a family in Flatbush, and while I was there, my host told me that the Rebbe, who lives in Brooklyn, gives out a dollar for tz’daka with a bracha to whoever comes to see him. I wasn’t that interested but I figured I may as well go.

“I went to 770, but when I saw the long line I decided to leave for an appointment I had that day, figuring I would come back later. Obviously, I wasn’t that eager to get a dollar from the Rebbe, and I didn’t get one that day. I went back, but the Rebbe was no longer giving out dollars.

“I was unhappy I had missed it, and it finally registered that this was an opportunity that didn’t present itself every day. I felt that I couldn’t

miss out and decided that the next Sunday, I would make it my business to wait on that line and get a dollar from the Rebbe.

“The following Sunday I waited for a few hours on line and received a dollar from the Rebbe. I think I also kissed his hand, as is customary among Sefardim. On an external



Rabbi Meir Drori

***“When Rav Volpe began talking about it, it was very hard for me to accept what he had to say. It was all surprising to us, but as he went on, I realized that he was right. He backed up everything he said, and it was self-evident.”***

level, I didn’t feel the impact of the experience. I returned to Eretz Yisroel and to my work, and the encounter with the Rebbe receded into the past.

“Some time went by and a new person moved into the yishuv, R’ Lior Eliyahu, a Lubavitcher. I don’t know what made me do it, but I asked him to learn *Tanya* with me. This was in 5752.

“From *Tanya* we moved on to sichos and maamarim. Once I got into it, I began learning on my own, with my background in learning helping me, of course.

“R’ Lior became a member of my kollel and began giving a shiur on *Kuntres Inyana shel Toras HaChassidus* (“On the Essence of Chassidus”) to all the members of the kollel. The kollel library acquired sifrei Chassidus, *Likkutei Sichos*, *Seifer HaMaamarim*, *Shaarei Halacha U’Minhag*, *Shaarei Geula*, and *Tanya*. An atmosphere of Chassidic chayus began permeating the kollel.

“Having become exposed to the world of Chassidus, I began sharing it with others. In the shul in Hod HaSharon, where I gave a shiur, I began giving a *Tanya* shiur too. Every so often, on days like Rosh Chodesh and siyumei Rambam, we began having farbrengens, and the interest level continued to grow. People enjoyed these shiurim and farbrengens tremendously, and it made an enormous difference in their lives. I can say that some of them definitely became *ovdim*, and one of them is already a Lubavitcher.

“As time went on, I began taking on the Rebbe’s horaos. I had a chavrusa to learn Rambam, and we started going out on mivtza t’fillin, out of Emanuel, or to the army base in Emanuel. I was thrilled to put t’fillin on a *karkafta* there, who hadn’t even had a bar mitzva.

“In the meantime, my personal connection with the Nasi HaDor



intensified. I began writing to the Rebbe, and when my son was becoming bar mitzva we sent a fax with the news. Right before the bar mitzva we received a letter from the Rebbe with the nusach for a bar mitzva.”

**How did you get to the topic of publicizing the identity of Moshiach?**

“The truth is that this started long before this. One day there was an announcement that Rabbi Sholom Ber Volpe was coming to Emanuel to give a lecture in shul about the Rebbe being Moshiach. Everybody was curious to hear what he had to say, me in particular, and I went to hear him.

“When Rav Volpe began talking about it, it was very hard for me to accept what he had to say. It was all surprising to us, but as he went on, I realized that he was right. He backed up everything he said, and it was self-evident. There was no reason to dismiss what he had to say simply because it was far-out.

“Later on, when I began delving into the Rebbe’s teachings, I began to realize that the Rebbe is not just another tzaddik; he is in an entirely

different league. I understood things better than I had before.

“I didn’t keep it to myself either, but felt the need to

publicize this to my friends, and to share with them what I had understood and felt, that the Rebbe shlita is Moshiach. In my various shiurim, I tried to convey this message in a way that my audience could understand it, and I saw that most of the time I was successful. I was asked many questions, you can

be sure, and I never argued. I always said we would accept Moshiach no matter what group he was from.

“At this point, I began giving shiurim on the topic of Geula and Moshiach. I remember how at one of these shiurim, at Hod HaSharon, one of the people got up in great excitement and announced: Moshiach is coming!

“On Gimmel Tammuz 5754, we all heard the news. We didn’t know how to understand what had happened, but knew that the Rebbe’s promise would be fulfilled in its entirety. We didn’t know how or when, but we knew that if the Rebbe said so, it would happen. We waited to see how it would work out.

**A REFUA FOR THE RIGHT PERSON**

One Motzai Shabbos, someone came from outside Emanuel to see me and wanted to write to the Rebbe. He wrote a request for a bracha for his son, but the Rebbe’s answer referred to himself and blessed him with a refua shleima. The same thing happened three times, with him getting the same letter each time. When his wife wrote to the Rebbe about her son, she got a bracha for a refua.

I didn’t understand what this was about, but I explained that even if you don’t clearly see an answer to your question, the bracha is already received. I always say that just by writing to the Rebbe, and proclaiming Yechi and accepting the Rebbe’s malchus, we naturally merit his help, as a king helps his subjects.

The next day I understood the answer when I got a phone call from the son who told me his father had been suddenly hospitalized. I told him to call his father and to remind him, in my name, that he had gotten a bracha more than three times from the Rebbe and had nothing to worry about.

Shortly thereafter, he was released from the hospital, when whatever they were concerned about had disappeared.

“A few days went by and one night I had a dream in which I saw myself in a wedding hall in the middle of a wedding. I saw the Rebbe enter the hall. After my initial excitement passed, I began to tell everybody that the Rebbe MH”M shlita had come! I remember that I took hold of the Rebbe and brought him to a seat. I don’t know how I dared, but this was a dream...

“Throughout the dream I was aware that it was after Gimmel Tammuz, and I asked the Rebbe what was new in 770. The Rebbe said that everything continued as usual without any change!

“When I woke up, I felt that the Rebbe had conveyed a clear message to me. Despite the obvious concealment, the truth was that ‘everything continued as usual, without any change.’ I think that this, more than anything, gave me the feeling that the Rebbe is with us.

“Around that time, a Lubavitcher brochure appeared in Emanuel that said you can write to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh* or *Likkutei Sichos*. Over Shabbos, people talked about this. I remember that on the way home, one of my family members made fun of it, simply because he didn’t understand it, but I was sure we could continue writing to the Rebbe.

“I saw many miracles, including some very special stories. For example, when one of the girls wrote to the Rebbe and didn’t understand the answer, I told her to remove the letter and to say to the Rebbe that surely he gave an answer, but she didn’t understand it, and to request a clearer answer.

“After she put the letter in again, the Rebbe said something like: After the previous answer which wasn’t understood, I will answer in a more clear manner, etc., and this second answer did clearly answer her question.

“I began writing to the Rebbe regularly on many subjects. One time I wrote that although I have been giving shiurim for years, I requested permission and a bracha retroactively to be the Rebbe’s shliach.

“I remember that due to a personal reason, I asked the Rebbe whether I should stop giving shiurim, and the answer was: Continue hafatza without thinking about external disturbances.

“Over the years, I’ve had many personal miracles, especially with the very painful experience we went through when my wife was on the

*I remember that on the way home, one of my family members made fun of it, simply because he didn’t understand it, but I was sure we could continue writing to the Rebbe.*

bus that was ambushed by terrorists at the entrance to Emanuel. She was seriously injured, critically so.

“I got the news when I was in Miami, and I immediately sat down to write to the Rebbe. The answer was that there was nothing to worry about and everything would be fine. Baruch Hashem, thanks to the many chapters of T’hilim that were said on her behalf, and the many brachos from the Rebbe, she is recovering and will, with Hashem’s help, be fully recovered.

“My friends know that I write to the Rebbe and I advise them to do

the same. Many of them come to me and ask me how to go about doing it. Some of them want brachos, others want advice, and baruch Hashem I have seen many miracles (see box).

“I was recently in Miami again, and the hostess asked me to help her daughter write to the Rebbe. She wanted to ask about a number of things, including a shidduch that she was hesitant about and also about her studies.

“She was amazed to see how the Rebbe answered everything, including the things she hadn’t written about. The Rebbe wrote about a shidduch and said that if she could not decide, she should take a break from seeing him. In the next letter on the page, the Rebbe wrote that Hashem would give her something better ... then the Rebbe spoke about learning in high school, and if that wasn’t enough, the Rebbe spoke about her work in strengthening Jewish boys and girls and encouraged her to continue with this. This is actually something she does, as she gives classes to young people.

“I went from their house straight to the airport and throughout the flight I had this terrific feeling about how special it is when people write to the Rebbe and get answers.

“When I guide people in writing to the Rebbe, I tell them to write: ‘the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach shlita,’ and they usually agree to do so.”

**You have never had people question you about that?**

“Of course, people have expressed surprise, and have wondered how the Rebbe can be Moshiach. I tell them, based on the Midrash, that this is the order of events – that after Moshiach is revealed he is concealed, and he waits for Hashem to tell him to go and redeem the Jewish people.

“The Midrash helps them

understand it, but I don't fight about it. Those who accept it, fine, and to those who don't I say: You have to believe in Moshiach, right? You have to wait for him and ask for him to come, right? So ask for Moshiach, by name or without a name, because the main thing is that you ask...

"I am often asked how it is that I, a Sefardi rabbi, spreads the news that the Rebbe is Moshiach. What I always answer is that Moshiach and Geula is not something associated with a particular group. It is something that embraces the entire world. Of course, there are g'dolim everywhere, but as long as they don't match the criteria that are written in the Rambam, they are not Moshiach.

"I explain that the Rambam writes a clear p'sak din, which has been accepted by all Jews, and every Jew who is a ben-Torah has to accept it. Since this subject is the soul of the



Jewish people, everybody must look for the man who fits the description, and when they find him, then even though he doesn't fit their previously conceived image of Moshiach, they have to accept him regardless.

"As I said, I avoid debates, and try to present things in a pleasant manner, and baruch Hashem, I've been successful. As the Rebbe says, the world is already ready. We see it!"

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# A CALL FOR ACHDUS

*At this time, when Anash are reeling from the recent tragedies, I am sure that this letter expresses what many feel.*

On many occasions, we heard the Rebbe say that in situations such as these we must greatly strengthen and correct the achdus among Lubavitchers. I personally heard the Rebbe say extremely sharp statements on this subject. At a farbrengen in 5741, the Rebbe decried the lack of achdus, and in the course of speaking, he added as an aside, “and then they ask why so-and-so and so-and-so are no longer here, r”l.”

I think that all of Anash and the T'mimim are familiar with sichos, answers, and letters from the Rebbe on this subject.

I now address the dear T'mimim, talmidei Tomchei T'mimim:

You have the merit to stand at the head of the “soldiers of the house of Dovid.” It is you, most of whom did not see the Rebbe, who always leave us (older Lubavitchers) in awe of your fiery enthusiasm when it comes to Moshiach, and to your hiskashrus to the Rebbe, mitvzaim, etc.

We can definitely declare that **you** are the ones who merited, in recent years, to drag all of Anash into strengthening hiskashrus to the Rebbe, especially, in those areas that the Rebbe demanded.

Therefore, it is you, with your youthful energy and with the strength of “soldiers of the house of Dovid,” who can bring all of Anash and the askanim to complete achdus, as the Rebbe wants. Needless to say,

differences of opinion do not justify a lack of achdus, for we are all children of the Rebbe.

All of us, Anash and T'mimim, believe with perfect faith, that “just as he is alive, so too his children are

*It is you, with your youthful energy and with the strength of “soldiers of the house of Dovid,” who can bring all of Anash and the askanim to complete achdus, as the Rebbe wants.*

alive,” and leading the camp of “his children are alive” are the T'mimim and the talmidei Tomchei T'mimim. If you T'mimim used your naturally, youthful energy and threw yourselves into Mivtza Achdus, you would definitely succeed, with Hashem's help, in uniting all the T'mimim. Then, all of Anash and the askanim would follow in true unity. The “soldiers of the house of Dovid” mustn't avoid taking on this responsibility!

May we immediately merit “bless us, our father, all of us, as one.”

*Rabbi Yisroel Hershkowitz,  
Rav of the Chabad community in  
Ofakim*

P.S. After writing this letter I asked the Rebbe for a bracha to publicize it, and I opened up vol. 13 of the *Igros Kodesh* to page 485 to a letter about achdus:

*...even human intellect and even the intellect of the animal soul understands that when each one looks at his friend as his competitor, what comes out of this is not only a lack of assistance of one to another but the opposite. Especially as it is explained in Chazal and Chassidus that it is specifically peace that is a vessel for Hashem's blessing. [As we say in davening:] “Bless us our father, all of us, as one” ...*

Despite the fact that, obviously, I don't intend to say that you are the only guilty party. Yet, apparently, all of the menahalem and all members of the hanhala have a share in the falling-out, and this is a given, considering that it says, “as waters reflect...” If one side would begin an overture to peace and kiruv, then, as it says, it would ultimately turn around and mekarev the heart of the other side.

At least from now on, may each of you do as mentioned above, and specifically based on the explanation – and the instruction of the Alter Rebbe in the *Igeres HaT'shuva*, the end of chapter 9 – that when something from the past needs correcting, the effort must be doubled. As Chazal put it, “If he was used to reading one page, etc.” I await good news.

# THE REBBE'S WORLDWIDE REVOLUTION: “CHECK T’FILLIN AND MEZUZOS”

BY SHAI GEFEN

“*B’dikas ha’t’fillin v’ha’mezuzos, azkir al ha’tziyun*” (check t’fillin and mezuzos, I will mention it at the gravesite), the answer that thousands of people received from the Rebbe, wrought a revolution in the mindset of hundreds of thousands of Jews. Jews from all over the world experienced miracles after following this instruction from the Rebbe to check their t’fillin and mezuzos.

In recent years, we have seen numerous institutes for Stam advertising that they check t’fillin and mezuzos. This spiritual awareness for the necessity of having kosher t’fillin and mezuzos is thanks to the Rebbe’s repeated instructions and urging.

This revolution in awareness has not just affected those who are not observant, but has made a great impact on religious communities. Checking one’s t’fillin and mezuzos was not a given years ago, and few people checked them regularly, as the halacha mandates. Yet checking was especially important because the market for Stam was a free-for-all. Experts say there was no standard when it came to the one who checked them.

Another aspect to the revolution was that the Rebbe pointed to a direct connection between a health

problem (or any other problem) with the need to check mezuzos and t’fillin. In many cases, the Rebbe said that a particular illness or tragedy happened because the mezuzah or t’fillin were pasul. This was the Rebbe’s chiddush, and today this idea has penetrated all chareidi groups.

## THE REBBE WARNS: THE MARKET IS CORRUPTED

The Stam market was a free-for-all for years, and this led to terrible consequences. It should be noted that the Rebbe Rayatz had wanted a Vaad Mishmeres Stam to check mezuzos. He asked R’ Shmuel Zalmanov a”h to prepare a plan for the founding of a special organization whose goal would be to strengthen and disseminate the idea of kosher t’fillin and mezuzos and the need to check them.

In the early years of the Rebbe’s nesius, the Rebbe began promoting the idea of checking mezuzos and t’fillin. In a letter from 10 Elul 5715 to Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin a”h, the Rebbe wrote about the scandal of **“thousands ... of mezuzos, and apparently t’fillin too, that are Xerox copies on paper** [as opposed to handwritten on parchment], **etc.,** [that came from Eretz Yisroel] **under the stamp of yishuv ha’Aretz.”**

From a letter the Rebbe wrote on 20 Cheshvan 5717, we can see how chaotic the Stam situation was: **“Obviously, the checking of t’fillin, includes the parshiyos as well as the battim and straps... Numerous times in such situations they informed me from Eretz Yisroel**



about giving t'fillin to be checked by a sofer who said they were kosher. Then another sofer found that a letter was missing, which means they are pasul according to all opinions."

We can see the Rebbe urging people to check t'fillin and mezuzos from letters that were written after the Rebbe accepted the nesius. In a letter from 7 Adar II 5711, the Rebbe wrote to someone that he should check his mezuzos. In another letter dated 11 Nissan 5711, the Rebbe wrote to someone who asked him for segulos, "In general, my way is not to give segulos, but as in every Jewish home, you should check the mezuzos." In a letter of 25 Iyar 5711, the Rebbe wrote, "be sure that the mezuzos are kosher."

Over the years, the Rebbe raised awareness of this issue to

*"There has been an incredible change of 180 degrees! There are people who came to have their t'fillin checked and it turned out that they were pasul from day one. They were shocked to discover that they had never put on t'fillin."*

unprecedented heights so that in recent years, thousands of his

answers referred to checking t'fillin and mezuzos.

## 20 PASUL MEZUZOS AND 20 CHILDREN MURDERED

In one terrifying and tragic case, the Rebbe publicly associated pasul mezuzos with a terrorist attack. It was in the summer of 5734, when the Rebbe officially announced Mivtza Mezuzah. That summer a group of schoolchildren, were killed by PLO terrorists in Maalot, and the Rebbe said that the mezuzos in the school the children were in, were pasul.

At the farbrengen of Behar-Bechukosai 5734, the Rebbe told about a Jew who wanted a bracha for the children who went on the trip, who said that when the mezuzos in the school were checked, 17 were found to be pasul, and the number of students who were killed was 17. The next day, the number of dead rose to 20, the Rebbe went on to relate, and he checked again and discovered another four mezuzos that had not been checked and three out of the four were pasul. So the total number of pasul mezuzos equaled the number of those killed!

People complained about this sicha, saying that the Rebbe was seemingly justifying the attack ch'v. The Rebbe referred to this when he compared a mezuzah to a "metal helmet that soldiers wear. If the enemy shoots and a soldier, who was not wearing his helmet, was hit, obviously his injury was due to the shooting of the enemy. Nevertheless, if he had been wearing his helmet, he would have been saved..."

The Rebbe said something remarkable at that time which seemed a clear reference to Divine involvement, "They urged me and did not allow me to rest from demanding and speaking about mezuzah. I myself don't know why.







As with all the Rebbe's mitzvaim, even when it entailed the observance of a basic mitzva, there were people who complained about it. At that time, there were people who questioned the Rebbe taking a mitzva and turning it into something that provides protection.

In a sicha that was said in the summer of 5736, the Rebbe referred to these questions and zeroed in on precisely where they were coming from. **"The 'other side' managed to get someone to dress in 'silken [Rabbinic] garb,' and to proclaim 'how is it that a mitzva of the Torah is being turned into a matter of protection and defense?'"**

The Rebbe said people shouldn't be impressed by those who mock, and added that among those abducted in Entebbe was a G-d-fearing Jew who had been lacking when it came to the inyan of mezuzah. At that farbrengen, the Rebbe added that a yeshiva bachur who had been killed had had a mezuzah that was pasul.

### **MIRACLES AND WONDERS IN T'FILLIN AND MEZUZOS**

When people were told to check their t'fillin and mezuzos, and did so, and made the necessary corrections, they saw miracles, spiritually and materially. With this routine answer, the Rebbe brought on amazing and open miracles that saved thousands of people. When they asked the Rebbe regarding a medical problem, etc., it was as though the Rebbe was scanning the mezuzos in their homes.

Sometimes, people said that their mezuzos or t'fillin were declared kosher, and the Rebbe told them to check again, as though he were looking at them and seeing a problem.

To a talmid in yeshiva whose grandmother suffered from disturbing thoughts, the Rebbe



wrote (*Igros Kodesh*, vol. 15, p. 13): **"Check the mezuzos in her room."** The person wrote back and said the mezuzos were checked and found to be kosher. The Rebbe responded, **"If that is certain, then they surely were not put up properly, according to the din, in the right place, at the right height, etc. In any case, something about the mezuzos is not right, based on what**

**you wrote about your grandmother."**

Once, when the Rebbe was giving out dollars, a man told the Rebbe he had checked his mezuzos and was told they were fine. The Rebbe told him to check them again. To another Jew who had written to the Rebbe that robbers had broken into his house even though he had checked his mezuzos

that year, the Rebbe answered: **“And the t’fillin? I will mention it at the tziyun.”**

In 5751, the Rebbe wrote an unusual answer to a Lubavitcher askan who had been told to check his t’fillin and mezuzos. When the askan wrote back, asking for another bracha, without mentioning the checking, the Rebbe wrote, **“Seek until you actually find the desire to inform me about the results of checking your t’fillin and mezuzos.”**

During the Gulf War, someone wrote to the Rebbe that his gas

station was hit by a Scud missile, and all the glass shattered – only the Rebbe’s picture had remained whole. The Rebbe responded, **“Hashem should reimburse you double. Check t’fillin and mezuzos.”** In other words, the Scud missile didn’t land where it landed by chance.

To a Jew from Tel Aviv who wrote during the Gulf War, that “everybody is worried,” the Rebbe responded, **“(1) you are suspecting a number of innocent people who are fully confident in Hashem the Guardian of Israel; 2) perhaps you should check your t’fillin and**

**mezuzos.”**

A man from Crown Heights sold someone some beautiful mezuzos. Shortly thereafter, the buyer wrote to the Rebbe about a certain matter and was surprised to receive the following answer: **“Your daily conduct should be in accordance with the laws of our Torah, the Torah of life. Check t’fillin and mezuzos.”**

The astonished man checked his mezuzos and discovered a p’sul that could not be corrected.

Another interesting story is found in an answer from the Rebbe from 3 Kislev 5740. Someone wrote to the Rebbe that during his wife’s pregnancy, the baby had been in the breech position, and when their mezuzos were checked, it was discovered that one of them had been upside down. After it was put right-side-up, the baby returned to the normal position. The man wrote to the Rebbe that he assumed there was a connection between the two things.

The Rebbe responded (Likkutei Sichos, vol. 24, p. 374), **“Thank you for informing me about the mezuzah, especially about adding your explanation of the connection – for everything is by Divine providence from Hashem, Creator of the world and the One who runs it. A smart man understands and sees this, but someone who isn’t, etc.”**

### **RABBI YUD: THE REBBE’S MESSAGE HAS BEEN ACCEPTED EVERYWHERE**

Rabbi Yisroel Yud is director of Machon Pe’er in B’nei Brak, the first and most experienced institution founded to check mezuzos and t’fillin back in 5735, nearly 30 years ago. In a long and edifying conversation with *Beis Moshiach*, he said that the Rebbe’s message about verifying that one has kosher t’fillin

## **T’FILLIN & MEZUZA TIDBITS**

In a certain area, educational problems arose with boys who were over-bar mitzva, and the Rebbe asked them to check their t’fillin.

\* \* \*

A famous Admur in Yerushalayim, known for his righteousness, was sick with hepatitis. The Rebbe instructed him to check the mezuzos in his home and they were found to be pasul.

\* \* \*

When Rabbi Oberlander went on shlichus to Hungary in 5750, the Rebbe wrote Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchok Glick a”h, who initiated this shlichus, **“Many need him – and great is the merit, etc. Therefore it is worthwhile checking the mezuzos and t’fillin, especially when the responsibility is dependent on the greatness of the merit.”**

\* \* \*

Rabbi Avrohom Ben-Shimon once wrote to the Rebbe that his son woke up at night crying. The Rebbe’s answer was: perhaps it pays to check the mezuzos in his room.

The family wondered at first why the Rebbe wrote “mezuzos” in the plural, but then they realized that the boy’s bedroom had another door that opened onto the porch.

\* \* \*

On Erev Shavuos 5740, when a certain famous misnagdic rosh yeshiva spoke against the Lag B’Omer parade, the Rebbe said his t’fillin are pasul. None of the rosh yeshiva’s aides ever contradicted that statement...

\* \* \*

When it comes to stories about t’fillin and mezuzos, there is no end to the true and amazing tales that can be told. It might be time for someone to take on the project of recording some of the many thousands of stories.



**Rabbi Yud at the entrance  
to Machon Pe'er**

and mezuzos has penetrated all segments of society.

“Today, it’s a given that when you have a health or family problem, you check your t’fillin and mezuzos. I personally know hundreds of such incidents. Many people who came to me to have their t’fillin or mezuzos checked, and had corrections made with them, came back and told me how their problem was solved.

“We had a gruesome story that happened after the attack in Rishon L’Tziyon two years ago. Yisroel Shirak was killed, and his parents, who are traditionally observant, brought me his t’fillin to have them checked. It turned out that the letter *Nun* in “*l’maan yirbu yemeichem v’yimei b’neichem* (in

order that it be increased your days...)” was missing the head, i.e., the top of the letter. When I told this to the parents, the mother burst into tears and said that ZAKA told her that her son’s body remained whole, except for his head.

“Another story concerns a man who went to Belinson hospital with his young daughter for tests. He left a mezuzah with me, which was pasul. I fixed it and an hour later, he called me and said that the doctors didn’t find any problem with her.

“There’s no question that the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s message has gotten through to every group and every locale, and has wrought a tremendous revolution.”

**Before we get into the details, tell us – what percentage of those living in Eretz Yisroel, observe the mitzva of mezuzah?**

“Baruch Hashem, most Jews buy mezuzos and put them up. According to a poll done by *Yediot Acharonot*, 94% of the population has a mezuzah in their home. Unfortunately, many mezuzos are not kosher, but that’s another story.”

**As a pioneer who founded this**

**institute to check t’fillin and mezuzos thirty years ago, how do you see the development of the awareness of this subject?**

“The first move in this direction began after the Six Day War. There was an enormous spiritual arousal regarding t’fillin, and this led to a great deal of interest in the subject. Afterwards, as the Rebbe promoted the idea of mezuzah and the obligation to check them and to make sure to buy them from reputable places, the level of interest grew even more.

“Until then, there were people in the chareidi community who had mezuzos that were 6 centimeters, on oiled parchment, not to mention the writing, which was atrocious...”

“I remember getting involved in this nearly 30 years ago, when there was no such thing as an individual whose job it was to check mezuzos. The sofrim checked them, and this wasn’t done in a professional manner.

“At a certain point, courses for sofrim became available. Until then, there was no such thing as a sofer getting certified. It was a free-for-all. People relied on the sofrim and didn’t check their work. Most

## WHY SHOULD MEZUZOS AND T’FILLIN BE CHECKED ANNUALLY?

When the Rebbe launched *Mivtza Mezuzah*, some said that the halacha is that a mezuzah should be checked once in seven years, and that t’fillin, if they are presumed kosher [i.e., they were originally checked by three experts], don’t have to be checked at all. The Rebbe’s response on 20 Av 5734 was:

1) The p’sak in *Shulchan Aruch* was not referring to those places where there is a doubt about the basic kashrus of the mezuzah, whether there is something in the case, or whether it’s paper rather than parchment, or whether the correct thing is written on it. 2) The parchment and ink nowadays are not as good as those in the time of the Shas, and they don’t last as long, as is plain to see. 3) The *Matteh Efraim*, who was very involved in halacha, declared that mezuzos should be checked every Elul, even those that have been determined to be kosher.

## A LETTER FROM THE REBBE

B”H

24 Tammuz, 5732

Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the righteous and G-d-fearing public activists, R' Zev Reichberg, R' Moshe Greenberg and R' Tzvi Schechter,

Shalom U’v’racha!

After a great delay, I received your letter in which you write that you founded a public office for the checking of t’fillin and mezuzos. May it be that G-d’s will be successful through them to establish and spread all matters of Judaism and kashrus without any doubts and in addition, with great hiddur.

Since in every place and at all times, hiddur mitzva is a great thing, and certainly the proper fulfillment of a mitzva, all the more so in the land which has “the eyes of G-d upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,” especially at this time, as is readily understood.

With honor and blessings for success to all the participants in this very great undertaking.

*Igros Kodesh, vol. 27, p. 169*

## A GEMACH FOR RETURNING LOST T’FILLIN

Rabbi Yisroel Yud, director of Machon Pe’er, was a pioneer in other areas connected with Stam, such as a gemach for returning lost t’fillin.

“I don’t have to tell you about the problem of losing your t’fillin while traveling. To date, we have returned hundreds of lost pairs of t’fillin. We have pairs of t’fillin that the owners still haven’t claimed, which we hold on to, as the halacha requires, until Eliyahu comes. We are negotiating with the Eged bus company so that they automatically give us any t’fillin forgotten on their buses.

“We have a special shop window with t’fillin bags displayed, so passersby can identify their t’fillin and get them back when they provide other identifying marks.

“Someone brought t’fillin from a Jewish contractor who had hired an Arab worker. The Arab joined a minyan one day, and people put t’fillin on him. But the Arab ran away with the t’fillin in the middle of the davening.

“The t’fillin were found by the contractor and returned to the Chabad house in Migdal HaEmek. They came to us and we are waiting for the person who lost them to come and claim them.

“There was another story with a Jew from Nachalat Har Chabad who lost two pairs of t’fillin and they were found in the Ben-Shemen forest. He came to us, hoping they had ended up with us, and was delighted when he found them.

“It’s easy to identify Lubavitcher t’fillin because of their size.”

people innocently thought everything was fine, and didn’t think much about it.

“When the Rebbe began promoting it, everything changed. Public awareness was raised and people began demanding professional sofrim and researching them. The public became educated and people began to understand that there is a connection between various problems and a pasul mezuza or t’fillin. The Rebbe was the ‘Nachshon ben Aminadav’ in this.”

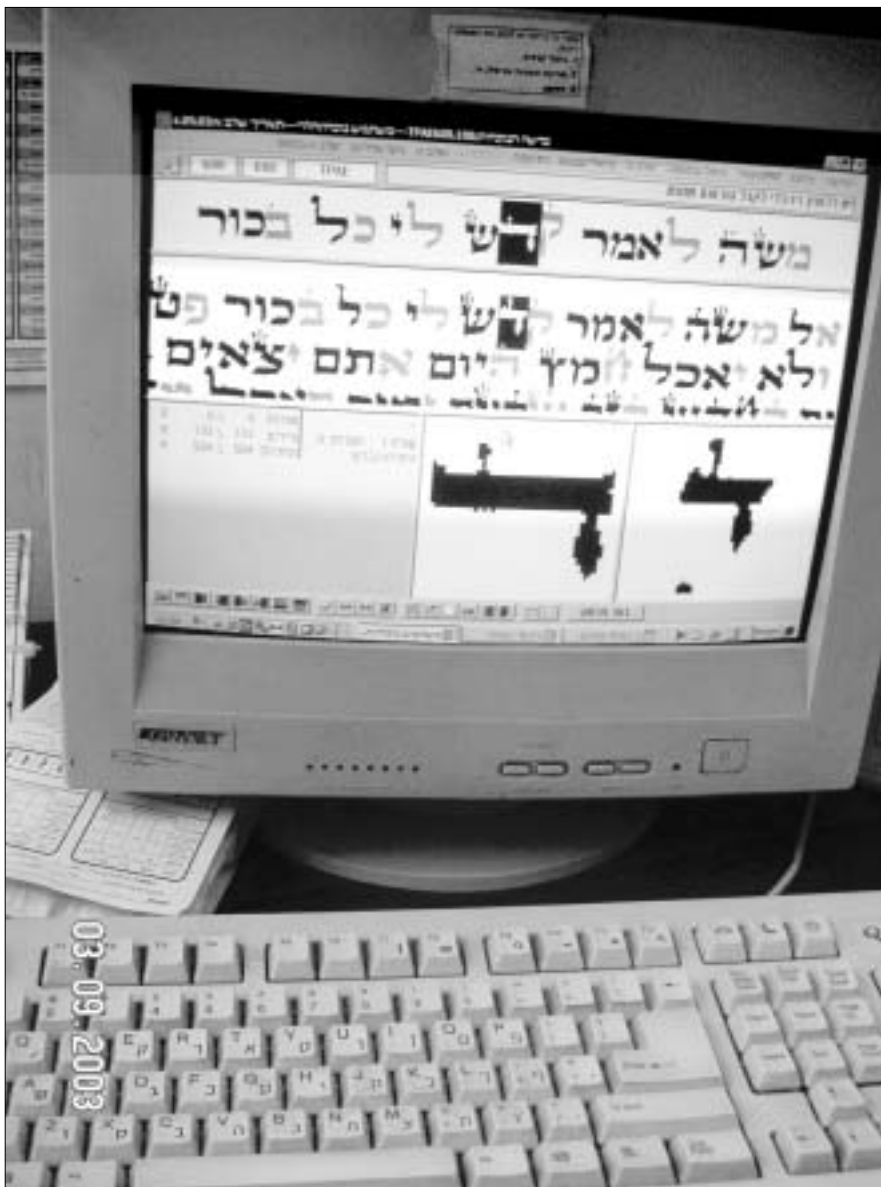
### What was the situation in Eretz Yisroel like regarding sofrim?

“Before the war, towns in Poland each had their own sofer who was relied upon. The situation in Eretz Yisroel was far worse in that there were a few dozen good sofrim, and it was all very chaotic. There was almost nobody to consult with, and there was nearly nobody who offered advice since people were not knowledgeable in this regard. Most of the chareidi and dati community thought there was no need to check t’fillin and mezuzos. They relied on the psak in *Shulchan Aruch* and the Rambam that t’fillin are assumed kosher and don’t need to be checked. It made no difference that most poskim that followed them insisted that t’fillin and mezuzos be checked. The public remained oblivious.”

### What did the Rebbe accomplish?

“I don’t know what would have happened if the Rebbe hadn’t brought this issue to the fore. Who knows how many thousands of Jews would simply not be putting on t’fillin and would have pasul mezuzos in their homes? The Rebbe blazed a trail for others to follow. At first, there was a demand, and naturally, this led to the development of a profession for *bodkim* and *magihim*.

“Then institutes opened up, one



Computerized checking

after the other, and today there are thousands of people who work in checking t'fillin and mezuzos. The more institutes are opened, the bigger the demand for their services."

**Why did you get involved in this?**

"At the beginning of 5734, Rabbi Yaakov Landau z"l asked people to check their mezuzos, following a few tragedies that took place. I asked someone involved in mezuzos to give work to a sofer who didn't have work. The man agreed and

gave him work. Then I thought, why don't I do this kind of work too?

"So without prior background, I sat down to seriously study the halachos, and I went out and told people about the importance of checking mezuzos and t'fillin. The more I got involved, the more I understood how pathetic the market for Stam in Eretz Yisroel was. For 15 years we had to fight with the stores and demand a certified sofer."

**In hindsight, do you see essential changes that took place?**

"Of course! There has been an incredible change of 180 degrees! There are people who came to have their t'fillin checked and it turned out that they were pasul from day one. They were shocked to discover that they had never put on t'fillin."

**Have you tracked the changes through your institute?**

"As the director of the machon, I have seen how the Rebbe wrought a revolution. Many hundreds of Jews came to me and asked me to check their mezuzos and t'fillin after being personally instructed by the Rebbe to do so. I can tell you that each time he hit the bulls-eye. There was no such thing as the Rebbe sending someone to check his mezuzos or t'fillin without finding a p'sul or a p'gam, whether in the crowns or the letters. I saw shocking things, with my own eyes."

**Could you give us an example?**

"There was an amazing story that happened with someone whose relative was a misnaged, and very sick. The man decided to write to the Rebbe about him, and the Rebbe told him to check the t'fillin and to be punctilious about Havdala. The sick man was 33. When I checked his t'fillin, I found that a word was missing! After he recovered (and naturally, he recovered), he said that he had wanted to check his t'fillin before he got married but he was told it wasn't necessary. I took the opportunity to bring up the point about Havdala, and it turned out that this man found it hard to make Havdala on wine, and made it on milk.

"Obviously, I don't check up to see what happens after each person comes to me, but I've seen that every time the Rebbe sent someone, there was a problem."

## THE MAIN PROBLEMS

### What are the problems in today's market of Stam?

"Baruch Hashem, in recent years the problem of missing or additional letters has greatly decreased, thanks to computer checking. Computer checking is very effective, though only for missing or extra letters and not for other problems. In about 98% of the cases, the computer saves people from additional or missing letters. Just today, I found a mezuza that was missing the word "ha'yom." At the machon, I have photographs

of 660 parshiyos with missing or extra letters. It's just shocking.

"The main problem today entails ensuring that sofrim are yerei-Shamayim and certified. I warn people not to buy from just anyone. Unfortunately, people allow those who are not yerei-Shamayim to write mezuzos. This is extremely serious and causes many problems. I'm not even going to talk about Arabs who write mezuzos..."

"The market today is also plagued with forgeries. Someone recently showed me a copy of a mezuza on parchment, and it was

almost impossible to tell that it was a mezuza done by silkscreen. The journalist Shoshana Chein from *Yediot Acharonot* researched this subject and I was involved. It turned out that a large percentage of mezuzos on the market are

forgeries. That is why I repeatedly warn people to buy only from experts and from sellers known to be yerei-Shamayim.

"Today's technology enables us to find errors, but it also makes forging easier. The forgeries are definitely getting better, so you must be extra vigilant."

### What do you think still needs improvement?

"First of all, raising awareness about checking mezuzos and t'fillin. It hurts to see a Jew suddenly discover that he has not put on t'fillin for thirty years. And there are those who discovered that they never put on t'fillin, even though they went through the motions every day, because their t'fillin were pasul to begin with. That is why I say that we must increase awareness, and most importantly – make sure people are not naive when it comes to buying Stam, not to buy from an unreliable source, and to check who the sofer is. The problems are primarily in the outlying cities but there are also many problems in B'nei Brak and Yerushalayim.

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# THE HOLY ADMUR: RABBI MOSHE MORDECHAI BEIDERMANN ZATZAL OF LELOV

*From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha*

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO  
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



## PART I

Reb Moshe Mordechai Beidermann was born in Jerusalem, in the year 5663, to his holy father the *Admur*, Reb Nossen Nota *zatzal*. The future *Admur* was raised and educated by his grandfather, the G-dly kabbalist, Reb Dovid Tzvi *zatzal*, a descendent of the holy Reb Dovid of Lelov (one of the greatest disciples of the holy Reb Elimelech of Lizensk, and a student/compatriot of his in-law, the Chozeh of Lublin.<sup>1</sup>) At the young age of fifteen, Reb Moshe Mordechai received rabbinical ordination from the greatest Torah scholars of Jerusalem. In 5681, he traveled to Krakow, Poland, where he studied Torah diligently, in purity and holiness. There, he merited a close relationship with the *Admurim*, Reb Y.D. of Belze, and Reb Aaron of Kozhnitz. He was especially connected to Reb Avrohom Elimelech of Karlin *zatzal*. In 5688, Reb Moshe Mordechai returned to the Holy Land.

Reb Moshe Mordechai was only twenty-seven years of age when his father passed away (on the fast of Gedaliah, 5690), yet his father's most eminent Chassidim humbled themselves before him. Still, Reb Moshe Mordechai refused to accept the Lelov leadership. Only four years later, on

Purim of 5694, did the young *tzaddik* accept the mantle of leadership. In 5693, Reb Moshe Mordechai paired up with the holy Baba Sali, Rabbi Yisroel Abuchatzzeira, who was then in Israel, and they studied the kabbala together. This created a lifelong bond between the two holy masters.

Day and night, Reb Moshe Mordechai studied the Torah and



His father, the *Admur* Reb Shimon Nossen Nota *zatzal*

served the Creator. He fasted frequently and practiced self-mortification. In addition, he worked hard at bringing estranged Jews back to their Father in Heaven. Because of his intense love for his fellow Jews, many a devastated person knocked on his door to find comfort and healing. Indeed, the *tzaddik* wrought miracles on behalf of these people through his holy prayers. The Jewish masses flocked to the *Admur's* home to receive his blessing and a word of advice, and he utilized these opportunities to draw them closer to the Torah and help them elevate their level of Divine worship. Indeed, the *tzaddik* first established his *beis midrash* in Tel Aviv, so that he would be able to draw the inhabitants of the city closer to Torah and mitzvos.

Reb Moshe Mordechai maintained a firm connection with all the *tzaddikim* of the Holy Land. He humbled himself before the *Admurim* Reb Aharon of Belze, and Reb Shlomke of Zviyell, and enjoyed a very friendly relationship with the Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz, the Lev Simcha of Ger, the Klausenberger Rebbe, and Reb Meir of Amshinov, may their merit protect us.

In 5724, the *Admur* reestablished his *beis midrash* in B'nei Brak, a city renowned for its many giants of Torah

and Chassidus. There too, he was regarded as one of the great Chassidic masters. After the liberation of the Western Wall, the *Admur* prayed at the Wall frequently, especially during the Holidays. These prayers lasted many hours. In 5738, the *Admur* moved to Jerusalem, and in 5745, after falling ill, he returned to B'nei Brak. Even when he was very sick, he continued his holy work with self-sacrifice, conducting his *tish*,<sup>2</sup> and accepting people who came to receive his blessing. He also continued traveling to Jerusalem at every opportunity, refusing to abandon his practice of visiting the Western Wall.

The *Admur* suffered from his illness for six years, and on the holy day of Shabbos, 24 Teives, 5747, (the Yom Hilula of the Alter Rebbe), after some 50 years of leadership, he returned his soul to his Maker. A portion of his Torah insights appears in his *seifer*, *Kedushas Mordechai*.

\* \* \*

The Lelover Rebber *zatzal* (who merited to see the Previous Rebbe when the latter visited the Holy Land in 5689, and to hear a Chassidic discourse from him) always maintained a friendly connection with Lubavitch, and sent his sons to learn in the Chabad yeshiva of Tel Aviv. (Their names appear in *Seifer HaT'mimim*.)

After the *histalkus* of the Previous Rebbe, the *Admur* showed great respect for the Rebbe MH"M, as illustrated by the following episodes:

### CONNECTS THE NEW ADMUR WITH MOSHIACH

I heard this story from Rabbi Yaakov Zohar of B'nei Brak: "In the year 5712, I was studying at the Nehardik yeshiva, Yeshiva Beis Yosef. Reb Alter, the son of the *Admur* of Lelov *zatzal*, was also learning in the yeshiva at the time. One day, he came into the *beis midrash*, and began to relate with great excitement,

that his father, the *Admur*, had just used outstanding adjectives (the likes of which he was not at all accustomed to using) to describe a certain *Admur* in the United States, who had been crowned as Rebbe about a year before. The Lelover Rebbe had also drawn a connection between the new *Admur* and Moshiach. I remember that Reb Alter's words had a strong impact on me, for at the time, I had no connection to Chabad, and I had never heard anything about the Rebbe.

### SEEING THE REBBE'S FACE – PROVEN TO BE BENEFICIAL TO ATTAINING FEAR OF HEAVEN

The rabbi and *gaon*, Reb Yitzchok



The Lelover Rebbe with the Baba Sali

Dovid Grossman *shlita*, relates the following: "As one who was fortunate enough to have a close relationship with the *Admur* of Lelov *zatzal*, I must tell you a story that took place in his home one time:

"A young woman approached him once with the following question: Chabad had brought her back to Judaism, and she felt deeply indebted to them and to the Rebbe. However, a match had just been proposed for her, and the young man in question, a Torah student, was firmly opposed to having a picture of the Lubavitcher Rebbe hang on the wall in his home. What should

she do? 'Since I feel deeply indebted to the Rebbe *shlita*, in whose merited I returned to the light of Torah, I find it very difficult to accept such a condition. On the other hand, the proposed match seems very good in every other respect. What should I do?'

"The *Admur*'s face grew serious, and he said to her: 'I recommend that you completely abandon this proposal, because his opposition to seeing the Lubavitcher Rebbe's face clearly shows that despite his external appearance, this individual does not possess the fear of Heaven. Nevertheless, even as you plan to sever your connection with him, you must still see to it that he does not remain without fear of Heaven; so, give him a tape of the Lubavitcher Rebbe speaking words of Chassidus, or singing 'Tzama Lecha Nafshi' and ask him to listen to it well. This is a proven aid for the attainment of the fear of Heaven.'

"This is just one of many stories in which I saw how my teacher and master, the *Admur* of Lelov *zatzal* related to the Rebbe."

### ONE CAN HEAR HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, THE RAYATZ, IN HIS VOICE

Reb Yitzchok Dovid's brother, the chassid Rabbi Ben Tzion *shlita*, relates the following:

"1. In his old age, the *Admur* of Lelov *zatzal* was very sick, and he suffered pains in every part of his body. His eyes were very weak, and he could barely discern the words in a *seifer*. At the same time, he was having difficulties falling asleep. So his chassidim brought him taped recordings of *mussar* lectures, chassidic songs, and so on, but he was not satisfied. One time, I brought him a tape of the Rebbe's *farbrengens*, where the songs the Rebbe himself sang at the *farbrengens* (like *Tzama Lecha Nafshi*) were recorded, and he was deeply



satisfied. From that time on, the *Admur* would listen to the tapes on a regular basis, saying that they literally revived him. He was always grateful to me for this.

"2. The *Admur* of Lelov would often say that when it comes to the Lubavitcher Rebbe one sees an unusual thing — he is not just a Rebbe, but also a chassid, for he is a true chassid of his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz. The *Admur* would add that the unity between the Rebbe and his father-in-law is so thorough that when one listens to the tapes of the Rebbe's talks and Chassidic discourses 'one can hear his father-in-law, the Rayatz, in his voice.'

"3. I once asked the Lelover Rebbe for his opinion on a certain mater. His response was unequivocal: **You must ask the Lubavitcher Rebbe for his opinion on this.**

"4. On the same occasion, he said to

me: 'Surely, you will speak to Reb Leibel Kitzanover' (i.e., Rabbi Leibel Groner; the *Admur* knew Rabbi Groner's grandfather, who was known in Jerusalem as Reb Shlomo Kitzanover, after the city from which he came); 'when you do, please do not forget to tell him to mention my name to the Rebbe for a complete recovery.' He then gave me his name and his mother's name, to relay to Rabbi Groner.

"5. A number of times, I heard the *Admur* of Lelov mention enthusiastically about how fortunate he was to have met the Rebbe Rayatz, and to have merited to hear Chassidus from him, during the latter's visit to the Holy Land in 5689."

**"FROM THE REBBE ONE HEARS THE VOICE OF THE SH'CHINA"**

Erev Rosh HaShana, 5744, the *Admur* of Lelov spoke the following

words to Reb Binyomin Rabinovitz, (grandson of the *gaon* and *tzaddik* Reb Menachem Nachum of Kontoziva):

1. With regard to Moshe Rabbeinu, we are taught that the Sh'china spoke from his throat. From the Lubavitcher Rebbe, one hears the voice of the Sh'china.

2. The Rebbe is the only one who is fully carrying out the mission of the Baal Shem Tov.

3. The Rebbe's powers completely transcend the natural order.

NOTES:

1 I.e., Seer.

2 In most chassidic circles, it is customary for the chassidim to gather around the table of their Rebbe to hear inspirational words of Torah, and to receive a morsel of his meal.

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# UP FRONT WITH MOSHIACH – THE T'MIMIM

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY M. MELAMED

*A compilation of stories about the special relationship between the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and Tomchei T'mimim and the talmidei ha'T'mimim. \* Presented for 15 Elul, the day Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim was founded.*

## ONE DAY IN TOMCHEI T'MIMIM

A Lubavitcher worked to convince a certain bachur to go to yeshiva, and knowing the boy, he thought that if he went to Tomchei T'mimim he would stay there a shorter time. If he would learn elsewhere, he would stay there for a few years.

He asked the Rebbe which was preferable, and the Rebbe answered: **“Send him to Tomchei T'mimim, even if he spends just one day there.”**

What actually happened was that the bachur went to Tomchei T'mimim and stayed for many years.

## THE BAALEI BATTIM OF THE YESHIVA

The Rebbe once said that someone who stepped foot in Tomchei T'mimim, even for one moment, our Rebbeim became baalei battim over him and they demand of him that he be a talmid chacham!

## LIKE A TRAIN

The father of a certain bachur

who learned in Tomchei T'mimim wanted him to go to college. Then, after he got his degree, he could go back to yeshiva. When he asked the Rebbe about this, he received a sharp letter: **“You are mekushar to the Rebbe, my father-in-law, and this is like the relationship between the cars on the train: Wherever you go, you pull the Rebbe along with you. If so, do you want to exile the Rebbe to the university?!”**

## WHO WILL LEAD?

Someone who learned in Tomchei T'mimim and who sent his son to Tomchei T'mimim wanted to send his son to a different yeshiva. At a farbrengen, the Rebbe cried out about this and said, **“How will it look when Moshiach comes? The father will walk in the front with all the T'mimim and his son will be in the rear. How is it that you have no mercy on your son?”**

## AVODAS HA'T'FILLA

A bachur in Tomchei T'mimim in Brunoy, a baal nigleh, asked the mashpia R' Nissan Nemenov about a certain topic that pertained to avodas ha't'filla. R' Nissan pushed him off and said that being a baal nigleh, avodas ha't'filla was not for him.



Some time later, the bachur had a yechidus with the Rebbe and he asked whether avodas ha't'filla was for him. The Rebbe answered that every Tamim who learned in Tomchei T'mimim, especially if he learned there for a number of years, was *shayach* to avodas ha't'filla.

### FAMILY MEMBERS

At one of the Pesach s'darim that took place at the home of the Rebbe Rayatz, the Rebbe gave his afikoman to bachurim who had returned from shlichus in Australia. Rashag asked the Rebbe, "But it says that the afikoman should be given (only) to one's family members?"

The Rebbe replied, "**The wording is, 'and it should be distributed to all the family members.' These are my family members; they worked hard for two years** [on shlichus]."

### THE REBBE'S CHILDREN

Every Erev Yom Kippur, the T'mimim heard the *Birkas HaBanim* from the Rebbe. Over the years, when he gave the bracha, the Rebbe said some very special things about Tomchei T'mimim and about the talmidei ha'T'mimim.

One of the T'mimim who was present at the first Birkas HaBanim in 5712 relates, "The Rebbe shed tears throughout the bracha and said that the talmidei ha'T'mimim were 'the Rebbe's children.' **You learn in the Rebbe's yeshiva, so you are the Rebbe's children.**"

### GIVING FROM HIS BREAD

At the Birkas ha'T'mimim in 5752, the Rebbe said, "Being the nasi ha'dor and 'the nasi is everything,' obviously (Mishlei 22:9), 'One with a good eye will be blessed, for he has given of his bread to the poor,' to the talmidei ha'T'mimim... And to them 'he gave **of his bread,**' from those things that were like his flesh and blood spiritually, as well as those things

which are like his flesh and blood materially!"

### EVERYBODY, TOGETHER

The custom was that on Pesach night the Rebbe would visit certain mosdos in the community along with the administrators of the mosdos. In 5728 (or thereabouts), the Rebbe went, as always, to the dining room where the talmidim on K'vutza were eating, and the Rebbe asked Rabbi Dovid Raskin whether all of the talmidim from K'vutza were there.

A quick check revealed that one talmid was missing. He was

***"How will it look when Moshiach comes? The father will walk in the front with all the T'mimim and his son will be in the rear. How is it that you have no mercy on your son?"***

spending Yom Tov with his uncle who lived in a nearby neighborhood. The Rebbe said: He just arrived and he already went to galus?!

One of the T'mimim who noticed what was going on, hurried out of the dining room and ran to East Flatbush, about half an hour away, where the uncle lived. He told the bachur that the Rebbe wanted all the talmidim on K'vutza to spend the seider night in Tomchei T'mimim, and within forty minutes all the talmidim on K'vutza were seated in the dining room.

### THE REBBE VISITS THE DORMITORY

In Adar 5714, a new dormitory opened for the bachurim learning in 770, on the corner of Troy and Lincoln. The Rebbe visited the building when it was inaugurated.

The visit took place on 8 Adar, and the Rebbe went to all the floors and took an interest in the details, such as the checking of the new mezuzos, etc. During the course of the visit, the Rebbe went into a certain room and asked for a *Tanya*. The Rebbe also asked why the windows were open and why there weren't enough pillows. The Rebbe inquired into other details, gave some instructions, and thus ended his visit to the new dorm.

### WHAT MUST A TAMIM KNOW?

One of the times President Shazar visited the Rebbe, the Rebbe told him that he wanted the T'mimim from Eretz Yisroel to spend an entire year with him so they would see how things are done in Lubavitch throughout an entire year.

### THE MESIRUS NEFESH OF A TAMIM

Rabbi Nissan Telushkin was a rav in a shul an hour and a half away from 770. On Simchas Torah, the T'mimim visit shuls and bring the joy of Yom Tov, and they visited his shul too. They did so every year.

One year, R' Nissan came to the Rebbe after Simchas Torah and said that he wanted to give a *yasher ko'ach* to the bachurim who came to his shul. The Rebbe said: It is proper to give them a *yasher ko'ach*, especially when it entails great mesirus nefesh on their part.

When Rabbi Telushkin said it was indeed a great mesirus nefesh to walk an hour and a half and then to dance, etc., the Rebbe said: For

them, the walking and dancing is not mesirus nefesh; **their mesirus nefesh is knowing that I am going to farbreng and that they will miss it because they are going out to make other Jews happy!**

### OUT OF THE QUESTION!

When Israeli bachurim first began coming on K'vutza in 5724, there were many difficulties involved. One time, Rashag (who was the director of Tomchei T'mimim) discussed the problem with the Rebbe and suggested that the bachurim return by ship to Europe, and fly from there to Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe said: **"You want to take bachurim and wear them out for two weeks at sea? It's out of the question!"**

### NOT IF THEY WILL GO HUNGRY

Once, after a farbrengen, the Rebbe told Rabbi Chadakov that what was said at the farbrengen should be publicized, but the T'mimim shouldn't go, because if they go it would be too late and then they wouldn't have what to eat ... Only those who were going anyway should publicize what was said.

### THE HE'AROS OF THE T'MIMIM

The Rebbe expressed great delight regarding the *kovtzim* of *he'aros* of the T'mimim and Anash. The Rebbe always encouraged them, the editorial board, and those who were involved with it, those who devoted their personal time to it. Often, when the Rebbe sent a letter to the editorial board, there were handwritten additions such as "hatzlacha rabba b'avodas ha'kodesh."

The editorial board of the *koveitz* of the yeshiva in Morristown once got a letter in which the Rebbe

wrote, **"fortunate is their lot and may they go higher and higher in Torah and mitzvos."**

### CONSTANT MERCY

One of the T'mimim had a yechidus and he complained that he didn't have a chayus in his learning. He asked the Rebbe to arouse mercy on his behalf.

The Rebbe said: **"We are constantly arousing mercy on the talmidei ha'T'mimim. You just have to make keilim to receive it."**

### EDITING THE SICHA FOR THE T'MIMIM

On Acharon shel Pesach 5736, the Rebbe said a sicha in which he

***"Wherever you go,  
you pull the Rebbe  
along with you. Do  
you want to exile the  
Rebbe to the  
university?!"***

explained the inyan of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim and what was demanded of those who learn there. After the sicha was published, the Rebbe told Rashag that he spend the entire night editing the sicha.

### NOT TO INTERRUPT THEIR LEARNING

In Kislev 5739, the Rebbe went out for Kiddush Levana at 8:10. This was the time the bachurim learned Chassidus, and the Rebbe said he was going out on condition that no bachurim would be present. The Rebbe added that he could be mekadesh the levana at home too, but he wanted to do so with a minyan.

### AN ONLY CHILD

In one of the first years of the Rebbe's leadership, one of the bachurim got married on a Thursday night and the T'mimim farbrenged the entire night. The farbrengen was also in honor of Chai Elul, which fell out at that time.

The next morning, none of them showed up to learn Chassidus. At eight o'clock, the Rebbe entered the zal and the Tamim Pinchas Korf (today a mashpia in Oholei Torah) was there alone. The Rebbe looked at him and said, **"I have a *ben yachid* (only child) in Tomchei T'mimim."**

### FOR SIMPLE FAITH

R' Dovber Junik relates, "Even in the beginning, the Rebbe said he took the bachurim upon himself. On Yud Shvat 5711, the Rebbe said, **'To those bachurim who go with simple faith, I give a yashar ko'ach.'**"

### SHINING FACE

The secretaries related that when the Rebbe got a report that in a certain yeshiva the bachurim were sitting and learning, the Rebbe's face shone with happiness. On the other hand, in a letter dated 13 Teives 5713, the Rebbe wrote, "I was sorry to hear about the weakness in the study of nigleh..."

### THE WAR OF THE SOLDIERS OF THE HOUSE OF DOVID

On Hoshana Rabba 5743, the Rebbe said in a sicha that in Ikvisa D'Meshicha there are those "who mock the footsteps of Your anointed one." In other words, they don't want "Moshiach Now" to be yelled ... This is the war of the soldiers of the house of Dovid, the illumination and revelation of Moshiach Tzidkeinu – to go out against them, and to strengthen faith in the coming of Moshiach.

# “FROM THE REBBE’S ANSWER, I KNEW HE WOULD BE FINE”

BY SHAI GEFEN

It's hard to describe the tension and fear that many felt when they heard that the Lubavitcher Yosef Yitzchok Fasch, a soldier in the I.D.F., had been critically wounded. His parents are Isser and Ziva Fasch, who have been shluchim at Kibbutz Ein HaNatziv for thirty years. Many people davened and farbrengens were held in his merit. The T'hilim said on Shabbos Mevarchim were also said for his refua.

Then, at eleven o'clock Shabbos morning, Yossi regained consciousness, identified those around him, and even tried to remove the equipment attached to him. The doctors, called to his bedside immediately, stood there in amazement. They call it a “medical miracle.”

His mother had said all along that she was sure her son would recover, after having received a bracha from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*.

**Tell us the chain of events. How did you get the news?**

On Thursday morning, I heard the news that my youngest child was critically injured in the head. This was the most difficult moment I ever experienced in my life. As a mother, I had never experienced this feeling; it's just terrible. However, I then said to myself: now is the time for emuna in Hashem. It's no big deal to believe when everything is fine. Even in terrible times you must know that there is a G-d Who runs the world with kindness and mercy.

When they told me about my son, the first thing I asked was - is he alive? When they told me he was alive, I

immediately took a volume of *Igros Kodesh* and asked for a bracha, from the depths of my heart, for Yosef Yitzchok ben Ziva, for a complete recovery. When I opened the volume, the words, “*Ani Hashem rofecha*” (I am G-d your healer) jumped out at me. I didn't need more than that, and I closed the book. Then and there, I said that I knew for sure he would recover.

We went with the soldiers to the Soroka hospital in Be'er Sheva. I asked them why they didn't bring a plane for the trip from our house in the north to Soroka. On second thought, I said it



was fine because this way we wouldn't have to spend all the hours of the operation being nervous wrecks.

And that's the way it worked out. By the time we arrived at the hospital, Yossi was just being wheeled out of the operating room. It was a very difficult operation, which took five hours. They removed shrapnel from his brain after an Arab terrorist shot him. We were all still fearful of the worst, but I felt certain that it would be all right.

**People were horrified ...**

We received calls from around the

world, and they all davened for Yossi. I told the journalists here on Thursday that Yossi would recover because if the Rebbe promised, the Rebbe would keep his promise.

People cried and I calmed them, telling them it would be all right. They asked me where I got this emuna from, and I said, “From the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, from *Tanya*, and from Hashem, Who will turn it all into good.”

**When did the turning point begin?**

It began Shabbos morning. Until then he was in critical condition. At eleven o'clock Shabbos morning a doctor told us that he wanted to do a CT scan since they would now awaken him from his sedation. I asked whether the CT scan had to be done or was this unnecessary chilul Shabbos. He didn't answer me.

The doctors pushed off doing the CT scan until after Shabbos. At eleven o'clock they roused him, and when he opened his eyes he began speaking and to move things. He even wanted to get out of bed and the doctors had to secure him so he wouldn't rush it.

**What was the doctors' reaction to this incredible change in his condition?**

They were in utter shock. They couldn't believe their eyes, and they called it a Medical Miracle. The media, which was present, couldn't believe it. They asked me if I would agree to be interviewed, and I said I would be happy to, since I wanted to encourage other mothers whose children were in a similar condition and so they should know there are miracles and that

Hashem has compassion on His people. And most importantly, so people know that you can write to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh* and see miracles. Naturally, the interviews took place after Shabbos.

I would like to thank everybody for their prayers and support. I can't thank you enough.

**Did you feel that people were behind you?**

Definitely. People kept calling. On Friday, a woman came over to me in the hospital and began to cry, saying, "Everybody is praying for your soldier."

My husband took it all very hard. He is a Holocaust survivor and he lost a lot of his family. Now of course, we will celebrate with a Seudas Hodaa. Today, the commander in the south and his staff came and they were all thrilled with the latest developments. They are all talking about this amazing miracle.

I want to point out that today his unit is having a ceremony, and Yossi is one of three outstanding soldiers. Obviously, this was planned before he was shot.

**Is your son named after the Rebbe Rayatz?**

Yes. He received brachos from the Rebbe when he was born and even beforehand, when I was expecting him. After he was born, we named him after the Rebbe Rayatz.

When he was five years old, my

## THE FASCH FAMILY'S SPECIAL SHLICHUS TO THE KIBBUTZ

Isser Fasch has been living at Kibbutz Ein HaNatziv for 51 years, and his wife Ziva has been living there for 41 years. They have been shluchim there for 29 years.

The Fasch family didn't have it easy on the kibbutz. The difficulties in being frum on the kibbutz were enormous. At a yechidus with the Rebbe, Mrs. Fasch said she wanted to leave the kibbutz. The Rebbe said she should stay, and added: **"You should know that you will have battles over everything you want to do, but I am asking you to wage these battles with simcha and tuv leivav and with a smile on your lips."**

Even in the most difficult times, the Rebbe did not allow them to leave. He wrote: **"Obviously, you must continue in your place and Hashem will give you success. With blessings for success in everything, including, and most importantly, to serve Hashem with simcha, with strong bitachon, and relate good news."**

The Fasch family, Isser, Ziva, and their children, had many amazing kiruvim from the Rebbe, and many yechiduyos.

Over the years, they brought much of the light and warmth of Judaism and Chassidus to the kibbutz

"After a lot of work, the Rebbe was accepted by the members of the kibbutz," said Ziva in an interview she gave to the women's section of *Beis Moshiach* (Av 5761). "In the past, few kibbutz members wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha, but today, many want to write to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*. Sometimes a woman comes discreetly, to write to the Rebbe, so that her husband doesn't know about it, and vice versa. They have all been amazed by the results."

husband and I went to the Rebbe. We left Yossi with a family on the kibbutz, as people do on the kibbutz. Upon our return, Yossi showed me a bag of candy and asked me whether he could eat them. He said he wanted to know whether it had the Badatz hechsher.

My husband and I had decided, at that time, to use only the Badatz hechsher, but we still hadn't told the

children about this. But Yossi already knew about it and he didn't touch the candy for days! Of course, we immediately bought him candy with a good hechsher.

**Will Yossi remain in the army?**

Knowing him, he will continue. In another half a year, he finishes his army service.

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# SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NACHLAS HAR CHABAD SEMINARY, RABBI Y.Y. NISSILEVITCH

**Q: The new scholastic year is fast approaching us. How are the preparations proceeding?**

Well indeed, baruch Hashem, and I am happy to share with you our plans both in Gashmius and Ruchnius.

Properly running a Seminary is not so simple. It requires a strict and punctual coordination between the gashmius and the ruchnius. The experiences of last year have taught us a lot and we are confident that whomever sends their daughter to our Seminary this year can be assured that their daughter will have the best year ever in gashmius and ruchnius.

Feel free to visit us, to get a first hand impression of our Seminary. Come and see for yourself where your daughter will be this year; Meet our mechanchim and staff members. Speak with them concerning the learning program and about individual goals for each girl. Visit other "Mosdos" as well.

**Q: Let's begin with the Gashmius.**

The Mishna says, "Im Ein Kemach, Ein Torah" (if there is no wheat, there is no Torah). We strongly believe that any student who comes from overseas to Eretz Yisroel to study Torah, is entitled to have the best accommodations they deserve.

"Iskafia" is a personal matter of each individual student. But, our obligation is to give the students the best and most comfortable conditions so she can learn Torah and Chassidus with peace of mind.

The Nachlas Har Chabad Seminary provides the best accommodations. Our campus is located on delightfully landscaped grounds. The dormitory building houses beautifully furnished suites; three rooms per suite with a separate bathroom/shower. A student lounge is equipped with refrigerator, cooler, microwave and other conveniences. There are washing machines and dryers and a fitness room for the girls' free usage. The main building houses spacious classrooms, a dining hall, farbrenging room, activity rooms. All facilities are air-conditioned. The campus is fenced with full security. The girls receive three meals daily catered on premises and our cook has devised a scrumptious menu plan.

Within walking distance to the campus there is a swimming pool, stores, post office, bank, etc.

Our administrative director **Mrs. Zehava Dobkin**, has been working with the Chamah Organization for over 12 years.

**Q: What can you tell us about the Ruchnius aspect?**

Nachlas Har Chabad has been established by the Rebbe personally and, thank G-d, it is suitable to be a real Rebbe's sh'chuna with a Chassidishe environment. There are Shuls, Yeshivas, Kollels, etc. And, one of the most important things is that Kiryat Malachi is, thank G-d, one of the most secure places in Israel.

We are pleased to announce that this year we have a new Menahelus, **Mrs. Devorah Leah Ashkenazi**, a woman who has a wonderful reputation as a Chassidishe, intelligent, educated and honest person. She is totally committed to this project

and sees her new role as Menahelus of our Seminary as a real Shlichus of the Rebbe. She is so dedicated to her new position that she is moving from Kfar Chabad to Nachlat Har Chabad, so she can be closer to the students whenever needed.

The staff of teachers was carefully chosen by Chamah, and is considered to be one of the best in Israel. They are educated, experienced in working with young adults and very dedicated and committed to our girls. Their main goal is to prepare the students to establish a real Chassidishe home and be a true "Akeres HaBayis".

Our Madricha, dorm counselor, is a dynamic and energetic young woman, with much experience in working with youths.

A unique academic program has been developed and after-school programs thoughtfully selected. Your daughter will find herself benefiting from all types of learning; from in-depth textual studies to warm discussions. Informal learning include: evening programs and activities, farbrengens, day excursions and overnight trips, discovering Eretz Yisroel, visits to Kivrei Tzaddikim, Shabbatons, Rosh Chodesh programs, special projects, etc.

Together as a team, with the expertise of our Gashmius and Ruchnius staff, and the backing of the Chamah Organization, the Nachlas Har Chabad Seminary will not only give your daughter a broad base education in premium facilities for this year but impart long lasting foundational skills and values as a Chabad Chassidishe woman, implementing the Rebbe's wishes.

**Q: What is the caliber of your students?**

It is important to mention a Yechidus that Rabbi Moshe Herson, the founder of the Rabbinical College of America in Morristown, New Jersey, had with the Rebbe. When speaking about Chinuch, the Rebbe said: "You should know that there are students who don't need a Rosh Yeshiva or a Mashpia. They will grow up with their own efforts and become Chassidishe boys. But, this is a minority. Then, there are students who a Rosh Yeshiva and Mashpia won't be able to accomplish too much. But, this is also a minority. The vast majority is in the middle. If the Rosh Yeshiva and Mashpia will devote themselves, they will grow up to be Chassidishe Talmidim".

So, our dear parents, in our Seminary we have accepted Talmidos who will be a shining example and inspiration to their peers. And, we accepted Talmidos who have the full capability to become Chassidishe daughters and build true Chassidishe homes.

**Q: Are you accepting students mid-year?**

We have several students who are joining us mid-year for various reasons. We will handle each request individually.

*For inquiries and conditions of acceptance call our offices in Israel +972-8 850-1313 or Mrs. Ashkenazi +972 3 960 3696. E-mail: [nhchsem@zahav.net.il](mailto:nhchsem@zahav.net.il)*

# COME SEE FOR YOURSELF

BY SHAI GEFEN

## DON'T GIVE THEM GUNS!

Less than a week after Defense Minister Mofaz and Prime Minister Sharon announced that they would give weapons to Arabs in various areas of the Shomron, Shlomo Miller of Itamar, father of seven, was murdered. The Arab terrorist was a P.A. paramilitary police officer. These police officers were given weapons by former Prime Ministers Rabin and Netanyahu. Now, Mofaz and Sharon want to continue in the same insane tradition in order "to protect the security of the Palestinians."

What on earth are Mofaz and Sharon thinking? The truth is, their reasoning doesn't interest us, because the very idea of giving weapons to murderers after eleven years of bloodshed is an unforgivable crime!

You yourself, Mr. Sharon, stood on the platform at Zion Square and hoarsely yelled, "Don't give them guns!" What changed? If Rabin distributed guns before he knew who the guns would be used on, what can you and Mofaz say after so many acts of murder were carried out in this country?

It's not only the Oslo Criminals that need to stand trial, but also the Disengagement Villains, for their crimes against humanity and against the nation. The blood of Shlomo Miller is on Mofaz's head. Miller's 17-year-old eulogized his father and called upon the government, "Don't give them guns! They killed my father!"

We are going through an extremely difficult period and we cannot blame anyone, not Arafat, not Hamas, and not even the Americans. The blame falls squarely on our Israeli leaders. What else needs to happen to get the Jewish

people to finally oust their leaders?

As believers, children of believers, we do not despair. We see this as the end of our galus and the bursting of the Zionist bubble that the State is the *Is'chalta D'Geula*. This has got to lead us straight to Malchus Beis Dovid, as it says in Sanhedrin, "Ben-Dovid [Moshiach] doesn't come until the destruction of the decadent kingdom from Israel."

## PROPHECY

When we see that the prophecies of churban were fulfilled, we know that the prophecies of Geula will be fulfilled. In the sicha of Shoftim 5751, the Rebbe said we must publicize to all members of the generation that Hashem appointed a person with free choice, who is incomparable to anybody else, and he is the prophet of the generation and the advisor of the generation, and the ultimate prophecy of his is, "*hinei zeh Moshiach ba.*"

We must "stand at the ready," at a time when the Jewish people are in despair, and we must breathe hope into people, a spirit of Moshiach and an atmosphere of Geula. People need this more than ever.

The message the Rebbe instructed us to relay, as the final message before the revelation of Moshiach, is the most realistic message in light of what is going on. This message of Geula will enable people to hang on in these final difficult moments of galus, since we know *hinei zeh ba.*

## IT'S NOT EXPULSION, IT'S ABANDONING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE!

Although the battle for Gush Katif is a very serious one, for some reason,

people forget the real problem, which is the abandonment of the security of millions of Jews. The Rebbe MH"M says that the situation in Eretz Yisroel is such that every yishuv, every inch of land, is included in the category of "border city," since Eretz Yisroel is surrounded by nations that want it annihilated.

Giving up even one area immediately brings on demands for more land.

The head of the Shin-Bet was present at a meeting last week with the Foreign and Defense committees. He said very plainly that the southern part of Israel will become a second Lebanon after a withdrawal. After eliminating 21 Jewish settlements the missiles will come ever closer and terrorism will only increase, ch"v.

The danger to millions of people ought to be the central theme of the fight for Gush Katif. A simple explanation should suffice.

## COME AND VISIT

Many people ask what can be done, besides demonstrations, in order to strengthen the position of Gush Katif. There is a lot that can be done! One of the most important things is to visit Gush Katif and show solidarity with the people living there. Go and see for yourselves, what Sharon and his supporters are willing to destroy. Whoever visits the area sees the battle entirely differently, and that's why we should all visit.

Every shliach in Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora is asked to come and visit Gush Katif. Influence your neighbors and friends to visit beautiful Gush Katif. There is nothing like seeing it for yourself, to understand what a terrible





crime Sharon is trying to perpetrate there. Many Jews who visited Gush Katif changed their views entirely after seeing the hundreds of mosdos and thousands of children, factories and hothouses.

Come and see!

### **DON'T STAND BY YOUR BROTHER'S BLOOD**

What is happening with Yitzchok Pass, father of murdered Shalhevet, is just unbelievable. He has been jailed for the crime of wanting to take revenge on the Arabs. Even if the accusation is valid, the way he is being treated is scandalous. He is not allowed to go out on furlough like many other prisoners. He is eligible for parole after serving two thirds of his sentence, but Katzav, also called "President of the State of Israel," who has become more of a friend to the Arabs than to his fellow Jews, is still hesitating, even though dozens of Knesset members signed a petition to release Pass immediately.

A country that doesn't stop worrying about the lives of terrorists, turns its back on its finest children. Yitzchok Pass cannot spend the upcoming Yomim Tovim in jail! We must all demand his release forthwith!

### **"PACK UP AND GO ABROAD"**

In recent weeks, we are hearing more and more people, even those who are observant, say they are not interested in the disengagement. They prefer to close their eyes, and to pretend that they are not in the same boat.

These people (including rabbanim!) should know that this attitude of theirs is like a p'sak din on themselves, that they also will not have the merit to remain in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe says (20 Av 5738):

**In order to make this even clearer, Hashem showed that those who are not ohavei Yisroel openly stated their demand – that Jews who came to Eretz Yisroel after 1948 should pack their**

**suitcases and leave the country. If they don't do so, they should know they are in danger, because by angering them [the Arabs] they will not make peace but will wage war against them, G-d forbid.**

That means that those who do not want to connect the present situation to the clear p'sak din in *Shulchan Aruch*, who claim that for pikuach nefesh you have to give in to all those who are the opposite of ahavei Yisroel, in order not to anger the goy; they are actually giving the order, Heaven forbid, that all Jews who came to Eretz Yisroel after 1948 (including some who want to say that for pikuach nefesh you have to make concessions) should pack their suitcases and leave Eretz Yisroel, Heaven forbid, and find some city of refuge elsewhere!

Since the Torah is a Torah of truth, compromises cannot be made with Torah, and when a din is paskened, the p'sak must be done openly... From this it is understood that if the opinion (of the posek) is that for the sake of pikuach nefesh we cannot anger the goy, and we must concede to them in order to prevent danger to Jews, he has to be the first to take his bags and leave Eretz Yisroel (since this is what the goy wants), since Jews around him look at him, and therefore do not leave Eretz Yisroel – and therefore the Arabs (or the one in Libya, etc.) get angry, and this could lead (so he says) to war, Heaven forbid.

Hashem defined the situation quite clearly - this is about a "city near the border," and some of the enemy say that they are coming just for "straw and hay." The Torah said, hundreds of years ago, that no matter where this takes place, whether in Eretz Yisroel or outside of it, even to the furthest corner of the world, wherever there is a Jewish community, "you go out against them with weapons and desecrate the Shabbos." And this is how you defend the entire country with all the Jews therein. It's an inyan of pikuach nefesh

*Every shliach in Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora is asked to come and visit Gush Katif. Many Jews who visited Gush Katif changed their views entirely after seeing the hundreds of mosdos and thousands of children, factories and hothouses.*

that sets aside the entire Torah.

Especially in this situation, where you don't have to set anything aside, you just need to explicate the law in Hilchos Shabbos properly, because when it comes to halacha, p'shetlach and hints are irrelevant. If it says so, where piskei dinim are written, then we must pasken the law as it says in piskei halachos.

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