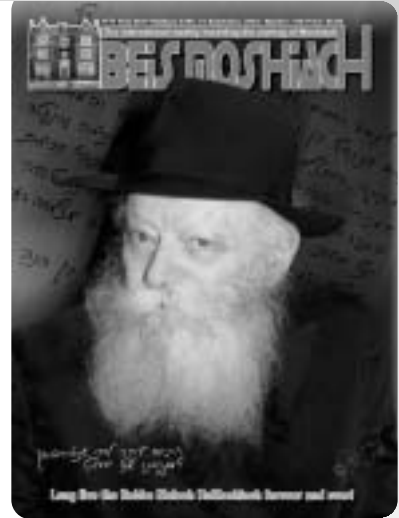


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Beis Moshich wishes all our readers and all the Jewish people a k'siva va'chasima tova l'shana tova u'm'suka. The next issue is scheduled to come out for Sukkos.

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STARTING WITH THE STRENGTH OF A CHAZAKA

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS HAAZINU, SHABBOS T'SHUVA; 3RD DAY OF TISHREI, 5751

1. Each year,[1] the days of the week on which the festivals are celebrated provides a lesson for us in our service of G-d. This year is unique in that Rosh HaShana is celebrated on a Thursday and a Friday and thus, the holidays flow directly into Shabbos. Furthermore, in the Diaspora, this phenomenon repeats itself on Sukkos and on Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

Shabbos and the festivals introduce a dimension of holiness into a Jew's life. Thus, we are commanded, "And you shall observe the Shabbos because it is holy" and "These are the festivals of G-d which you shall proclaim to be holy assemblies." On Shabbos and festivals, G-d's holiness permeates all of a Jew's activities, causing him to feel different and uplifted.

This holiness extends to the physical dimensions of one's life as well. Therefore, the Shabbos and festival meals are of a uniquely festive nature. This, in turn, effects the weekdays that follow. Although they are primarily involved with material activities and the efforts to earn a

livelihood, the influence of Shabbos and the festivals has a residual effect and makes it easier to fulfill the commandments: "All your deeds shall be for the sake of Heaven," and "Know Him in all your ways."

This is particularly true of Rosh HaShana which begins the "days of awe," in which every Jewish trembles with a spiritual fear. This has a greater effect on Jews than other holidays. On Rosh HaShana, the day of judgment on which one's fortunes for the entire year are decided, each Jew's feelings are aroused.

This arousal effects a Jew even when he eats. Thus, we find that, in addition to the command to celebrate Yom Tov in a pleasurable manner, there is a specific command for Rosh HaShana: "Eat succulent foods and drink sweet beverages because the day is holy unto our L-rd."

Rosh HaShana also has a greater influence over the other days of the year than other festivals. It is called, "the head of the year," a name which implies that just as the head controls the functioning of the other limbs of the body, similarly, the day of Rosh HaShana controls the nature of all the days of the year to come.

The present Shabbos, Shabbos Shuva[2] also is of general significance.

It is the first Shabbos of the year and is influenced by the unique nature of the Ten Days of T'shuva, a time which our Sages associated with the verse, "Seek the L-rd when He may be found; call upon Him when He is near." On this Shabbos, the spiritual arousal of t'shuva is easier to achieve and has a further reaching effect.

Furthermore, this Shabbos includes within it all the Shabbasos of the year. The Arizal explains that the each of the seven days of the week between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur can atone for any deficiencies and elevate the service of all the corresponding days in the previous year (i.e., Shabbos Shuva elevates all the Shabbasos of the previous year). Similarly, it can be understood that these days include all the corresponding days in the year to come.[3] Thus, Shabbos Shuva generates the potential for service during all the Shabbasos of the coming year.

Based on the above, we can appreciate the uniqueness of this year when Rosh HaShana flows directly into Shabbos. When Rosh HaShana is celebrated in the middle of the week (or when its celebration begins on Shabbos), although its service is elevated by the Shabbos which follows, there is an interruption between them

as reflected in the recitation of Havdala (which means “separation”). Afterwards, the elevation of the service of Rosh HaShana by the Shabbos which follows represents a separate development.

In contrast, when Rosh HaShana flows directly into Shabbos, Havdala is not recited, only Kiddush. This implies that there is no separation between Rosh HaShana and Shabbos, and the elevating influence of Shabbos has a direct effect. Indeed, these three days represent a chazaka (a halachic status established by three consecutive repetitions) which adds strength and power to this holiness, intensifying its influence on the coming year.

Furthermore, in the Diaspora, this chazaka is itself repeated three times, thus, establishing a chazaka for the chazaka and further strengthening the influence of holiness.[4] This allows for the holiness of the soul to permeate through our physical substance and reveal itself in a complete manner.[5]

To understand the above concepts in greater depth, it is necessary to explain the difference between Shabbos and the festivals. Although both Shabbos and the festivals share a commonality, there is also a difference between them. This difference is manifest in the following ways: a) All the thirty-nine forbidden labors are prohibited on Shabbos. In contrast, on the festivals, those labors which are associated with the preparation of food may be performed. b) Shabbos is characterized by the quality of oneg, pleasure. In contrast, the festivals are characterized by the quality of happiness, simcha.[6] For this reason, Torah law places a greater emphasis on wearing fine clothing and eating festive meals on the festivals than on Shabbos. c) Shabbos is referred to as kodesh, “holy,” while the festivals are referred to as mikraei kodesh (“holy assemblies”), literally, “the calling forth of holiness.”

These differences are reflected in the conclusions of the intermediate blessings recited in the Shmoneh Esrei on these days. On Shabbos, we

conclude this blessing, “Blessed are You, G-d, who sanctifies the Shabbos.” On festivals, however, the blessing is concluded, “...Who sanctifies Israel and the seasons.”

The Talmud notes the difference between the two and explains: Shabbos has been sanctified by G-d (from the beginning of the seven days of creation onward). In contrast, the festivals are dependent on the Jews’ sanctification of them (through the fixing of the calendar).

To explain the inner dimension of this difference: Shabbos represents an ascent above time. For this reason, each

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week, on Sunday, a new cycle of time begins. In contrast, the festivals represent, the drawing down of holiness within the context of time.

Therefore, Shabbos is referred to as “holy,” and is thus in a category of its own. The festivals are, “the calling forth of holiness,” i.e., holiness is “called forth” and drawn down into the sphere of the mundane. (Accordingly, the festivals are usually celebrated in the midst of the week.) Thus, the festivals serve as an intermediary to draw down the holiness of Shabbos which is above time into the realm of ordinary weekdays.

This difference also explains why all work is forbidden on Shabbos – because its holiness transcends totally our mundane reality – and why, in contrast on the festivals, the labors associated with the preparation of food are permitted. This reflects the fact that, on the festivals, the holiness which is drawn down is related and associated with our material world.

This also explains the connection of Shabbos with the quality of oneg and the festivals, with simcha. Oneg can be felt by a person while he is alone; it does not have to be shared with others, as the holiness of Shabbos stands in a separate category above the material nature of the world. {Thus, we find the quality of k’dusha – holiness – associated with the service of prishus – separation from material things and the common people.} Simcha, in contrast, is experienced, in its full extent, only when one is together with others,[7] reflecting how the holiness of the festivals revolves around establishing a connection with our material reality.

Thus, the two – Shabbos and the festivals – complement each other. Shabbos reflects a higher level of holiness and, indeed, elevates all existence to a higher plane. The festivals and their emphasis on simcha, however, surpass the Shabbos in the ability to draw down and transmit holiness to the world as it exists within its own context.[8]

This clarifies the uniqueness of the direct progression from the festivals to Shabbos we experience this year: Generally, there is an interruption between the festivals and Shabbos which emphasizes the difference between the service of the festivals (drawing holiness into this world) and Shabbos (elevating the world to a higher level of holiness). Furthermore, these services are separate and distinct from each other.

This year, in contrast, the fact the festivals are followed directly by Shabbos points to a combination of the two services which makes it possible to draw down the elevated state of

Shabbos into the world as it exists without nullifying the world's material existence.

The connection between the two is further emphasized by the fact that Havdala is not recited between the festivals and Shabbos, indicating that between happiness and holiness, there is no separation.[9] Indeed, happiness is not connected with Havdala, separation, at all, for happiness breaks through and negates separation as evidenced by the connection it establishes between people.

This concept shares a special connection with Rosh HaShana and Shabbos Shuva. Rosh HaShana commemorates the creation of man. One of the reasons Rosh HaShana's celebration was ordained on this day, the anniversary of the sixth day of creation, and not on the anniversary of creation at large – although this is also associated with Rosh HaShana as we say in our prayers, "This is the day of the beginning of Your work..." – is because man carries out the purpose of creation and brings the world at large to its ultimate fulfillment, revealing holiness and G-dliness within the world.[10] This was realized on the very first Rosh HaShana, when the creation at large followed the instructions given by Adam the first man, "Come let us prostrate ourselves, bow down, and bend the knee before G-d, our Maker." [11]

This is the service of Rosh HaShana each year,[12] to accept G-d as King, and to draw down His Kingship over the world at large. Thus, the service of Rosh HaShana parallels that of the other festivals. The above also allows us to appreciate the significance of the fact that, this year, Shabbos follows directly after Rosh HaShana. The first Rosh HaShana, as well, was followed directly by Shabbos (so that Shabbos could elevate the creation at large). Similarly, this year, the two days of Rosh HaShana are considered as one

single "long day" and, directly afterwards, we enter Shabbos.

There is a further point of connection: The sounding of the shofar is the "mitzvah of the day" for Rosh HaShana through which the service of crowning G-d as King is carried out. When Rosh HaShana falls on Shabbos, the shofar is not sounded outside the Beis HaMikdash. Chassidic thought explains that the shofar is not sounded because the spiritual effects it produces are brought about by the holiness of the Shabbos.

Notwithstanding this explanation, since, "deed is most essential," there is an advantage to actually sounding the shofar on both days.[13] This does not negate, however, the spiritual advantage of having the service of the sounding of the shofar elevated by the influence of the Shabbos.

This year possesses, to the greatest extent possible, both dimensions of service. The shofar is sounded for two successive days and, without an interruption being made, this service is elevated by the spiritual influence of Shabbos.

To express this concept using Chassidic terminology: The simple sound of the shofar's blasts[14] arouses the pleasure and desire to rule as King within G-d's essence which, in turn, draws down Divine influence and life-energy to the world at large.

Thus this year, through the shofar blasts of Rosh HaShana G-d's essence is aroused and Shabbos brings about the revelation of this dimension throughout the world at large, reflecting the "era which is all Shabbos and rest forever," the era of the Redemption.[15] This is reflected in the fact that the activities of Shabbos are "twofold in nature." [16] Similarly, the five letters of the Alef-beis which have two forms (e.g., a Mem which has one form when written in the midst of a word and another when written at the end of a

word) are associated with the redemption.

2. The above also relates to this week's Torah portion which begins with the verse, "Give ear O heavens, listen earth." The expressions, "Give ear," and "listen" share the same basic meaning. However, the expression "Give ear" refers to a situation in which the speaker is close to the listener and therefore, can speak in his ear. In contrast, "listen" can also refer to hearing from afar. Accordingly, our Sages explain that the choice of phraseology in the above verse indicates how Moshe, our teacher was "close to the heavens and far removed from the earth."

The question arises: The Torah is intended to be a lesson for each individual. How can every Jew be asked to reach such spiritual peaks? Indeed, we find that Yeshayahu the prophet reversed Moshe's phraseology stating, "Hear heavens and give ear, earth" because he could not approach Moshe's rung. Indeed, since this verse is given to the Jews as they exist within the context of this physical world, on the surface, the order should be reversed and the earth should be mentioned before the heavens.

Among the explanations of this concept is that when a Jew studies G-d's Torah, he is lifted above worldliness. Although he continues to exist within the material world, he is "close to the heavens." This explanation, however, is also somewhat problematic. "The Torah is not in the heavens," and it is only in this material world that it is possible to clarify Torah law. Indeed, even the heavenly courts come to hear the decisions of Torah law rendered by Jews in this world.[17] Therefore, seemingly, the proper approach to the study of Torah is to be "close to the earth," studying Torah in a manner in which one understands and applies it within the context of this material world, the very opposite of being, "close to the heavens."

The resolution to this difficulty lies in the essential G-dly potential within a Jew which allows him to be "close to the heavens" while he is immersed in the application of Torah to worldly concerns. His state of spiritual elevation elevates, without negating, his existence within the material world.[18]

This means when one studies Torah, one must try to comprehend it according to the approach of "the earth" (and not try to understand it according to the spiritual perspective of "the heavens"). Nevertheless, before studying Torah, one is required to bless the Torah. This blessing draws down[19] a higher dimension of G-dliness within our Torah study,[20] allowing us to feel how Torah has its source in the heavens and through Torah study, the Jews can establish complete unity with the Torah, G-d's wisdom, and thus, with G-d, Himself.

In this context, we can understand the Midrash's statement that in Rabbi Meir's Torah scroll instead of "G-d made them garments of leather" ("ohr" with an ayin), it was written, "G-d made them garments of light" ("ohr" with an Alef). This could be interpreted to mean that the spiritual light from above was reflected in Rabbi Meir's[21] scroll and the inner meaning of the verse was revealed.[22]

3. Since this farbrengen comes in continuation of Rosh HaShana, it is proper to mention the names of all the Rebbeim to recall their merit as it was customary in the Beis HaMikdash to mention the city of Chevron (the resting place of the Patriarchs) before the morning sacrifice. Just as the morning sacrifice set the tone for the subsequent sacrifices and service of the day, similarly, the mention of the Rebbeim on a farbrengen connected with Rosh HaShana sets the tone for the service of the entire year to come.

The personal names of the Rebbeim are all significant: The Baal Shem Tov was called Yisroel to arouse the essential level of Yisroel that exists within every Jew. The Maggid was called Dovber because he drew down G-dliness until the level of "a bear," an animal "overladen with meat." The Alter Rebbe's name, Shneur Zalman, refers to the revelation of the two lights (Shnei Or) of (the revealed and hidden dimensions of) Torah within the sphere of time (Zalman shares the same letters as the word "Lzman" meaning "to time"). Dovber, the Mittlerer Rebbe's name, has a similar intent as that of the Maggid's name. However, his position among the Chabad Rebbeim, indicates that his service is connected with "the broadening of the river," explaining the seminal points of Chassidus in depth. The Tzemach Tzedek's names, Menachem Mendel, are both names associated with Moshiach. The Rebbe Maharash's name Shmuel is connected with the prophet Shmuel (and thus with the Haftora of Rosh HaShana which describes his conception). The Rebbe Rashab's name, Sholom Dovber, reflects drawing down Sholom (peace which is connected with Torah and, in particular, P'nimius HaTorah) with the level of Dovber described above. Similarly, the Previous Rebbe's name, Yosef Yitzchok, is connected with the services of "G-d will add on to me another son," and "All those who hear will rejoice with me."

Nevertheless, it is proper to mention the Rebbeim by their titles, the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid of Mezritch, the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash who is associated with the approach of L'chat'chilla Aribber, the Rebbe Nishmaso Eden, and the Nasi of our generation, and not by their personal names. This points to their function as N'siim.

The Nasi is the yechida of his

entire generation and thus, includes all the souls of his generation. This is evident from the acronym for the word "Nasi," "a spark of Yaakov, our Patriarch." Just as Yaakov's soul included in it the souls of all the Jewish people, so, too, this quality is reflected in each Nasi. Each Nasi grants the potential for the people of his generation to reveal the dimension of yechida within their individual existence and within the world at large. This will lead to the revelation of Moshiach, the yechida of the entire Jewish people with the establishment of a dwelling for G-d in this world.

This revelation will be enhanced by singing a niggun associated with each of the Rebbeim. A niggun is "the pen of the soul," and reveals one's inner dimensions.

May each Jew make maximum use of the combined influences of Rosh HaShana and Shabbos to influence his behavior in the year to come. This will add to the k'siva va'chasima tova for a good and sweet year in both material and spiritual things which G-d has granted us. (Indeed, the judgment of Rosh HaShana concerns primarily a Jew's material needs.)

[The Rebbe Shlita proceeded to mention blessings associated with each letter of the Alef-beis, explaining that these are general blessing including all sorts of good.] May it be a year when "I will show you wonders." This implies an added positive quality beyond that of the previous year, "a year of miracles." There are times when, although miracles are wrought, "the person to whom the miracle occurred does not appreciate it." This year, G-d's miracles will be openly revealed. This will enable us to appreciate the miracles more and use them more effectively for positive purposes.

May these wonders also include wonders, "as in the days of your exodus from Egypt," with the coming of the Messianic redemption.[23]

NOTES:

1. Translator's Note: This year, because the second day of Rosh HaShana was celebrated on Friday, the farbrengen which is usually held toward nightfall to draw down the influence of Rosh HaShana into the year which follows was postponed and held on a similar hour on Shabbos. Thus, on Shabbos Shuva, there were two farbrengens, the farbrengen customarily held Shabbos afternoon, and a farbrengen which began before nightfall in connection with Rosh HaShana. Nevertheless, the content of both the farbrengens was included in a single text and edited by the Rebbe Shlita in this manner. This is the body of the text which is presented here in translation.

2. The name Shabbos Shuva is given because the Haftora begins, Shuva Yisroel, "Israel, return..." Often, the Shabbos is referred to as Shabbos T'shuva, "the Shabbos of T'shuva," because it is the Shabbos of the Ten Days of T'shuva.

3. Indeed, this is the primary element of the service of Tishrei which is a "head" (Tishrei shares the same letters as the word "Reishis" meaning "head") of the new year and sets the tone for its service. Nevertheless, within the service of Tishrei is also included the elevation of the service of the previous year.

4. Note the public letters of the Rebbe Shlita for a detailed explanation of this matter.

5. Even the highest levels of the soul, the yechida (and even the yechida of the yechida), the dimension of the soul which is totally at one with G-d will be revealed.

6. There is also a dimension of simcha connected with Shabbos (indeed, the Biblical phrase "And on the day of your celebrations" is interpreted as a reference to Shabbos). However, this dimension is surpassed by the celebrations of the festivals and is overshadowed by the quality of oneg.

7. This is reflected in the emphasis Torah law places on inviting guests for the festivals.

8. Shabbos also has an effect within the world as reflected in the laws requiring that our pleasure be expressed in festive meals. This, however, stems from the fact that the holiness of Shabbos elevates the world, lifting it above its normal circumstances.

Conversely, there is a dimension of holiness associated with the festivals (and, therefore, any labors not associated with the preparation of food are prohibited). This, however, stems from the fact that the festivals have drawn down a measure of holiness into the world.

9. Indeed, Havdala is recited when a weekday follows a festival not because of the primary element of a festival, happiness, but rather because of the holiness which is associated with the festival.

10. In doing so, man becomes G-d's partner in creation. This is alluded to in our Sages' interpretation of the phrase, "all that G-d created to function," as "to correct;" i.e., man brings the creation at large to its desired state.

11. Although man is the most important creation, to emphasize how he is intended to effect the creation at large, man was created last, after all other beings.

(Our Sages explain that man was created last, "so that he could enter the feast immediately." However, based on the principle, "Man was created to labor," the previous quote can be interpreted to mean, not merely that man was intended to benefit from the entire world, but rather, through his work man would be able to elevate the world by partaking of its feasts and through the totality of his service of Torah and mitzvos.)

12. Although as a whole, the service repeats itself, in particular, each year, it must be carried out on a new and higher level.

13. This is reflected in the fact that, even when Rosh HaShana fell on Shabbos, the shofar was sounded in the Beis HaMikdash (because of the greater potential generated by the higher level of holiness there).

14. These resemble the simple sound of the letter Alef which serves as the intermediary between the essential breath coming the heart and the

22 letters of speech. An intermediary shares a point of connection with both elements to which it relates. Similarly, the Alef has a simple sound, thus, relating to the essential breath of the heart. Simultaneously, it is the first of the letters and thus, shares a creation to the others. This is related to the concept of Rosh HaShana for the letters were the medium with which G-d created the world. Furthermore, the Alef stands for the words "Alufo shel olam," "L-rd of the world."

15. This is also related to the letter Alef. The difference between the Hebrew words "gola" (exile) and "geula" (redemption) is an Alef. By drawing down the revelation of Alufo shel olam into the world, exile can be transformed into redemption.

16. Significantly, the two-fold nature of Shabbos is discussed in the maamer from Parshas B'Shalach in Likkutei Torah. On the surface, it is slightly problematic. Likkutei Torah is a continuation of Torah Or as obvious from the fact that Torah Or ends with Parshas VaYakhel and Likkutei Torah includes maamarim from Parshas P'kudei and onward. Thus, the question arises: Why did the Tzemach Tzedek decide to include the abovementioned maamer from Parshas B'Shalach in Likkutei Torah?

It can, however, be explained that the Tzemach Tzedek chose this maamer as the beginning of the text to emphasize the connection between Likkutei Torah and the ultimate redemption. (In this context, it is noteworthy to mention that when the Rebbe Maharash asked why Moshiach did not come in the year 5608, the year the Alter Rebbe had designated as appropriate for his coming, the Tzemach Tzedek answered him, that Likkutei Torah was printed that year.)

This points to the difference between Likkutei Torah and Torah Or. Although originally, the two were intended to part of a single set, the printing of Likkutei Torah was delayed because of a government decree. However, because of the delay, when it was printed, it also included the Tzemach Tzedek's explanations in contrast to Torah Or which contains merely the Alter Rebbe's teachings.

17. Therefore, when there was a difference of opinion between G-d and the heavenly court on a question concerning Torah law, the question was presented to Rabba bar Nachmeini and he was asked to render judgment while he existed on this physical plane, a soul encloded in a body.

18. This is related to the explanation of the progression from the festivals to Shabbos mentioned above. When Shabbos and the festivals are separate the material aspects of the world which are influenced by the festivals and Shabbos (a state of holiness which can be referred to as "the heavens") are both represented, but they exist in a manner in which they are separate from each other. When, however, in a year like this, the festivals and Shabbos follow one another; the material aspects of the world exist in a Shabbos-like manner.

19. This is implied by the very word for blessing, "bracha," which also has the connotation, "extension."

20. This concept is often explained within our Sages' interpretation of the verse, "Why was the land destroyed?... Because you forsook My Torah." The Sages explain that although the Jews studied Torah, they did not recite the blessings beforehand. Therefore, they were not able to draw down G-dliness in the Torah they studied.

21. This is also indicated in the name, Rabbi Meir, which means "to illuminate," for he "illuminated the eyes of the Sages with his wisdom." Indeed, his colleagues "were not able to understand the full extent of his wisdom," and, therefore, often, his opinion was not accepted as halacha.

22. Trans. Note: The Rebbe Shlita noted the difficulty with this Midrash because the Midrash states, "it was written in Rabbi Meir's Torah scroll...." (seemingly, with actual ink on parchment), thus the Torah scroll would be halachically unacceptable. The Rebbe Shlita did not resolve the difficulty.

23. This redemption will be accompanied by the ingathering of exiles. Indeed, in the previous year, we already received a foretaste of this revelation when thousands of Jews were able to emigrate from behind the Iron Curtain.

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Boruch Hashem, Elul 5764

102 years of the Rebbe's MH"M birth

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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BEHOLD THE INCONCEIVABLE: TISHREI WITH THE REBBE

BY RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK GINSBERG
MASHPIA, YESHIVAS TOMCHEI T'MIMIM – LUBAVITCH, K FAR CHABAD

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



T'kias shofar on Rosh HaShana, when the Rebbe MH" M *shlita* himself blew the shofar, was a lofty and most awe-filled event, a totally unforgettable experience. Any attempt to describe it is doomed to failure from the very outset, as it is truly beyond description, especially by those who saw and heard the Rebbe with their own eyes and ears. The pushing and squeezing began in the early hours of the morning, and there were even those who got places the previous evening and stayed there the whole night in order to see and hear from up close.

The Rebbe *shlita* came in for *Shacharis* on Rosh HaShana, followed by his secretaries, who carried four packages containing "*pidyonos nefesh*," requests for *brachos* in the coming year that the Rebbe took with him to pray and plead for at the time of *t'kios*. During davening, the packages of *panim* were on a small table near the Rebbe's *shtender*, and when the Rebbe went up to the Torah for *Maftir*, the secretaries followed him, carrying the packages to the *bima*.

After the conclusion of the Torah reading and *Maftir*, the packages were moved to the center of the *bima*, and the Rebbe began preparing for *t'kios*. The Rebbe *shlita* would hold his *tallis* with both hands and throw it over his

head, covering the packages of *panim*. While his head was under the *tallis*, he would cry as he prayed over the *panim*. Those who were standing around the *bima* could hear choking sobs from under the *tallis* – and a niggun. (Some say it was the "Niggun of Three Stanzas," associated with the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, and the Alter Rebbe.) On a number of occasions, when the *tallis* fell slightly to the side, people close by could see the Rebbe's face, red and burning, a sight simply not of this world.

After a few minutes, the Rebbe stood upright and pulled his *tallis* back to reveal a portion of his face, so he could put the shofar to his lips. Then, the unique *avoda* of arranging the *shofaros* on the kerchiefs would begin. People saw ever so clearly that this was something of a totally heavenly and inconceivable nature. There were a number of *shofaros*, including a black one that reportedly belonged to the Rebbe Maharash. There were a number of kerchiefs, including one that was said to have belonged to the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe arranged the *shofaros*, covering one and uncovering another, moving them several times and changing their order. No one understood what was happening, but everyone felt that the Rebbe was

"turning over worlds."

After these preparations, the Rebbe called out with the well-known niggun of yearning in a fiery and piercing voice: "**LA'M'NATZEIACH LIVNEI KORACH MIZMOR...**" The Rebbe then recited the *p'sukim* with the familiar niggun, which was periodically cut into by heartfelt sobs; the *brachos* of "*Lishmoa kol shofar*" and "*Sh'Hechiyanu*"; the *t'kios* themselves; the "silent confession" that is known and accepted as "picturing the Rebbe's face," and the conclusion to the sweet and familiar niggun. Afterwards, the Rebbe would return to his place near the eastern wall, turn around, and scan the crowd standing there for a few precious seconds. As is explained in *kabbala*, the *baal t'kios* looks upon the people with great love, and thus silences the accusing forces. As we mentioned earlier, any attempt to describe this majestic sight is doomed to failure, as it is truly indescribable.

On Rosh HaShana 5733, the *t'kios* didn't come all that easily. It appeared as if the Rebbe was exerting himself, trying again and again, but without success. He switched *shofaros* and then tried again and again for a long time. Those in attendance, who were already in a state of intense excitement from the monumental occasion, became even

more emotionally caught up in the moment. Some cried, others fainted, while Hatzolah volunteers ran from corner to corner to revive them.

Among those in the crowd was an *avreich* who had a depressing problem. He had been married for several years already, but had not yet been blessed with children. He had requested the Rebbe's *bracha* several times, and tried different treatments and *segulos*, but to no avail. In those moments of spiritual awakening, the *avreich* concentrated with all his might in request of Divine mercy to open the gates of Heaven so he will merit to embrace a healthy child of his own.

Suddenly, he remembered a particular spiritual matter that had been demanded of him (the *avreich* would not reveal what it was), which would require a great deal of effort on his part, to the point that he considered it totally beyond his capabilities to fulfill. However, in those moments of intense reawakening, he did not hesitate, and resolved with all the fortitude he could summon: G-d please give me children! In turn, I will accept this matter upon myself, in spite of all the hardships involved!

As was customary every year, at the conclusion of the Motzaei Rosh HaShana farbrengen, the Rebbe personally distributed "*kos shel bracha*" to everyone, wishing each person "*Lchaim v'livracha*." This *avreich* also passed by and when his turn came, he asked for a *bracha* to have children. The Rebbe looked at him and responded, "If you fulfill what you decided during *t'kios*..."

Needless to say, this *avreich* told no one about his decision, nor did he even utter it with his lips privately. However, the Rebbe, as the general soul of all Jews, who includes and feels within him each and every Jew literally at every single moment, felt this *avreich* and agreed to answer his longing request for children, if he will fulfill what he promised at that high hour.

THE REBBE THINKS ABOUT EVERY JEW AT EVERY MOMENT

Here is finally someone who not only thinks about everyone, but literally about each and every person on an individual basis, even far more than a mother and father who think about an only child, born to them in their old age. Here's someone else who thinks about his only son, but in our case, he thinks about you in the same way that he thinks about himself. This is similar to how the brain and the heart feel all the other limbs included within them, as their existence is literally one and the same – "the leader of the generation is as the entire

Then, the unique avoda of arranging the shofaros on the kerchiefs began. People saw this was something of a totally heavenly and inconceivable nature...

generation, for the *nasi* is everything" – literally everything.

There is a mitzva to remember Amalek. Chassidus discusses at length about "the *kli* of Amalek." Amalek is a very hard *kippa*, and we must do everything possible to blot it out. It is written, "*asher karcha ba'derech*" (who met you on the way) *l'kareir* (to cool off) a person who is excited and enthusiastic about the wondrous occurrences of literally revealed G-dliness that are happening before his very eyes. It has been explained that one of the more sophisticated methods of this "*kluginker*" is to say, "What are you getting so excited about? Why are you going out of your *keilim*? After all, in

relation to G-dliness, it's no great wonder!"

Indeed, the truth is that in relation to the tremendous power and majesty of G-d Alm-ghty, this is no great wonder. However, in relation to us, it is a great wonder. Thus, we must be excited and enthusiastic, and we must experience a warm inner feeling that clearly leads to an enthusiasm of holiness and a manifold increase in action.

When we hear stories such as this one, we must feel excited, enthusiastic, and in awe. But the main thing here is not the "miracle" – the Rebbe didn't just show a "*kuntz*" on how he knew what someone was thinking at a particular time, even though the person didn't breathe a word to anyone. We're talking here about something else entirely. The Rebbe *shlita* is a general and inclusive soul, in which each and every Jew is literally felt in a revealed state. This can be compared to the brain, which thinks at every moment about what is happening in every limb of the body, and it feels this far more than what the limb itself feels.

The Rebbe thinks about each one of us – you and me – literally at every moment. The Rebbe knows and feels constantly what is going on with you, with me, and each one of us. He receives great pleasure, as it were, from the good things we do, including in a material sense. The Rebbe also takes pleasure in a Jew's material wellbeing, but of course, even more than this, he takes pleasure in a Jew's spirituality, from what he has done and achieved in order to fulfill the Divine purpose. When a Jew does not conduct himself as he should, the Rebbe feels this at that very instant, something that causes him the opposite of pleasure and the opposite of health.

We perceived this clearly in 5738, when even the attending physicians saw that the Rebbe's physical health depended upon what was happening with the *chassidim*. The doctors testified to the fact that the more the *chassidim*

danced and sang “*Der Rebbe iz gezunt*” (interestingly enough, to the tune of “*Yechi*”), the more they saw with their very eyes how the Rebbe felt physically better. The Rebbe’s secretariat then issued a worldwide announcement: Anyone who cares about the Rebbe’s health will go out and make other Jews happy and continue the joy of Simchas Torah even in the days that follow – and this will strengthen the Rebbe’s health.

No flesh and blood human being can think about millions of people at the same time (even more than they think about themselves). But the Rebbe is truly and completely above all measure and limitation, totally and infinitely united with and nullified to His Blessed Essence. However, together with this, he is flesh and blood, a soul in a physical body in this physical world, making him the “*m’mutza ha’m’chaber*” that connects and unites us with His Blessed Essence.

(It is appropriate here to dwell for a moment on an interpretation of the well-known words “*m’mutza ha’m’chaber*,” a term perhaps not everyone is familiar with. This term is in contrast with the general concept of an “intermediary,” i.e., a third party entity that connects and mediates between two others. It is forbidden for us to place such an “intermediary” between G-d and ourselves. The connection between a Jew and G-d is direct, without any intermediaries or arbiters. However, we’re not talking here about your average “intermediary,” some third person, but someone who is a literal part of us and at the same time a literal part of G-d.

(When the hand and foot are connected with G-d via the brain, this does not classify the brain as a third party, an “intermediary” between two separate entities. The brain is in fact an integral part of the hand and foot, and as such, it joins them to that which they are connecting. Similarly, we find with the Rebbe, who is the head and brain (and also the heart) of the entire

Jewish people, including every Jew within him. He is not a third party among them, an “intermediary,” rather, he is actually a part of us, our head and brain.

(Obviously, it’s no problem that the arm and the leg need the brain to join them with the soul, and to pray and plead for them before G-d, as the brain provides the only way for them to be connected with the soul and G-d.

(However, in a much higher sense, the Rebbe is not a third party between G-d and the Jewish people; rather, he is also “a literal part of G-d Above.”

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Furthermore, “Israel and the Holy One, Blessed be He, are totally one,” and in the Rebbe, this is actually felt and revealed. Therefore, he is by no means an “intermediary” that is separate from the two things it is uniting and connecting. He is, rather, the lower as well as the upper, and thus, he unites and connects them in a most direct and sublime manner with Hashem.)

THE REBBE TAKES US WITH INFINITE LOVE

When we just briefly consider the wondrous fact that at this very moment, the Rebbe MH”M *shlita* is thinking about us, cares about us, with his entire *mehus*, literally feeling for us

even more than we feel ourselves, similar to how the brain feels a particular limb more than the limb feels itself, how he receives much *nachas* and pleasure from the good things we do, and when we do not conduct ourselves as is fitting, thus bringing us to a truly lowly state *ch”v*, he understands us, has mercy upon us, and takes us with infinite love every step of the way – this provides us with tremendous strength and encouragement to walk in the path by which he leads us with total devotion and *hiskashrus* to him with our whole essence and being. Furthermore, this gives us a fervent desire to connect as many people as possible to the Rebbe.

This fact has an even greater and more unique expression in the incredible stories about the amazing answers that people receive in *Igros Kodesh*, and how they see clearly how the Rebbe *shlita* is with each and every person, thinking about him at all times, and responding in the exact fashion and at the exact moment that he needs to hear.

When the Rebbe says again and again that “the only thing that remains in the work of *shlichus* is to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed in order that he may fulfill his *shlichus* to take all Jews out of the exile,” then we must totally devote ourselves to this, without any hesitation or consideration. In this spirit, we must conduct ourselves with infinite love for every Jew, no matter who he is, no matter how he lives, and no matter what his opinions may be – all in accordance with the way that the Rebbe *shlita* has taught and guided us over the years.

In this manner, we shall go forward together, out of a sense of true and uncompromising Jewish love and unity in “the only thing that remains in the work of *shlichus* – to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed” with the True and Complete Redemption, immediately, *mamash*, now!

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



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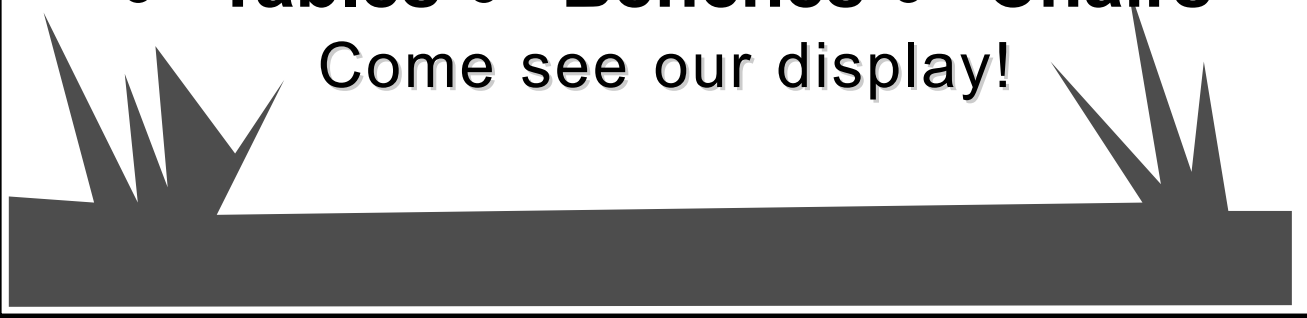
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HOW GOOD IS OUR LOT!

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

*Today the practice is widespread, but when Chassidim were fewer in number, and they yearned to see the Rebbe but didn't have the money to do so, a raffle was very exciting. * About raffles and how the Rebbe related to them and those who won. * Some firsthand accounts from raffle winners.*

One of the unwritten customs in Lubavitch is the custom of the raffle. Before Yomim Tovim or any other time, many Chassidim participate in a raffle and the winner is the lucky one who goes to 770, to the Rebbe, as a representative of all the others.

This widespread custom began on a small scale in the year 5713 (1953). In those days, a trip to the United States cost a fortune and most people couldn't afford it. So what do you do when your heart yearns to see the Rebbe?

This thought bothered the Chassid, Rabbi Refael (Folle) Kahn. He wracked his brains until he came up with the idea of a raffle. Every person would contribute a little bit, and at least one of them would go to the Rebbe as the representative of them all.

It wasn't as organized as it is now. R' Folle made a committee to establish

the rules of the raffle, and he headed the committee.

After the rules and regulations were established, the first raffle got underway. Chassidim liked the idea and each one contributed fifteen liras. Sixty-three Chassidim, mostly from Kfar Chabad and Tel Aviv, bought a raffle ticket.

The drawing took place in the shul on Nachalat Binyamin in Tel Aviv. The happy winner was Rabbi Leib Zalmanov, who was then a young man and a member of the hanhala of Tzeirei Chabad and a Lubavitcher askan in Eretz Yisroel.

He was thrilled, and the envy of all his fellow Chassidim, but his joy didn't last long because they quickly discovered that only 945 liras had been collected. That was a nice sum for those days but it wasn't enough to purchase a ticket to New York.

R' Leibel managed to raise the rest of the money, but then he had another obstacle to contend with: getting an exit permit from the army. Since he was a draft candidate, he was forbidden to leave the country. According to the rules of the raffle, the winner could give the ticket to a family member. This enabled his father to go instead of him, but the Rebbe said that since it was customary for the winner himself to get the prize, they should continue trying to obtain an exit permit.

After months of effort, they managed to arrange his exit permit, and R' Leibel left in Iyar 5714.

The second raffle took place on Chanuka 5715. A short description was written up about it in the eighth booklet of *Bitaon Chabad*:

"On the fifth night of Chanuka 5715, there was a raffle for a trip to the Rebbe shlita at the central Chabad shul on Nachalat Binyamin Street in Tel Aviv, with a large crowd of Anash and T'mimim in attendance.

"Whoever bought a raffle ticket could participate. According to the rules established by the raffle committee, our friend R' Eliyahu Jolovsky of Tel Aviv won the raffle.

"Anash and the T'mimim wish him great success and view him as their loyal representative whom they are sending to their teacher and Rebbe, the Admur shlita..."



Chassidim dancing by the plane, before the trip to the Rebbe

“REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THE PARTICIPANTS”

The Rebbe greatly encouraged these raffles, though in one of his letters he raised a halachic issue. The letter was sent to the R' Folle Kahn and dated 25 Teives 5715:

I was pleased that you included in your letter a list of participants in the raffle. Since, according to your letter, you are a member of the raffle committee, certainly you will find the appropriate way to explain [the following] to all the participants. According to *Shulchan Aruch* (Choshen Mishpat 207:13), the inyan of a raffle such as this one, i.e., the winner wins something worth far more than what he paid to participate, raises the concern of *asmachta*, such that ownership would not be transferred. Therefore, all the participants need to agree with a full heart to give their money without reservation. And in order that there not be even a trace of a concern, the winner should be considered the representative of all the participants, for a man's emissary is like himself,

and with the winner taking the trip, in a certain way it's like each of them went. And even if you want to say that among the participants there might be someone who wants to

“I was able to watch the Rebbe throughout Mincha, but awe and a feeling of unworthiness did not allow me to gaze upon him without a break, and I simply hid my face...”

travel for an ulterior motive, still, it is certain that for most of them their intention is to be at the holy tziyun, “to be seen, etc.”

The Rebbe treated the raffle winner not as an individual, but as the representative of hundreds and thousands of Lubavitchers in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe regarded the shliach's trip as the “soul trip” of all the thousands of participants:

...although only one individual gets to go, all the participants should make the appropriate preparations, as though they were going ...

(Igras Kodesh, vol. 10, p. 263).

In another letter written to the participants of the raffle (3 Iyar 5718), the Rebbe writes of the impression it makes on all those who participated in the raffle:

...the trip itself, the days spent here, and then the return, as well as the impression on all those who participated in the raffle and the results of all this – with outstanding success, fitting for the hopes of our Rebbeim.

As the Mishna says, “the main thing is action,” and as it's explained at length in Chassidus, every inyan has to have a practical application,

may this come to fruition in the thought, speech, and action of all the above, and everybody in their environment and in their part of the world.

(Igras Kodesh, vol. 17, p. 73).

Regarding preparations, the Rebbe wrote a letter to the participants in the raffle as follows:

May it be G-d's will that the winner be "motzi" all the participants with his trip, and be mezakeh them in all ways, both in quantity and in quality.

That the spiritual benefit of the trip ought to begin with the raffle itself:

Obviously, do not wait until the actual trip for the benefits; the beginning needs to be from the time of the raffle and the hachlata.

(Igras Kodesh, vol. 20, p. 234)

THREE YECHIDUYOS IN ONE MONTH

Since the Rebbe viewed the raffle winner as the representative of all the others, it's not surprising that the winner got special treatment from the Rebbe. During Tishrei, the raffle winner benefited from a number of personal kiruvim from the Rebbe: an aliya to the Torah in the Rebbe's presence, standing near the Rebbe during t'kios, getting a set of arba minim (or part of a set) from the Rebbe. The winner was even honored on Simchas Torah by taking a seifer Torah for the first and last hakafa. The winner always got a bottle of mashke for the farbrengens back in Eretz Yisroel, and money towards the trip.

Some past winners told *Beis Moshiach* about their experiences:

As we said, the first raffle winner was Rabbi Leibel Zalmanov. In those days, the trip was long and complicated. Rabbi Zalmanov sailed from Chaifa to Marseille, France, and then took the train until Paris, where

he waited a few days and then flew to New York. He spent a month in 770, in the course of which he had yechidus three times.

Rabbi Zalmanov related his experiences in a series of farbrengens that he held upon his return home. His impressions were written up and printed in *Biton Chabad*, the seventh issue. This is how he described the first time he saw the Rebbe, in his diary:

"I merited to see the king's visage, the visage of the holy of holies, the Rebbe shlita, for the first time, at Mincha on Erev Shabbos, 11 Iyar 5714. With great emotion I recited the *Sh'Hechiyanu* bracha. I was able to watch the Rebbe throughout Mincha, but awe and a feeling of unworthiness did not allow me to gaze upon him without a break, and I simply hid my face..."

On one of the Thursday nights that he was in 770, his cousin R' Shmuel Zalmanov a"h came over to him. "He had yechidus often, and that Thursday night he had yechidus. When he came out, he looked for me and said that the Rebbe said I should review a maamer before kabbalas

Shabbos. In those years, bachurim reviewed a maamer between Mincha and Maariv on Friday night.

"I didn't know why the Rebbe asked me to do this, but you don't ask questions, and I immediately began learning the maamer, which I reviewed the next day for the T'mimim and Anash.

"Shortly before I left New York, I understood why. R' Shmuel Zalmanov, who accompanied me to the airport, told me the reason behind it. He said that the Rebbe had spoken about me and asked whether I could speak before an audience. He said that he had answered that he didn't know me since we had only met one time. The Rebbe told him I should say a maamer on Shabbos, so he would know whether I could speak before an audience."

On Shabbos Mevarchim Sivan, the Rebbe referred to the raffle winner at the farbrengen. At that time, he spoke about those who go to the army. At the end of the sicha, the Rebbe said that since there were soldiers present who marched, they should sing a march. While Leibel stood there in surprise, the crowd began singing

TWO BRACHOS, TWO BABY BOYS

Rabbi Yaakov Mann, who won the raffle in 5738, tells of the miracle that happened to him:

"I went to 770 with my wife, Bracha. On Simchas Torah, the Rebbe had a heart attack and after Simchas Torah there wasn't the usual yechidus, but all the guests passed by the Rebbe's room while the Rebbe sat in his room, and all passed by quickly. My wife and her friend N.V. of Yerushalayim went past together.

"Mrs. V. thought of asking the Rebbe for a bracha for children, but when she stood there, she couldn't utter a word and just cried. The Rebbe asked her why she cried, and then she mustered the courage to ask for children. The Rebbe blessed her and she continued happily on her way.

"My wife, who stood next to her, got a similar bracha even though we had five daughters. A year went by and Mrs. V. gave birth to a boy on the first day of Rosh HaShana and my wife gave birth to a boy on the second day of Rosh HaShana!"



Chassidim dancing at the airport

“Napoleon’s March.”

The second night of Shavuos, Leibel attended the Rebbe’s meal, also thanks to his having won the raffle. The Rebbe asked him if he knew what to do at Kiddush and Havdala (since he was a resident of Eretz Yisroel who traveled abroad). The Rebbe also said that he would not get an aliya the next day (this changed later on, when Chassidim followed the custom of chutz la’Aretz).

The next day, the second day of Shavuos, the Rebbe held a farbrengen. “The Rebbe distributed mashke on his table to a number of guests for the residents of their cities, and also gave me mashke for Tzeiriei Agudas Chabad in Eretz Yisroel and Anash in Paris, as well as a bottle for members of the army in Eretz Yisroel.”

On Isru Chag, when R’ Leib Zalmanov went to say goodbye to the Rebbe, the Rebbe spoke to him about Tzach and told him “regards to Anash in Eretz Yisroel and bless them to relay good news, both in general and individually.”

“The trip home was also via Paris, where I stayed a few days. On Shabbos there was a farbrengen with

the mashpia R’ Nissan Nemenov. I told the talmidim of Brunoy of my experiences, stories they drank in eagerly.

“When I arrived back home, I participated in a simcha in Kfar Chabad, where I excitedly told about my trip to the Rebbe.”

THE REBBE WAITED FOR THE WINNER

Rabbi Yaakov Mann of Yerushalayim won the national raffle twice! The first time was in 5738, and the second time was in 5742.

The kiruvim he got from the Rebbe began on Rosh HaShana:

“I received an aliya in the Rebbe’s minyan and then I was asked to stand near the Rebbe for the t’kios. Before Sukkos, I received a set of minim from the Rebbe. The Rebbe would give out Daled minim every year to the rabbanim, representatives of Lubavitch communities, distinguished people, shluchim, etc. The four minim were spread out on tables, and whoever stood in line got what he needed, as the Rebbe looked on.

“As a raffle winner, I was also

allowed in. I went over to the table with hadasim and thought of taking six hadasim, as it is customary in Chabad to take more than three. In my heart, I thought of taking the three extra hadasim and giving them to my host, as a token of my appreciation.

“The Rebbe, read my mind, and asked me, ‘Who are you taking extra hadasim for?’ I said it was for my host.

“The Rebbe said, ‘Be healthy.’

“So my host got three hadasim and I got an explicit bracha from the Rebbe for health.

“The most special moments for me as a winner were on Simchas Torah. For some reason, I was late for the hakafos. As I walked in, they all said, ‘We’ve been looking for you. The Rebbe wouldn’t start the hakafos until you arrived.’ 770 was packed with thousands of Chassidim, and I was quickly moved over the heads of the Chassidim until I got to the bima, and then the hakafos began.

“I was honored with a seifer Torah for the first hakafa, and then I remained on the bima until the seventh hakafa. At a certain point, in the middle of the hakafos, I noticed the Rebbe’s head was lowered, as in a nod. It was very strange since the Rebbe never nodded off in public. The Rebbe grew very pale. R’ Groner noticed this and asked for doctors immediately. A few doctors came forward and tried to figure out what was wrong. The crowd ran out so the zal would have fresh air.

“The Rebbe said he wanted to continue the hakafos and finish the davening. Some elder Chassidim remained to continue the hakafos with the Rebbe. Since I had won the raffle, I was told to remain until the seventh hakafa, and I saw the Rebbe dance with his brother-in-law, Rashag.

“After Simchas Torah, I received a bottle of mashke from the secretariat,

for the farbrengens in Eretz Yisroel. When I returned home, I farbrenged in the Tzemach Tzedek Shul in the Old City.”

A RAFFLE EVERYWHERE

In 5741, Rabbi Yehuda Jacobson of Yerushalayim won the raffle:

“I enjoyed many kiruvim because I won the raffle. On Erev Yom Kippur, when I got lekach from the Rebbe, R’ Groner told the Rebbe that I had won the raffle. The Rebbe told him that he should prepare the dollars for me, i.e., the Rebbe’s token participation in the expenses of the trip.

“When the sets of minim were given out, I was among all the distinguished people who received Daled minim. I heard the Rebbe’s sicha that he said at that time.

“On Motzaei Simchas Torah, during kos shel bracha, the Rebbe gave me a bottle of mashke and told me to farbreng in B’nei Brak. Since I lived in Yerushalayim, I didn’t know why the Rebbe wanted me to farbreng in B’nei Brak, but of course, I did it anyway.”

As the years went by, there were



**Mashpia R’ Zev Kesselman,
in charge of raffles since 5739**

five raffles a year: for Tishrei, Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shvat, Purim, and Yud-Alef Nissan. The number of participants grew from year to year, and when enough money was collected there were two raffles for Tishrei.

Since raffles became widespread, it went from a little event the committee oversaw to an event that has representatives in various Chabad

centers. R’ Folle Kahn himself, who wasn’t a young man, gave over the responsibility to those younger than him. Rav Berel Karasik of Kfar Chabad (and shliach in Kiev) oversaw the raffles for a number of years, and from 5739 until today, the mashpia R’ Zev Kesselman of Kfar Chabad has been in charge.

At the end of the 80’s and in the 90’s, yeshivos and other private organizations held their own raffles.

Rabbi Yaakov Shmueli of Rechovot won the raffle in 5743. On Chol HaMoed Sukkos, he got an aliya in the Rebbe’s minyan, and through the secretaries, received money towards his trip. At the kos shel bracha on Motzaei Simchas Torah, he received mashke with which he farbrenged in Rechovot and then at his place of work in the vocational school in Kfar Chabad.

“I cannot describe the feeling that the winner of the raffle has,” said R’ Shmueli. “It’s a tremendously high feeling to be the shliach for everyone, and to represent the Chassidim of Eretz Yisroel before the Rebbe.”



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BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY

BY A. AVROHOM

On the first day of Rosh HaShana, right before “Kabbalas HaMalchus” and the blowing of the shofar, we read the Haftora from the first chapter of the book of Shmuel. And the message is: we’re going to the Rebbe!

Much has been said and written about the Haftora of the first day of Rosh HaShana, which relates the story of Chana. In the merit of her prayer, Hashem accepted her request and she had a son, who later became Shmuel HaNavi, the one who anointed Dovid as king.

We can discuss the difficult test Chana endured with Penina, her co-wife, and how Eli HaKohen thought she was drunk, and she had to explain that she was simply davening. We could bring numerous explanations about her special t’filla, from which Chazal learn a number of halachos regarding t’filla, that apply to everyone.

We can be impressed by Chana’s mesirus nefesh, how she didn’t even ask for nachas from her son, but promised to give him to Hashem “all the days of his life” – “forever!”

And there is no end to the depth of meaning within the words of her second prayer, her prayer of thanks, which begins with her joy and continues with a description of her difficult test and her emuna in Hashem. Yet, I think that there is one

basic point not usually emphasized though it stands out as soon as you begin this fascinating Haftora. It’s an introduction of sorts, a basis and foundation upon which the rest is built, and the “rest” includes the anointing of Dovid, which is the beginning of the gilui Moshiach in the world.

* * *

“And there was a man from Ramasayim Tzofim, from Har Efraim, and his name was Elkana.” That is how the Haftora begins, and it goes on to describe who Elkana is. The Navi says:

“And this man went up, from his city, from year to year, to bow and bring sacrifices to Hashem Tzevakos in Shilo.”

Very straightforward: the Chassid went to his Rebbe every year, and at that time, the “Rebbe” was in the “little 770,” which was the Mikdash in Shilo, for “the Mikdash is our *Gan Eden HaTachton*, and the aron and the luchos are our maamer Chassidus,” etc.

Elkana did not travel alone. He would take along **his entire family**, and

Penina had many children. **All of them** went to the Rebbe. And there were no group deals back then. They had to load everything up on donkeys and begin to travel until they reached Shilo. If the Mikdash was covered with skins at that time, just imagine what kind of roof the guests slept under!

Apparently, even at that time, this was an unusual phenomenon, for the text sees fit to point this out. For if everybody was *oleh regel*, then why the detailed description about Elkana’s going? We learn that only people like Elkana went. There were many “*klei kodesh*,” who didn’t think they should “leave their communities.” Others had business to take care of during the holidays. And even among the most Chassidic, there were those who went alone, without their families. And apparently back then too, there were those stragglers, who went only for Shabbos B’Reishis (which can’t even be done this year).

And all those who stayed behind looked at the extremist named Elkana, who insisted on making the trip “to see and be seen,” and to bring his sacrifices.

“It’s a pity on the children,” they yelled. (Penina was considered a *tzadeikes* for agreeing to travel with all the kids.) “Must you go every year?” They pressured Elkana in the central shul of Har Efraim. “Let your children have a normal Yom Tov for a change.” And there was no lack of hotheads, who blamed Elkana and said, “It’s

because of all the schlepping that Chana doesn't have children."

At this time of the year, we are particular about avoiding words that are the opposite of praise, but from the description in the p'sukim we can understand that people could have had **justifiable** complaints "about what went on there," and this is why they did not go to Shilo. Although they conceded that **there, and only there** is where "our Holy of Holies is, our aron, and in it, our luchos."

Elkana heard all the comments in the mikvaos of Har Efraim and in the shtiblech of Ramasayim, but as Tishrei

that could have a woman and mother who had such profound faith. That is, despite the fact that, as the Midrash says, she was not only childless but did not even have a uterus! All the advice-givers told her that this showed that "her shlichus" was such-and-such, and she should drop her fantasies of giving birth (what do you think – that only Eli thought she was drunk?). Yet, she continued to believe and to hope, to pray and to cry, **until she accomplished, with her t'fillos**, "and I have poured out my soul before Hashem," what nobody else before or after her accomplished.

doesn't ask for nachas from a son but is ready to **dedicate** him to Hashem, forever.

It is only with a chinuch like this that we can anticipate that when a shlichus arises that necessitates remaining behind, that we can carry this out too while **relinquishing** our spiritual delight. This is what Chana did when right after Shmuel's birth, Elkana wanted Chana to travel with him to Shilo, and Chana **refused** to go since she knew that her shlichus, at that time, was to nurse her baby at **home**, until "when the child is weaned."

It is only when we go to the Mikdash every year, without looking at what is going on around us, and focus exclusively on the goal and **then** we go – that we feel that victory is not expressed in our being able to say, "Aha!" Rather, we must connect with the loftier joy, expressed in the words "I rejoice in **Your salvation**." The joy in which the entire world sees the wonders and **chasdei Hashem**, the fulfillment of the promise of the **Kohen** who will be in those days, the avoda of "He guards the steps of **chasidav**," those who believe unconditionally, despite – and maybe davka because – they were previously "the needy in the dirt" and "the trash heaps."

With the fire of this hiskashrus, it's possible that when the time comes, we will be able to proclaim to the world – that same world which recently mocked us – and to those close to us who joined the chorus of "the wicked are stilled in darkness," and to shout with the sound of the great shofar, which will blow of its own accord, and rise up with no power in the world to stop it:

"Hashem, may those who contend with him be shattered, let the heavens thunder against them. May Hashem judge to the ends of the earth; may He give power to his king and raise the pride of his anointed one." (Shmuel I 2:10 from the Song of Chana)



approached, he packed his bags and left. For as a fervent Chassid he knew that in Tishrei, home is not the place to be.

That's where it all begins – the emuna and the t'filla, the tests and the victory of the tests, the bitachon and strength to go against the current, to go against those who circle their finger near their heads and mockingly ask: You still believe that?!

Going to the Rebbe! Literally. To take everyone and everything and to go.

It was only a family like this one

It is only with this strength that one can withstand harsh and bitter tests, when those closest to you, torment and tease, to the point of driving one to despise all things of this world: "and she would cry and not eat." Yet, we must reveal an unbelievable strength until we achieve *didan natzach*, and we sing shira as Chana did, "my mouth is opened wide against my antagonists," and we say to them, "let not haughtiness come from your mouth."

It is only on a firm basis such as this that the t'filla of a woman can come forth, a t'filla in which she

FROM THE WILDERNESS TO A WORLD OF HOLINESS

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

It was in the middle of the Yom Kippur War. A tank unit under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Yoav Vasfi, fiercely defended the settlements of the Golan Heights, repelling the Syrians again and again. The unit had fought for ten days and then on the twentieth of Tishrei, Yoav was killed. After his passing, the Chief of Staff awarded the family a decoration of

bravery, which said, "In everything he did, he displayed great courage, a calm spirit, leadership, and wise counsel."

However, it wasn't the medal that comforted the widow and orphans but the letter Yoav had written to his wife Sarah and his three children, Arnon, Vered, and Einav, which consoled them. He briefly described the tremendous spiritual arousal he felt

upon seeing many miracles in battle.

"Dear Arnon, Vered, Einav, and Sarah, I began to believe there is a G-d in heaven. Yoav."

These words were actually a last will and testament for the family. "I never attributed much importance to religion," says Einav. "These words that my father wrote are engraved in my



heart forever. It's not by coincidence that my sister and I became religious and even became Chabad Chassidim," he laughs.

Ten years went by and the war in Lebanon began. Arnon, the older brother, fought in an elite unit on the frontlines. While on a mission, the half-track he was in command of, rolled over and he was killed on the spot. The family tragedy had doubled.

As a child of a bereaved family, Einav was invited to participate in a camp for I.D.F. orphans, which took place in Kfar Chabad. He tells us how the Chabad camp saved him from eating non-kosher food:

"I was in the camp for war orphans and for some reason, all the values I learned about in camp didn't move me. We wore kippot and tzitzis in camp, and one day, a friend and I went into a treif restaurant and asked for steak. The waiter burst out laughing and said, 'You're wearing tzitzis and asking for non-kosher meat?' I ran out of there in embarrassment. I guess I remembered to remove my kippa before I walked in, but had forgotten the tzitzis, and that's what saved me from eating treif."

THE REBBE SAYS: THERE'S NO REASON TO WORRY

Einav was born and raised in Yesod HaMaala in northern Israel. He did not get a religious education. He served in the army for four years in Intelligence. "At home we ate kosher, more or less, but outside, my friends and I ate everything. I went to shul only on Yom Kippur, and I didn't even daven; I just stood nearby and chatted with my friends. The shul was a place to meet people."

His first connection with religion and Chabad was after his sister Vered became religious. "I remember the bitter debates we had." She raised a Lubavitcher family and lives in S. Francisco.

When Einav served in the army, his

"I boarded a boat with some villagers. The black magic seemed to be following me, even on the boat. I felt powerless to escape it..."



mother was worried about his behavior and at her daughter's suggestion, she wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha for him. The Rebbe's response was that there was no reason to worry.

After his release from the army, he got a piece of land that belonged to the moshava and began to grow apricots. He devoted himself to this primarily in the summer, and spent the winter in South America.

"The amazing scenery in those countries attracted me," he says, to explain the enormous interest he had in touring distant parts. "I always wanted to truly experience the places I visited, and that's why, wherever I went, I befriended the natives, dressed

like them, and even tried to learn their language."

On his very first trip, he already had a *Tanya* and some booklets about strengthening emuna. He took it with him thanks to his sister's influence. He did not intend to learn the s'farim, but took them as a good luck charm.

Chile was his first stop and where he spent winter 5753. He completely forgot about his apricots and a life of work. He left his trees in the care of a friend and toured Chile.

The following summer Einav went

back to South America, this time to Brazil. From S. Paulo, the capitol, he went to Salvador, where he met two friends from Israel, one of them, Oren, came from Yesod HaMaala too. The friends lived there for a while and attended shul on Shabbos. Einav joined them.

"This was the first time I davened the entire t'filla from a siddur. When we finished davening, we went touring."

WAR AGAINST THE FORCES OF IMPURITY

Einav wanted to spend the night in a tent on the beach. When the opportunity arose, he set up a tent and

felt what he had wanted to feel all along, absolutely removed from the big world out there. It was a peaceful experience for Einav.

This, however, was the quiet before the storm. Immediately afterwards he got caught up in an emotional turmoil. "In the morning I left the beach on my way to the bus station to return to Salvador. A woman and a girl were waiting at the stop. Some Africans came along with guitars and drums. One of them was a religious figure in a Brazilian cult, a Rastafarian. I identified him by his clothes.

"The Rastafarian began lecturing to the woman and girl about his religion. I knew a bit of Portuguese by this time and I heard him mention many Biblical figures like Moses, David, Isaiah, etc. I listened closely. I was far from home, far from Eretz Yisroel, and suddenly I was hearing these familiar Biblical names. The Rastafarian noticed me and began addressing me. I got involved in a religious discussion."

The bus came. Einav and the group of Africans boarded the bus, but the conversation didn't end. The Rastafarian continued to speak to Einav. The conversation was loud and all the passengers listened quietly. After all, a religious figure was speaking.

"When we got to my stop, I decided to continue on and listen to him. In the course of my travels, I had many interesting experiences and I always love to experience something fully, to the end. This time, I was drawn by the spiritual experience. We continued traveling together until the bus reached a wretchedly poor neighborhood built on the ruins of the ancient city of Salvador. Dangerous people live there. Even the police are afraid to go there. Yet I felt I had to continue. I wasn't afraid.

"We got to the Rastafarian's house. A house? A miserable hut! He lived an ascetic life, removed from the world. His entire life was his religion, which was close to Christianity. I met his

young disciples who waited for him.

"He sat down on the floor next to his students, and began questioning me. 'Who are you?' he asked, and I told him I was a Jew. 'Aha! A Jew?!' he said in amazement. Then he added, 'You cannot give Jerusalem to a murderer,' referring to the government. I was surprised that he knew what was going on in the Middle East when he was removed from the world.

"He showed me his occult practices. I was amazed, but felt it was dangerous for me, and I decided to leave him. I knew that I was a Jew, come what may.

"I left him and went back to my

"He showed me his occult practices. I was amazed, but felt it was dangerous for me, and I decided to leave him. I knew that I was a Jew, come what may."

friends, but the Rastafarian didn't leave me alone... I was walking down the street when I encountered the Rastafarian. In a city with a million people, I met him twice in one day! He was happy to see me and said, 'I'm going on vacation and you're invited to join me.' I agreed.

"I went back to the place I was staying with my two Israeli friends to get ready to leave. I told Oren, my friend, that I was going to a small island, and he realized something had happened. He called my mother and told her that I had fallen in with a cult. She was very worried.

"We went on a bus and the Rastafarian paid for me. It was bizarre since he went barefoot and in rags, whereas I, although I wasn't rich, had nice clothes and of course I wore shoes.

"After traveling eighty kilometers, we got to the shore. We boarded a small boat and went to a little island where we stayed with a family in a little village. The village is in the middle of wild foliage and there were many fruit trees, like mango and kiwi. For me, this was Gan Eden."

This unique vacation, which lasted a few days, had a definite purpose, which Einav only realized at the end. He sat for hours with the Rastafarian and spoke about philosophy. The Rastafarian explained his religion, and in order to convince Einav about the truth of his religion, he repeatedly said that the Jew is the most important of all, for Jews are the Chosen People. In order to prove his legitimacy as an important religious figure, he tried to convince me of his mystical powers.

Einav was astounded by what he saw. Magic?! Higher powers?! Was the Rastafarian a holy man? It was only the next day, when they sat together on the beach, that Einav realized the true purpose of the vacation on this isolated island.

"We sat on the shore, looking at the waves breaking on the rocks, and continued to speak about spirituality. Suddenly he said to me, 'Until now you have seen a world of mysticism, a world of magic. The time has come for you to be a part of it.' He offered me a position in his cult!

"I was shaken. I knew that I was a Jew and that I could not convert to another religion, but I didn't know how to explain it. I finally said that I had Toras Moshe, and this was my Torah. He didn't give up, but tried his best to convince me to stay with him. That is when I finally realized what he had intended all along, and I left him



immediately.

“I boarded a boat with some villagers. The black magic seemed to be following me, even on the boat, and I felt powerless to escape it.”

FIGHTING UNHOLINESS WITH THE SHMA

“I went back to Salvador, to the apartment I had lived in before, with my friends. My friend was happy to



see me and immediately asked, ‘Why do you have that strange look in your eyes?’

“All the occult practices I had been exposed to had affected me in a terrible way. I felt that I had to return to Judaism before the forces of impurity would overpower me. Ironically, it was the forces of impurity that pushed me back to Judaism.

“I took a T’hillim that I had with me and, together with my friend, recited T’hillim with great fervor, with the prayer that everything I had experienced shouldn’t harm me.”

A few weeks went by in which Einav traveled amidst the beauties of nature, and he felt a strong pull to visit the Rastafarian in his home. “Despite what I had gone through, I wanted more and more spirituality, but I hadn’t found any other spirituality,” is how Einav explains this mysterious attraction.

“I sat with him in his house and he wanted to teach me. He knew Tanach by heart, as well as, *l’havdil elef alfei havdalos*, the so-called New Testament. When he referred to names I knew from Tanach, like David, Shlomo, Yehoshua, etc., I told him what I knew of them. But when he mentioned the founder of Christianity, I said nothing. He didn’t understand why, and he went on. He finally realized what my problem with it was and he decided to do something about it.

“Together with his disciples, he began repeating this name again and again. In my confusion, I almost said it along with them. I suddenly felt the full strength of my neshama and began yelling, ‘*Shma Yisroel, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem echad.*’ They continued saying the impure name and I yelled the Shma.

“Apparently this made a great impression on the Rastafarian and his disciples. They could have done away with me in that creepy neighborhood, without leaving a trace, yet when it



came to my religion, I dared to challenge the Rastafarian. After this battle with him, I finally realized that this wasn't for me and I left the city and continued traveling around Brazil."

Einav went to visit a good friend who lived in a small village in Venezuela. The friend, who had lived there for many years, was completely cut off from Yiddishkeit. "He liked Christianity and he considered converting. I spoke to him about the importance of remaining a Jew. After many conversations, he agreed with me. For many years I had no connection with him, but after I joined Chabad, I sent him s'farim on Chassidus and emuna."

A STRONG ATTRACTION TO JUDAISM

When summer came, Einav returned to Eretz Yisroel. He was in a great spiritual upheaval after what he had experienced, but he didn't know how to express his strong feelings. He decided not to work in the apricot orchards on Shabbos.

"My friends thought I was crazy," he laughs. "I didn't work in my orchards on Shabbos, even though this entailed a tremendous loss of money. When apricots ripen, they must be

picked immediately, or they spoil. Despite my not working on Shabbos, I didn't have the guts to publicly announce that I was shomer Shabbos. My harvest was much larger than that of my neighbors who worked on Shabbos, and this convinced me that I was on the right path."

Einav felt very strongly drawn towards Judaism. All the impurities he had encountered spurred him on towards being a good Jew. He decided to eat kosher. "Not that I ate *mehadrin*, but at least it wasn't treif."

The summer went by and Einav traveled abroad again. This time, for a change, he went to visit his sister in S. Francisco. His Lubavitcher sister and brother-in-law encouraged him to keep mitzvos. After a week with them, he went to Brazil wearing tzitzis and a yarmulke, even though he wasn't absolutely committed to them.

He traveled in Brazil with a gentile friend, and thanks to him, he managed to keep what he had committed to keeping. "A few of us would go to a restaurant, and my gentile friend would go to the kitchen to check if the fish had scales. It once happened that we went to a restaurant, and when my gentile friend saw that the fish had no scales, we all got up and left for another restaurant. The same with

Shabbos – he knew that I didn't want to travel on Shabbos and that was the day we all relaxed.

"I had a *Tanya* with me that my sister had given me. I looked into it occasionally. I didn't understand any of it. It was like Chinese to me, but I was drawn to it anyway, and every so often, I would read the words, even though I didn't understand them."

HOW I GOT TO 770

Einav returned to Eretz Yisroel and he committed to being fully observant. He contacted the shliach in Yesod HaMaala, Rabbi Yaakov Reitzes, who was mekarev him and directed him. He slaked his thirst for Judaism by reading books on Judaism and Chassidus, which his sister had left behind. "I studied *Likkutei Sichos*, and the Rebbe's words entered my heart."

Chassidim make every effort to visit 770, but Einav's trip entailed amazing hashgacha pratis. "Six years ago, my sister had a son, thanks to a bracha from the Rebbe. Two days before the bris, I decided to fly to S. Francisco to be a part of the simcha. The next day, I boarded a plane, which made a stop at Kennedy airport. My sister asked me to take the opportunity to go to the Rebbe's shul. She said, 'You're in New York already, and you

have some free time.' She tried to convince me to go, but I really wasn't interested. I didn't even take the address with me.

"But the Rebbe wanted me to go, and he brought me there against my volition..."

"After the plane landed at Kennedy, I wanted to eat somewhere. Since I ate kosher, I asked the taxi driver to take me to Brooklyn, since I knew I would definitely find kosher food there. The driver wasn't that familiar with the area, and left me off in a rough neighborhood. I asked passersby how I could get to a Jewish neighborhood, and one of them told me that nearby was the big synagogue of the Lubavitcher Rebbe!

"A summer rain began to fall and I walked quickly, hoping to find a kosher restaurant. The gentile I had spoken to earlier, passed me in his car and gave me a lift. Two minutes later, I was on Kingston Avenue, and he pointed to 770 and said, "Here's your rabbi's synagogue."

GETTING INTO THINGS IN RAMAT AVIV

One fine day, Einav was listening to a radio interview. Members of *Am Chofshi* (a virulent anti-religious group) had broken into the Chabad yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, and the journalist, Shelley Yachimovetz, interviewed Rabbi Yossi Ginsberg, the rosh yeshiva, along with a representative of *Am Chofshi*.

The interviewer tried to present the religious side and asked the representative of *Am Chofshi* what

bothered him about Chabad. "They're good people," she said. Rabbi Ginsberg did a nice job explaining that the yeshiva helped baalei t'shuva.

After hearing this interview, Einav figured the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv was just the place for him. After he checked it out with Rabbi Reitzes, he was accepted into the yeshiva.

"This was a special period of my life," he remembers. "I learned a lot of sichos of the Rebbe, and asked many

"My harvest was much larger than that of my neighbors who worked on Shabbos, and this convinced me that I was on the right path."

questions about Judaism and Chassidus. I didn't understand everything the way I wanted to, but after delving into the Rebbe's sichos, and with the help of the dedicated staff of the yeshiva, all my questions were resolved.

"People asked me what attracted me to Chabad and the answer was: endless ahavas Yisroel. From the sichos and stories about the Rebbe, I realized how much ahavas Yisroel the Rebbe has, and how ahavas Yisroel is the core of his worldview. I saw the practical

application of this at the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv."

After a few months in which Einav got into things, he got an answer from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*, from which he understood that he had to go back to Yesod HaMaala and spread the wellsprings.

He returned to Yesod HaMaala and did a lot to spread the wellsprings, together with the shliach, Rabbi Reitzes. In 5759, he married his wife Anat, a baalas t'shuva who attended Machon Alte in Tzfas.

Once a week, Einav gets on the train with his friend Oren, who had been with him in Salvador and who also became a Lubavitcher, and they go to the yeshiva, where they learn together. "The yeshiva has a great atmosphere and it's worth the long trip there every week."

Today, Einav Vasfi runs the Gan Chabad in Yesod HaMaala, together with Rabbi Reitzes. During the last Shmita year, Einav was *mafkir* [renounced ownership of] his orchard, and had no parnasa, so he started a business which provides jeep tours. This combines his love of nature and touring.

"We organize tours, with farbrengens and music in the heart of the forests of the Galil. We also provide glatt kosher food to tourists. The tours we organize are taken by Chabad camps, Chabad schools, and other Chabad groups. I, of all people, know how much the heart opens to spirituality when a person is in beautiful, natural surroundings, close to nature and close to G-d."



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PREPARE TO GO TO THE REBBE – SMILE AT A FELLOW JEW

BY RABBI ELAZAR KOENIG
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

During the month of Elul, we must make a daily “cheshbon nefesh” on how often we smiled at other Jews. Throughout this month, G-d is in the field, smiling at us, and He wants us to give him a heartfelt smile in return – by smiling at another Jew.

The Alter Rebbe brings the famous parable of the “king in the field,” and how he receives each person with a cheerful face and a smiling countenance. The Rebbe MH”M explains that this represents the revolution that the Alter Rebbe created regarding a Jew’s perception of the month of Elul. The king, who judges all mankind, loves us very much, and a month before the judgment, he is already greeting the Jewish people happily and joyfully. As a result, it would be inappropriate for a Jew to show G-d an unhappy face, “as water reflects the face.”

During the times before the Alter Rebbe’s revelations, there were many who went around in the month of Elul with troubled looks on their faces. However, in our generation, we know that G-d

shows us a smiling countenance, and He wants us to smile back at Him. G-d wants us to prepare for the judgment on Rosh HaShana with joy and a smile, and it is improper conduct that when someone smiles at you, you show him a worrisome “Elul-style” expression...

At first, it doesn’t seem possible. How can we smile at G-d when we don’t see Him smiling at us? Granted, we believe that the Thirteen Divine Attributes of Mercy shine during the month of Elul, and that the king is in the field. But we don’t **see** the king smiling at us, so how is it possible to smile **back** to the king?

The Rebbe MH”M asks this very question, and he explains that the best advice is to smile at another Jew. Upon a Jew’s face are found the

letters of G-d’s Name. The **Yud** is the eyes, the **Hei** is the ears, the **Vav** is the nose, and the lower **Hei** is the mouth. When we look in the face of a Jew, we see G-d’s Name. Furthermore, “I place G-d before me always,” refers to looking at a Jew’s face and knowing what he sees.

Nevertheless, the Rebbe still remained “worried”: What do we do when the month of Elul comes and we haven’t met a single Jew?

The answer to this is simple: When you don’t have another Jew to smile at, you should look in the **mirror** and smile, as your face also has G-d’s Name written upon it...

THE STRENGTH IN JOINING WITH ANOTHER

When Rosh HaShana arrives, we want to connect to G-d. A Jew **wants** that G-d “will choose us, our inheritance” – every Jew wants that G-d will choose **him**, and it is fitting for G-d to choose him, for he and G-d are one and the same.

The Mezritcher Maggid comments on the pasuk, “Make for you two trumpets (*chatzotzros*),” as referring to “*chatzai tzuros*” (half shapes). Just as a husband and wife complement one another, as each

one is only a half, similarly, we find in connection with G-d and the Jewish people. We ask G-d to “choose us, our inheritance” – we want to be a part of Him and never to be parted from Him.

Faced with our request, G-d asks us, as it were, “Are you really suited for Me?” The difference between the Creator and the created is infinite in proportion. If so, how can we possibly ask to be connected to G-d?

We see this when we travel to the Rebbe MH”M. We want to be with the Rebbe, to speak with him from our hearts, and most importantly, to be united with him in the fullest sense as **one unit**. The Rebbe is the **head** and we are the **body**, which that does not want to be separated from the head. Yet, how do we have the gall to demand such unity from the Rebbe? Are we truly worthy of this? Have we made all the necessary preparations to earn the right to be one with G-d?

Upon a Jew’s face are found the letters of G-d’s Name. The Yud is the eyes, the Hei is the ears, the Vav is the nose, and the lower Hei is the mouth. When we look in the face of a Jew, we see G-d’s Name.

The Rebbe says that Elul is an acronym for “*Ish L’Reieihu U’Matanos La’Evyonim*” (one to his neighbor and gifts to the poor). What is the connection between “one to his neighbor” and “gifts to the poor”? “One to his neighbor” seems to refer to “*mishloach manos*,” not

“*matanos la’evyonim*.”

The explanation is that when we want to be united with G-d, the most fitting preparation is to unite with a **second Jew**. Together with this, when you give him *tz’daka* – “*matanos la’evyonim*” – you feel the aspect of “one to his neighbor,” not *ch”v* your superiority over him. Furthermore, the poor person does a greater kindness to the *baal ha’bayis* than the *baal ha’bayis* does to the poor person. It is written that when a *baal ha’bayis* just gives a coin to a poor person, G-d repays him by bestowing life to his **child** when he needs it.

G-d desires the aspect of “all of us **as one**” as a preparation for the bracha that He gives us during the seventh month. “All of us as one” means that I unite with someone who thinks the exact opposite that I do. Even when I consider myself to be among “your leaders” and the other is one of “your woodchoppers,” nevertheless, I



connect with him in a manner of “one **to his neighbor.**”

Only after this connecting of opposites can we tell G-d that we have done his bidding by uniting with the other person in spite of all the differences between us. Now, we want to unite with Him in the wondrous state of unity between the Creator and the created – between G-d and the Jewish people, which we will merit to see at the True and Complete Redemption.

In summation, to reach the level of “my beloved is to me,” there first must be “I am to my beloved.”

TO EVALUATE THE OTHER PERSON PROPERLY

The Rebbe brings two illustrative stories:

The first story relates to R. Hillel Paritcher, who wanted to come to the Alter Rebbe. However, the Alter Rebbe always managed to avoid meeting with him. Whenever R. Hillel came to a certain place in order to meet with the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe would leave before he arrived.

R. Hillel decided to “outsmart” the Alter Rebbe, so he waited for him at his lodging place under the bed. In the meantime, R. Hillel prepared a question from Tractate Erchin that he wanted to ask the Rebbe.

When the Alter Rebbe entered his room, he immediately said, “When a Jew has a question in ‘Erchin’ (Valuations), it’s a sign that he has to evaluate himself. If he makes a proper self-evaluation, he will have no questions in ‘Erchin.’” R. Hillel immediately fainted. When he revived himself, the Alter Rebbe had already left.

What was R. Hillel’s question in Erchin? The halacha states that when a Jew says to G-d that he will dedicate his value to the Beis

HaMikdash, his value is then measured according to his age – without consideration of how much Torah he has learned, his genius, or his righteousness. This aroused within R. Hillel a serious question. How could it be fitting for a Jew like R. Hillel Paritcher to be considered “equal in value” to a simple unlearned Jew simply because they are the same age? Thus, the Alter Rebbe answered him that he apparently is not evaluating himself as he should.

Human nature dictates that someone values the other person a little less than he values himself. Therefore, we must know how to evaluate ourselves properly, since in comparison to the Creator, we are all on equal footing.

THE ONLY PREPARATION FOR TRAVELING TO THE REBBE

The second story relates to the Tzemach Tzedek:

The Tzemach Tzedek started making preparations for the revelation of the Alter Rebbe, and he was positive that with his proper spiritual readiness, he would certainly merit to see the Alter Rebbe’s shining countenance.

However, not only did he not see the Alter Rebbe’s glowing face, he didn’t see him at all. The Tzemach Tzedek immediately began to make a personal accounting of what he is lacking and what remains to be corrected. This lasted for several days, until the 8th of Elul.

On that day, on his way to daven Shacharis, the Tzemach Tzedek met a Jew named R. Pinchas, who asked him for a small loan of three silver coins. That day was also market day, and he wanted the funds to engage in business transactions. Since the Tzemach Tzedek didn’t have the money on him at that

moment, he told R. Pinchas that he would give him the loan after davening.

When the Tzemach Tzedek went into shul, he began his preparations for davening. After he placed his tallis on his shoulders, he suddenly made a cheshbon nefesh with himself. A Jew is looking for parnasa, market day already started early this morning, and by the time I finish davening, it will be too late. This Jew needs the money now!

He immediately removed his tallis, went home, took five silver coins, gave them to R. Pinchas, and only afterwards did he go back to shul to daven Shacharis.

As soon as the Tzemach Tzedek entered shul and went to the sink to wash his hands, the Alter Rebbe revealed himself to him with a bright and shining face and answered all his questions. He later said that he had never merited such a glowing appearance from the Alter Rebbe before.

The Rebbe MH”M spoke in this sicha about the greatness of the Tzemach Tzedek and the preparations he made in order to merit seeing the Rebbe. Yet, in spite of all efforts, the one preparation that truly helped him to see the Alter Rebbe as is fitting was the assistance he gave another Jew.

When we prepare ourselves to travel to the Rebbe and we want him to reveal himself to us, the preparations must be along the lines of “one **to his neighbor.**” None of the Tzemach Tzedek’s preparations seemed to help him in meriting the Rebbe’s revelation, until he did a favor for someone else. If we will conduct ourselves in this manner, we will merit to see the Rebbe MH”M with a cheerful face and a smiling countenance.

The ultimate preparation for a trip to the Rebbe is to unite with

another person. A union is not made to do someone a favor; it's for our sake. This is the way to draw down the lofty revelations, and everything depends upon us.

This is the minimum that is demanded from every chassid who wants the Rebbe to reveal himself to him – “We want to see our King!” We want him to “choose **us**, our inheritance, the greatness of Yaakov who He loves” – specifically “us.” If you want to connect such polar opposites, the Rebbe MH”M tells us, you must also make this effort. Smile at someone even if you don't think it's appropriate to smile at him. Show someone who doesn't think exactly the way you do a cheerful expression. Whatever differences might exist between you and the other person are nothing compared to those that exist between G-d and the Jewish people.

This is the reason why on the Shabbos before Rosh HaShana, we always read Parshas Nitzavim – “You are standing today **all of you**.” The Alter Rebbe interprets “all of you” as meaning “to be united as one,” i.e., each person complement the other, and each in his own way serves as the head of his fellow Jew.

THE CHESHBON NEFESH OF THE MONTH OF ELUL

During the month of Elul, we must make a daily “cheshbon nefesh” on how often we smiled at other Jews. Throughout this month, G-d is in the field, smiling at us, and He wants us to give him a heartfelt smile in return – by smiling at another Jew. This is a true expression of “I have placed G-d” – to see another Jew, bring him closer, and give him a smile, to the point that he really feels that you love him and are concerned about him.

It is not for naught that the Alter Rebbe established to say every day

before davening, “I hereby accept upon myself the positive commandment of ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” This is a most correct preparation for *t'filla* (from the same root as “*tofel*,” attaching), connecting with G-d is to connect with a Jew in a manner of “as yourself.”

A chassid's cheshbon nefesh during the month of Elul must take into account whether he annoyed or angered another Jew that day, *ch"v*, how much he helped another Jew that day, and how much he thought about the needs of another person.

***G-d asks us, as it were, “Are you really suited for Me?”
The difference between the Creator and the created is infinite in proportion.
If so, how can we possibly ask to be connected to G-d?***

SMILING AT SOMEONE ELSE = SMILING AT YOURSELF

The Aggada tells a story about a villager who had never looked in a mirror before.

One day, this villager went in a warehouse, and found there an old abandoned mirror. Suddenly, he runs horrified back to his wife, telling her frenziedly that he saw his father smiling at him in the warehouse. His wife didn't believe him, so she decided to go into the warehouse herself and see if what her husband

said was true. After a few moments, the wife was heard screaming as she ran from the warehouse. “You liar!” she cried. “You didn't see your father; you saw a witch!”

How does this story apply to our discussion? When we look at another Jew, we are essentially looking in a mirror, and each person sees his own conduct and character within the other. When the month of Elul comes and we ask G-d for the aspect of “and my beloved is to me,” i.e., that he should choose us as His people, we also must do our part in total fulfillment of “I am to my beloved.”

When a Jew conducts himself with another Jew in a manner of “*tzavsa v'chibur*” (connection), he merits that the Creator and Master of the world will respond in kind, judging the world with kindness and mercy, and blessing him with a good and sweet year.

All the avoda of Rosh HaShana – which is on the level of “*binyan ha'malchus*,” as we request from G-d on Rosh HaShana, “Reign over the whole world in Your Glory” – depends upon our simple conduct of “one to his neighbor” towards our fellow Jews. When the month of Elul comes and the King appears to all of us with a smiling countenance, we all certainly want to smile back at Him.

In accordance with our conduct of “I am to my beloved” during the month of Elul, we will surely merit this Rosh HaShana to witness all the revelations of “and my beloved is to me,” and most importantly, we will merit the fulfillment of our demand, “We want to see our king!” – in all his glory, immediately, *mamash*, NOW!!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!

(Delivered at a symposium held at the yeshiva on the subject of traveling to the Rebbe MH”M. Transcribed by HaTamim Shalom Dovber Crombie.)

INSIDE STORIES

INTERVIEW BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

R' Chesed (Chanina Sinai Dovid) Halberstam was an attendant in the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home on President Street for eighteen years. * In this interview, he shares some of what he saw and experienced. * Exclusive to Beis Moshiach. * Part 2 of 2

This interview is publicized in honor of R' Chesed's marriage to Baila Leah Stein, granddaughter of R' Yosef Chaim Stein, who was the shamash in the Rebbe Rayatz's shul in 770. He passed away in 5713 in 770. After his passing, the Rebbe asked her father, R' Elkana Stein, to take over the position but after he refused, the Rebbe blessed him with success in whatever he did. Over the years, he was very successful.

The wedding took place on Chamisha-Asar B'Av on Rechov HaAdmur M'Lubavitch 36, Ramat Shlomo in Yerushalayim, facing the replica of 770.

(Continued from last week.)

MIND-READING

In 5740, the N'shei Chabad sent flowers to the Rebbetzin for her birthday on 25 Adar. Along with the flowers, they sent a letter with requests for brachos for women who needed help. The Rebbe was home at the time, dining with the Rebbetzin.

I presented the flowers to the Rebbetzin and I gave the letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked at it and said, "It's for her."

I said, "They're asking for

brachos!"

The Rebbe looked at me and said, "Nu, she can also give brachos."

I didn't say anything further to the Rebbe, but I thought that it was certainly because of the Rebbe that the Rebbetzin could give brachos. The Rebbe read my mind and responded, "And I mean, in her own right."

I continued thinking that if the Rebbetzin could give brachos, then what was the difference between her bracha and the Rebbe's bracha? Then the Rebbe asked me, "Have you learned *Derech Mitzvosecha*?"

I said that I had and the Rebbe asked, "Which part?"

I answered that I had learned *Shoresh Mitzvas HaT'filla*, the section on davening.

The Rebbe said, "If so, then you know the difference between *sovev* and *memalei*. When I give a bracha, it's *memalei*, which means that a person has to do something for the bracha to be fulfilled. Her brachos are *sovev*, and you don't have to do anything for the bracha to be fulfilled!"

That is how the Rebbe responded

to my thoughts!

A LESSON IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The Rebbe told me that I should see to it that the Rebbetzin did not stay home all day. We would usually go to the park on Long Island. When my son, Aharon Yosef learned in Lubavitcher Yeshiva on Ocean Parkway, we would pass by the yeshiva to pick him up and take him with us to the park. She loved to play with him, to put him on the swings, etc.

One day, when we were close to the park, construction work was being done on the street we usually took, and we had to drive down a parallel street. As we drove, we heard a woman crying out in Russian. We continued driving and stopped at a red light at the end of the street. Suddenly the Rebbetzin turned to me and said,



R' Chesed Halberstam



“I heard a woman crying on this street. Could you drive around again to the beginning of this street?”

We went back and we saw a woman standing and crying while nearby, workers were loading furniture onto a truck. A city marshal was overseeing the evacuation. The Rebbetzin asked me to park the car behind the car of the marshal and I got out to see what was going on. I went over to the officer who was supervising the goings-on and he told me that the woman hadn't paid the rent in months and she was being evicted.

I suggested that we continue on

our way, but the Rebbetzin asked me to find out how much the woman owed, and if he would accept a personal check, but not to say anything to the family. I didn't know exactly what the Rebbetzin's intention was, but I did as she asked.

The marshal said he had no problem taking a personal check, but he first had to check with the bank to see that the check was covered. He also said that if he got the payment, he would tell the workers to put the furniture back. When I reported back to the Rebbetzin, she took out her checkbook and wrote out a check for the full amount, something around

\$6700, signed it, and gave it to me to give to the man.

I gave the man the check and after the bank told him that the check was fine, he told the men to put back the furniture. The woman, who was standing outside and crying, didn't realize what was going on in front of her eyes, and the Rebbetzin urged me to get back into the car and to drive on to the park.

I was amazed by what had just happened, and when we were in the park I couldn't restrain myself. I asked the Rebbetzin: What happened today? You don't know the woman. Why did you suddenly decide to give her such a large sum of money?

The Rebbetzin asked: Do you really want to know?

I said that I did, and she said: Sit down and I will tell you.

This is what she said: When I was young, I walked with my father [the Rebbe Rayatz] in the park and he sat me down on a bench and spoke to me about hashgacha pratit. Every time there is a change from the norm and you see something, it's by Divine providence.

Today, when we reached the traffic light and I saw the sign about the need to detour I was reminded of what my father told me. I thought: We drive here every day, and there is no construction and no detour. Just today, there is construction and we had to drive down this street, where I saw a woman crying. From what she said, I could tell that she was Jewish. I thought: what does this have to do with me? I realized I have to help her, and that's what I did.

GEVALD TATENYU

When we drove in the car, the Rebbetzin loved to hear tapes of Avrohom Fried. One song that she especially liked was “Tatenyu.”

The Rebbetzin was usually particular that nobody be present

when she lit Shabbos and Yom Tov candles, even those close to her. I once heard from someone who saw the Rebbetzin when she lit candles on Erev Rosh HaShana 5746 that the Rebbetzin hummed this song with great *d'veikus*. *Our Father, merciful Father, have mercy on us ... gevald Tatenyu ...*

At this auspicious time, the Rebbetzin davened, not for her personal needs but for the salvation of the Jewish people.

WHEN THE REBBE LISTENED TO CHAZAN ROSENBLATT

Speaking about music – on Erev Pesach I would clean all the s'farim in the Rebbe's house. In one of the early years, the Rebbe sat at the table and learned, and I stood and cleaned the s'farim.

The Rebbe had a phonograph, and he asked me, a few times, to put on the record of Chazan Yossele Rosenblatt. One time, when we heard Rosenblatt sing, "*Rachem na, Hashem Elokeinu*," I heard the Rebbe hum along.

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK'S GARTEL

Erev Yom Kippur 5739, after the blessing of the T'mimim, I stood near *Gan Eden HaTachton* and the Rebbe motioned to me with his head to follow him. I entered the Rebbe's room and closed the door and the Rebbe said, "On my desk in the office at home, there's the gartel of the Tzemach Tzedek. Since I wear it on Yom Kippur and I forgot it at home, can you go and bring it?"

I looked at my watch and saw there were a few minutes left till sunset. I ran as fast as I could and got to the house and began searching the desk drawers but didn't find the gartel. Having no choice, I ran back to 770. I looked at my watch and saw it was still two minutes till sunset.

When I got there, the Rebbe

opened the door and when I said that I had looked but didn't find it, the Rebbe said: *Yogaata, matzasa!* (If you try, you will find).

I ran back to the house, opened the drawer I had looked in before and to my amazement, the gartel was right there. I looked at the time again, because you can't carry on Yom Kippur, and was surprised to see that it was still two minutes before sunset. At first I thought my watch had stopped, but I saw that the second hand was still moving yet the minute hand still showed two minutes before sunset...

I ran back to the house, opened the drawer I had looked in before and to my amazement, the gartel was right there. I looked at the time again, because you can't carry on Yom Kippur...

I rushed back to 770, knocked on the door, and when the Rebbe saw that I had the gartel, his face lit up and he thanked me.

I left the room and the Rebbe closed the door behind me. I went downstairs to shul for Kol Nidrei. (In the yoman of the T'mimim of that year, which is printed in the *hosafos* to *Sichos Kodesh* 5739 – the 5763 edition – vol. 1, p. 411, it says that after blessing the T'mimim the Rebbe went to his room for about ten minutes and then came down for Kol Nidrei a little bit later. This story explains why.)

A GROUP OF BATLANIM

On Shmini Atzeres 5747, a friend, R' Binyamin Altheus and I went to the library to wish the Rebbetzin a good Yom Tov. The Rebbetzin said, "Nu, make Kiddush." On the table was a bottle of Benedictine, but I went to get the wine.

The Rebbetzin said, "Chassidim, on Shmini Atzeres, make Kiddush on mashke," and she poured each of us a full cup of Benedictine. We made Kiddush and talked. Suddenly, we saw the Rebbe standing near the door. We got up immediately and began leaving the room so the Rebbe could enter.

The Rebbe suddenly turned his head to us and said, "A bunch of batlanim who leave the Benedictine on the table and walk away."

CHAPEAU, CHAPEAU

The Rebbetzin once said that when they were at the Sorbonne University, the Rebbe would go to lectures and sit there while wearing his hat. The gentile students complained that the hat blocked the face of the lecturer, and they called out to the Rebbe: *Chapeau, chapeau* (hat, hat). The Rebbe switched to wearing a beret.

I never understood why the Rebbetzin told me this story. On Pesach this year, I was in Los Angeles and before davening I found a Hagada with a commentary in shul. In one of the comments it said regarding Rabbi Yosi HaGlili that he was a reincarnation of Dovid ben Yishai. And both Rabbi Yosi HaGlili and Dovid ben Yishai are numerically equivalent to 386, which spells *chapeau* in Hebrew (*Shin-Pei-Vav*).

I suddenly remembered what the Rebbetzin had told me, that the gentiles had yelled "*chapeau*" at the Rebbe. The halacha is that if a gentile gives testimony we don't accept it, but if he innocently offers information we accept it. In the story, gentiles innocently called out *chapeau* – Dovid ben Yishai.

“MAY THE MERCIFUL ONE BLESS THE ADMUR” – IN THE REBBE’S SIDDIR!

On the last day of Shiva for Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka a”h, the Rebbe told R’ Leibel Groner that he wanted my son and me to come in for a yechidus. When we went to the Rebbe, he thanked me for the eighteen years of service, and said that as a sign of his appreciation he wanted to give me something that I knew he valued highly.

As he spoke, the Rebbe took out a Chumash that was very familiar to me. It was the Chumash that the Rebbe received from the Rebbe Rayatz before his wedding. At the back is a siddur called the Rostover Siddur. The Rebbe used this Chumash to say the daily portion of Chumash, and on Friday night after the meal, he would recite the sidra *Shnayim Mikra V’Echad Targum* from it. The Rebbe used the siddur to say the *bentching*.

The Rebbe gave me the Chumash and said, “As you saw, I used the Chumash to say *Chitas* and *Shnayim Mikra V’Echad Targum*, and if part of *Chitas* was missed, it can be corrected with this Chumash. In general, this Chumash is good in that it has a number of commentaries, Ibn Ezra, Ramban, Rashbam, etc.

Then the Rebbe told me about the siddur. At a time when they took young boys into the army in Russia, the Rebbe Rashab told his son to compile a siddur that would be extremely short, so that no t’filla appears twice. This would make the siddur as small as possible and would be given to Jewish soldiers. This siddur was called the Rostover Siddur, and it is at the back of the Chumash.

Then the Rebbe gave me a pocket T’hillim and a *Tanya*, and showered me with brachos. To my son Aharon Yosef he said, “Thank you for all the nachas ruach you gave the balabuste [the Rebbetzin],” and the Rebbe gave him the siddur which the Rebbetzin davened from in her latter years (a *Torah Ohr Siddur*).

As you can see in the facsimiles on this page, the siddur has various handwritten notes, corrections, and additions. I don’t know who wrote it, but as I said, it’s the siddur the Rebbe used to *bentch* from.

In the *ha’rachaman*, you can see two handwritten corrections/additions: 1) the nusach of *ol ha’goyim*, 2) before the *ha’rachaman hu yivorech es avi mori*, etc., it says, *ha’rachaman hu yivorech es Admur* (Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu).

From this we learn that the *ha’rachaman* for the Rebbe should be said before the *ha’rachaman...es avi mori*, and that the full nusach should be said,



The title page of the Chumash the Rebbe Rayatz gave the Rebbe

ha’rachaman hu yivorech es Admur, and the bracha shouldn’t be included within the *ha’rachaman of avi mori*.



A page of the siddur the Rebbe gave Chessed Halberstam where the “*ha’rachaman*” for the Rebbe is added in a handwritten note

THE TZADDIK RABBI AMRAM BLAU ZATZAL

From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



PART I

Rav Amram Blau was born in Jerusalem, in the year 5654 (1893-1894), to his father the gaon, Rabbi Yitzchak Shlomo *zatzal*, author of *M'lo Ha'omer* on the laws of *challa*, and a descendant of the *Keren Orah*. Reb Amram studied in the Ohel Moshe yeshiva, under the gaon Rav Yitzchak Yeruchem Diskin *zatzal*. Rav Amram was the head of Jerusalem's Neturei Karta ("Guardians of the City") movement.

Rav Amram was renowned for his zealous defense of Jewish observance against negative influences, and for his fight against secular Zionism. In particular, he struggled mightily against the secular Zionist character of [modern-day] Jerusalem, and led demonstrations against the breaches in Shabbos and *tznius* observance.

Rav Amram was a man of great self-sacrifice, intimidated by nothing. No important issue required too much effort or patience for him. Indeed, he merited sitting in jail a number of times on account of his struggles to defend the holy and the sacred. Once, when he was thrown in jail for demonstrating against the Shabbos desecration, the Chazon Ish went to visit him, saying that he was "going to visit our holy

Shabbos, which is in jail."

Notwithstanding his uncompromising struggles, Rav Amram was by nature a man of kindness and noble character. At his table, the downcast and broken-hearted were always to be found, and he dedicated from his time to teaching them Torah. He also served as a secretary for *Ramasayim Tzofim*, an organization founded in 5681 (1920-21) by the gaon Rav Akiva Yosef Shlezinger *zatzal*, with the purpose of helping Jews work in agriculture in a manner facilitating their observance of the laws associated with the earth of the Holy Land.

Rav Amram departed this world on



Reb Amram Balu in his youth

the sixteenth of Tammuz 5734 (July 6 1974).

"I AM MERELY REPEATING THE INSTRUCTIONS AND IDEAS OF OUR NESSIM"

In a letter to Rav Amram dated 24 Elul 5716 (August 31 1956), the Rebbe reminds him that his roots go back to the chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek, and the Rebbe asks him to make an effort to spread the teachings of Chassidus in Jerusalem, and to establish Chassidus classes in the *shuls* under his influence.

In a marginal footnote, the Rebbe adds: "I understood from the words of the rabbi and chassid, Reb (Oriel) Tzimmer, that Your Torah Honor does not agree with — and, perhaps, even opposes, etcetera — certain things. However, in the spirit of the Rambam's well known teaching, 'Accept the truth from whoever says it,' this should certainly not prevent, nor delay for even a moment, the implementation of the abovementioned (dissemination of Chassidus), since I am [not suggesting a new initiative], but am merely repeating the instructions and ideas of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe, our *N'siim*, who devoted themselves with self-sacrifice to disseminating the study of the Torah's inner dimension, and who

instructed their disciples and followers to do everything in their power to further this goal, and [to continuously set higher standards for themselves in this regard, in the spirit of the teaching], 'Whoever possesses [a hundred dollars, desires two hundred dollars?], and so on.'

“SHOCKING, PAINFUL”

On the same day that the Rebbe wrote this letter to Rav Amram, he wrote a lengthy letter to the gaon and chassid Rabbi Avrohom Hersh Cohen, asking him to establish Chassidus study classes in one of the shuls of “those who call themselves Neturei Karta, [and] who have recently printed in one of their pamphlets that people should refrain from studying Chabad Chassidus . . . shocking . . . and painful.”

The Rebbe then promises the gaon that he will succeed in this, “in accordance with the Heavenly Court’s ruling that in all matters pertaining to Torah, awe of Heaven, and good character traits, those connected to him and those following in his footsteps will have the upper hand.” Obviously, my intention with regard to this Chassidus study session [in a Neturei Karta shul] is not that it should be done in a quiet manner, without divulging that the subject matter is Chassidus, and so on; rather, it should be done in a manner resembling the approach used by the opposition — i.e., you should say explicitly that you wish to establish this study session in that specific shul . . . it would be appropriate for one of the fixed times for this study session to be on the holy Shabbos . . . I am sending this letter with great urgency, so that you



Reb Amram teaching Torah to prisoners in the Yaffo jail, Erev Sukkos, 1949

will begin your efforts in this regard as a preparation for the upcoming new year . . . It would be best if this study session would start on Erev Rosh HaShana, as a means of extending its merit to the entire previous year.”

REB AMRAM HELPS ESTABLISH CHASSIDUS SHIUR

It was Erev Rosh HaShana when Rabbi Avrohom Hersh received the letter, which was sent express. Upon receiving the letter, the gaon began pondering the question of how to carry

out the Rebbe’s holy request that a Chassidus study session be established in a shul of the Neturei Karta on this very day of Erev Rosh HaShana. It seemed very unrealistic. In the end, the gaon decided to go directly to Rav Amram Blau, and ask him straight out to not only not interfere with the idea, but to actually help him carry it out. When the gaon entered Rav Amram’s home, he discovered to his astonishment that on that very same day, Rav Amram had received an express letter from the Rebbe regarding the importance of establishing Chassidus study sessions.

Rav Amram hurried to fulfill the Rebbe’s instruction. He understood that the Rebbe was seeking to negate a [Heavenly] accusation brought on by those who had written against the study of Chassidus. Reb Amram immediately gathered some of his Neturei Karta acquaintances, and together with Rabbi Avrohom Hersh, they went to their shul and began the first Chassidus class, which continued for many years.

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THE REBBE'S BAAL TOKEIA

BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ



*Rabbi Yosef Menachem Mendel a”h was the baal tokeia for the “standing t’kios” for the Rebbe MH”M. * Born in the legendary Chassidic city of Kotzk, he came to learn in Tomchei T’mimim in Otvotsk. * During the war years, he wandered with his fellow T’mimim to Vilna, Kobe Japan, and Shanghai. * From there he arrived in Montreal, went on shlichus to Philadelphia, and then was called to the field of education in Brooklyn. * The story of an outstanding Chassid.*

“At that moment, I could picture the t’kios by the Rebbe Rayatz, and I remembered that even when someone else blew, the Rebbe Rayatz himself said the brachos. I was sure that it would be the same with the Rebbe, and didn’t think to say the brachos. Then the Rebbe told me to say the brachos. I felt myself to be between a rock and a hard place. I couldn’t refuse the Rebbe, yet I couldn’t allow myself to say the brachos. There were a few seconds of silence, which seemed like

an eternity to me, but thank G-d, I had the strength to wait, and the Rebbe said the brachos and was the makri during the t’kios.”

That is how Rabbi Yosef Menachem Mendel Tenenbaum a”h emotionally described the first time he was the baal tokei’a for the Rebbe MH”M, in Tishrei 5712 (1951).

The year before, the Rebbe still davened in the Rebbe Rayatz’s apartment, and the baal tokei’a was Rabbi Berel Rivkin a”h, who had been

the Rebbe Rayatz’s baal tokei’a. After the Rebbe accepted the Chabad leadership and davened in the main minyan in the small zal of 770, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Shmuel Levitin to recommend a baal tokei’a for him.

R’ Levitin suggested R’ Tenenbaum, and the Rebbe agreed. Before Rosh HaShana, he went to the Rebbe who told him how to prepare for the t’kios. The Rebbe told him to learn the maamer, *L’Havin Inyan T’hias Shofar* from the Alter Rebbe’s *Siddur im Dach*, and also told him to immerse in the mikva Rosh HaShana morning *pashut, dag, pashut* three times.

Before the t’kios that year, the Rebbe said the p’sukim, “*La’m’natzei’ach ... min ha’metzar,*” and when he got to the brachos, he motioned to R’ Tenenbaum to say them. As we quoted above, R’ Tenenbaum couldn’t say the brachos in place of the Rebbe, and thus, the Rebbe said the brachos himself. In later years, starting around 5716, the Rebbe even blew the “sitting t’kios” (sounded before the Amida prayer of Musaf), and R’ Tenenbaum blew the “standing t’kios” (during the Amida).

“If I didn’t have the courage to wait and not say the brachos in 5712, who knows how it would have been done in the years that followed,” R’

Tenenbaum would say. “Believe me, it wasn’t my strength that stopped me from saying the brachos, but I could picture the t’kios with the Rebbe Rayatz and couldn’t do otherwise.”

That was R’ Tenenbaum, a combination of bittul and uncompromising strength, unusual wisdom alongside t’mimus and inner yiras Shamayim. He was like that from his youth until his last day.

ENTRANCE EXAM

Rabbi Yosef Menachem Mendel was born in 5677 (1917) in Kotzk, Poland. His father, R’ Yitzchok, was a Kotzker Chassid, a businessman as well as an outstanding Torah scholar, who even during business hours would delve into a Talmudic topic from time to time. Those who learned in the beis midrash near his business would go to him for clear explanations on the topic under discussion.

His grandfather on his mother’s side was a Chassid named Alter Yaakov Yehuda, and among the Kotzker Chassidim they would say that the Kotzker Rebbe would not begin davening until this Chassid arrived.

In this home, R’ Tenenbaum received his chinuch for Torah and

“Believe me, it wasn’t my strength that stopped me from saying the brachos, but I could picture the t’kios with the Rebbe Rayatz and couldn’t do otherwise.”

yiras Shamayim, and from his uncle, R’ Yosef, he learned how to blow the shofar. Thanks to him, R’ Tenenbaum later became the Rebbe’s baal tokei’a for the standing t’kios.

While he was still a child, his family moved to Otvotsk. In their neighborhood lived the gaon and Chassid R’ Dovid Teiblum (known as Ricker, as he was from the town of Rickeh), who was a teacher in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim. R’ Dovid discerned R’ Tenenbaum’s abilities and fine middos, and referred him to Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim that was in Otvotsk at that time.

In those days there weren’t many yeshivos in Poland, as most young men who were interested in pursuing their studies did so in the local beis midrash. Tomchei T’mimim had acquired a good reputation, though dozens of bachurim who applied to the yeshiva were not accepted, primarily because of a lack of money. Only exceptional talmidim were accepted.

The rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Yehuda Eber (may Hashem avenge his blood), presided over the entrance exam. R’ Tenenbaum was tested together with another bachur, and R’ Eber presented them with a complicated question. After studying the question, R’ Tenenbaum answered that it was a good question and he had no answer for it. The other bachur tried to answer the question.

Immediately after the test, R’ Tenenbaum was informed that he was accepted into the yeshiva, while the other bachur had to wait a few days before he was accepted. Afterwards, R’ Eber told R’ Dovid Ricker why he did what he did.

The bachur you sent me immediately understood the question. I saw he had a good head and was willing to accept him, for he wasn’t to blame for not knowing the answer. The other bachur *hut stam gedreit* (was just trying to wiggle out of the question).

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REBBE RAYATZ

Shortly after entering the yeshiva, R’ Tenenbaum had his first yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz. His brother-in-law, R’ Yitzchok Hendel, relates that even with that first yechidus, the Rebbe Rayatz displayed special affection for him, and even held the edge of his jacket as they spoke.

R’ Tenenbaum hardly said anything about his yechiduyos with the Rebbe Rayatz. What he did say was about the first maamer Chassidus he heard from the Rebbe Rayatz, *Al Tira Avrom, Anochi Magen Lach* – 5695, which he knew fluently and would repeat from



Rabbi Tenenbaum receiving a dollar from the Rebbe

time to time.

R' Tenenbaum was successful in his study of nigleh and Chassidus, and became one of the yeshiva's top talmidim. He was known as a *masmid* (diligent student) and as someone with straight thinking. As time went by, he became a *maskil* in Chassidus, and acquired amazing *bekius* in *Tanya*. You could always ask him about a difficult topic in *Tanya*, and he would answer you as though he had just studied it.

When his friend, Rabbi Yosef Wineberg began giving *Tanya* shiurim on the radio, he would consult with him when he prepared the shiurim. After R' Wineberg received the Rebbe's comments on his shiurim, he and R' Tenenbaum sat together to study them.

His diligence in the study of Chassidus had a tremendous effect on him, and he became a true *oved* whose avodas ha't'filla was remarkable. In 5697, when Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson arrived in Poland from the United States, the Rebbe Rayatz told him, "The journey by ship from America was worthwhile in order for you to see Mendel Tenenbaum's davening."

Rabbi Menachem Zev Gringlass described R' Tenenbaum's conduct as a Tamim in a letter of condolence he sent the family:

"When he first came to Tomchei T'mimim, I slept in his room, and I could see that his bed remained untouched for weeks. Towards midnight, he would sit at the table and learn *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, and would doze off while leaning on his arms. That was his sleep for the night. He didn't get undressed. When he woke up, he began the avoda of *Krias Shma al HaMitta*, and silently hummed a niggun ... It was like the faintest note on a violin."

He went on to describe R' Tenenbaum's day:

"He learned Chassidus for a few hours in the morning, only then did he make his preparations for davening. The walk to the mikva and back took about an hour, and if he walked with

someone else, he reviewed Chassidus on the way. Then he put on his t'fillin and stood in his place – without exaggeration – for two to three hours thinking Chassidus in depth. Because of his concentration, his face turned white. His davening lasted until about two in the afternoon, and that was on a weekday. On Shabbos, it was nearly all day, and in the short days he barely had time to make Kiddush and wash for lechem mishna."

He also wrote:

"The Rebbe Rashab once said: The *Kuntres HaT'filla* and the *Kuntres Avoda*

The Rebbe looked at him with a look that R' Tenenbaum described as, "A look of surprise as though he had discovered America," and said, "I know what it says! But this is how I heard it. It is Torah from Gan Eden!"

were already published, and now we need to publish a *Kuntres Achila U'Sh'tiya* (on eating and drinking).

"That never happened, but from R' Tenenbaum one could learn how to eat, how to hold a slice of bread, and how to hold a spoonful of soup. His eating and drinking were actual avoda."

Rabbi Berel Levy, who was R' Tenenbaum's roommate at one time, said, "Before he began *Krias Shma al HaMitta*, he would look to see if I was sleeping. Many times I feigned sleep so

I could watch him say the Shma in his special way."

WHEN THE REBBE TAUGHT THEM HOW TO DO A CHAZARA

Thanks to his talents and efforts, R' Tenenbaum was one of the chozrim of the Rebbe Rayatz's maamarim. The way it worked was, after a maamer was said, he and his friend, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, would review the maamer with the mashpia and secretary of the Rebbe, Rabbi Chatshe Feigin (may Hashem avenge his blood). Then they would repeat the maamer for the Rebbe.

R' Tenenbaum told the following story. In one of his maamarim, the Rebbe Rayatz mentioned a pasuk in chapter 40 of T'hillim, "*agida va'adabeira, atzmu misaper*" but instead of saying, "*va'adabeira*" the Rebbe said, "*va'asapeira*." Before going in to review the maamer for the Rebbe, they discussed how they should say the maamer, but came to no conclusion.

R' Chatshe, who was the head chozer, said the pasuk the way it is written in T'hillim, and not as the Rebbe had said it. The Rebbe corrected him, and R' Chatshe said, "But it says, '*va'adabeira*' ..."

The Rebbe looked at him with a look that R' Tenenbaum described as, "A look of surprise as though he had discovered America," and said, "I know what it says! But this is how I heard it. It is Torah from Gan Eden!"

At the end of 5699, R' Mentlick had already escaped to America, and R' Tenenbaum had the opportunity to review a maamer for the Rebbe. Since by nature he was shy, you can just imagine how he stood before the Rebbe. He said the maamer in great awe and in a low voice.

After a few minutes, the Rebbe stopped him and said: When a businessman uses his thumb for business matters, that's not good, but someone who learns should use his thumb while learning.



The T'mimim in Vilna parting from R' Yitzchok Dovber Ushpal, who left for America in 5701

In other words, although undue strength is undesirable when it comes to business matters, Torah study demands strength, and the Rebbe himself modeled how to review a maamer. The Rebbe got up and in a loud voice and with a strong tune he continued where they were up to in the maamer.

VILNA, JAPAN, SHANGHAI, AND MONTREAL

World War II broke out in 1939 and the front quickly approached Otvotsk. The yeshiva was closed and the bachurim fled. Many went home, to be with their families at this trying time. Others sought means to escape the area. When Poland was conquered, the Rebbe Rayatz's view was that they should try to leave the country. Many T'mimim managed to escape to Vilna.

R' Tenenbaum was one of the refugees, but he was caught by the Nazis at the border, along with his roommate, R' Gringlass and R' Shmuel Dovid Raitchik. The Germans forced them to go to a location near the city of Shadlitz and they spend the night under the watch of armed guards, who had them clean the area of the station. Miraculously, they managed to escape at dawn, and they continued towards Vilna.

They joined the T'mimim there, and despite their flight and their worries over their families, they set up a yeshiva just like in Otvotsk. This yeshiva lasted from the beginning of 5700 until the winter of 5701. Vilna was under Russian rule, and it

announced the opening of the borders, saying that whoever had a Polish passport could choose to return to Poland or to enter Russia. Poland under Nazi rule and Russia under Communist rule were terrible choices for Jews in general and T'mimim in particular. The situation was grave and they couldn't consult with the Rebbe Rayatz, who had already escaped to the United States.

The solution that Hashem sent was absolutely unexpected. The Japanese consul in Lithuania, a man named Sugihara, was a righteous gentile who opposed his orders and issued thousands of transit visas to those who wanted to leave the country. These visas enabled the recipient to travel by train to Russia and then by ship to Japan and on to Curacao.

Some of the T'mimim in Vilna, among them R' Tenenbaum, got these visas and left Vilna. They continued the yeshiva schedule on the road, with great mesirus nefesh. They passed through Moscow where they met Anash who pleaded with them to leave copies of the maamarim that they had, which were rarities in Russia. How thrilled the Chassidim were to receive one booklet of recent maamarim of the Rebbe Rayatz.

When they arrived in Japan, they learned that the authorities in Curacao did not allow the refugees to enter their country, and so they were stranded in Japan until their visas expired. Then they were expelled to Shanghai in China.

Most of them remained in Shanghai until the end of the war, but in 1941 they were sent a few visas from Canada that were distributed to those learning in the various yeshivos. Nine visas were given to the T'mimim, and the rest were given to bachurim in other yeshivos. R' Tenenbaum was one of the lucky nine.

The nine bachurim traveled from Shanghai to S. Francisco, and on Thursday, 2 Cheshvan 5702, they arrived in Montreal.



Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Shanghai, the end of 5701

Standing from right to left: Yosef M.M. Tenenbaum, Zev Wolf Gringlass, Provst, Yitzchok Dovber Ushpal, Moshe Eliyahu Gerlitzky, Yosef Wineberg, Yosef Rodel and Yosef Portowitz

ONE OF MY LIMBS

Because of the war, R' Tenenbaum and his friends could not obtain visas to the United States. R' Tenenbaum first arrived to see the Rebbe Rayatz in New York for Pesach of 5704, together with R' Gringlass. They enjoyed special attention from the Rebbe and joined him for the sedarim.

After Yom Tov, he had a yechidus with the Rebbe. He hoped that he would finally be able to remain with the Rebbe, after a break of five years, and was surprised when the Rebbe told him to go and open a yeshiva in Philadelphia.

Naturally, despite his disappointment, R' Tenenbaum did not refuse. He accepted the shlichus, but his face went pale. The Rebbe's reaction to this was: I consider you as one of my limbs and you don't have to ask a limb!

Less than a month passed from that yechidus and Yeshivas Ohel Moshe – Achei T'mimim opened in Philadelphia, headed by R' Tenenbaum and R' Yitzchok Dovid Groner. The Rebbe Rayatz sent them detailed letters with specific instructions as to how to proceed.

In 5705, R' Tenenbaum married his wife Devorah Fried a"h. The wedding took place in Montreal, where she was from. After the wedding, they returned to Philadelphia, where their oldest son was born.

R' Tenenbaum asked the Rebbe before making any move, big or small, and as soon as his son was born, he went to New York to ask the Rebbe what to name him. He wanted to name him Eliyahu for his father-in-law, but since he had died young, he wanted to add the Rebbe Rashab's name.

When he presented his question to the Rebbe Rayatz in yechidus, the Rebbe told him that you don't combine the names of the Rebbeim with other names, and he should name his son Eliyahu, "and you will have other sons."

That's what he did. He named his oldest son Eliyahu, and his next son, Sholom Dovber. The Rebbe's words, "you will have other sons," were precise, as he had four other sons but not daughters.

In 5708, Rashag asked him to be a mechanech in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Brooklyn. With the Rebbe Rayatz's approval, R' Tenenbaum left Philadelphia and moved to New York. He settled, as did most of Anash at that time, in Brownsville, and began working as a maggid shiur in the yeshiva on Bedford. Not even a year went by and he was promoted to menahel ruchni of the elementary school and mesivta. He was extremely devoted, and served in this role until his final days.

He was very successful, and a year later, he joined the central hanhala of the yeshiva. Over the years, he was one of six men who went to the Rebbe MH"M for yechidus every month to report about the yeshiva, and to receive instructions and brachos.

The members of the hanhala highly esteemed his wisdom and his talents as an educator. Before every yechidus, when they convened in the home of Rashag, although R' Tenenbaum was the youngest of the group, Rashag would not start the meeting until he arrived. The members of the hanhala enjoyed his wisdom and the way he navigated between the various views. He never did things on his own, but always consulted with the other members of the hanhala.

MEKUSHAR HEART AND SOUL TO THE REBBE MH"M

In 5710, after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, R' Tenenbaum became mekushar to the Rebbe MH"M heart and soul. He remembered the Rebbe from Poland, when he would come and visit his father-in-law for Yom Tov. The Rebbe Rayatz told the Rebbe to speak in learning with the T'mimim, and that's how R' Tenenbaum knew that the Rebbe was an extraordinary

personality and willingly accepted his leadership.

R' Tenenbaum had the unusual z'chus that in 5711 the Rebbe was sandek at the bris of his son Yitzchok. (Aside from him, the Rebbe was sandek for only two other Chassidim, R' Yosef Rosenfeld, and R' Y.Y. Chitrik). The bris was on 7 Adar II at the family's house in an apartment building on Park Place in Brownsville, and the Rebbe said a sicha (printed in *Sichos Kodosh*). The Rebbe also gave five dollars towards the first payment of tuition for the child (as is customary) and in the sicha said, "I was once present when the Rebbe, my father-in-law, was sandek. Although he was a shochet and didn't mind the sight of blood, he looked aside during the bris," and that is what the Rebbe did too.

R' Tenenbaum moved to Crown Heights in 5716 and lived on President Street near Rogers. He began giving a Chassidus shiur in the Beis Dovid shul every winter Friday night and kept this up the rest of his life.

Even years later, when he bought a house on Montgomery Street, he continued the shiur in a shul near his new home. His dedication to holy matters was exemplary. He started a shiur on Shabbos morning in 770, and every single Shabbos, no matter the weather or time of the year, he would sit near the eastern wall with a group in attendance.

When the idea came up to buy the house on Montgomery Street, the Rebbe encouraged him in a yechidus, and when his wife wondered how they would pay for it, the Rebbe smiled and said, "Your husband has a good reputation. They'll give him loans."

Regarding his good reputation – there were Jews who, every year before Pesach, gave him money for *maos chitim* because they relied on him to distribute the money to those in need. On more than one occasion he discreetly made a gemach for someone, and this was aside from the aid he

provided the talmidim in yeshiva to whom he wasn't only a mechanech but also a father.

Over the years, he participated in nearly all of the Rebbe's farbrengens. He stood near the Rebbe with utter bittul and the Rebbe related to him with affection and esteem.

On Chai Elul 5710, during Mincha, the chazan stopped before Tachanun and looked inquiringly at the Rebbe to know whether he should say Tachanun or not. The Rebbe turned to R' Tenenbaum as though consulting with him. R' Tenenbaum said, "In the kuntres Chai Elul it says that it's a Yom Tov, and on Yom Tov you don't say Tachanun!" And the Rebbe accepted this and they did not recite Tachanun.

On another occasion, at a farbrengen in 5712 or 5713, the Rebbe spoke about avodas ha't'filla, and turned towards R' Tenenbaum and said, "remember the days of yore."

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS TALMIDIM

R' Tenenbaum was very refined, thoughtful and calm. These qualities were readily apparent, particularly in his role as menahel ruchni of the yeshiva. He demanded that his talmidim be punctual and would remind them that in English, wasting time is called "killing time." A yeshiva bachur needs to know his role and constantly remember that wasting time is killing something very precious.

He always spoke pleasantly and patiently with his talmidim, and only raised his voice on rare occasions. He preferred the "right draws near" over the "left pushes away," and related to the boys with great respect.

He treated the teachers this way, as well. One of the secular studies

teachers was not religious, and one day, R' Tenenbaum noticed that he seemed bothered by something. He gently asked him what was troubling him, and the man said that his first child had been born a few days earlier, after five years of marriage, and the nurses had put too many drops into his eyes. They were afraid that the baby's eyesight was ruined.

R' Tenenbaum suggested that he

said there was a great improvement and the baby was fine. R' Tenenbaum said that he owed the Rebbe something, and explained that since he had received a bracha from the Rebbe, he needed to pay back with a mitzva.

R' Tenenbaum said this pleasantly though firmly, and the man decided to begin putting on t'fillin daily!

In a condolence letter from one of his talmidim, it said that R' Tenenbaum was extremely considerate when he *farhered* (tested) the boys. "We had boys who knew more and boys who knew less. I can never forget how he would help the talmid to get him to say the right answer. And he was so happy when he finally pulled the right answer out of the unfortunate boy, it was amazing to watch."

As far as those talmidim who didn't seem to belong in yeshiva, R' Tenenbaum made every effort to keep them in yeshiva. On the one hand, he strongly maintained the atmosphere in yeshiva, but on the other hand, even in serious cases, he did all he could to keep another neshama within Tomchei T'mimim.

When the yeshiva was first founded in America, many of the talmidim were from American homes where the parents insisted on their children attending college after high school. R' Tenenbaum put great effort into these talmidim in heart-to-heart talks, both with the talmidim themselves

and with their parents. He even made house calls. Keeping in touch with the parents was very important to him, and he devoted a great deal of time and effort to this.

His learning was straightforward. He wasn't a regular maggid shiur in a classroom but every afternoon he gave a Gemara shiur to talmidim who preferred to learn limudei kodesh



At a Yud-Tes Kislev celebration with talmidim on Bedford



5721 – Meir Reines receiving a prize for studying Chassidus from Rabbi Tenenbaum

Seated: Rabbi Yoel Kahn, Moshe Eliyahu Liss, Yosef Wineberg, Shmuel Tzvi Fuchs, and Avrohom Garfinkel

write to the Rebbe, and although the man didn't believe in this, he agreed to say his full name and that of his mother. Within a short time, an answer of refua shleima came out from the Rebbe. R' Tenenbaum joyfully relayed the good news, but the man didn't believe in it.

A few days later, the man happily told R' Tenenbaum that the doctors

instead of limudei chol. In these shiurim, he taught them a straightforward approach to a daf Gemara, and the basic rules when learning Rashi and Tosafos.

He was a model of an authentic educator who worried about his talmidim even during *bein ha'z'manim*. Back in the early years of the Rebbe's nesius, R' Tenenbaum organized special gatherings for young talmidim on Chol HaMoed, whether within the yeshiva or in 770. This turned into the traditional rally.

In those days, the rally took place in 770 or in the sukka of 770, and the Rebbe watched from the window or went out to encourage the singing at the end of the kinus.

During the summer break, R' Tenenbaum traveled to Venezuela and Curacao (where he wanted to flee during the war) and other countries. He traveled to raise funds on behalf of the yeshiva, and "sowed ruchnius and reaped gashmius." He was always prepared with mezuzos, Chassidic books, etc., and spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus among the Jews he met who weren't otherwise exposed to Yiddishkeit. He established relationships with balabatim and they looked forward to his trip each summer so they could hear his words of chizuk.

"LONG LIFE IN TOMCHEI T'MIMIM"

R' Tenenbaum's characteristic diligence was even more apparent in his later years, when despite his precarious health, he didn't miss a day at yeshiva or a single staff meeting, even when he was one of the oldest members of the hanhala.

In 5747, he had a heart attack and was hospitalized on Rosh Chodesh Adar. That day, the Rebbe sent him 22 dollars for tz'daka. He tried to figure out why the Rebbe had sent him precisely 22 dollars, but it was only when he was released on the 22nd of Adar that he understood.

The first time he went to 770 to



At the Yud Shvat farbrengen in 5716

Behind the Rebbe from right to left: Rabbis Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, Berel Rivkin, Mordechai Isaac Chadakov, Yisroel Jacobson, Eliyahu Yachil Simpson, Mordechai Mentlick, Y.M.M. Tenenbaum, and Rashag

daven, after the operation, the Rebbe told his son Yitzchok, who stood near the door after the davening, "Today I saw your father in shul."

After his hospital stay, his family asked him to reduce his daily commitments. The first time he went past the Rebbe for dollars after his operation, the Rebbe said, "Long life in Tomchei T'mimim." After hearing this, he dropped any plans of working less and devoted himself to his job in yeshiva with renewed chayus.

On Motzai Yom Kippur 5752 something unusual happened. Every year, the Rebbe would turn around to the tzibbur during "Napoleon's March," and when they finished singing, by t'kias shofar, the Rebbe would turn back around and face east. That year, the Rebbe continued to look at the tzibbur even when the niggun was finished, and waited for the t'kia.

R' Tenenbaum stood ready, and since he was weak, he asked his son, Levi, to stand near him in case he couldn't blow the shofar. He managed to blow the shofar himself, as the Rebbe watched him the entire time.

At the end of that year, on 26 Elul 5752, R' Tenenbaum had a stroke.

How symbolic it was that it happened while he was within the "walls of the yeshiva" on Ocean Parkway, while at work in his avodas ha'kodesh.

After being ill for a long time, he passed away on Thursday night, Motzai Zos Chanuka 5754, his body purified by his suffering and his soul refined with Torah, avoda, and g'milus chassadim.

R' Tenenbaum was survived by his sons: R' Eliyahu and R' Sholom Dovber, who are in chinuch like their father; R' Yitzchok who is involved in tzorchei tzibbur; R' Levi who is also a mechanech; and R' Alter Yaakov Yehuda who is a shliach in California.

R' Tenenbaum, who blew the shofar for the Rebbe for years, is certainly raising a hue and cry in heaven that this Galus come to an end. And that we immediately merit, "And it will be on that day that the great shofar will blow, and all the lost ones from the land of Assyria will come and the forsaken ones from the land of Egypt, and they will bow to Hashem on the holy mountain, in Yerushalayim," with the revelation of the Rebbe MH"M.

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"Those who are suited and those who want to put their efforts into this, should put their efforts into rabbonus and dayanus, for these take precedence" (sicha Rosh Chodesh Shevat 5739)

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“WE DEMONSTRATED WEAKNESS, AND THEY STRIKE AT THE WEAK”

BY SHAI GEFEN

IT'S OUR FAULT

Terrorism around the world is on the increase and has become a serious threat to world peace. A new era in terrorism began with the attack on the World Trade Center, when the world began to realize that there's no such thing as “good terror” and “bad terror.” The world understood that terror is terror, and it strikes anywhere, at any time, at anyone.

A number of serious attacks took place these past few weeks in Russia, at the same time as the double bombing in Be'er Sheva. Two planes exploded, there was a car bomb on the streets of the city, and hundreds of children were taken hostage and killed. This should be lighting red warning lights for world leaders, who should be looking into the origins of terrorism and solutions to eradicate it.

The attack on the WTC took place a year after the new Intifada started in Eretz Yisroel. The world's attention was focused on the picture of the Arab boy caught in the crossfire of Israelis and Arabs. The world sympathized with the “good terrorists,” those who hate Israel. Now they are beginning to catch on to what this terror is all about.

President Bush said at a press conference, “The attacks in September helped us to better understand Israel.” President Putin also addressed a press conference after the attacks in his country and said, “We demonstrated weakness and they strike at the weak.”

We who were raised on the Rebbe's teachings know that worldwide terrorism is a result of Israel's conduct. When Israel began caving in to terror, unconditionally, that's when

international terror began to strike roots in other places too. When we took another step forward in the Disengagement Plan, which plunges us further into capitulating to terror, worldwide terror rose a notch.

The significance of the Disengagement Plan is absolute capitulation to thousands of RPG's and a handful of terrorists, and the expulsion of Jews from their homes in order to pacify terrorists. *Why shouldn't*

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terrorists around the world be encouraged to increase terror to further their agendas?

In 5750, when a representative from Ger came to the Rebbe in order to “convince” him that it's possible to sit within a government that talks about giving away land, the Rebbe said one line that explains what has been going on lately. The Rebbe said:

Since that party met with Arab

representatives and negotiated with them ... as a result ... Arabs all over continued their activities and harmed some of our Jewish brethren – to the point of killing some r”l. And not only in Eretz Yisroel, but in other countries too.

When we in Israel are weak, and give in to terror, the entire world is weaker as a result. The main problem is the free world understands the danger while in Israel the government is blind. The Disengagement Plan continues to move on, as clearly, the double massacre in Be'er Sheva doesn't bother P.M. Sharon. And the hostage crisis in Russia did not make our leaders pause for thought. They carry on as though it has nothing to do with us.

Since the Oslo Accords, numerous opportunities arose to stop capitulating to terror, but the “wise and discerning nation” offered even more to our enemies. If even now we don't stop and say, “Enough is enough,” it's frightening to think of what will happen next.

We have endured four years of terror, and it's because Arafat understood at the second Camp David summit that Israel is prepared to go to the nth degree in concessions, including the Temple Mt. When the arch terrorist got this clear message, he knew that he would get more without an agreement. The decision about an Intifada and terror wasn't simply Arab caprice but a cold and calculated move that has proven to be quite successful.

Until Israel learns the lesson and changes its warped thinking, terror will triumph and the tears will flow!

JEWES OF THE WORLD, WAKE UP!

The Rebbe emphasized many times that the issue of shleimus ha'Aretz is not only connected to the Jews of Eretz Yisroel, but *all Jews* ought to be concerned, since terror affects world peace. Today the world sees this clearly.

I call upon all shluchim of the Rebbe around the world: The topic of shleimus ha'Aretz is an inseparable part of the Rebbe's battles, and it's a burning issue, today more than ever before. Whoever looks, even superficially, sees clearly that all the Rebbe's sichos on this topic were said for our times. If you look at the book *Karati V'Ein Oneh* you see this. Like with many things, an awakening on the part of world Jewry can bring about change in the policies of the State of Israel.

Shluchim have a great deal of power, whether through Jewish communities or through connections with those in power or men of means who are involved in Israeli politics. There's no question that if the shluchim would give this their attention, and would understand that getting involved in this helps not only Jews of Eretz Yisroel, but Jews around the world, they would certainly use their considerable influence to oppose Israel's policy of capitulation.

The rabbanim of the Pikuach

Nefesh organization who visited Washington D.C. met with senators and were warmly received. If the same thing was done in Russia and other countries, along with projects to arouse public support among Jews worldwide, it would certainly have a great impact.

There might be the aspect of "a prisoner cannot free himself from jail," as far as those who live in Eretz Yisroel (though this certainly doesn't absolve them of trying), but aid from abroad can be very influential in saving the Jews of Eretz Yisroel. Every action, no matter how small, can bring about change, especially now, when the world is alert to what terrorism is wreaking upon them.

Shluchim, rabbanim, and community leaders: You have the ability and the privilege to help in this war, and the sooner the better!

"TODAY THEY ARE READY TO CONCEDE EVEN WITHOUT A PIECE OF PAPER"

It's hard to understand and digest the madness and wickedness which is what the Disengagement Plan is about. Whoever observes what has been happening here the past twenty years is shocked by what the concessions have caused. During the course of the Camp David agreement, the Rebbe said that from this agreement began the, "you have begun to fall before them," and sadly, we see how right the Rebbe was. From year to year and day to day,

the situation only gets worse. What they used to call issues they would not compromise on, has become normal and accepted today. In the past, these kinds of moves would be sold to the Israeli public as "peace" and "achievements," but today we have deteriorated so greatly that we concede without getting anything in return, and they aren't even ashamed of presenting it to the public this way.

In a sicha that was said on Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5744, the Rebbe said that if in the past they demanded a piece of paper in order to present a "peace agreement," today they don't even demand this:

... This is the feeling that there's a need to capitulate immediately before all pressure, the absolute opposite of behaving with "pride of Yaakov!" The source of the problem is the feeling of inferiority before the goy and the need to abase oneself and to find favor in their eyes. This attitude is, unfortunately, growing. If in the past they agreed to give in on condition that they receive a piece of paper, today they are ready to give in without a piece of paper, but in exchange for an verbal promise alone, when they know what value such a promise has!

And all this is to curry favor with the goy. They are prepared to give back additional land to Egypt, but the miracle is that the Egyptians don't want to accept it! If only this situation continues! They are also ready to give back the land in Lebanon, although they saw the consequences of this approach.

For those who wonder what happened to Sharon, the answer is simple. Nothing happened. It's exactly the same Sharon as the one at the Camp David accords, but in the past his capitulation to the goy was in exchange for a piece of paper; now he doesn't even need that. That's the entire Torah on one foot.

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