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THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE RAMBAM OF CHASSIDUS

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'YEIRA; 15TH DAY OF MAR- CHESHVAN, 5751

1. In connection with Parshas VaYeira and Chaf MarCheshvan,[182] it is related[183] that the Rebbe Rashab went to his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, for yechidus before his birthday. When the child entered the room, he began to cry. After his grandfather calmed him, he asked him to explain the reason for his outburst. The Rebbe Rashab answered that in cheider, he had learned that G-d revealed Himself to Avrohom. He was disturbed and wanted to know, "Why doesn't G-d reveal Himself to me as well?"

The Tzemach Tzedek replied to him. "When a Jew who is a tzaddik is ninety-nine years old and decides to circumcise himself, he is worthy of Divine revelation."

Since this story is told in connection with the Rebbe Rashab's birthday, a day of general importance when, "the spiritual source of his soul shines powerfully," we can appreciate that it includes the totality of his service and clarifies what the central point of his service was.[184]

To explain: All the Rebbeim were N'siim and thus shared certain

common dimensions. Nevertheless, each one was also characterized by a particular dimension which reflected his individual nature. Pinpointing this quality is a challenge because it is difficult for people of our spiritual level to differentiate between the service of individuals like the Rebbeim who were on a much higher spiritual plane. Nevertheless, each of the Rebbeim manifested certain qualities more prominently than others. Thus, it is worthy to mention these differences with the intent that this lead to an increase in the fear of heaven and the service of G-d.

In general, all of the Chabad Rebbeim were distinguished by their ability to draw down and enclothe the teachings of P'nimius HaTorah within the limits of human intellect. This gave their followers the potential to internalize their teachings and personally identify with spiritual ideas, thus producing an increase – and indeed, a new dimension – in the service of G-d. The increase in knowledge of G-d led to an increase in the love and fear of G-d[185] and thus, an increase in actual service since love is the source for the fulfillment of all the 248 positive commandments and fear is the source for the fulfillment of the 365 negative commandments.

This thrust was powerfully revealed by the Rebbe Rashab whose discourses were characterized by detailed intellectual explanations, drawing down the teachings of Chassidus within the limits of human intellect to a degree that surpassed his predecessors' achievements. He would present a summary and a conclusion of the discussion of spiritual concepts in a manner which allowed them to be easily understood and thus applied in actual life.

To be sure, this thrust was also evident in the Previous Rebbeim's teachings. The Alter Rebbe revealed the Chabad (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge) approach. The Mittler Rebbe expressed those teachings in greater depth, being comparable to "the broadening of the river." Nevertheless, the Rebbe Rashab's teachings, however, put a far greater emphasis on bringing out a conclusive summary of the subject matter so that it would be able to be implemented in the Chassidim's everyday lives. For this reason, the Chassidim referred to the Rebbe Rashab as "the Rambam of Chassidus." The Rambam's uniqueness was expressed in his collection of the entire Oral Law and his presentation of it in a manner in the form of clear and easily comprehensible directives

governing every aspect of our conduct. The Rebbe Rashab made a similar contribution within the context of the Chabad tradition.

The Rebbe Rashab's approach was revealed in the hemshechim[186] (treatises which included a series of maamarim) in particular, the hemshechim which began in the years 5666 and 5672 which explained fundamental Chassidic concepts in a clear manner that enabled them to be understood and applied in actual life.[187]

This thrust was also expressed in the Rebbe Rashab's establishment of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. The yeshiva was intended to allow for a systematic and settled[188] approach to the study of Chassidus. In the yeshiva, Nigleh (the revealed teachings of Torah law) and Chassidus were both studied in a manner which reflected how they are two dimensions of a single Torah. The students were taught to appreciate a Chassidic dimension in their Nigleh studies and to approach a Chassidic concept with the same thorough intellectual approach that characterizes Talmudic study. This, in turn – enhanced by the sharing of ideas and intellectual and spiritual give and take among the students that characterizes yeshiva study – gave a student the opportunity to apply the concepts he learned in his own life and to share them with others.

Thus, the founding of the yeshiva was associated with the service of spreading the wellsprings of Torah – the wellsprings of Nigleh and the wellsprings of Chassidus as they are fused together – outward.[189] In this manner, the students of the yeshiva become “candles which illuminate” and fulfill their mission as T'mimim as the Rebbe Rashab emphasized in his discourse, “Whoever goes out to the wars of the House of David.”

Thus, the founding of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim by the Rebbe Rashab added a further stage of completion in the efforts that G-dliness

should be appreciated and grasped through studying Chassidus and that this study should lead to action.

In particular, this refers to the deed of “raising up many students,” beginning with the founding of the yeshiva by the Rebbe Rashab. Furthermore, the Rebbe's intent when founding the yeshiva was that it should spread and that new branches should be established in many places. This activity was furthered by the director of the yeshiva, the Previous Rebbe, who brought the yeshiva to “the lower

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half of the world” (America), from where branches were established throughout the world.[190]

There is a connection between the above concepts and the Rebbe Rashab's heartfelt outburst that G-d should reveal Himself to him just as He revealed Himself to Avrohom, our Patriarch. What the Rebbe Rashab wanted, even as a young boy, was to see G-dliness openly revealed. Throughout his life, he worked towards that goal and this was the

purpose of his achievements in revealing Chassidus and establishing the yeshiva.

To express these concepts on a deeper level. G-dliness is revealed within and through the medium of the Torah, which is G-d's will and wisdom and which is totally united with Him. “G-d and His Torah are one.” G-d invested Himself in the Torah as evident by our Sages' interpretation of the word Anochi as an acronym for the Hebrew words meaning, “I wrote down and gave over Myself.”

This was revealed in an open and manifest manner at the time the Torah was given as the Torah declares, “You have been shown to know that the L-rd is G-d.” Then, we actually saw the revelation of G-dliness. The Ten Commandments – which include the entire Torah – reflect His inner will, where there is no concealment or veiling.

Within the various disciplines of Torah, there is a greater dimension of revelation in the realm of halacha. Thus, our Sages interpreted the expression, “The word of G-d” as referring to halacha, and the expression, “G-d is with Him,” as “the halacha follows his view.[191]

Similarly, there is a greater dimension of Divine revelation associated with the study of P'nimius HaTorah which is described as “the tree of life, where there are no questions emanating from the powers of evil.” In this realm of knowledge, G-dliness and spiritual subjects are discussed openly in contrast to the study of Nigleh where these subjects are not openly revealed.[192]

Within the realm of P'nimius HaTorah itself, there is a unique emphasis on the maamarim recited by the Rebbeim. Rav Hillel of Paritch would say that hearing a Rebbe recite a maamer is like receiving “the word of G-d on Mount Sinai.”[193] This particularly applies, regarding the Rebbe Rashab, the Rambam of Chassidus, who would bring out

spiritual concepts in the form resembling a clear halachic decision that could be applied in one's service of G-d.

The preparation for and the first stage of the Rebbe Rashab's service was reflected in his heartfelt desire that G-d reveal Himself to him.[194] He wanted to see the actual revelation of G-dliness. It was this desire that was expressed through and channeled the direction of his service and his revelation of Chassidus in the years that followed.

This service was continued by the Previous Rebbe who explained and amplified his father's Chassidic teachings. Furthermore, he instructed that these teachings be translated into other languages. Similarly, he continued his father's work in expanding the activities of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, transferring its base to America and establishing new branches throughout the world.

2. In addition to the insights the story reveals concerning the Rebbe Rashab and his lifework, in and of itself, it serves as a fundamental lesson for every Jew. Every Jew, even a young child, must desire the revelation of G-dliness within the context of his life within this material world.

We must – and we have the potential to – express this desire with the simplicity and single-mindedness of a child for each Jew possesses a childlike dimension, as the verse relates, “Israel is a youth and I love him.”[195]

Similarly, this story gives us insights regarding the education of our children. We should educate our children so that G-d is a real and powerful force in their lives. They should care about G-dliness and feel a genuine lack that G-d does not reveal Himself to them.

This desire is more than a preparation for the study of Torah and the service of G-d at a later time. It is, itself, a stage of service which must continue at all times. Before studying

Torah, it is necessary to recite a blessing which reflects our appreciation of G-d, the Giver of the Torah. Similarly, our study of Torah and service of G-d should constantly be vitalized by the earnest desire for the revelation of G-dliness.[196]

3. In particular, the above is relevant this year, the 130th anniversary of the Rebbe Rashab's birth. From year to year, there must be an increase in the influence of the Rebbe Rashab's birthday the day when the “spiritual source of his soul shines powerfully,” for “we must always increase in regard to holy matters.”

Each Jew should feel a yearning desire for G-dliness which should motivate an increase in the study of Torah – both Nigleh and Chassidus, and in particular, the maamarim of the Rebbe Rashab.

Each year, a birthday is a day of general importance. This is particularly true regarding the birthday of a Nasi who is a general soul.

The uniqueness of this day was reflected in the Rebbe Rashab's custom of reciting a maamer to the Previous Rebbe on the day of his birthday. This custom continued even after the Rebbe Rashab's passing. The Previous Rebbe related a detailed vision, describing how, on the Rebbe Rashab's birthday, the Rebbe appeared to him on Chaf MarCheshvan and recited a maamer. (He was also joined by the Rebbeim

who preceded him who each recited a maamer as well.)

In particular, the number 130 reflects a unique level for it is 5 times 26 (the numerical equivalent of the name Havaya). Five is connected with the Torah which is given in five books. Five is also intrinsically related to the Rebbe Rashab for he was the fifth of the Chabad N'siim.[197]

Since the Rebbe Rashab was a general soul, the heights reached on his birthday (and particularly this year, the influence of five times the numerical equivalent of the name Havaya) is relevant to every Jew. Each Jew is given the potential to serve G-d in a manner in which G-dliness becomes part of his mundane day-to-day experience. Each Jew should feel a yearning desire for G-dliness which should motivate an increase in the study of Torah (both Nigleh and Chassidus, and in particular, the maamarim of the Rebbe Rashab). Furthermore, this study should be grasped and comprehended within our intellectual faculties[198] and thus, bring about a change in our actual conduct.

This should lead to spreading the teachings of Chassidus outward and “raising up many students” with the establishment of branches of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in new places. There should be a stress on Jewish education and in particular, on raising children with a desire and yearning that G-d reveal Himself to them.

May these activities speed the coming of the Redemption and thus, we will merit the fulfillment of the prophecy, “And your eyes will behold your teachers,” with the Resurrection of the Dead. Thus, on Chaf MarCheshvan, we will merit to hear the Rebbe Rashab (and the Rebbeim who preceded him) recite a maamer here in this physical world. Similarly, we will merit the revelation of “the new Torah which will emerge from Me.” May this be in the immediate future.

NOTES:

182. Chaf Cheshvan falls in the coming week and thus, "is blessed" by this Shabbos.

183. It was the Previous Rebbe who told this story and ordered that it be publicized.

184. Although the story took place when the Rebbe Rashab was a young child, it still reflects his character. Indeed, in regard to the Rebbe Rashab, we find certain dimensions of his personality revealed at his very birth. Thus, at his birth, the Tzemach Tzedek commented that the day that the Rebbe Rashab was born, Chaf Cheshvan in the year Kisra, reflects his connection to the level Kesser and his fitness for the crown of the Nesius.

[Nevertheless, it took many years before this potential was realized. Throughout his father's life, the Rebbe Rashab received certain dimensions associated with the Nesius. However, it was not until several years after his father's death, that he accepted the Nesius entirely.]

185. As the Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya, daas is the source for the emotions and their vitalizing power.

186. The practice of reciting hemshechim was begun by the Rebbe Maharash (although it appears that the Alter Rebbe did recite a series of maamarim on occasion). This was a revolutionary step, for previously the Rebbeim would recite and publish their maamarim individually.

187. This is particularly evident in the summaries which the Rebbe Rashab added to each of the chapters in the first portion of the hemshech 5672. This provided a student with a clear summary of the ideas discussed in each chapter.

188. The word hisyashvus "settled manner," and yeshiva share the same root.

189. "Outwards" can be applied both in the personal and general realm. In the personal realm, it implies studying Torah – Nigleh and Chassidus – in a manner that allows the animal soul to understand as well. In the world at large, it implies spreading those teachings until they reach the furthest corners of the world.

190. The potential for this activity was generated by the Rebbe Rashab's naming of the yeshiva during the Hakafof of Simchas Torah, 5659, Tomchei T'mimim, in connection with the phrase from the liturgy, "Supporter of the perfect (Tomeich T'mimim), save us."

191. The name of G-d used in these expressions is Havaya, the essential name of G-d. In general, the name of G-d used in connection with Torah study is the name Elokim which alludes to a lower dimension of G-dliness as in the expression, "These and these are the words of the living G-d." Halacha, however, refers to a higher rung, the name Havaya.

192. On the contrary, the uniqueness of the study of Nigleh is that it deals with physical matters and subjects within our material world.

193. In contrast, after the recitation of the maamer is completed, that dimension is no longer present. Thus, it is possible to debate the subject matter discussed in the maamer even with the author of the maamer himself.

194. In addition to serving as a preparatory step for the Rebbe Rashab's later service, his question also had an immediate effect, bringing about the revelation of a new teaching by the Tzemach Tzedek.

195. This also relates to the statement, "I pray with the intention of a child," which the Tzemach Tzedek quotes as a desirous approach to prayer.

196. This should be the only desire which affects us while involved in Torah study. Our Sages taught, "The Torah was given only to those who ate Manna." While the Jews were in the desert, G-d took care of all their material needs and thus, they had no worries or concerns regarding material things. Similarly, when a Jew studies Torah, the Torah should be his only concern and nothing else should be on his mind.

197. It is also significant that this milestone of 130 years is reached in the third generation after the Rebbe Rashab. Our Sages taught that there is a unique significance in the perpetuation of Torah study for three generations, thus establishing a chazaka. This is also reflected in the statement, "The crown of the elders is grandchildren."

(In this context, we can understand why the yeshiva was founded in connection with the Previous Rebbe's wedding. Then, the possibility for "grandchildren" was granted.)

198. Although the emphasis is on intellectual comprehension, the explanations of Chassidic ideas must be taken from the works of the Rebbeim and not brought in from outside sources.

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קח את הכרטיס שלך בתוך מספר דקות!



Beis Moshiach is pleased to renew its section featuring the Rebbe's English letters. *Beis Moshiach* was the first, several years ago, to collect and publish these letters. Indeed, many letters came to light were printed and subsequently published in volumes.

We are greatly indebted to the generous cooperation of our dear readers and all who heard our call and shared their letters with us. They understood the great importance of gathering, preserving, and publishing the Rebbe's English letters.

The Rebbe expressed his desire for this matter on several occasions. He directed that his letters should be selected and published in volumes. It is well known today how greatly the Rebbe, in the late *Mem's* (80's), pushed for the *Igros Kodesh* to be published, "as quick as possible and quicker than possible." Within 5 years, until 27 *Adar* 1 5752, over 20 volumes of his Hebrew and Yiddish correspondence were published!

It is not widely known yet that the quantity of the Rebbe's English correspondence is just as much, if not greater, than his Hebrew correspondence. Unfortunately some letters were lost over time, etc. The Tzemach Tzedek said that something that is published lasts for generations.

Readers and collectors of the Rebbe's letters: We urge you to send in the Rebbe's English correspondence which was not yet published in the 7 English existing volumes and which pertain to issues of general relevance. Please send them in so that the letters can be published for everybody's benefit and thereby preserved forever.

You can send or deliver the correspondence to:

"English Letters" c/o Beis Moshiach
744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409.

Or, e-mail high resolution scans to:
rebbsletters@hotmail.com

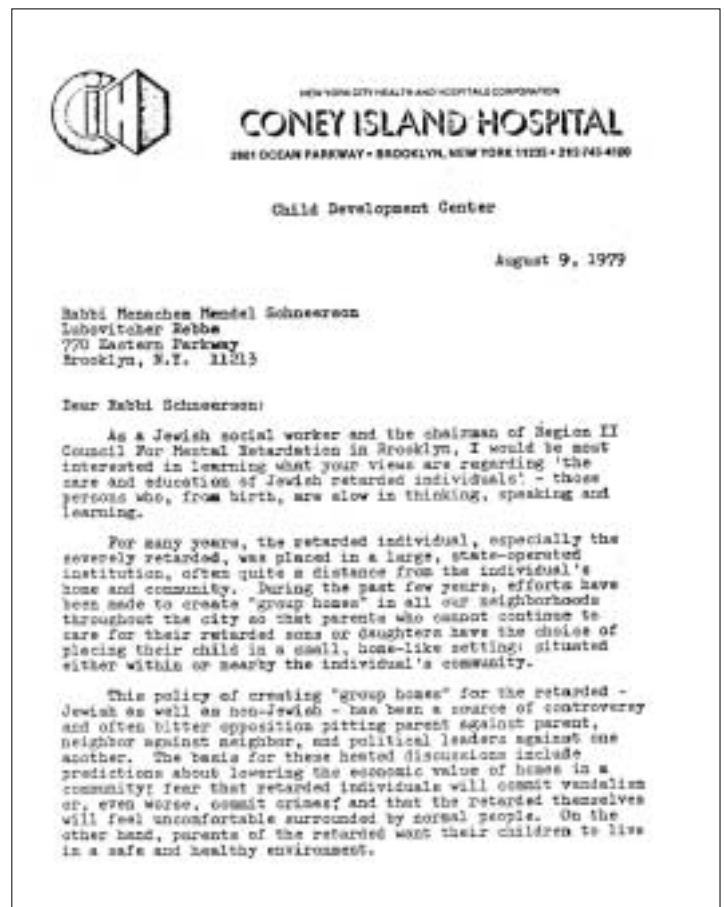
Again, any correspondence you may have please send

in, and please encourage your friends neighbors and family to do so as well. Please inquire also your non-Lubavitch acquaintances, as many who received these letters were not necessarily Lubavitcher Chassidim.

B'ezras Hashem, there are plans under way to, bli neider, **reward** those who send in letters. So please include a return address and other contact information.

* * *

RETARDATION: ONLY A TEMPORARY HANDICAP * PART 1



How may we view this issue - that is, caring for individuals who have a disability which requires life-long care and supervision - from a Jewish perspective? As a concerned Jew, I care very much about our Jewish community, how we treat one another and how we conduct ourselves as human beings. I am particularly interested in your comments and opinions. Because the Lubavitch movement, with its deep concern for every Jewish individual's welfare, has added a spiritual dimension - a spark - to all our lives!

As a married man with - thank G-d - two beautiful, healthy children (ages 2 and 5), I am also aware that there has to be an equal concern for both the individual as well as for one's total community. The question is: how do we protect and safeguard all of our Jewish children - the retarded and the non-retarded - so that they can have the opportunity to grow, to develop, and to live "Jewishly"?

I would also welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the above with you or your representatives. Thank you for your cooperation.

Respectfully yours,

Robert Wilkes

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By the Grace of G-d
22 Av, 5730
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. R. Wilkes, Asst. Program Director/
Chairman, Region II Council For Mental Retardation
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2001 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11210

Greeting and Blessing:

This is in reply to your letter of Aug. 8, in which you ask for my views on "the care and education of Jewish retarded children," outlining some of the problems connected therewith and proposing policies, etc.

I must, first of all, make one essential observation, namely, that while the above heading places all the retarded in one group, it would be a gross failure to come up with any rules to be applied to all of them as a group. For if any child requires an individual evaluation and approach in order to achieve the utmost in his, or her, development, how much more so in the case of the handicapped.

Since the above is so obvious, I assume that you have in mind the most general guidelines, with a wide range of flexibility allowing for the necessary individual approach in each case. All the more so, since, and to say, our present society is poorly equipped in terms of manpower and financial resources to afford an adequate personal approach to each handicapped boy and girl. Even more regrettable is the fact that little attention (at any rate little in relation to the importance of the problem) is given to this situation, and consequently little is done to mobilize more adequate resources to deal with the problem.

Now, with regard to general guidelines, I would suggest the following:

(1) The social worker, or teacher, and anyone dealing with retarded individuals should start from the basic premise that the retardation is in each case only a temporary handicap, and that in due course it could certainly be improved, and even reversed substantially. This approach should be taken regardless of the pronouncements or prognosis of specialists in the field. The reason for this approach is, first of all, that it is a progression for greater success in dealing with the retarded. Besides, considering the enormous strides that have been made in medical science, human knowledge, methodology, and knowhow, there is no doubt that in this area, too, there will be far-reaching developments. Thus, the very confidence that such progress is in the realm of possibility will inspire greater enthusiasm in this work, and hopefully will also stimulate more intensive research.

(2) Just as the said approach is important from the viewpoint of the

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worker and educator, so it is important that the trainees themselves should be encouraged - both by word and the manner of their training - to feel confident that they are not, G-d forbid, "cases," much less unfortunate or hopeless cases, but that their difficulty is considered, as above, only temporary, and that with a concerted effort of instructor and trainee the desired improvement could be speeded and enhanced.

(3) Needless to say, care should be taken not to exaggerate expectations through far-fetched promises, for false hopes inevitably result in deep disappointment, loss of credibility and other undesirable effects. However, a way can surely be found to avoid raising false hopes, yet giving spirited encouragement.

(4) As part of the above approach which, as far as I know has not been used before, is to involve some of the trainees in some form of leadership, such as captains of teams, group leaders, and the like, without arousing the jealousy of the others. The latter could be avoided by making such selections on the basis of seniority, special achievement, exemplary conduct, etc.

(5) With regard to the efforts which have been made in recent years to create "group homes" for retarded individuals, which, as you say, has been a source of controversy - it is to be expected that, as in most things in our imperfect world, there are pros and cons. However, I believe that the approach should be the same as in the case of all pupils or students who spend part of their time in group environments - school, dormitory, summer camp, etc., and part of their time in the midst of their families, whether every day, or at weekends, etc. Only by individual approach and evaluation can it be determined which individual fits into which category.

(6) There is surely no need to emphasize at length that, as in all cases involving Jews, their specific Jewish needs must be taken into account. This is particularly true in the case of retarded Jewish children, yet all too often disregarded. There is unfortunately a prevalent misconception that since you are dealing with retarded children, having more limited capabilities, they should not be "burdened" with Jewish education on top of their general education, so as not to overtax them. In my opinion this is a fallacious and detrimental attitude, especially in light of what has been said above about the need to avoid impressing the child with his handicap. Be it remembered that a child coming from a Jewish home probably has brothers and sisters, or cousins and friends, who receive a Jewish education and are exposed to Jewish observances. Even in the American society, where observant Jews are not in the majority, there is always some measure of Jewish experience, or Jewish angle, in the child's background. Now therefore, if the retarded child sees or feels that he has been brought out and removed from that experience, or when he will eventually find out that he is Jewish, yet deprived of his Jewish identity and heritage - it is very likely to cause irreparable damage to him.

On the other hand, if the child is involved in Jewish education and activities - and not in some general and peripheral way, but in a regular

-3-

and tangible way, such as in the school performance of Mitzvos, customs and traditions - it would give him a sense of belonging and attachment, and a firm anchorage to hold on to, whether occasionally or subconsciously. Eventually even a subconscious feeling of inner security would pass into the conscious state, especially if the teacher will endeavor to cultivate and fortify this feeling.

I am, of course, aware of the arguments that may be put forth in regard to this idea, namely, that it would require additional funding, qualified personnel, etc., not readily available at present. To be sure, these are arguments that have a basis in fact as things now stand. However, the real problem is not so much the lack of resources as the prevailing attitude that considers the Jewish angle as of secondary importance, or less; consequently the effort to remedy the situation is commensurate, resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy. The truth of the matter is that if the importance of it would be seen in its true light - that it is an essential factor in the development of the retarded Jewish child, in addition to our elementary obligation to all Jewish children without exception, the results would be quite different.

Perhaps all the aforesaid is not what you had in mind in soliciting my views on "group homes." Nevertheless, I was impelled to dwell on the subject of some length, not only because it had to be said, but also because it may serve as a basis for solving the controversy surrounding the creation of "group homes" for those children who are presently placed in an environment often quite distant from the individual's home and community - to paraphrase your statement.

Finally a concluding remark relating to your laudatory reference to the Lubavitch movement, "with its deep concern for every Jewish individual's welfare," etc.

Needless to say, such appreciation is very gratifying, but I must confess and emphasize that this is not an original Lubavitch idea, for it is basic to Torah Judaism. Thus, our Sages of old declared that *va'yachin le'achiv*, *achivhu* ("Love your fellow as yourself") is the Great Principle of our Torah, with the accent on "as yourself," since every person surely has a very special, personal approach to himself. To the credit of the Lubavitch emissaries it may be said, however, that they are doing all they can to implement and live by this Golden Rule of the Torah, and doing it ostentatiously and enthusiastically.

May the *Zechas Hashem* - the merit of the many who benefit from your sincere efforts to help them in their need, especially in your capacity as Regional Chairman of the Council For Mental Retardation, stand you in good stead to succeed in the fullest measure and stimulate your destination for even greater achievements.

With esteem and blessing,

MOSHIACH: A MODERN-DAY REALITY

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN LIBEROW
DIRECTOR, CHABAD OF FLATBUSH

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



“The revelation of Moshiach’s name” in the world – when, why, and how Melech HaMoshiach himself related to the matter. Delivered at a class on Moshiach and Geula in 770.

SMASHING THE GALUS MENTALITY

In 5750, when the subject of Moshiach was just starting to take center stage, I found myself on Erev Tisha B’Av in a bookstore – to buy *Kinos*. The salesman who stood before me was *chareidi*, and I thought that this might be a good opportunity to say something about Moshiach. As I pondered this thought, I smiled and said, “Nu, I hope that Moshiach will come before Tisha B’Av, and I can get back my money back on the *Kinos*...”

As I prepared to leave the store, the salesman suddenly yelled at me, “Have you gone crazy? Jews have been waiting 1,900 years already for Moshiach, and you want to say that he’s coming now in our times?” He obviously forgot about the fact that he says three times a day, “May the growth of Dovid quickly sprout forth...for we await His salvation every day.”

We also see something amazing. For some reason, there are people who have this strange tendency that whenever others speak about the coming of Moshiach, they agree to listen and believe that he will come – but in another ten years or more... They are absolutely not prepared to accept the possibility that he will literally come now. The very notion that Moshiach can come at this very moment seems to be “unacceptable” to many people. This typifies the darkness of the exile.

When the Rebbe MH”M shlita came out with the announcement that Moshiach is coming, he broke all the conventional wisdom that characterizes the Galus mentality. The Rebbe began to talk about the Redemption as a modern-day reality and called upon everyone to believe that Moshiach is literally coming **now** – not tomorrow, or even the day after, but right now, *mamash*.

This is why identifying Moshiach in this generation, or as the Rebbe defines it, “the revelation of Moshiach’s name,” surfaced specifically with Lubavitcher chassidim.

Reason dictates that a person who succeeds in coming to the clear recognition that Moshiach is coming right now naturally begins searching for a suitable leader who fits the definition. He does so with the full knowledge that Moshiach Tzidkeinu is not some angel from heaven or spirit; he is a human being, body and soul, here in this physical world.

Even those who believe that Moshiach can only come in another ten years, *ch”v r”l*, know very well that when the time comes and he does arrive, Moshiach will be a person in this physical world who they will have to identify as Moshiach. It is a logical fact that if Moshiach is someone who lives with us, we naturally must be able to identify him.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO ADDED...

The identification of an individual as Moshiach has occurred in virtually **every generation** throughout the history of the Jewish nation. According to the *Sde Chemed*, quoted frequently

in sichos, every generation has made assumptions as to who is Moshiach. Yet, in earlier generations, specific emphasis was not placed upon the subject. There were those who knew to point out a certain Jew as the Moshiach of their generation, and even spoke about it. However, these were very unique people whose involvement in the whole subject was not constant, only on special occasions.

Starting from the Rebbe Rayatz's declaration of "L'Alter L'Geula," the closer we come to the Redemption, the involvement in the subject of Moshiach's identity becomes simpler and more natural. This is because the involvement is a natural result of the actual longing for Moshiach's coming.

As the Rebbe explained in a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Naso 5720, when the Rebbe Rayatz came out with his call of "L'Alter LT'shuva, L'Alter L'Geula," there were those who added "az der iz der" (as he's the one).

By the way, the Rebbe didn't say who "those" were who publicized this. However, we know in general that there was a group that dealt with the publicity of the Rebbe Rayatz's "appeal" at the time – foremost among them, the Rebbe shlita and R. Avrohom Pariz. These were "those" who publicized "az der iz der"...

The Rebbe continued to say that at the time someone came to one of those "gutter Yidden" and complained about the publicity. The gutter Yid responded, "You and I both say every day, 'I believe with complete faith that he will come at any day.' If so, there must be someone who is Moshiach. And we know that it's neither **you** nor **me** – so why does it bother you so much that it's **him**?"

Of course, the most significant element of this story is that the Rebbe shlita himself told it!

In other words, the involvement and enthusiasm in this matter is a natural result of the longing for Moshiach. Therefore, the closer we

come to the era of Moshiach and the days of Moshiach, the clearer the Rebbe spoke about Moshiach. This intensified the longing and anticipation among chassidim for the Redemption, and thus started an even greater involvement in the publicity of Moshiach's identity. This is the simplest and most logical "baalabatish" explanation why this whole subject has

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made the headlines and reached such open publicity specifically in recent years.

**ONLY THIS OUR EYES
HAVE SEEN**

However, as we learn from the Rebbe's sichos, besides the fact that this is a natural result of the longing for

Moshiach, the revelation of Moshiach's name possesses the **most important and fundamental aspect** in the process of Moshiach's coming. This was stated with the utmost clarity in an edited sicha from Erev Rosh HaShana 5752. After explaining that the Tzemach Tzedek includes all the preceding and succeeding n'siim within him, as expressed by his teachings, the Rebbe said:

"We understand from this that on the Tzemach Tzedek's birthday (Erev Rosh HaShana), when his mazal prevails, the matter of Moshiach's name becomes stronger, **as when the birthday celebrant does all that is dependent upon him, it will then certainly have its effect – the revelation of Moshiach's name**, and more than that, the revelation of Moshiach himself (as he is higher than his name)."

As we have all seen during this time period, especially as a continuation of 5753-5754, the "Tzemach Tzedek" of our generation has done all that is dependent upon him that there should not only be "the revelation of Moshiach's name," but more than that, "the revelation of Moshiach himself." Among the ways this takes expression is in the aspect of "he has borne our afflictions," when all the revelations we had regularly experienced in the physical sense until Chaf-Zayin Adar Rishon 5752 suddenly ceased. No kos shel bracha, no lekach, no Sunday dollars (except for one unusual exception) – in general, all the physical conduct changed completely. There was only one thing that we saw: **How Melech HaMoshiach, despite all the physical difficulties, stringently came out for almost every t'filla, encouraging the singing of "Yechi," regardless of all the insufferable afflictions that he endured. The Rebbe stubbornly came out for t'fillos and to encourage with all his strengths, again and again, the singing of "Yechi."**

HERE'S THE PROOF!

Yet after all this, there are those

who claim that as critically important as this whole matter is, this publicity actually drives Jews away from the teachings of chassidus.

First of all, it is most important for us to know a little history: Back in the old days, it was certainly not a given that this subject would drive Jews away from the teachings of chassidus. The first to reveal that publicizing Moshiach's identity had this effect – was the Rebbe himself. At the farbrengen of Shabbos B'Reishis 5745, the Rebbe delivered a very sharp sicha against those who were publicizing Moshiach's identity at that time. He stated that this drives Jews away from the teachings of chassidus, and “this is a war against me and the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the teachings of chassidus,” etc., etc.

After such harsh words, no one even dreamed that the Rebbe would one day permit such publicity. But it turns out that the Rebbe had other plans, and the following year, 5746, the Rebbe gave a lengthy sicha on Simchas Torah about how the leader of the generation is the Moshiach of the generation in its simplest interpretation. This subject slowly began to break forth “from above to below” until in the most recent years, we saw how the Rebbe himself invested all his strength to instill the issue into the world in the best possible manner.

At first glance, one might ask a very simple question: If the Rebbe screamed so sharply in 5745 against the whole idea and how much it drives Jews away from the teachings of chassidus, what happened all of a sudden that the Rebbe began to permit the publicity? What's the difference? If it really does drive people away, then it always does, and if it doesn't, why did the Rebbe have to come out with such a fiery sicha?

The answer is that the Rebbe MH”M shlita apparently wanted to show through his protest back in 5745 **how critically important the revelation**

of Moshiach's name is to the overall subject of the Redemption. This same issue that drives Jews so far from chassidus and is so difficult to instill into the world, despite everything, when the world is ready – you must instill it!

In other words, 5745 was truly not the time to deal with this matter. Then, the lights of Tohu were in one place and the vessels of Tikkun were in another, and the avoda that was required at the time was not to connect them. But when the Rebbe gave permission for the publicity, it meant that the matter was **necessary and imperative**, for if it were not, there is no reason in the world why the Rebbe would permit something that, according to his testimony, drives Jews away from the teachings of chassidus. The **only** reason that the Rebbe himself would allow this is because of its relevance to the very heart of the subject.

(By the way, I remember that shortly after the Shabbos B'Reishis sicha, R. Yoel Kahan made a farbrengen in 770, where he said that he had never before heard such a revelation – that the Rebbe himself would say that he is Moshiach! Instead of the Rebbe saying that it's not true, it's against the Torah, etc., he spent about fifteen minutes clarifying the matter, explaining how it drives people away, etc. Why shouldn't he just simply say that it's not true and that's the end of it? However, it should be clear to everyone that the Rebbe is coming to tell us that the matter is quite correct, it's just that – at this time – it **can** drive Jews away from the teachings of chassidus, etc.)

“AND HE WHO WANTS TO ERR...”

In addition, according to those who justify their non-involvement in the publicity of Moshiach's identity by claiming that it drives Jews away from chassidus, relying upon the Rebbe's Shabbos B'Reishis 5745 sicha, the state of affairs within Lubavitch today after

more than ten years of this massive PR campaign should be totally rock bottom.

But in actual fact we see that not only has Chabad not been harmed by all this, but quite to the contrary. Over the past decade, hundreds and thousands of Jews have become baalei t'shuva, and hundreds of new Chabad institutions have opened all over the world. It's true that we are only on the verge of the Redemption and there is still darkness in the world, and there are people who may not want to hear this, but according to the Rebbe's description back in 5745 when he clearly said that this is a war against me – our present-day situation should be far worse. Yet, if we can prove one thing from this sicha on our current situation, it's the **critical urgency** of the matter at hand.

Another claim: While it's true that there have been many positive answers from the Rebbe where he permits the publicity on Moshiach's identity, by the same token, the Rebbe also negated the whole issue through other answers during this same time period.

Before responding to the heart of the matter, I would like to give a short introduction:

On Acharon Shel Pesach 5712, the Rebbe gave a very interesting *vort* that responds to all questions of this type. The Rebbe spoke about the custom to dance a “*Moshiach tantz*” on Acharon Shel Pesach, saying that it can be explained in two ways: a) Moshiach literally dances with us; b) we dance now in order that Moshiach should come and dance with us. The Rebbe continued to say, “Each person will interpret it in a way that is worthwhile for him, however we will interpret it in a way that is worthwhile for us – Moshiach is literally dancing with us!” As he finished speaking these words, he stood and began to dance “*Nye Zhoritzi Chlahptzi*.”

We see here a very interesting point: In order for there to be free

choice in the world, G-d gave the possibility for everything in Torah to be interpreted in different ways, to the point that our Sages said, “Write, and whoever wants to err, let him err.” Similarly, we find in our discussion. It’s possible that someone will come along and interpret the sichos differently from us, and he might even bring various answers and sichos, etc., in support of his position. However, before we respond in explanation of every answer and sicha he brings (as even those seemingly negative answers are really positive, as we shall soon see), we must first ask him: What do you say about all the **positive** answers that have value no less (if not more, in both quality and quantity) than the negative ones?

Even if he wishes to be stubborn about it and say that we have no positive interpretation for all the negative answers, we should ask him again: *Ribbono Shel Olam*, what exactly is pushing you to adhere specifically to all the negative answers? Why don’t you interpret what is far more correct and worthwhile for us as chassidim – Moshiach Tzidkeinu himself is dancing with us!

THE DELAYED RESPONSE

In connection with the main aspect of this subject, R. Yosef HaLevi Weinberg tells a most interesting fact that sheds light on the whole matter. As is known, Rabbi Weinberg has a regular radio program each Motzaei Shabbos, when he gives a shiur in *Tanya* and the Rebbe’s sichos. The special recognition that the Rebbe gave to this program made it most official, as the Rebbe would edit the material each week that Rabbi Weinberg was preparing to use. Similarly, the Rebbe himself would sit and listen to the program, even commenting on the broadcasts afterwards (footnotes, etc., which were printed later in the *Lessons in Tanya* series).

In 5751, shortly after the famous 28th of Nissan sicha, Rabbi Weinberg

decided to speak on his regular program about the Rebbe as *b’chezkas Moshiach* (something that at the time was considered to be a most serious step). He recalls that he fully realized that he was taking a heavy responsibility upon himself, and he would more than likely even “get it over the head.” Still, he decided to do it in any event, in accordance with the widespread understanding among most chassidim and based upon the Rebbe’s sichos that the sense of awakening on

The gutter Yid responded, “You and I both say every day, ‘I believe with complete faith that he will come at any day.’ If so, there must be someone who is Moshiach. And we know that it’s neither you nor me – so why does it bother you so much that it’s him?”

this issue must come from the people, even to the point of self-sacrifice. So Rabbi Weinberg dedicated a sizable portion of his next broadcast to a clear and reasoned explanation of the subject.

In those days, the order of things was that the Rebbe would submit all of his comments (even very brief ones) to Rabbi Weinberg immediately after the program or the following day. When Rabbi Weinberg concluded the

program, he was convinced that he would receive at any moment a telephone call from the secretariat over the fact that he had the audacity to publicize such things. Yet, no call came. One day passed, and then another. Finally, **on the night of the third day**, he received a call from the secretariat that the Rebbe asks that he stop speaking about this subject.

Rabbi Weinberg felt that something had happened here. If it was so important to the Rebbe that he should stop, why didn’t he tell him this, as always, immediately after the program? After briefly clarifying the matter, he discovered that **a group of Lubavitcher chassidim** had turned to the Rebbe that day with an organized letter requesting that the Rebbe “stop the lunatics,” etc.

In other words, from the Rebbe’s point of view, there was no problem with publicizing the identity of the Redeemer. On the contrary, the Rebbe **encourages** it and does all that is dependent upon him that it will be publicized. For this very reason, the Rebbe **did not** comment on the publicity of the subject over the radio for three days. But when some people came and tried to prevent it, the Rebbe said: No problem, we’ll stop for a while; but after a while, the subject will again arise with all its *shturem*, until they try to interfere again, etc.

We see here something most interesting. What happened during the summer of 5751 and the winter of 5752 is a microcosm of what happened for forty years beforehand. Even then there were those who dealt with this (in accordance with what they understood from the Rebbe), as opposed to those who “brought their evil reports to their father.” However, in those days, the world was not ready and the time of the Redemption had not come, so when the matter was quieted down, it was for a period of many years. The flickering flame on this issue had weakened a little, but it would rise again.

However, we come now to the

main distinction. During those years, since the involvement in the subject of Moshiach's identity stemmed from a natural desire for the Redemption as opposed to a mandatory course of action, therefore it was possible to shut things down for an extended period of time. But as the years passed, the world progressed most significantly towards the Redemption, turning even the revelation of Moshiach's name into a must. Therefore, in these times, when the internal delaying and preventive efforts try to stifle the issue, they don't last for more than a day or two. This is because since the period beginning in 5751, "the year when Melech HaMoshiach was revealed," the revelation of Moshiach's name doesn't just come as a natural result of the longing for the Redemption, but as a most fundamental and relevant part of the whole process of Moshiach's coming.

"AND A SIMPLE NOTIFICATION IS SUFFICIENT"

There are those who ask: If this matter is so important, why didn't the Rebbe issue a clear instruction on it?

First of all, it is important to emphasize that we **never** heard an **explicit instruction** from the Rebbe to publicize the identity of the Redeemer in the campaign to publicize the announcement of the Redemption and to prepare for it accordingly. The Rebbe merely ordered us to prepare ourselves and others in preparation for the Redemption and to encourage the longing and anticipation for its arrival. Furthermore, when the *hanacha* of the sicha from the 5752 International Shluchim Conference was brought for editing with the words "to publicize who Moshiach is" as part of the campaign, the Rebbe **crossed out** those words.

All this was despite the fact that the Rebbe **himself** continued to **publicize** Moshiach's identity and to **encourage** all those who were involved in the

matter. We're talking about publicity in the **widest, the most explicit, and the most revealed** manner, e.g., *Kuntres Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel*, the answers to the 5752 Lubavitch Women's Organization Melaveh Malka on Greeting Moshiach, the sicha from Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752, etc. However, together with the **actual publicity** on the subject, there was no explicit executive order to make the publicity as an integral part of the Moshiach campaign.

As mentioned above, the reason is that the revelation of Moshiach's name absolutely cannot come due to an explicit order from a higher authority.



The whole idea is for it to come specifically from the lower realm, from the people themselves – "and they requested Dovid their king." Even this point has been expressed in numerous answers from the Rebbe.

There are several other answers where people want to prove the Rebbe seemingly negates the publicity campaign. However, due to the great darkness of Galus, they fail to notice that one can learn **specifically from these very answers** how much the Rebbe **encourages** the whole subject.

For example, there was a shliach who wanted to do something

particularly unorthodox (if he had written about it in 5745, the Rebbe at best would have ripped the note up). In any event, in 5751, he submitted the proposal to the Rebbe, and immediately received the following answer (in content): "New opponents have recently arisen who say that this matter interferes with the spreading of chassidus, and therefore, he should stop for a while."

In other words, the Rebbe responds to him: a) **new** opponents have **recently** arisen; b) he should stop, but only – "**for a while**." A person simply has to be blind to look for a more positive answer than this!

Another similar answer was given to a group from the Lubavitch Women's Organization that wanted to do a certain activity on the subject of "the revelation of Moshiach's name." The Rebbe responded as follows:

The task of any administrative body, including this one, is to administer according to their intellect, and not to ask me – which means that I am administering – and a simple notification is sufficient. I will mention it at the Tzion.

Even with an answer such as this, someone who has a Galus mentality will come and interpret that the Rebbe seems to be dissatisfied with "the revelation of Moshiach's name," etc. However, the **simple** interpretation that any five-year-old who studies Chumash can understand from this answer is that the Rebbe is saying: It is not relevant for this matter to come **from me; Kabbalas HaMalchus** must come **from you**. All you have to do is to notify me.

May it be G-d's Will that after all the activities on this subject, we will fulfill our obligation of a "simple notification," and then we will merit to see with our own eyes the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach, when we shall all proclaim before the king:

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

“GO IN PEACE, AND HASHEM WILL HELP YOU”

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

A story in honor of the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab on Chaf Cheshvan

PART I

Everybody in the city of Disna knew his neighbors, especially Boruch Yosef the Melamed. For many years, Boruch Yosef devoted himself to the schoolchildren, teaching them Torah and instilling fear of Heaven in them. He was beloved by all, Jews and gentiles alike.

Boruch Yosef was a Chassid of the Rebbe Rashab. Every so often, he would travel to see his Rebbe and to hear Chassidus, to immerse himself in the Chassidic atmosphere. Then he would return to Disna and repeat what he had learned from his Rebbe. And it was all with an inner joy that bubbled over from within.

Aside from his teaching, Boruch Yosef had another job, but unlike his teaching profession, this latter job was done modestly and secretly. Silence was best in this case.

Many young men, most of them T'mimim, would come to him from the Chevras Pidyon Shvuyim that was near the Jewish community of Disna, and ask him to intercede on their behalf and get them army exemptions. He was entrusted with large sums of

money for this purpose, to bribe the doctors, army officials and anybody who was involved in the draft.

Boruch Yosef became a familiar figure around the military offices. He would visit often, ask how the officers were doing, take an interest in their families and livelihood, and would eventually get to talking about some yeshiva bachur. He would place a wad of bills in their hands and the officers got the point. A nod on their part meant they would take care of the exemption.

Boruch Yosef was not the only man in Disna who did this kind of work. The pidyon shvuyim “profession” was one that many worked in. Other people arranged exemptions for a price, and the more people paid, the more likely it was that they would be exempt.

But Boruch Yosef didn't do it for the money. He charged no fee and did not pocket any of the money intended for the officials. Boruch Yosef did his work for the sake of Heaven, freeing yeshiva bachurim from the yoke of the czar in order to enable them to devote themselves to the yoke of Heaven. He did not personally benefit from it at all.

PART II

It was one day in summer when this all ended. The officials back in the capitol of Petersburg began to suspect that something fishy was going on in the draft office in Disna. There was an overabundance of sick draftees, and this is what aroused their suspicion.

A complaint arrived in Petersburg from a Russian citizen who reported the corruption that prevailed at the local draft office. “It's all done by bribe,” he wrote, “and an exemption is given to those who pay well for it.”

The complaint reached the proper desks and a delegation quickly went out to Disna with a warrant to investigate what was going on there. The residents of Disna were shocked, not having expected a reaction like this. The number of those who were exempt had grown over the years, and they walked freely about the city. You would be hard-pressed to find a single doctor, army officer, or office worker in the draft office who wasn't involved in taking bribes. Now the investigators were on their trail and the entire city shuddered.

The first arrests took place immediately, as the investigative committee began its work. Rumor had it that dozens of people had been arrested and many more arrests were anticipated. People informed on one

another and the chaos and fear reached unprecedented heights. The sentence of those who had freed the draftees was known: jail for years or even execution by firing squad.

PART III

Boruch Yosef's situation was grave. He expected to be arrested any moment. His name was known to many of the doctors and officers in the draft office, and some of the latter were already in prison. Everybody knew him and many residents of the city knew of his avocation.

Boruch Yosef knew he had to flee the city, but he didn't know where to run to. He thought, "I have two choices, Kremenchug or Poltava. I know many people there, Chabad Chassidim, and they would let me hide there. But which place is safer?" He just didn't know what to do.

The first thing he did was leave for Lubavitch, where the Rebbe lived. "The Rebbe will certainly give me advice," he thought, and he took his tallis and t'fillin and a bit of food, and boarded the first train.

When he arrived in Lubavitch, he headed straight for the Rebbe. His lips whispered chapters of T'hillim and he pleaded to Hashem, "Please save me from those who pursue me." Within a few hours, he was taken in ahead of the others who waited.

He stood there trembling and the Rebbe looked at him with his pure gaze and shining countenance. Boruch Yosef burst into tears and said, "Rebbe, save me! The officers have arrived in Disna and are arresting anybody suspected of helping free young men from the army. They can arrest me at any moment and there's the fear of the death penalty!"

The Rebbe looked serious and deep creases etched his brow as he sat there thinking. A heavy silence prevailed in the small room laden with s'farim, which was broken now and then by Boruch Yosef's sighs.

Then the Rebbe looked up and gazed steadily at Boruch Yosef, piercing him through to his broken heart. "Tell me Boruch Yosef," said the Rebbe gently, "who knows that you fled here?"

"Nobody knows except for my wife," replied Boruch Yosef. "I didn't talk to anybody about this."

The Rebbe went on, "Tell me, was your work to free the T'mimim done faithfully or did you, chalila, profit thereby?"

Boruch Yosef bent his head and thought for a long moment, then he directed his gaze at the Rebbe.

When he arrived in Lubavitch, he headed straight for the Rebbe. His lips whispered chapters of T'hillim and he pleaded to Hashem, "Please save me from those who pursue me..."

"Rebbe, I did it all faithfully. I did it for the mitzva of pidyon shvuyim and I derived no personal gain thereby."

The Rebbe's face lit up. The deep creases disappeared from his forehead and he looked gently at Boruch Yosef once again.

"Then listen to what I have to tell you. Hurry to the plaza where the wagon drivers wait, and rush to the train station and return to Disna. Act as though nothing happened. If you don't manage to catch a wagon driver before they leave, return here and take my carriage and hurry to the

train station."

Boruch Yosef was stunned. "Return to Disna? To the lion's den?" he thought. However, the Rebbe didn't give him time to ponder his instructions but urged him again, "Go in peace and Hashem will help you."

Boruch Yosef left the Rebbe's room and managed to catch one of the wagon drivers. A few hours later, as he sat in the train taking him to Disna, he reviewed his circumstances. He was in turmoil and the fear began to return and steal into his heart. His thoughts began to plague him, "Perhaps I should still flee to another city before it's too late?" Then another inner voice said, "But the Rebbe said to return to Disna!" Then another doubt, "But returning to Disna means certain danger! I face the death sentence!"

Meanwhile, Boruch Yosef returned to Disna. He got off the train and before anybody saw him, he arrived home in broken spirits.

His wife was frightened and told him, "While you were away, they arrested hundreds more people, officers, middlemen, and citizens. People are informing on one another in order to save their skin, and the authorities are arresting people left and right on even a hint of suspicion about them."

Boruch Yosef's fear increased and he hid in his house, anticipating arrest at any moment. The few Lubavitchers who knew he was hiding there, sent him food and drink to keep him alive. He sat all day in his darkened home, and cried his way through the book of T'hillim again and again, waiting. Every knock at the door made him jump.

"That's it. They've caught me!" he would whisper in despair. It was only after opening the door a crack and seeing that it was a member of Anash, only then would he calm down. Then the whole scene repeated itself.



PART IV

One morning there was a nervous knock at the door. Boruch Yosef's heart skipped a beat. The blood rushed from his face and his hands shook in fear. It was the Chassid, R' Reuven Meller, who was a Lubavitcher Chassid who also lived in Disna.

Boruch and Reuven were good friends. For many years, they davened together in the Chabad shul, and farbrenged and learned together.

"I have good news," said Reuven. "You can celebrate, for you've been saved." And he hugged Boruch.

Boruch Yosef stood there motionless, not believing what he was hearing. Reuven sat down, breathless from running to Boruch's house, and when he had calmed down and was able to speak, he explained as follows.

"You know that I make a living by selling fruits and vegetables. Many of my regular customers are among the city's elite, including the mayor, officials, advisors, and even some senior military men.

"This morning I went to the house of the deputy military commander in order to ask for payment for the fruits

and vegetables I sold his wife this past month, but the minute I entered their yard, I noticed something was amiss. The windows were sealed, the black curtains were drawn and all was quiet. I knocked on the door and the lady of the house opened the door, her eyes swollen with tears.

"Before I could ask her what was going on, she began to tell me about the arrests made by the investigative committee from Petersburg. Her husband had also freed men from the army. At first, he did this without the knowledge of his direct supervisor, the commander of the city. When the commander found out about it he was furious, and he threatened to send her husband to jail, but then the commander himself decided he wanted to earn some extra cash on the side, and he began freeing bachurim for a fee.

"In the meantime, her husband had learned his lesson. His commander's threat frightened him. He was afraid of losing his freedom, his job, and his ranking, and he stopped freeing people in exchange for a bribe.

"When the delegation came from Petersburg, the commander was arrested, as well as many of his assistants. Her husband was not arrested. The years since he had been involved in freeing draftees had blurred the details, and the investigators found nothing against him. He and his secretary were the only ones left in the military offices of the city, and his wife thought everything would be fine.

"A few days ago, her husband returned home in anger. He asked her whether she remembered Boruch, and he reminded her of that Jew who often visited the building where he worked, and gave lots of money to free young Jews. When she said she remembered him, her husband said the time had come to take revenge against him, and he told her he was going to inform on you.

“He readily dismissed all her attempts at reminding him how you would pay him large sums for these releases and that if he informed on you he would be expressing ingratitude.

“Her husband yelled that hundreds of his army buddies were sitting in jail and why should a Jew walk freely? He wanted you to sit with them in jail.

“He prepared a letter that described you as a lowlife who was ready to do anything for money, and wrote that you were one of the first in the city to harm the nation’s security. He sealed the letter without signing his name, as though he was just a regular citizen. If they would accept his slander, it would mean the death sentence.

“His goodhearted wife tried once again to prevent her husband from sending the letter, but he mocked her as a sudden Jew-lover. He put the letter in his pocket, intending to put it in the mailbox.

“The next day, when he arrived at his office with the letter, his troubles began. He was sitting and reading the many letters that had arrived at his office, when he suddenly paled. There was a letter informing on a resident of the city, and the letter was about him! The letter, intended for the committee, had come to his office by mistake. The good citizen who had written the letter, had gone to the committee with

“He quickly put the letter into his pocket just as the door of his office opened and members of the committee walked in...”

complaints about him and had said that the deputy commander was also involved in the scandal. The person had even cited a number of examples proving that the deputy commander deserved to sit behind lock and key for many years.

“He quickly put the letter into his pocket just as the door of his office opened and members of the committee walked in. Her husband, taken aback by the unexpected visit, saluted and removed the letter of complaint and said that an incriminating letter had just arrived at the office accusing a Jew of obtaining the release of many Jewish men from the army.

“The officials opened the letter and read it again and again, as they looked extremely grave. The head of the committee looked at the deputy

commander in wonder and consulted in a whisper with his comrades. Then he told the deputy commander that he was under arrest, as he thundered, ‘This letter does not incriminate a Jew but yourself!’

“This is what his wife told me and she couldn’t help bursting into tears. ‘Do you understand what happened?’ she asked me. ‘My husband gave them the letter that incriminated himself, instead of the letter he himself had written against the Jew. Now my husband is in jail, and it’s all because of his stupid desire for revenge.’”

PART V

Reuven hugged Boruch Yosef. “Of course I consoled her as best as I could, but I was thinking of you, my dear friend. I knew that you were at home, trembling and fearful of being arrested at any moment. That’s why I rushed over here as soon as I heard the good news.”

Boruch Yosef the Melamed sat dumbstruck, finding it hard to digest what he had heard. “What a great miracle happened here! This is the fulfillment of the Rebbe’s bracha, which happened so quickly and in such an amazing way. I was afraid of that deputy commander, because I knew his evil character, but Divine providence saw to it that he incriminated himself instead of me.”

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CHABAD MIKVAOS – NOW, ALL OVER THE WORLD

BY SHAI GEFEN

*Chabad mikvaos are part of a quiet revolution taking place all over Eretz Yisroel. In the past, there were battles to have Chabad mikvaos built, but today, rabbanim of all backgrounds consider Chabad mikvaos the ultimate in hiddur. * Rabbi Boaz Lerner of Nachalat Har Chabad has traveled to dozens of countries on behalf of Chabad mikvaos, and he gives us the background and relates the miracles he has experienced.*

When the mikva was built in Nachalat Har Chabad, R' Boaz Lerner was determined that it be built with the utmost hiddur. Thus, he insisted on a certain type of expensive ceramic tile, but discovered that they were no longer available. A local dealer suggested he travel to Milan, where some of that tile was still available.

"Rabbi Mordechai Garelik, the architect who designed the mikva, and I, decided to go to Milan," says R' Lerner. "We wrote to the Rebbe about it and opened to an amazing letter in the *Igros Kodesh*, where the Rebbe writes, '**...you inform me**

about the situation you are presently in with Rabbi Mordechai in Milan and you are meeting with Rabbi Yaakov Gansburg.'

"Incredibly, we had just gotten in touch with Rabbi Gansburg in order to get information about the ceramic tiles in Milan. Since the Rebbe wrote about Milan, we went.

We landed on a winter day in Shvat, at noon. At four PM, we were in Bologna, where the tile factories are located. By the time we arrived, they had closed.

"Rabbi Borenstein, the local shliach, and Rabbi Garelik went

down to the basement of one of the factories in order to talk with some people in the know, but they got nothing from them. 'Go back to Israel, you won't get any of those tiles,' they said. I stayed up above, sitting with the shliach's children.

"Suddenly, an older man left the factory, walking with a young man and a huge poodle. They walked towards their Mercedes and the poodle turned towards me and barked loudly. That's when its owner noticed me. He asked me what I was doing there, and I told him why I had come. On the spot, he told the young man with him, who was his son, to remain at the factory and to close a deal with us.

"That same night we left with a signed deal for expensive ceramic tiles, at an incredibly low price."

A REVOLUTION

It's hard to get Rabbi Boaz Lerner to sit down for a conversation. He's over his head with work, and in recent years he has made a dramatic revolution when it comes to building Chabad mikvaos. Aside from this, he is more of an action-oriented person than a talker. What finally got him to talk to me was his desire to inform the public about the ability

we have today to build Chabad mikvaos.

R' Lerner lives in Kiryat Malachi, but he operates around the country and abroad. Just a few months ago, he visited India, where the first Chabad mikva opened in Dramsala.

Most people are unaware of the huge difficulties involved in building Chabad mikvaos in Eretz Yisroel. The reason for the difficulties is lack of information, on the part of many rabbanim, when it comes to the importance of *bor al gabei bor* (one pit over another, as opposed to side-by-side), which is something the Rebbe Rashab established. This is why many rabbanim refused to allow these mikvaos to be built in their towns.

Over many years, the Rebbe fought to have Chabad mikvaos built. If you look up the topic in the *Igros Kodesh*, you will see how the Rebbe regarded Chabad mikvaos as extremely important. Yet there was much opposition to opening mikvaos like these. This opposition, sometimes inexplicable, only proved how spiritually important it was to insist on Chabad mikvaos. You can read about these battles in the *Igros Kodesh*.

Once, while giving out dollars for tz'daka, Rabbi Yisroel Lau passed by the Rebbe and told the Rebbe that, despite the opposition, they had completed a Chabad mikva in Tel Aviv. The Rebbe said, "There's no comparison between a document which was disputed and was later certified, to a document which was not disputed."

In fact, we see that this was so, for after the big fights about building these mikvaos, the inyan just grew stronger. The seeds the Rebbe planted over the years have recently grown and ripened, and there's an enormous change in

Rabbi Yisroel Lau told the Rebbe that, despite the opposition, they had completed a Chabad mikva in Tel Aviv. The Rebbe said, "There's no comparison between a document which was disputed and was later certified, to a document which was not disputed."

regard to Chabad mikvaos and in renovating existing mikvaos, in the most mehudar way.

R' Boaz Lerner gets a lot of the credit, for he is the loyal shliach of the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, whose job it is to check and be responsible for Chabad mikvaos

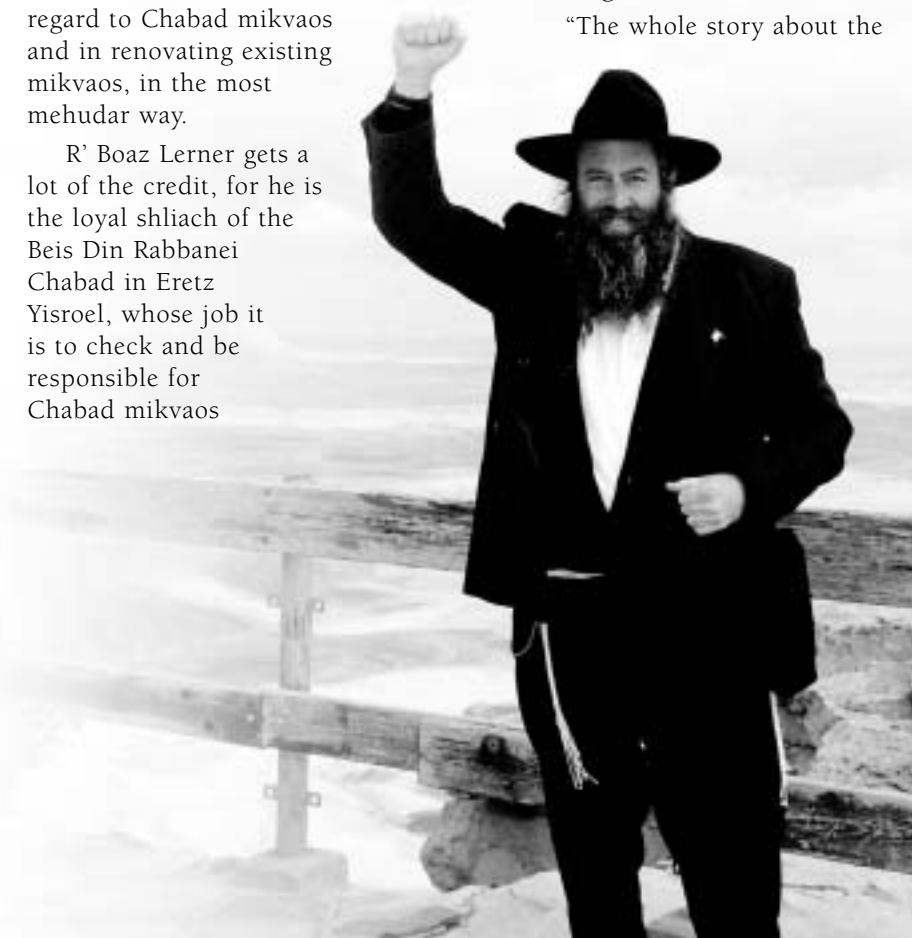
in all locations.

How did R' Lerner get involved in this in the first place? It all began in an unusual way, with a dream about the Rebbe.

"It was in 5753 when one night I dreamed of the Rebbe who asked me, 'What's with Nachala?' I woke up and didn't understand what the Rebbe meant. I asked some friends and someone told me that the mikva that had been started in Nachalat Har Chabad in memory of the Rebbetzin had not been completed. He reminded me of the Rebbe's sharp sichos about the mikva in Crown Heights, when it had remained unfinished.

"I wrote all this to the Rebbe, and asked whether I should get involved in getting that mikva finished. The Rebbe's answer was positive and included approval and a blessing.

"The whole story about the



mikva in Nachala was amazing and fascinating. Towards the end, we went to Italy to buy the ceramics, which were bought, as related earlier, in a miraculous way. I remember that afterwards we farbrenge with shliach Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik. We were drunk with joy.

“R’ Gershon Mendel explained why the Rebbe Rashab instituted this enactment of *bor al gabei bor*. He said that since a new generation would arise with the souls of the Soldiers of the House of Dovid, in order to bring down these lofty souls, a new enactment needed to be made of *bor al gabei bor*. Thus, the immersion would be in the best possible manner, the likes of which never existed before.

This idea spurred R’ Lerner on and today, “They’re receptive to accommodating the needs of Chabad mikvaos.”

FINDING A WAY TO THEIR HEARTS

After finishing the beautiful mikva in Nachalat Har Chabad, R’ Lerner looked for ways to stay involved in mikvaos. He asked the Rebbe whether he should do so, and as this was after Gimmel Tammuz, he got the following answer in the *Igros Kodesh* (vol. 7, p. 112-113), which left no room for doubts:

“The center for Taharas HaMishpacha in Yerushalayim asked me – through their representative here, Rabbi Barzel, and then in writing from Yerushalayim – to help build and complete mikvaos in Eretz Yisroel, and I promised them my help ...

Additionally, the mikva needs to be made in accordance with the instructions of the Rebbe Rashab, since he is our posek. And it’s also known in halacha that in the city of Rav you have to act in accordance

with the rulings of Rav, even though in the city of Shmuel, etc. Also, there’s no problem with *lo sisgodedu* [the Torah prohibition against following differing rulings in the same city] for a number of reasons, etc.

In the same letter, the Rebbe continues to clarify in great detail how the work with the mikvaos should go, and he continues:

“R’ Gershon Mendel explained why the Rebbe Rashab instituted this enactment of bor al gabei bor. Since a new generation would arise with the souls of the Soldiers of the House of Dovid, in order to bring down these lofty souls, a new enactment needed to be made of bor al gabei bor.”

Obviously, you don’t go to war with them, but you explain, that it is the opposite of the din to force someone *not* to fulfill the halachic decisions of his rav, especially in these matters when these mikvaos are kosher according to all opinions ...

“This clear answer helps me a lot when there’s an argument with a local rav,” says R’ Lerner. “I simply

show him the Rebbe’s letter and it helps. Many of the rabbanim suddenly get it, that building a Chabad mikva is not just the ‘craziness of some Chassidim,’ as they thought, but another stringency and hiddur to the existing mikva. It resolves many problems with other *shitos*.

“From the Rebbe’s answer I also learn what the correct approach is when asking the local rav to build a Chabad mikva. I have seen many rabbanim and communal figures change their opinion from one extreme to another about mikva after they read the Rebbe’s answer.

“One of the most difficult situations we had was in Sderot. In the beginning, there was tremendous opposition from the local rav, who even said that those who wanted a Chabad mikva should move elsewhere. I decided to sit down with him and learn the Rebbe’s letter.

“While learning it together, his tone changed completely. He told us in the middle of learning, ‘You remind me of a story that took place when I was in Morocco, and we thought of making a certain improvement to the mikva. We went to rabbanim to demand the improvement, just as you are coming to me to improve the mikva, so how can I refuse you?’ Baruch Hashem, they recently began building the Chabad mikva in Sderot.

“There were quite a few problems in Chadera too. Rabbi Axelrod, the shliach in the Givat Olga neighborhood, went with me to meet the rav, but the rav didn’t even want to let us in. I told Rabbi Axelrod to tell him that outside waited a pilot who engineered mikvaos (R’ Lerner used to be a fighter pilot, which is a story in itself – S.G.). Well, that did the trick. He let us come in, and I sat and learned the Rebbe’s letter on



Rabbi Lerner in front of a new mikva that was built with his guidance.



On the scene as cement is poured at the mikva in Kfar Chabad Beit



R' Lerner with one of the workers who built the mikva in India

mikvaos with him. His opinion changed completely.”

MY SECRET WEAPON

“We had another story in Beit Shemesh, where there are three Chabad mikvaos. One of the mikvaos is the Satmar mikva, for their rabbanim agreed to make it *bor al gabei bor*.

“I went to a meeting with their rav, and we examined the mikva together. It’s one of the most beautiful mikvaos I’ve ever seen. As we looked it over, they kept asking me, ‘Do you have such beautiful mikvaos in Chabad?’ I told them we didn’t.

“When we were done, I said to them, ‘Now I’ll show you something we have in Chabad which doesn’t exist anywhere else.’ I took out my handheld computer and showed them a video of the Rebbe talking about *shleimus ha’Aretz*. It’s a few minutes long and the Rebbe screams out on the subject. They stood openmouthed.

“A week later they told me that everything had been taken care of, and all the improvements I had asked for, had been done. I explained to them at length about the tremendous *chiddush* of the Rebbe Rashab, as the Rebbe explains it – that the immersion takes place in forty measures of water, after the hole that is a handsbreadth wide negates the presence of the floor you stand on, because the rainwater pit with forty measures is considered as one with the immersion pit.

“They were so enthusiastic about the improvements that their rav candidly said to me, ‘If people knew how *mehudar* a mikva made according to the specifications of the Rebbe Rashab is, they would all prefer immersing in a mikva like this.’”

When Rabbi Boaz Lerner talks

about mikvaos, he comes alive. He has experienced miracles and supernatural occurrences when it comes to mikva building. He sees this as his shlichus, and he is ready to travel anywhere in the world that he is invited to visit.

“The pleasure this gives the Rebbe is indescribable, so I try my utmost.”

* * *

“In one city in northern Eretz Yisroel, they constructed a building that was divided into two parts, which is done in many places. After they built the skeleton, I was called to check it out. A Chabad rav had supervised the building. After I checked it, I discovered that they had made the *bor al gabei bor* in the men’s mikva. When I informed the Chabad rav about this, he was devastated.

“The government person in charge happened to be there, and when we told him about the problem he said he couldn’t help us. Yes, it was a sad mistake, but nothing could be done to change it.

“As a last-ditch effort, I took out my video of the Rebbe on shleimus ha’Aretz and showed it to the government guy. I could see it made a deep impression on him.

“When he got up I could see

A PARTIAL LIST OF NEW CHABAD MIKVAOS BUILT BY THE MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS:

Gan Yavneh, Kfar Saba, Mazkeret Batya, Kiryat Mochkin, Elad, Ariel, Neve Dekalim, Efrat, Yesod HaMaala, Tzfat-Meor Chaim, Acko, Beit Shemesh, Bani Eyish, Bat-Yam, Mitzpeh Rimon, Shoham, Ashkelon, Be’er Sheva, Lehavim, Beit Shaan.



Putting on t’fillin with the contractor building the mikva

him hesitate and then turn around to one of the people in charge and say, ‘I just decided that the entire building will be only for women.’ Everybody was stunned, but I knew where this had come from, from the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach.”

What is your specific role when it comes to building Chabad mikvaos?

“There are places where it’s about building a new mikva and other places that want to add a pit, in accordance with Chabad’s *shita*, to the existing pits. There are also instances in which there are problems that necessitate supervision during the construction. There are also places where the entire thing has to be destroyed and rebuilt.

“I was recently somewhere where the mikva had to be destroyed and rebuilt. There are many details involved in the construction of a mikva, which need close supervision. In many places, rabbanim give precise instructions, but workers and contractors don’t always do what they are told, and that’s when problems arise.

“In many places the local rav or the head of the religious council

needs to be convinced of the importance of a Chabad mikva. In other places, you have to get people to sign a petition over this issue.

“I can tell you that, baruch Hashem, when it comes to agreeing to and understanding the importance of a Chabad mikva, we have come a long way. Rabbanim who, in the past, knew nothing about this, and when they heard the word ‘Chabad’ automatically opposed us, have become educated. Now they understand the stringencies and hiddurim of the Rebbe Rashab, and they take them on.”

What do you say to the rabbanim?

“I simply explain it all to them and learn the Rebbe’s letter with them. I also tell them that if there is a Chabad mikva, the rav can sleep peacefully, because when a mikva is built with the *shita* of *hashaka* (when the pits are side by side), the rav has to be sure that the pit was filled up properly and that the opening wasn’t closed by mistake.

“And with the *shita* of *z’ria* (processing the water through the existing rainwater), every time you change the rainwater, the rav has to make sure the pit with the

rainwater is completely dry, and despite this, there are many problems. In mikvaos Chabad, the rav doesn't have these concerns, because after the mikva is set up, there's nothing to do afterwards.

"I once met with Rabbi Yigal Kamenetzky, the rav of the Gaza Strip. I explained the importance of a Chabad mikva to him, as the Rebbe explains it. He was so impressed that he said, 'From now on, every pit I build here will also have a Chabad rainwater storage.'

"In Gan Yavneh, Rabbi Kurant who is the shliach invited me to come. All the experts said they

couldn't make a Chabad pit, since there the main pipe of the Mekorot company was under the building, and everything was ready for them to pour the cement.

"At the last minute, past zero hour, we brought a note to the architect from the religious council which said: 'Please help Chabad.' The religious council wrote this to be polite, but the architect took it seriously. How do you solve a problem with a pipe, which interferes with the building of a Chabad mikva? You simply raise the building!

"One of the places where they

didn't even take a Chabad mikva into account was the chareidi city of Beitar Ilit. The city council simply did not consider the needs of the large Chabad community living there. They claimed that the plans were completed and couldn't be changed.

"I prepared new plans for the mikva and in the end, it was the (present) Litvishe mayor, Rabbi Yitzchok Pindrus, who agreed to build a Chabad mikva. This entailed great expense because they had to change the plans.

"But the Rebbe repaid him, as it were, and Rabbi Pindrus was elected as mayor on 20 Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, who enacted the new type of mikva. I remember that he told me, 'My job is to clean the garbage bins of all the residents of the city. So too, it makes no difference whether it's a Litvak or a Lubavitcher; I'll make sure there's a Chabad mikva here.' He fought everybody and won.

"The mikva at the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv also had big miracles with the rain. The roshei yeshiva and other staff members were eyewitnesses to the miracles."

How many new Chabad mikvaos are there in recent years?

"Dozens more, which is a dramatic change, but I see the revolution not in quantity but primarily in the approach and the awareness that rabbanim now have about the advantages of having a Chabad mikva.

"Two years ago we discovered that the Ministry for Religious Matters had a project to build mikvaos. We got involved, and after bitter fights, we managed to get another twenty or so Chabad mikvaos approved (see box). In the meantime, some of the mikvaos have yet to be completed because of the budget cuts. We hope they'll be finished soon. But the big change



Rabbi Lerner teaching the halachos of mikva



Rabbi Lerner and shliach Dror Shaul in India with a friend of Chabad

is, that today the engineers at the Ministry of Religion have a special model from which to build Chabad mikvaos. It's just as the Rebbe said, 'a document that was disputed and later certified.'"

* * *

R' Lerner's stories are not only from Eretz Yisroel. He travels and consults mikva construction abroad too.

"I was contacted by some countries around the world. This past Sivan, we finished the first Chabad mikva in India for shliach Rabbi Dror Shaul in Dramsala. The mikva is part of his Chabad house. Since the trip there is arduous, we planned on finishing everything in one trip.

"We built a reservoir on the roof and hoped that during the monsoon season, which would take place after my trip, the pit would fill up. It turns out that the day after we finished building the reservoir, the monsoon began and the mikva filled right up. The mikva in India is built with the greatest hiddurim.

"Afterwards, I farbrenge with the young people there and told them I would give a dollar from the Rebbe to whoever would be tested on a section of chapter 41 of *Tanya*.

"That was one of the most moving trips I've made and I hope there will be others like it in the



Building the mikva in Chadera

future."

When I spoke with R' Lerner, at this point he stopped and thought for a while. Then he added, "It's interesting to note that the closer we get to Geula and the Rebbe's hisgalus, the more we see the world adding in purity, in preparation for the great light of the Geula."

* * *

In conclusion, if we think that R' Lerner is the first to be involved in the topic of mikva, we'd be mistaken. In the Rebbe Rashab's

letters we find that the one he placed in charge of mikvaos was Rabbi Notten Lerner. In a letter he wrote his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, it says: "And ask him in my name, in everything having to do with the mikva, he shouldn't do anything without asking R' Notten Lerner, and he should do as he says."

In another letter, the Rebbe Rashab writes: "I wrote to R' Notten last week and asked him to hurry up and go to Rostov, because he is needed there as they complete the work."

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REBBETZIN SHTERNA SARA, THE WIFE OF THE REBBE RASHAB

Part 1 of a 2 part series

BY MALKA SCHWARTZ

In the years 5620 and 5621 respectively, in the town of Lubavitch, a baby girl named Shterna Sara and a baby boy named Shalom Dov Ber were born. Shalom Dov Ber would grow up to be the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe and Shterna Sara his wife.

Shterna Sara was the daughter of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok, son of the Tzemach Tzedek. Her mother was the saintly Rebbetzin Chana, the daughter of Rabbi Yaakov Yisroel of Cherkas and Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, who was the daughter of the Mitteler Rebbe.¹ Shalom DovBer was the son of the Rebbe Maharash and his saintly wife Rebbetzin Rivka.

When Shterna Sara and Shalom Dov Ber were approximately 5 years old, their mutual grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, suggested a matrimonial match between the two. (The Tzemach Tzedek made this shidduch just 10 months before his histalkus.) On Sunday the 10th of Sivan, in the year 5625 (1865) The Rebbe Maharash and his brother, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok, committed to writing their agreement that their children would marry in the summer of the year 5635 (1875).²

CHASSAN AND KALLAH

Young Shterna Sara's family

eventually moved from Lubavitch and settled in Avrutch. As Shterna Sara anticipated, she married the Rebbe Maharash's son, Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber. In keeping with their agreement, the wedding was celebrated on the 11th day of Elul in the year 5635 (1875). They married in the city of the kalla.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer's mother,

*'Don't cry. I promise
that in this year a son
will be born to you.
However, you must
fulfill two
conditions...'*

the saintly Rebbetzin Rivka, traveled with him to the wedding. However, his father, the Rebbe Maharash, did not go with him or attend his son's wedding. At the time he said, "Now the revelation is of the aspect of 'Mochin d'Ima,' which is why the chassan's mother is accompanying him. In the World to Come, when the 'Mochin d'Abba' will be revealed,

I myself will also be there."³

Weddings gifts were sent to the kalla. The Rebbe Maharash saw them and asked what was inside a particular box. When he was told it was a hat for the kalla, he asked to see it. The hat had an adornment on it, which added a certain brand of stylishness to it. Only after the Rebbe Maharash removed this adornment did he put it back in the box, to be sent to the kalla. Rebbetzin Shterna Sara and the Rashab were married at the age of 15.

Sometime after their wedding, they traveled back to Lubavitch in order to live there. Rebbetzin Shterna described some of her feelings of the time she arrived in the town of Lubavitch:

"When I arrived in Lubavitch from Avrutch, as the daughter in-law of the Rebbe Maharash, I noticed that all the children of the Rebbe Maharash were tall. I was short. Concerning this my father in-law said, "You shouldn't feel bad about it. The shortest trees yield good fruit."⁴

Indeed it would be Rebbetzin Shterna Sara who would give birth to the future 6th Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz.

CHASIDUS WAS PRECIOUS TO HER

The Rashab recorded notes about the maamarim he heard from his father, the Rebbe Maharash. During the first two years of their marriage, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara would copy these notes by hand.

The Rebbe Maharash was very organized. Everyone knew his exact daily schedule, including when he went out for a walk. During his walks, the Chassidim would appoint a lookout to stand guard until the Rebbe's return. They would then sneak into his house and copy his Chassidic maamarim. None other than his own niece and daughter in-law, Shterna Sara, was amongst the copiers.⁵ She wrote legibly and quickly. In fact there are a number of maamarim, which the only record of them is the copies, which were written by Rebbetzin Shterna Sara.⁶

THE BIRTH OF THEIR ONLY CHILD, YOSEF YITZCHOK

In the year 5640 (1880), Yosef Yitzchok, the only child of the Rebbetzin Shterna Sara and the Rebbe Rashab was born. Regarding his birth, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara related:

"Many years had passed (5 years) since we were married and I was still

not with child. My heart was pained from this. To make the pain even worse, I was still very young and I was away from my family.

"Once at the Simchas Torah Kiddush of my father in-law, blessings were said to all the men that were present. Afterwards, they came to the place where all the daughters were and blessed each of the women, but for some reason they skipped me. They immediately realized their oversight, and made amends. Despite this, it caused me much anguish.

"After the Kiddush I went to my room. I thought about the fact that I was still not with child, about my loneliness, and what happened concerning the blessings at the Kiddush. My heart shrunk within me and I burst out crying. In the midst of my crying, I fell asleep and had a dream.

"In my dream I saw a Jew come towards me. He asked me: 'Why are you crying, my daughter?' I then poured out my heart to him.

"He then said to me: 'Don't cry. I promise that in this year a son will be born to you. However, you must fulfill two conditions: Immediately after Yom Tov you must give 18 rubles of your personal money to tz'daka, and no one should know about this.'

"The Jew disappeared, but he

immediately returned with two additional men. He told the two men what he promised me, and the conditions he had set. The two men gave their approval. All three men blessed me, and then they left. The dream ended.

"I told my husband about the dream. He immediately told his father, my father in-law, the Rebbe Maharash. My father in-law called me and requested that I repeat all its details before him. After this he asked me to describe the 3 men I saw. He then told me: 'The first one was the Tzemach Tzedek, the 2 additional men were the Mitteler Rebbe and the Alter Rebbe.'

"After Simchas Torah it was time for me to fulfill the 2 conditions. How would I get 18 rubles of my own money? [An idea occurred to me]: I had a dress that was sewn in the style of the time, but my father in-law had not wanted me to wear it. I called a certain woman and asked her to sell the dress. I added that she should be careful that no one know about it. What would people say if they knew the daughter in-law of the Rebbe was selling her dress?!...

"With strategies like this I was successful in gathering the 18 rubles. I gave the money to tz'daka, and in that same year [9 months later] our son was born to us."

(To be continued.)

NOTES:

1 Y'Mei Chabad p.115

2 Sefer HaToldos Admor Rashab, p.7 and p.17

3 Sefer HaSichos Toras Shalom, p.188

4 L'Shema Ozen, p. 83

5 One might wonder: Why did the maamarim need to be copied in such an outwardly tricky manner? There are some matters that must be acquired with cunning, similar to the way Yaakov Avinu had to take the bracha from his father Yitzchok. Yaakov used clever tactics to get the bracha from his father in order to recapture the holy sparks that had been previously captured through, "the snake was more cunning than any beast" (Bereishis 3:1). Since the snake captured the sparks through his cunning (he enticed Chava to sin), these sparks had to be recaptured through cunning. As it is written, "With the pure you shall show yourself pure, and with

the...")

Perhaps an additional reason why the Rebbe Maharash allowed the maamarim to be copied in this manner may have been in order that his Chassidim achieve p'nimiyus (inwardness and sincerity). Chabad demands p'nimiyus, and in order to achieve p'nimiyus a person must expend great effort. For example, in times past, Chassidic farbrengens were not open to just anyone who wished to attend. Only later did they start allowing everyone to enter, but only on the condition that they really wanted to participate "with an emes." In order to make sure they wanted to enter the farbrengen "with an emes," they closed the door! In other words, if the door is left wide open and anyone can walk in [it's easy]; it will not be done with p'nimiyus.

6 Sichas Motzaei Shabbos Kodesh Parshas B'Shalach 5724

7 Shmuos V'Sippurim vol. 1 p. 190

“GO TO AMERICA AND THERE YOU WILL HAVE CHILDREN”

BY SHAI GEFEN

Everybody in Yerushalayim knew her as Bubby Quinn. She raised a large, beautiful family and has dozens of descendents in America and Eretz Yisroel. She passed away in 5743 (1982) at the age of 111.

The story of how the Quinns emigrated to America 100 years ago is intertwined with advice and a bracha that Bubby Quinn received from the Rebbe Rashab, who also blessed her with a long life. The story has been passed down within the family for generations.

Bubby Quinn was a modest woman who spent her life involved in tz'daka and chesed. She raised her family in America at a time when it was extremely difficult to be mechanech one's children to Torah and mitzvos, and unlike many people, she was successful.

Devorah Miriam was born in the year 5633 (1873) in Dvinsk, where the Rogatchover Gaon lived. The family was of Chabad descent. She was orphaned of her father when she was a young girl, and her mother was left alone with little children. One of the balabatim in a nearby town who was a relative of theirs, decided to help the widow and support the family.

Devorah Miriam was the oldest child. When she came of marriageable age, her mother dreamt that Devorah Miriam would marry an outstanding Torah scholar. This was what both mother and daughter yearned for.

Divine Providence willed otherwise. The balabus who had taken the family into his house urged Devorah Miriam to marry his son. He was a G-d-fearing young man but was in business with his father. The family didn't know what to do. On the one hand Devorah Miriam wanted to marry a Torah scholar; on the other hand, it was hard to refuse their benefactor who had taken them under his wing and sustained them all those years.

“That people tell you to get divorced is not right! Change your place, change your mazal. Go to America and there you will have children...”

The mother finally decided to marry off her daughter to the balabus' son, Zalman Pinchas Quinn, out of gratitude to him. The decision wasn't an easy one to make. The family tradition says this shidduch was laden with emotion. The night before the wedding, Devorah Miriam cried about not meriting to marry a Torah scholar, but having no choice she made peace with the situation.

After the wedding, the couple lived

in Dvinsk near the Rogatchover Gaon.

Ten years after the wedding, the couple had still not had children. Mrs. Quinn had five miscarriages, and the doctors didn't know what to do for her. Many of her friends counseled her to get divorced and begin life anew after all treatments failed.

She decided to consult with the Rogatchover Gaon, who was the Chassidic mara d'asra of Dvinsk, as she asked him all her questions. She presented her question and said that her friends were pressuring her to get divorced. The Gaon said that this question was not for him but for a Rebbe. He suggested that she go to Lubavitch and speak to the Rebbe Rashab.

When she entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe was looking into a seifer. According to family tradition, the Rebbe didn't even look up. Before she could even begin to tell him her woes, the Rebbe said, “That people tell you to get divorced is not right! Change your place, change your mazal. Go to America and there you will have children.” Before she left, he blessed her with long life.

The Quinns were shocked by the Rebbe Rashab's advice, because it was so unusual for people to make the journey to America in those days, but they saw it as Heavenly advice which ought to be obeyed.

In 5664 (1904) Mrs. Quinn went back to Dvinsk and the news spread quickly. The Quinns were emigrating

to far-off America, as the Lubavitcher Rebbe had told them to do. The Rogatchover Gaon also blessed them. Everybody was curious to see how things would work out for the couple.

In those days, traveling to America was a threat to the Jewish future of a family, not to mention the material difficulties involved. In 5665 (1905) the Quinns arrived in America, where they rebuilt their lives in Williamsburg. The Rebbe Rashab's bracha was fulfilled when three daughters and two sons were born to them.

The connection between the Quinns and Lubavitch continued in America. The Quinn family davened in the Tzemach Tzedek shul in Williamsburg. Although the descendents were not Lubavitchers, they kept a few Chabad customs. They continued to daven in a *T'hillas Hashem* siddur; others kept the Chabad knot in their t'fillin, or observed special hiddurim on Pesach.

Mrs. Quinn educated her children with mesirus nefesh. She opened a sort of talmud Torah for her children, which eventually evolved into the famous yeshiva Torah Vodaas, where her son, Rabbi Nesanel Quinn, is menahel till this very day.

The family tells of difficult and bitter battles their mother waged to preserve the Jewish tradition of her children. She was rewarded for this in that all her children remained frum.

In 5687 (1927) her husband passed away from a severe case of pneumonia. She continued to raise her children on her own. When her children had all married, she moved to Spring Valley, a little village near Monsey at that time, in order to live with her daughter, Debra. In America, Mrs. Quinn was known for her incredible tzidkus. Each day she opened the shul, said T'hillim for hours every day, and was involved in tz'daka matters.

In her old age, at the beginning of

the 1950's, when she approached 80, she decided to move to Eretz Yisroel since she didn't want to be a burden to her children. She secretly took care of all the documents she needed, then she packed up and left. She lived in Batei Warsaw in Yerushalayim.

Even in the Holy City, among many righteous women, Mrs. Quinn stood out in her piety and acts of chesed. She would distribute tz'daka and get people involved in worthy causes.

One of her grandchildren, R' Zalman Deutsch, relates that in Yerushalayim she continued to open the shul where she davened daily. She davened in the minyan of Chassidim, always used an Arizal siddur, and many Chabad customs were preserved in the family even though her descendents were not Chabad Chassidim.

In the beginning of the 60's she broke her hip, and from that point on she davened in the Perushim minyan that was closer to where she lived. However, in the last few years of her life she was confined to her home and was unable to daven in shul.

R' Deutsch remembers an interesting story about the first Frigidaire that her son, Rabbi Nesanel, bought her when he visited her in Yerushalayim in the beginning of the 50's. In those days, a Frigidaire was quite a rare item in Eretz Yisroel. The following year, when he visited his

mother again, he was shocked to discover that the Frigidaire was gone.

His mother told him that she had given it to Hachnasas Kalla. Rabbi Nesanel decided to buy her another Frigidaire, on condition that it would remain his. He gave his mother "permission" to use it ...

R' Deutsch says that Mrs. Quinn spoke a lot about the Rogatchover Gaon and said they lived right next door to each other. They asked him all questions, large and small.

* * *

The Rebbe Rashab's bracha for long life also was fulfilled. Bubby Quinn a"h passed away at the age of 111 on Motzaei the first day of Sukkos 5743 (1982). Her mind was clear till her last day, and she davened three times a day.

She knew all her descendents who came to visit her. Her sons have also enjoyed long lives. Her son, Chaim Zev Quinn a"h, passed away this year close to 90, and may Rabbi Nesanel, who is well on in years, enjoy many more healthy years.

One of Bubby Quinn's descendents, Rabbi Danny Cohen is a Chabad Chassid and is a shliach in Chevron. He is a grandson of R' Chaim Zev Quinn. For Rabbi Cohen, this is most apt since the Rebbe Rashab, who gave his great-grandmother the bracha, invested a great deal of energy to build up the Chabad yishuv in Chevron.

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THE HOLY ADMUR: REB MORDECHAI GOLDMAN ZATZAL OF ZVYLL

From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



The holy *Admur, zatzal*, was born on the eleventh of Mar-Cheshvan 5666 (October-November, 1905) to his father, the holy *Admur* Reb Gedaliah Moshe *zatzal*, head of Zvyll's rabbinical court, and a fifth generation descendant of the holy Maggid of Zlatchov *zatzal*. In 5686 (1925-26), Reb Mordechai moved to the Holy Land together with his grandfather, the holy *gaon* Reb Shlomke of Zvyll *zatzal*, who educated him and directed him towards greatness.

In the Holy Land, the young scholar studied at the Sfas Emes yeshiva, where his study partner was Reb Yochanan Twerski *zatzal*, who later became renowned as the Rachmastrivker Rebbe. In addition to learning together, the two holy men also recited the Midnight Lamentation together. Indeed, the Imrei Emes *zatzal* used to praise the Divine service of the two holy men. While learning in the yeshiva, Reb Mordechai received rabbinical ordination from Reb Sh. A. of Teplik *zatzal*, and from Reb Chaim Yosef Sonnenfeld *zatzal*. After marrying his cousin, Reb Mordechai continued his studies and Divine service, and was known to speak and eat very little. Throughout all these

years, he shared a very close relationship with his grandfather, Reb Shlomke *zatzal*, who guided him up the ladder of Torah and Divine worship.

After the passing of his grandfather on the twenty-sixth of Adar 5705 (March 11, 1945), and the passing of his father, on the twenty-fourth of Cheshvan 5710 (November 16, 1949) Reb Mordechai began to lead the chassidim in Jerusalem. He also established a yeshiva in the mold of Zvyll Chassidus, where he gave steady Torah classes, and created a strong environment of Torah and Chassidus.

Many people flocked to the *Admur's* home for advice and guidance in their Divine service, and to receive his holy blessing. His doors were open 24 hours a day, ready to take in any embittered soul.

The *Admur* frequented the resting places of *tzaddikim*, where he would pray and supplicate on behalf of the Jewish nation, and on behalf of those who sought his blessing. In particular, he frequented the holy resting place of Reb Shimon bar Yochai, in Miron. By Lag B'Omer 5727 (May 18, 1967) only a few

days prior to the outbreak of the Six Day War, visits to Miron had all but come to a standstill because of the danger and uncertainty engulfing Israel at the time. Reb Mordechai, however, refused to abandon his important practice, and ascended to the *Tanna's* resting place, where he held special prayer services, and led *hakafos* around the resting places of the *tzaddikim*, to awaken Divine salvation for the Jewish people.

Under the *Admur's* leadership, Zvyll Chassidus flourished and grew. Reb Mordechai established new institutions and improved those already in existence, including the *cheider*, yeshiva, *kollel*, rabbinical institute, *chesed* funds, and *s'farim* publication faculty. In the last ten years of his life, he suffered heart problems, and underwent a number of operations. Despite his weakness, however, he continued his holy service and his wondrous *chesed* activities with self-sacrifice. On the twenty-eighth of Shevat 5739 (February 25 1979), after twenty-nine years of leadership, the *Admur* of Zvyll passed on. He is interred on Har HaZeisim, in Jerusalem. The *Admur's* Torah insights are contained in his *seifer*, *Yekara Demalka*.

THE LUBAVITCHER KNOWS AND MAY DISCLOSE

There was always a deep and wondrous connection between the tzaddikim of the House of Zvyll and the Lubavitcher Rebbes. In 5701 (1940-41), when the Rebbe Rayatz issued his famous proclamation, “*L’Alter L’Tshuva L’Alter L’Geula*,” and certain elements attempted to cast aspersions on this inspiring message, the holy *Admur*, Reb Shlomke *zatzal*, declared: “The Lubavitcher Rebbe says what Heaven tells him to say.”

The tzaddik Reb Zundel Hager *zatzal* of Jerusalem writes that at the time Reb Shlomke said: “The mystery of Moshiach was revealed to the Lubavitcher [Rebbeim], and they are permitted to speak of it.

The tzaddik Reb Dovid Shechter (a great Torah scholar, and one of the leading Breslover chassidim), who had a close relationship with Reb Shlomke, heard the *Admur* say at the time: “What can I do? Heaven has proclaimed that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is the tzaddik of the generation!”

Similarly, in *Tzaddik Yesod Olam*, a *seifer* describing Reb Shlomke’s connections with the Torah leaders of the generation, the *Admur* is described as having said: “Until now I thought that so-and-so was the giant of the generation, but now Heaven has shown me that it is the *Admur* of Lubavitch.

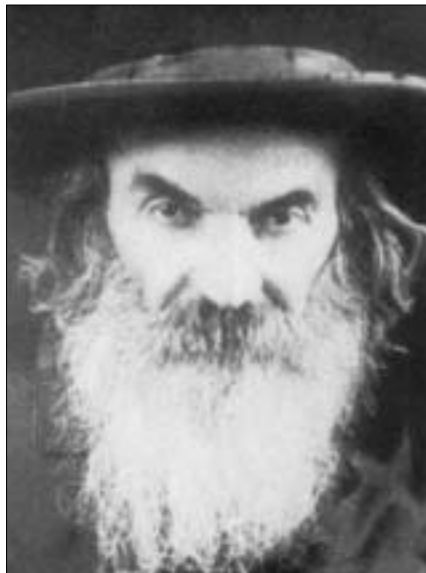
The *rav* and *gaon*, Reb Yaakov Henig *shlita*, (who was the *rosh yeshiva* of the Nadvorna yeshiva in B’nei Brak, and today, serves as the head of a rabbinical court in Golders Green, London) relates that back in 5689 (1928-29), when the Rebbe Rayatz visited the Holy Land, Reb Shlomke said: “With regard to the coming of Moshiach, it is known that he who knows the appointed date does not reveal it, and he who reveals it does not know it. The Lubavitcher, however, knows it, and has permission to reveal it.”

THE ADDRESS FOR ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE REDEMPTION

Like his holy grandfather, the *Admur* Reb Mordechai *zatzal*, showed great



The *Admur*, Reb Gedaliah Moshe of Zvyll *zatzal*



The *Admur*, Reb Shlomke of Zvyll *zatzal*

admiration for the Lubavitcher Rebbes. While still in Russia, in his hometown of Zvyll, he and his father, and grandfather, were connected with the Lubavitcher Chassidim, and worked with them with self-sacrifice to protect

the embers of Judaism. The *gaon* and chassid, Reb Chaim Shaul Brook writes in his diary (*Seifer HaZikaron*, p. 27) that he sat in jail in Zvyll together with the tzaddik Reb Gedaliah Moshe, Reb Mordechai’s father. Reb Mordechai himself studied Torah underground with Reb Chaim Shaul and the students of Lubavitch.

In 5737 (1976-77), the Rebbe sent the *Admur*, Reb Mordechai, a letter through the *gaon* and chassid Reb Yosef Chananya Eisenbach *shlita*. When Reb Eisenbach went to see the *Admur*, together with my in-law, Reb Menachem Ben-Tzion Wilhelm, of blessed memory, and gave him the letter, Reb Mordechai rose and remained standing until he read the entire letter. He then explained that he had found in the holy *Zohar* an important matter relating to the hastening of the Redemption, and had written to the Rebbe about it, “because he is the address for such things.”

IN HIS DAYS

The *Admur* always supported the Rebbe’s activities. We find his signature can be found on proclamations calling on people to participate in the T’fillin Campaign and Shabbos Candles Campaign. He also signed the proclamation of Torah leaders calling for participation in the Rebbe’s struggle against the Vienna conversions, and for the rectifying of the Law of Return to state “*halachic* conversion.”

In a letter sent to the Rebbe for his seventieth birthday by the senior *Admurim* of the Holy Land, the *Admur* of Zvyll penned the following note above his signature: “May it be G-d’s will that you continue to lead in a grand way until [you reach the age of] a hundred and twenty, to publicly sanctify the Name of G-d, blessed be He, and may we merit in your days and in our days, the revelation of the great light, [when] “every created being will know that You created it.” Mordechai ben Faige Devorah, of Zvyll. The *Admur*’s signature also appears on the

letter of blessing sent by the Torah leaders for 11 Nissan 5737 (April 6, 1971).

“BECAUSE I’M NOT A POLITICIAN”

Reb Yisroel Zusha Horowitz *shlita*, dean of the Be’er Menachem and Shevet HaLevi *kollel’s* in Jerusalem’s Gush Shmonim neighborhood, is one of Reb Mordechai’s foremost disciples. Fortunate enough to have had a very close relationship with the *Admur*, Reb Zusha merited to be his study partner, and even published a *seifer* – *Imros K’doshos* – comprising Torah insights he heard from the *Admur* on various occasions. Reb Zushe shared with me the following recollections:

1. “During the time of the Soviet Union’s evil decrees against Torah and Judaism, the *Admur* of Zvyll, then in his youth, studied in Lubavitch’s underground yeshiva, located between Zvyll and Koritz. The *mashpia* of the yeshiva was the *gaon* and chassid Reb Chaim Shaul Brook *zatzal*, who was a close friend of the *Admur’s* grandfather, the holy Reb Shlomke of Zvyll. I merited leaning two chassidic melodies from the *Admur*, Reb Mordechai *zatzal*, and he told me that he learnt them at the time from “Lubavitcher *bachurim*.”

2. In the first years following [the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rayatz in] 5710 (1949-50), the *Admur* traveled to the United States, and attended one of the Rebbe’s *farbrengens*. Accompanying him was his friend, Reb Eliyahu Bar-Chorin, of blessed memory, from Monsey, New York. Without disclosing their identity, the two sat down amidst the crowd. When the Rebbe saw him from the distance, he instructed the overseers [of the *farbrengen*] to show the *Admur* to a seat on the dais. (Upon his return to the Holy Land, the

Admur said with a smile: “None other than the Lubavitcher Rebbe himself was *mekarev* me.)

3. When the Rebbe launched the Shabbos Candles Campaign, [Lubavitcher Chassidim] came to the *Admur* to get his signature on the proclamation calling on Jewish girls over the age of 3 to light Shabbos candles. The *Admur* signed the proclamation with joy and reverent awe. One member of his household who saw this asked in agitation, [“Since it’s a Lubavitcher campaign], why did you sign it!?” The *Admur* replied, “I signed it because I’m not a



Reb Zushe Horowitz with the Rebbe, MH"M

politician, and I do good things without giving any thought to what people might say about it. If it can bring another soul back to Judaism, why not sign it!?”

4. I recall that the *Admur* of Zvyll sent a few of his sons to learn in Toras Emes [Chabad] in Jerusalem, because he wanted them to learn Chassidus. The *Admur* himself, for many years, would teach his close disciples *Tanya* before *davening*, while wrapped in his *tallis* and *t’fillin*. I, too, was fortunate enough to participate in these classes for a long time.

I should point out that the *Admur* already studied *Tanya* diligently in his youth. *The Hamodia*, 23 Shevat 5754 (February 4, 1954) reveals that “his sons, the rabbis, speak nostalgically about how in the evenings he would study the holy *Seifer HaTanya* with an outpouring of his soul late into the night, while his family slept.

5. On a number of occasions, I saw letters that the *Admur* wrote to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, requesting blessings for his family and himself. Likewise, his son the *rav* and chassid, Reb Yosef, of blessed memory, (who built Yeshivas Zvyll), once showed me the letter the Lubavitcher Rebbe sent for his *t’naim* in response to the letter the *Admur* sent the Rebbe requesting his approval and blessing for the match.

6. The *Admur* of Zevyill’s son, Reb Yosef, learnt in Yeshivas Toras Emes Lubavitch, and was a great servant of G-d. He built the Zvyll yeshiva, and traveled to the United States to gather money for the project. At first, however, he was not successful in this endeavor. When he went in to the Rebbe for a private audience, the Rebbe asked him about the approach he uses in acquiring funding, and he told the Rebbe that thus far he had not been successful. The Rebbe explained to him that this was due to the fact that he was not attributing importance to small donations, but seeking only contributors who would donate large sums of money at once. The Rebbe gave him two dollars and told him to begin accepting small sums of money, and that from this point on he would begin seeing success. So it was; after that private audience, he began to succeed in his efforts, and he merited building beautiful yeshiva.

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SAVED BY THE REBBE, TWICE!

The amazing story of a businessman from London whose life was saved twice, thanks to his listening to the Rebbe.

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

Dozens of Chassidim took an active part in the Yud Shvat farbrengen that took place last year in the Chassidic library in B'nei Brak. Old and young sat together, Chabad Chassidim and Litvaks, Polish Chassidim and men wearing knitted yarmulkes. The farbrengen, organized by R' Binyamin Cooperman, will surely remain engraved in the hearts of those who attended it. The crowd listened closely as mashpiim and other speakers spoke. There were thoughts about the significance of the day as well as stories from shluchim.

One of the speakers was Rabbi Yechezkel Lifschitz, shliach in Nepal, who told an amazing miracle story that held everybody enthralled.

"The story took place shortly after I left for Nepal," he began. "You have to remember that unlike many other places around the world where the shluchim are aided by people in their communities, in my shlichus the financial situation is really dismal. Nepal is a very poor country. At first, I tried fundraising in various ways, but when it didn't work out I decided to travel to England to raise money to enable me to continue my work.

"When I arrived in London, I went to a wealthy Jewish man whom I had heard has a very warm Jewish heart. I told him where I live and that I'm on the shlichus of the Rebbe, and asked

for his help. The man listened to me and I seemed to have made a good impression on him.

"At the end of our conversation, he said, 'I can't help you right now because all my money is tied up in investments, but since you are a shliach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, I will do all I can to help you.'

"He went out of his way to help me and gave me a nice contribution. I was curious about what motivated him to help me in that way, and when I asked him, at first he tried to avoid answering me, but when I nudged him, he admitted that the reason why he had helped me was because his life had been saved two times, thanks to the Rebbe. He asked me to sit down and told me his stories."

* * *

"Many years ago I had a gentile partner. One day he presented me with a very enticing proposal, a business deal that promised to earn us lots of money. It had been suggested to him by some businessmen in a third world country. When he told me about the fortune we could make, I got very excited and decided to buy a ticket and fly with him to that country to close the deal.

"A few days before the flight I met an old friend, a Lubavitcher Chassid, and I excitedly told him about the big

deal I was about to close. When he heard I was traveling to that country, he told me I should consult with the Lubavitcher Rebbe before flying. I knew that the Rebbe was a big tzaddik and did miracles, and I immediately agreed to his idea. I wrote a letter and sent it off.

"Within a short time I got an answer, and to my shock, instead of blessing me, the Rebbe wrote that he did not think it was worthwhile getting involved. I was shaken by the directness of what the Rebbe had written, and despite the allure of easy money, I didn't dare to defy what the Rebbe said. I canceled my ticket and told my gentile partner that I wasn't going to join him after all.

"He was dumbfounded by my decision and couldn't understand what had changed my mind. I told him about the Rebbe's answer and he thought I was insane.

"He tried to convince me otherwise, but when he saw that he was wasting his time, he decided to follow through with the deal on his own. A few days after his flight, I understood why the Rebbe had said what he did. The gentile made only a one-way trip because the business deal was a sham. He ended up being killed by Mafiosi who took all his money. I couldn't stop praising the Rebbe for saving my life.



“The second time the Rebbe saved my life was in the summer of 5756, when I was in New York on business. Before I returned home to London, a friend called me and said that his wife was in New York and she was supposed to return home shortly. He asked me to take care of the tickets for that flight and to look after her since this was the first time she was flying.

“I arranged her ticket, but a few hours before the flight, my brother in New York called me. He said: ‘Listen, I have no idea what the connection is, but the Lubavitcher Rebbe came to me in a dream and told me to tell you this verse: ‘Beware and guard your soul exceedingly, lest you forget that which your eyes saw.’ I have no idea what this is supposed to mean, and maybe it’s just a dream, but I had to tell it to you.

“As soon as I heard this, I remembered the first time I had been in touch with the Rebbe, when the Rebbe told me not to fly. I realized that the Rebbe was telling me not to fly this time either. I didn’t know what to do though, because I was supposed to take the woman to the airport.

“It was clear to me that if the Rebbe had asked me not to fly, there was perhaps a problem with that flight, and therefore I would not let my friend’s wife get on that plane. But how would I stop her? I was afraid to tell her the dream.

“After thinking about it a long time, I came up with an idea. I got to her house two hours before the flight and drove to the airport, but instead of following the signs, I tried to get lost!

“I went from one highway to another as the woman urged me to hurry and expressed alarm at the mistakes I was making. At first she thought it was accidental but after a bunch of errors, each of which led to yet another error, she began to yell.

“I took the insults and kept quiet. I was sure that if the Rebbe didn’t want me to fly, she shouldn’t board that flight either!

“I finally arrived at the airport, a few minutes after the flight was supposed to have left. I prayed that the flight hadn’t been delayed. I was glad to learn that the flight had just left.

The woman began to scream at me for being the reason she had missed the flight, and how she regretted even considering going with me, etc. etc.

“Not even five minutes went by when one of the airport employees who passed near us asked her why she was yelling. She explained that I had made her miss her flight and that she had to be in London. He asked her which flight she had missed, and she began hoping that perhaps she hadn’t missed the flight after all. She took out her ticket and told him the flight number.

“The employee looked stunned and he said: You’re upset? You ought to thank this man because you owe him your life. That TWA flight exploded a few minutes ago and fell into the water.”

* * *

“Now you understand why I’m doing all I can to help you?” he told the shliach.

(as heard from someone who attended the farbrengen)

A REFERENDUM IS DANGEROUS FOR THE JEWS

BY SHAI GEFEN

WE CANNOT SAY YES TO A REFERENDUM

The national referendum idea is being spoken about more and more. Unfortunately, Yesha leaders and others are convinced that a referendum is a solution of sorts. Some of them even promise they will honor the results of a referendum, and thus soften any inner opposition.

A referendum is extremely dangerous. Even if we assume we will win a national referendum about Gaza, it will open the door to a national referendum on every topic that arises. Today it will be Gush Katif and tomorrow it will be Shabbos observance and marriage. Even Yerushalayim will be up on a national referendum.

If Sharon and his government decide to hold a national referendum, we will join the battle, and make sure there is no majority for the disengagement insanity, and that there will not be a chillul Hashem in a majority of Israelis supporting giving away land. But this is a far cry from suggesting that a national referendum take place and promising to honor what the majority votes for!

Since when can a majority decide to shut down a kibbutz, no matter how out-of-the-way up north it is? And since when can a majority decide to expel Jews from their homes?

We must not fall into the trap of the government ministers. We must make it very clear: Dismantling settlements is unacceptable, at any

price! No majority in the world can decide on something that endangers our fellow Jews, since a vote like this is illegitimate at its very foundation. Hey, let's see them hold a national referendum on the transfer of Arabs! Would they agree to that?

The Likud referendum took place after Sharon demanded it, and that is why we got involved and miraculously experienced G-d's intervention. Does that mean we should initiate such a thing? No way!

THE REBBE'S POSITION ON A NATIONAL REFERENDUM

We all know how meaningful a national referendum is when a million gentiles and another million and a half Arabs are included in the vote! The Rebbe explained that the purpose of a national referendum is to calm the Right and to legitimize the despicable moves of the prime minister.

In a yechidus, which Shmuel Katz had with the Rebbe about a national referendum being proposed at that time, the Rebbe negated the idea and said:

I am afraid of those who want to solve the debate over a withdrawal by holding a national referendum, because danger lies in the very wording [of the referendum]. If they come and ask the nation, "Are you prepared to concede land in exchange for peace?" this would be purposely misleading since with this clever question they are providing half the answer, as though a concession will

lead to peace.

If they go to a national referendum, it is only on condition that they word it as follows:

Is it worth placing every single home in Eretz Yisroel in danger, and to put ourselves in danger of war, leaving Israel without oil, without borders, without defense, with the enemy close to our population centers, in exchange for Sadat's signature on a piece of paper. [All this] when it is obvious that till this day, Egypt has already broken their word four times, and it's clear that Sadat won't live long and won't rule Egypt forever. Additionally, it's obvious that he has no say over the Arabs living in Yehuda and Shomron, and it's clear that the Arabs living in Yehuda and Shomron are openly declaring their intention to annihilate and kill the entire nation living in Tziyon, and it's clear that even if a certain group will agree to peace that other groups won't agree. And so the question is, whether under the circumstances it's worth endangering ourselves and returning land in exchange for a piece of paper which obligates no one?

We all know what kind of brainwashing Sharon and his advisors and ministers will use to convince the people of the urgency of a withdrawal, and in addition, he has the help of the 20% Arabs.

Yet, if they decide to do a referendum anyway, we must get busy, and with Hashem's help, we will succeed. But this is not to say that a



national referendum will decide the future of the nation. No decision in the world can be made in opposition to Torah and the security of the Jewish people, just as it's impossible to hold a referendum about whether a hole can be drilled in a ship at sea with thousands of people on board.

“CHAREIDIM” [THOSE WHO TREMBLE] TO THE WORD OF HASHEM?

It's hard to believe, when we hear about the negotiations the chareidi parties are holding before the vote on the dangerous disengagement plan. How far will they go in defrauding the word of Hashem? This is something every true “chareidi,” literally “one who fears” the word of Hashem, asks. Why is it that on such a critical topic, which the rabbanim and the chareidi public ought to be in the forefront in their opposition, there is silence, and instead they are busy negotiating with Sharon and his cohorts?

The chareidi parties should be leading the opposition to the disengagement plan, and shouldn't allow an atmosphere of wheeling and dealing as it relates to such a critical vote affecting the lives of the Jewish nation. It's painful to see them repeating the same old mistakes. Even if in the end, they will vote against the plan, why blur their position now? Why do they make it look as though it's possible to change what it says in the Torah in exchange for a promise of money? Everybody knows the dangers involved in this plan!

This is also pertinent to the religious national party, which is no better than the chareidi parties, and maybe worse. Shame!

THE OBLIGATION TO PROTEST

We face a critical time. Baruch Hashem, we've seen Chabad Chassidim join forces and we've seen results. The 100 demonstrations and the bus campaign have brought the

Rebbe's message strongly opposing all concessions to hundreds of thousands of Jews around the country. This is why it's important to continue working and being active participants in bringing the Rebbe's message to everyone.

We implore rabbanim, askanim, roshei yeshivos, and mashpiim to lead the way in the fight for shleimus ha'Aretz, as it says regarding the halacha of pikuach nefesh, “mitzva b'gadol,” that it's specifically the distinguished ones who should lead the way.

Every Chabad Chassid must think of this as being a battle for his very own home, and act accordingly; that not a week goes by without sending a protest letter to people in the government; to actively participate in protest demonstrations; to financially support publicity campaigns to spread the Rebbe's views.

This is what the Rebbe said about the importance of protesting:

To those who are quiet – I can't do anything. But they themselves know that this is the opposite of the law in *Shulchan Aruch* – that when a Jew on the end of the world does something that is not in accordance with *Shulchan Aruch*, then every Jew, no matter where he might be, must tell him that he is doing something that is not in accordance with *Shulchan Aruch*. And that doing so harms him, and harms (as it were) the “Divine Presence in exile,” “Who dwells with them in the midst, etc. (19 Kislev 5731).

... It is shocking that they want to endanger the lives of three million Jews and to hide the truth from them! ... May all those who remain quiet (who are numerous, bli ayin ha'ra, I don't want to say, “may they increase”) begin to cry out. It is more pleasant to deal with someone who does something deliberately than with someone who remains silent, because you can't connect with someone who

*Even if we assume we will win a national referendum about Gaza, it will open the door to a national referendum on every topic that arises. Today it will be Gush Katif and tomorrow it will be Shabbos observance and marriage. Even Yerushalayim will be up on a national referendum. * Since when can a majority decide to shut down a kibbutz, no matter how out-of-the-way up north it is? And since when can a majority decide to expel Jews from their homes?*

is quiet. This is because when he's quiet he doesn't do anything and doesn't say anything; he listens to complaints and doesn't react ... (11 Shvat 5731).

... Therefore, firstly – when it comes to actual bloodshed, there's a mitzva "do not stand by your friend's blood!" (That so-and-so and so-and-so are quiet – I don't have an explanation for that, you'll have to ask them why). In addition, when something really hurts, you don't consider whether crying out will help or not. The crying out is because it affects you! (Motzaei Zos Chanuka 5746)

In order that the world act in accordance with the p'sak in Torah (the clear p'sak forbidding giving away land), there needs to be a majority who paskens this way, since "we follow the majority." Those who remain silent, and those who don't want to get involved with this din, must know that this silence won't help. This silence will increase the danger, Heaven forbid! (Motzaei Shabbos B'Reishis 5740).

... The problem is that nobody opens up their mouth in protest, it just happens, and if someone wants to say something – they immediately silence him. And that's how all the agreements go by smoothly, and they don't publicize it (19 Kislev 5740).

... But now it's a situation in which nobody speaks up in protest, and this is because so-and-so received a check for his yeshiva in order to get him to be quiet and not protest matters connected with danger to life of Jews! And he claims that *this* is about talmidim in his yeshiva, and *that* is about the pikuach nefesh of another Jew! This distinction between talmidim of his yeshiva and the rest of the Jewish people is unheard of! (Noach 5742)

FROM TABA TO GUSH KATIF

The terrible tragedy that took

The terrible tragedy that took place at Taba on Motzaei Simchas Torah is the best example of what happens with land that is given away to goyim...

place at Taba on Motzaei Simchas Torah is the best example of what happens with land that is given away to goyim. The land in Taba, where the Hilton Hotel is, is the last piece of land that Israel gave Egypt in the Camp David Accords, after a protracted discussion with the

Egyptians, who didn't give an inch. Naturally, Israel relied on the strongest Arab nation in the world, and didn't anticipate what would result.

Today, as Israel is about to withdraw from even more land (may it not happen), we are being shown from heaven what will result, G-d forbid, from withdrawals and capitulations.

The situation today in Gush Katif is much more serious. We all know who rules the area, what sorts of weapons they manufacture there, and how many missiles will be smuggled through Sinai to the Gaza Strip, and how many more tunnels they will dig if the Israeli army leaves. Everybody knows that the south of the country will quickly turn into southern Lebanon. The attack in Taba is just a microcosm of what we can expect, G-d forbid.

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DISCLAIMER: DANGEROUS VIEWS

I am pleased to note that – almost alone among Chabad publications – *Beis Moshiach* is the one periodical that has maintained a consistent, unswerving, and uncompromising stance on the subject of the security of Eretz Yisroel. While certain others have been either evasive or lukewarm, both the English and Hebrew departments of *Beis Moshiach* have been outspoken and direct in prompting and publicizing the Rebbe's views that Eretz Yisroel is the everlasting and indivisible heritage of the Jewish People, and that no portion of the Land may be give to our enemies, even as part of

a “peace plan,” and that even merely discussing such an idea poses a grave danger to millions of Jews, R”L.

In view of the above, I was particularly shocked and disturbed to find in the English section of Issue 480, 7 MarCheshvan (Parshas Lech Lecha, not Noach as mistakenly printed on the cover) on pages 28-29, an entire article devoted to praise of a rabbi whose views on this subject have been far from consistent with those of the Rebbe, and who, in fact, issued several rabbinic rulings wherein he permits (G-d forbid) giving away

land “for the sake of piece,” even going so far as to permit ceding sovereignty over the Temple Mount itself to our Arab enemies.

The article goes on at length, telling all about what a good “friend of Lubavitch” and admirer of the Rebbe he has been, without even a hint of disclaimer to warn readers of his dangerous views. Such an article has no place in *Beis Moshiach Magazine*. I raise my voice – and my pen – in protest.

Shimon Neubort
Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York

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ACCLAIM FOR SHLEIMUS HA'ARETZ BUS ADS

The International Matteh Chassidei Chabad to Save the Nation and the Land started a new campaign that has met with great acclaim. About 1000 ads on buses around the country publicizing the Rebbe's opposition to a disengagement plan. There are two bus ads. One of them says (translation): **The Lubavitcher Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Warns: Sharon's Plan Raises a Hand Against G-d and His Torah and Brings Tragedy upon Israel.** The other bus ad says: **Disengagement is a Terrible Danger to Jews.**

The ad campaign began on Chol HaMoed Sukkos and Rabbi Yekusiel Rapp and Rabbi Sholom Dovber Wolpo want it to continue for another week. Due to the gravity of the situation, in which Sharon continues his reckless policies, flyers with the Rebbe's message will

be posted, as well as billboards.

"It's the Rebbe's clear message of utter opposition, and it will certainly have an effect," says Rabbi Rapp.

Rabbi Rapp and Rabbi Wolpo ask everybody to help pay for the bus ads, and to help pay for at least one sign which costs only \$50.



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HISTORY IN SPAIN AS 800 YEARS SINCE THE PASSING OF THE RAMBAM IS OBSERVED

History was made recently when the two Chief Rabbis of Israel, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Yonah Metzger, and Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Shlomo Amar, led an international delegation of rabbis to Spain to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the passing of the Rambam.

The high-level delegation – consisting of rabbis from many of the largest cities in Israel, members of Moetzet Harabanut HaRashit (the Chief Rabbinical Cabinet of Israel) and several members of the Beth Din HaGadol (Grand Rabbinic Court) in Yerushalayim, as well as many prominent rabbis from around the world – visited four cities in Spain, Madrid, Toledo, Seville and Cordoba, the city where the Rambam was born. During the three-day visit the *Rabbonim* visited the historical sites of Jewish life in Spain and conducted and attended *shiurim*, lectures, gatherings and symposiums concerning the life and teachings of Rabbeinu Moshe Ben Maimon HaSephardi, the Rambam.

One of the highlights of the journey was the emotional visit to the “Rambam Square” in the Jewish Ghetto of old Cordoba. There, right in front of the “Rambam Monument,” Israeli Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Yonah Metzger spoke of the learning of three *prokim* (chapters) of the Rambam per day instituted by the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rabbi Metzger then invited Rabbi Shmuel Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Chairman of the International Siyum HaRambam (conclusion of the Rambam) Celebration to make the *siyum* (conclusion) on the Rambam.

Rabbi Butman recited the last *Halocho* in Rambam: “*Ubeoso hazman ...*” – “And at that time ...” (the time of Moshiach) “there will be no hunger and no war, no jealousy and no strife, for goodness will be plentiful and all

delicacies will be as available as dust ... and the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as waters cover the sea.” He also recited the “*hascholo*,” the very first *halocho*, as is customary.

The participants felt a deep, soulful emotion as they stood in front of the Rambam Monument in the square bearing the Rambam’s name in the Jewish Ghetto where he lived, united with his teachings. “This is surely one of the highlights of the journey,” said a senior rabbi.

At the conclusion of the *siyum*, Rabbi Shlomo Amar, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi, asked the participants to stay for just another few moments. He then recited the Kaddish with great feeling as the heartfelt “*omains*” of the delegation reverberated throughout old Cordoba.

Indeed, history was made. The circle was completed.

“This is really a historic moment. The Rebbe is really happy” said Rabbi Gershon Mendl Garelik of Milan. “This is the first time a *siyum* of the Rambam

was conducted in his home town,” Rabbi Moshe Garelik, Director, European Rabbinic Association. “This mission is a great encouragement for the entire Jewish Community” said Rabbi Yitzchok Goldstein, Shaliach of Madrid. “This will have wonderful repercussions also in our community” said Rabbi Dovid Weitman, Shaliach in Paulo, Brazil.

To the Chabad Lubavitch members of the delegation this was particularly sensitive and elevating. They all live with the Rebbe’s call concerning the daily study of the Rambam and the Rebbe’s fervor to all details concerning the Rambam and the study of his Sefer. With Chassidic friendship and enthusiasm they wished each other “To witness the fulfillment of the verse with which the Rambam concludes his monumental work ‘And the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as waters cover the see,’ teikef u’miyad mamash.”



Picture credit: David Rottenberg/Bakbila

Standing in Rambam Square in front of the Rambam monument during the historic *siyum* (conclusion) of the yearly study of the Rambam’s Mishna Torah, from right: Rabbi Shlomo Amar, Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel; Rabbi Shmuel Butman, Director, Lubavitch Youth Organization and Chairman, International Siyum HaRambam Celebration; and Rabbi Yonah Metzger, Chief Rabbi of Israel.