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THE SHLIACH RESEMBLES THE ONE WHO SENDS

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS TOLDOS 29TH DAY OF MAR- CHESHVAN, 5751

1. On this Shabbos, Shabbos Parshas Toldos, the International Conference of Shluchim begins. This conference will continue in the days of the coming week, the week associated with Parshas VaYeitzei.

Both these Torah portions – the portions with which we are instructed to “live” in these weeks – are associated with the concept of shlichus. The conclusion of Parshas Toldos relates how “Yitzchok sent Yaakov,” and Parshas VaYeitzei begins relating how Yaakov accepted this mission, “And Yaakov left Be’er Sheva and journeyed to Charan.”

Our Sages teach, “The deeds of the Patriarchs are a sign for their descendants.” Thus, from the Torah’s description of Yaakov’s mission, we can surely derive a lesson regarding the mission of each Jew in the world, and in particular, a lesson which is relevant to the International Conference of Shluchim.

Yaakov’s journey from Be’er Sheva to Charan involved a great descent, to leave Eretz Yisroel and go to Charan, a place associated with “the wrath of

G-d.” It involved dealings with Lavan, a deceitful person, and several undesirable aspects. On the surface, Yaakov should have protested, refusing to leave Eretz Yisroel. Since he was a tzaddik – and “when a tzaddik decrees, G-d fulfills” – his protest surely would have achieved its desired result.

Although his father Yitzchok[212] sent him on this journey with a specific intent, to find a wife, there are many ways in which this intent could have been accomplished without Yaakov going to Charan. Indeed, Yitzchok himself found a wife from Charan without going there. Instead, his father sent his servant Eliezer who chose a wife for him. Similarly, in Yaakov’s case, there could have been a way for Yaakov to find a wife without having to leave Eretz Yisroel.

This indicates that Yaakov’s journey to Charan had a more general intent. Indeed, the Rabbis explain that Yaakov’s journey to Charan reflects the totality of man’s mission within this world, not to remain in the place where he grew up, but to go out to the world at large, build a Jewish home and refine his environment, to borrow an

expression, “be fruitful and multiply; fill up the earth and conquer it,” and in this manner, establish a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds.

In an even larger sense, Yaakov’s journey is symbolic of the mission with which every Jewish soul is charged as it descends, “from a high roof into a low pit,” entering the body within this physical world for the purpose of making a dwelling for G-d in this lowly world.

In this context, we can understand why the Torah mentions Be’er Sheva, the place from which Yaakov was sent, and why it mentions Charan, his destination. When a person departs on a mission, he must know that he is a shliach. He must be aware of the one who appointed him and appreciate that, “a shliach is equivalent to the one who appointed him.” Thus, at least in regard to the task which he is charged with fulfilling, he is negated to that individual and thus, becomes his representative, acting with his power.

Conversely, a shliach must also be an independent person, acting with his own knowledge and potentials[213] for it is only in this manner that he will be able to fulfill his mission.

These two dimensions are reflected in the mission with which every Jew is charged, the mission that involves the descent of the soul into the body. We must be aware of the drastic nature of this descent which the soul undertakes, going “from a high roof to a deep pit,” i.e., the source of the soul is not merely an elevated place, “a roof,” it is a “high roof,” uplifted above all peaks. This is reflected in the name Be’er Sheva which literally means, “the well of seven.” This is a reference to the S’fira of Bina[214] which is the “well,” the source, for the seven emotional attributes that are represented by the seven branches of the menorah.

Nevertheless, the mission involves the descent of the soul to “a low pit,”[215] a drastic descent into a world of separation where G-d’s light is hidden. Charan, associated with the arousal of G-d’s anger, is symbolic of this world, a place dominated by the powers of klipa which are “opposed to G-d.”

In this environment, the Jew, the shliach, feels as a separate and individual entity, and the influence from the place where he was sent is no longer felt. Nevertheless, it is precisely in this environment that the mission, to establish a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds can be accomplished.

Furthermore, it is through establishing a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds that the full power with which G-d has endowed man becomes revealed. Since the Jew, the shliach, exists in Charan, a place where were it not for his efforts, G-dliness would not be revealed, he requires a greater measure of Divine influence to overcome the concealment which he faces. Thus, it is in such a situation that the full power of G-d, the one who sends us on this mission, is revealed and even in Charan, His will is accomplished.

Similarly, carrying out this mission

allows the shliach to reach a higher level of bittul. As he exists for himself, the shliach is a separate entity. When, however, he carries out his mission, he loses all sense of self and becomes totally negated to G-d. In this manner, he reveals his source in Be’er Sheva, the high spiritual levels.

Based on the above, we can understand why the Torah uses the word “Charana” for the expression, “to Charan,” rather than, the form “L’Charan.” “L’Charan” indicates that one shares a connection to the place from which one has departed. In

As he exists for himself, the shliach is a separate entity. When, however, he carries out his mission, he loses all sense of self and becomes totally negated to G-d.

contrast, “Charana” reflects how Charan is a separate place where one is removed from connection with one’s source.[216] Also “Charana” indicates a descent within Charan itself, a penetration to the depths of the place which aroused G-d’s wrath. There, Yaakov was forced to deal with Lavan, a master of deceit, and to endure severe physical hardships for twenty[217] years.

Nevertheless, through Yaakov’s service in Lavan’s home in Charan, he was able to fulfill the mission with which he was charged in a complete manner. There, he gave birth to the

twelve tribes of Israel, refined his surrounding environment (as reflected by his acquisition of Lavan’s sheep) and thus, fulfilled G-d’s intent in Charan. This also brought Yaakov himself to higher peaks, as the Torah relates, “The man prospered exceedingly.”[218]

Yaakov’s ability to perform this mission stems from his association with the quality of truth. Truth is referred to as “the middle bolt which extends from one extreme to the other.” Truth establishes a connection between the highest levels and the lowest depths and enables the high levels of G-dliness associated with Be’er Sheva to be revealed even in Charan.

Indeed, Yaakov’s entire life was associated with the mission of elevating the lowest levels of the world at large. This is reflected in the manner in which he emerged from his mother’s womb, holding onto Eisav’s heel. Indeed, his very name was given because of this position.

On the surface, why should Yaakov, “the chosen of the Patriarchs,” be given a name that is associated with Eisav’s heel? This, however, reflects his unique potential and his mission within the world, to refine even its lowest aspects, Eisav’s heel, and thus, make it possible to draw G-dliness down into these realms.[219]

In this context, we can appreciate the nature of the mission with which G-d charges the Jewish people as a whole. The first stage is a descent. This is reflected in the fact that Eisav emerges as the firstborn and Yaakov is born holding onto his heel. Afterwards, Yaakov begins his service of refinement. This involves a descent, enclathing himself in the garments of Eisav – both literally and figuratively, for he used Eisav’s own tactics to take his blessing from him as the Torah relates, “Your brother came with deceit and took your blessing.” Afterwards, he underwent

an even further descent, journeying to Charan and dealing with Lavan.[220]

The intent is, however, through this service of refinement to bring about a revelation of Eisav's high source, the lights of Tohu, levels of G-dliness so elevated that they could not be contained within vessels.[221] Nevertheless, through Yaakov's service of refinement, he makes it possible to reveal the powerful lights of Tohu within the vessels of the world of Tikkun.

Yaakov carries out this service in a systematic fashion, step by step, continuing his work of refinement,[222] ascending level after level, until he reaches the ultimate peaks, "until I come to my lord in Seir." [223] There he will reveal the ultimate lights of Tohu.

The description of Yaakov's fulfillment of his mission provides a lesson for each Jew in regard to the fulfillment of the mission with which his soul was charged as it descends from the spiritual realms (Be'er Sheva) into this physical world (Charan) with the intent of transforming this world into a dwelling place for G-d.

Although this is a tremendous descent, one need not become overwhelmed. One must be aware that one is G-d's shliach and "a person's shliach resembles him." Thus, he has been endowed with G-dly powers. Furthermore, because he is sent to a place where G-dliness is not openly revealed, he is given even greater powers. Through utilizing these powers in the task of refinement, he transforms this tremendous descent into a process of ascent in which he reaches even higher levels than those previously appreciated.

The above concept is further emphasized during the era of exile, which involves an even greater descent. Even at present when the

Jews are living in generous countries, free from the persecution and oppression that existed in previous years, they are still, "children who were exiled from their father's table;" they are not granted Divine revelation. Nevertheless, precisely because of this situation, they are endowed with an even greater measure of Divine power which ultimately, will enable them to reach the highest peaks.

Our nation's history reveals this process. After the many years of suffering in Egypt, our people emerged "with great wealth," affluence which reflected their refinement of the land of Egypt. Similarly, the more than 1900 years of exile which our people have suffered will lead to their emergence "with great wealth" with the coming of Moshiach.

Based on the above, we can understand why it is precisely in these generations, the final phase of this exile, that the concept of shlichus was introduced by the Previous Rebbe. By appointing shluchim to spread the wellsprings of Torah and Chassidus outward, the Previous Rebbe added new power and potency to help each Jew fulfill his mission in making this world a dwelling for G-d.

This is made possible by those individuals – the shluchim – who devote themselves totally to the shlichus of spreading Torah and Chassidus outward. These shluchim – many of whom have gathered here to attend the International Conference of Shluchim – are dispersed throughout the entire world with the intent of reaching those Jews in the furthest removed corners of the world. Because these shluchim descend to the lowest and furthest parts of the world, they are granted even greater powers by those who sent them, and this enables them to reach even higher peaks through their service.

2. In this context, we can

understand why the International Conference of Shluchim is held on the Shabbos on which the month of Kislev is blessed. The month of Kislev is connected with "the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward." It is the month of the redemption of Yud-Tes Kislev.

Here, also, we see a process of descent for the purpose of ascent. The Alter Rebbe's imprisonment came about because of a kitrug (negative spiritual force). Nevertheless, ultimately, this descent was intended to bring about an increase in the spreading of Chassidus outward.[224]

This spreading of Chassidus outward represents the process of, to quote the metaphor of the Alter Rebbe, taking the most precious jewel in the king's crown, grinding it into an elixir, and dashing it upon the face of the king's son in the hope that a drop will enter his mouth and save his life.

Similarly, in subsequent generations, as the darkness of exile has progressed, the Rebbeim have added to the revelation of P'nimius HaTorah.[225] This process has reached a peak in our generation, and even more so, in the last years, and there has been an unbounded revelation of Chassidic teachings. To quote the Previous Rebbe, "the treasure stores of the nation that have been hoarded for centuries are being squandered," and made available to the mass public. Texts that had been possessed merely by a select few[226] have now been published and are being studied by many. In particular, this applies to the teachings of the Tzemach Tzedek.[227]

The intensification of the revelation of P'nimius HaTorah in our generation is also connected to the development of the concept of shlichus. The shluchim's departure from "Be'er Sheva" (their native land) to spread Chassidus outward has not detracted from the intensity of the

revelation of Chassidic teachings. Indeed, as described above, it has increased the powers they are granted from above which are revealed in the teachings of Chassidus.

3. The process of transformation of the world that is accomplished through shlichus has effected even those countries which had previously stifled Jewish expression. The very country which had issued the sentence of utmost severity upon the Previous Rebbe for his activities to spread Torah and mitzvos, and then sentenced him to exile, is now allowing and assisting Jews to emigrate. Hundreds of thousands of Jews have left – and are continuing to leave Russia – and are settling in America and in Eretz Yisroel. Furthermore, in certain instances, the Russian government is offering financial help.

An example of this is their care for the “Children of Chernobyl” whom they have helped settle in Kfar Chabad. The Russian government also sends doctors to care for them and thus, helps them to benefit from the education resources of the kfar. This represents a process of elevation after the descent, going from Charan (the place associated with Divine wrath) to Be'er Sheva (the source of the Jewish soul).

[The name Kfar Chabad emphasizes the importance of education. Our Sages compare Yechezkel's vision of the Divine Chariot[228] with that of Yeshayahu and explain that Yechezkel's vision is more detailed and filled with emotion because he was like “an inhabitant of a kfar (a village).” These qualities – elaborate detail and emotional power – are two of the most important facets in education.]

4. There are several practical directives which should result from the International Conference of Shluchim. First and foremost, each shliach should feel strengthened and

reinforced by this meeting. He should realize that no matter how far away he has been sent, the one who appointed him is with him. Indeed, “a person's shliach is considered as he, himself.”[229] Surely, the shliach has been given the potential to carry out his shlichus.

There are different levels of shlichus. Some shluchim carry out their service in further removed places than others. In this instance, they are given more power to carry out their services. Furthermore, at the International Conference of Shluchim, when all the shluchim, no matter what their level, come

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together, what is revealed is the common point that they all share, the fact that they are shluchim of the Previous Rebbe[230] to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus outward.

They must dedicate themselves to this dissemination of knowledge without any limitations for as the Rebbe Rashab explains, “The present era is one when a person should, ‘grab and eat, grab and drink,’ [i.e., seize whatever opportunity to spread Yiddishkeit that comes his way].”

This approach is alluded to in this week's Torah reading: Rashi interprets

the opening verse of Yitzchok's blessings, “And G-d will give you,” to mean, “He will give you and then, give again.” This concept provides a shliach with an important lesson: As soon as he becomes a shliach – and surely, when he is in the midst of carrying out his shlichus – he should plan that his first activity should immediately be followed by a second activity, a further spread of Torah and Chassidus.

A shliach's efforts should also include, to borrow an expression from the Talmud, “one shliach making another shliach.” The present shluchim should bring out others to further expand their activities. These new shluchim, in turn, should bring out others, extending the chain of these activities.[231]

The word “international,” “olami,” also has the meaning “eternal.” Therefore, it is appropriate that, as an eternal memento of this conference, a “Book of Shlichus” should be printed including, in addition to the words of Torah and the suggestions communicated at the conference, not only the names, but also the pictures of each shliach and his family. In this manner, when a shliach's son will open the book, he will remember that he also is a shliach and he will be inspired to study Torah until he has matured enough to become a shliach himself.[232]

These activities will lead to the realization in deed and action of the concept that the Hebrew word “shliach” together with the number ten (signifying the ten powers of the soul) is numerically equivalent to Moshiach. Each Jew has a spark of Moshiach within his soul which can be revealed through the service described above. The revelation of the spark of Moshiach on an individual level will lead to the revelation of Moshiach for the entire world and the coming of the ultimate redemption. May it be in the immediate future.

NOTES:

212. His mother, Rivka, had also charged him with a similar mission. Thus, his journey involved honoring both his parents.

213. Nevertheless, as he exists independently, he must submit and subjugate himself to the person who appointed him.

214. On a higher level, Be'er Sheva can be interpreted as a reference to the ultimate source of the emotions which is on a higher level than the source for our intellectual potentials.

215. The metaphor of a pit can be amplified by employing our Sages' interpretation of the Torah's description of the pit into which Yosef was thrown, "The pit is empty; it contains no water." Although it contains no water, it contains snakes and scorpions; i.e., not only is "the pit," the world, a place where positive influence, "water," is lacking, there are negative and even dangerous factors.

216. This separation from one's source is also indicated in the association of this world with the left foot of the letter hay. The right foot of the hay is connection to its roof, while there is a gap between the roof and the left foot. This alludes to the separation felt between this world and its spiritual source.

217. The number 20 is associated with the s'fira of Kesser, an unlimited quality. The descent experienced by Yaakov had the unlimited power of Kesser.

218. In this context, we can understand why the Torah mentions Yaakov's departure on this mission twice; once at the conclusion of Parshas Toldos, "And Yaakov listened to his mother and father and departed for Padan Aram," and once at the beginning of Parshas VaYeitzei, "And Yaakov left Be'er Sheva and journeyed to Charan."

Parshas Toldos emphasizes Yaakov's acceptance of the mission on which his father and mother sent him. His parent's influence is very apparent and, hence, the descent involved in the shlichus is not as apparent. In contrast, Parshas VaYeitzei reflects how he separates himself from his source and engrosses himself in the actual fulfillment of the mission in Charan.

219. This relates to the division of the name Yaakov into Yud eikev. The letter Yud stands for G-d's name and eikev means "heel." Yaakov had the potential to reveal G-dliness even on the level of the heel, the least sensitive part of our body. Furthermore, this potential allows revelation, not only within a Jew's heel, but even on the level of Eisav's heel.

220. Here, also, he was forced to deal with deceit as Rashi mentions in his commentary on the Torah. This reflects the ultimate descent; Yaakov, the personification of the attribute of truth, being forced to use deceit.

221. This is reflected in Yaakov's referring to Eisav as "my lord," in the confrontation described in Parshas VaYishlach. Yaakov was aware of Eisav's high source and thought that Eisav had already refined himself. Hence, he addressed him

in a manner which reflects these high levels.

222. This is characteristic of Tikkun, Yaakov's level.

223. "Seir" is related to the Hebrew "saaros" which mean "hairs." In Kabbala, it is explained that the hairs of the beard are mediums through which the highest levels are revealed. Therefore, they are associated with the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

224. Here, we see a connection to the holiday of Chanukah which is also celebrated in the month of Kislev. Chanukah is associated with the miracle of the cruse of oil in the Beis HaMikdash and oil is also used as a metaphor for P'nimius HaTorah.

225. The Previous Rebbe's imprisonment and redemption on Yud-Beis Tammuz and, afterwards, his settling in the U.S. added tremendous impetus and energy to the process of revealing Chassidic teachings.

226. Even those few individuals who possessed these texts did not have the opportunity to study them in peace and thus, learn and internalize them as desired.

227. The two names Tzemach and Tzedek are both associated with Moshiach.

228. Yechezkel was granted this vision on the K'var River. The latter name allows for a homiletic interpretation. In Hebrew, K'var means "already." Thus, the term refers to a ploy of the Yetzer HaRa to dampen our enthusiasm, telling us, "Why get so excited? It's already happened before." This descent (the K'var River is in Babylon, a place of exile) is intended for an ascent. The latter is achieved by Yechezkel whose name includes the words "chazak Keil," "the strength of G-d."

229. This relates to the four definitions of shlichus found in halacha: a) The deeds of the shliach are considered as having been performed by the one who appointed him. The shliach, and his powers, however, are considered as separate entities. b) The shliach's power to act is considered as given over to the one who appointed him. His other powers, his thoughts and his feelings, are his own. c) All of the shliach's powers, his thoughts, his feelings, his will, and his pleasure, are given over to the one who appointed him. d) "A person's shliach is considered as he, himself."

230. Serving as the Previous Rebbe's shluchim makes them more conscious of the fact that they are G-d's shluchim to transform the world into a dwelling for Him.

231. The Talmud states that this chain can continue until 100 shluchim (i.e., which is not a limit, but rather a symbol of a complete process) have been appointed.

232. This concept is connected with this week's Torah portion which begins, "These are the chronicles of Yitzchok. Avrohom gave birth to Yitzchok," which Rashi interprets to mean that the two looked the same. Similarly, a father's activity must inspire a son to want to be like him, to continue the same positive activities.

B”H

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RETARDATION: ONLY A TEMPORARY HANDICAP * PART 3

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תורתנו תורה ודבר
עצמות
תורה תורה ודבר
א. א. א. א. א.

By the Grace of G-d
9 Kislev, 5741
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To All Participants in the
Major Conference for the Jewish Community
On Issues and Needs of Jewish Retarded
New York City.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to be informed of the forthcoming Conference. I trust it will mark a turning point in the attitude of community leaders to Jewish education in general, and to so-called Special Education in particular.

In any discussion relating to the wellbeing of the Jewish community, the primary, indeed pivotal, issue should surely be Jewish Identity - that which truly unites our Jewish people and gives us the strength to survive and thrive in a most unnatural, alien, and all too often hostile environment.

Historically - from the birth of our nation to this day - Jewish identity, in the fullest sense of this term, has been synonymous with traditional Torah-Judaism as our way of life in everyday living. Other factors commonly associated with a national identity, such as language, territory, dress, etc., could not have played a decisive role in Jewish survival, since these changed from time to time and from place to place. The only factor that has not changed throughout our long history has been the Torah, ^{and} Mitzvos which are "our life and the length of our days." The same Tefillin, Tzitzis, Shabbos and Yom-Tov have been observed by Jews everywhere in all generations. Clearly there is no substitute for the Torah-way as the source and essence of our Jewish people.

Recognizing this prima facie fact, means recognizing that Jewish survival depends on the kind of Education that develops and nourishes Jewish identity in the fullest measure. And this must surely be the highest priority of all communal services.

With regard to Jewish retarded - parenthetically, I prefer some such term as "special" people, not simply as a euphemism, but because it would more accurately reflect their situation, especially in view of the fact that in many cases the retardation is limited to the capacity to absorb and assimilate knowledge, while in other areas they may be quite normal or even above average - the Jewish identity factor is even more important, not only per se but also for its therapeutic value. The actual practice of Mitzvos in the everyday life provides a tangible way by which these special people of all ages can, despite their handicap, identify with their families and with other

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:

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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'eiras 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.

Conference

-2-

9 Kislev, 5741

fellow Jews in their surroundings, and generally keep in touch with reality. Even if mentally they may not fully grasp the meaning of these rituals, sub-consciously they are bound to feel at home in such an environment, and in many cases could participate in such activities also on the conscious level.

To cite one striking example from actual experience during the Festival of Succos this year. As is well known, Lubavitch activists on this occasion reach out to many Jews with Lulav and Esrog, bringing to them the spirit of the Season of Our Rejoicing. This year being a year of Chochel, I urged my followers to extend this activity as much as possible, to include also Nursing Homes and Senior Citizens' Hotels, as well as other institutions. I was asked, what should be the attitude and approach to persons who are senile or confused, etc. I replied - all the more reason to reach out to them in this tangible way. Well, the reports were profoundly gratifying. Doctors and nurses were astonished to see such a transformation: Persons who had spent countless days in silent immobility, deeply depressed and oblivious to everything around them, the moment they saw a young man walk in with a Lulav and Esrog in his hand suddenly displayed a lively interest, eagerly grasped the proffered Mitzvah-objects, some of them reciting the blessings from memory, without prompting. The joy in their hearts shone through their faces, which had not known a smile all too long.

One need not look for a mystical explanation of this reaction. Understandably, the sight of something so tangible and clearly associated with the joy of Succos evidently touched and unlocked vivid recollections of experiences that had permeated them in earlier years.

If there is much that can be done along these lines for adult and senior Jews in special situations, how much more so in regard to special children, when every additional benefit, however seemingly small, in their formative years will be compounded many times over as they grow older. In their case it is even more important to bear in mind that while they may be handicapped in their mental and intellectual capacity, and indeed because of it, every possible emphasis should be placed on the tangible and audio-visual aspects of Jewish education in terms of the actual practice of Mitzvos and religious observances - as I have discussed this and related aspects at greater length in my correspondence with Dr. R. Wilkes of the Coney Island Hospital.

There is surely no need to elaborate on all above to the participants in the Conference, whose Rabbinic, academic, and professional qualifications in the field of Jewish Education and social services makes them highly sensitive to the problems at hand. I hope and pray that the basic points herein made will serve as guidelines to focus attention on the cardinal issues, and that this Conference will, as mentioned earlier, mark a turning point in attitude, and even more importantly in action vis-a-vis Jewish Education, long overdue.

With prayerful wishes for Hatzlocho, and with
esteem and blessing *M. Schwartz*

ROSH CHODESH KISLEV: THE YUD-TEK KISLEV OF OUR GENERATION

BY RABBI NACHMAN SCHAPIRO, VAAD L'HAFATZOS SICHOS
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



*Only after we look back several years can we understand that even Rosh Chodesh Kislev is a day of spiritual redemption, a new stage in spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus. This can be seen in all of the Rebbe's activities from that day forward, but primarily, we see this in spreading of the Rebbe's personal wellsprings: Likkutei Sichos. * Excerpts from a Chassidic farbrengen.*

When we contemplate upon the meaning of the auspicious day of Rosh Chodesh Kislev and how we relate to this day, it would be appropriate to take a look back more than two hundred years to the first Yud-Tes Kislev celebration in 5559.

The Alter Rebbe was in prison for fifty-three days. These were days of tremendous physical and spiritual suffering. When the Alter Rebbe was finally released, what was the feeling among *chassidim*? Why all the *simcha*? The Rebbe has come back to us!

During those days of *simcha*, when the *chassidim* were doing somersaults in the streets of Petersburg, it stands to

reason that they didn't think about the whole imprisonment as a result of Heavenly accusations against the teaching of *chassidus*. They also didn't realize that the redemption symbolized the removal of the *kitrug* and the Divine permission to continue the spreading of the wellsprings. They knew only one thing: The Rebbe was in prison, and now he has returned to us!

To a certain extent, the *chassidim* back then did understand that accusations had been made against the spreading of *chassidus*, as the leading cause was the *misnagdim* who wanted to stop the spreading of the Chabad

movement *ch"v*. The committees that were established immediately after the imprisonment with the responsibility of continuing the Alter Rebbe's holy work testified to that effect.

Nevertheless, in 5559, the *chassidim* did not know how great the *kitrug* really was, and they surely did not have the slightest idea about everything that was happening in the Heavenly Court at the time of the imprisonment and the redemption.

It was only after the passage of many years that *chassidim* slowly became aware of the spiritual charges leveled against the continuation of Chabad *chassidus*, and the great spiritual victory that expressed itself even in material terms – the Alter Rebbe's release from imprisonment.

Today, when we celebrate Yud-Tes Kislev, the main emphasis is on commemorating the removal of the *kitrug* on the spreading of *chassidus* and the Heavenly Court's stamp of approval for the continuation of the spreading of the wellsprings outward beyond all possible measure. Today, we celebrate Yud-Tes Kislev not just as a holiday of liberation and redemption, but primarily, as the Rosh HaShana of *chassidus*, the day when a new and wondrous chapter began in the spreading of the wellsprings.

Even after the Alter Rebbe's passing, *chassidim* continued to celebrate Yud-Tes Kislev with greater intensity each year, since with the passing of time, they felt and understand more the increase in *chassidus* and *maamarim* that were revealed as a result of Yud-Tes Kislev. The climax of this *simcha* came in 5662, when it was revealed that Yud-Tes Kislev was in fact the Rosh HaShana of *chassidus*.

Then came Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738, and it was as if nothing had changed. After a period of time when we were not privileged to see the Rebbe, he came out of his room in 770 and went home. The reaction of *chassidim* was exactly as on Yud Kislev 5559: Anash and T'mimim were doing somersaults in the streets of Crown Heights, rejoicing and dancing. The *mashke* flowed like water, and *hakafos* were held all night long in 770, with the honors going to those who gave out the most *mashke*...

What was the feeling among *chassidim* in 5738? Why all the *simcha* then? The Rebbe has come back to us! The *simcha* engulfed every community of *chassidim* throughout the world, and for only one reason: we have merited to see the Rebbe again!

Only after we look back several years can we understand that Rosh Chodesh Kislev is also a day of spiritual redemption, a new stage in spreading the wellsprings of *chassidus*. This can be seen in all of the Rebbe's activities from that day forward, but primarily, we see this in spreading of the Rebbe's personal wellsprings: *Likkutei Sichos*.

At times, things develop in such a way that they create an absolutely new and innovative reality the likes of which had never been experienced before. However, after a few years go by, it becomes routine, to the point that it's hard to explain what the big *chiddush* to this whole routine was in the first place.

We find this effect in the stages of

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publishing *Likkutei Sichos*:

Until 5738, there was never a period of three consecutive years that the Rebbe edited *Likkutei Sichos*. In 5719-5720, the Rebbe agreed for the

first time to edit the *sichos*. Officially, the reason given was the commemoration of his thirtieth wedding anniversary. Afterwards, in 5723, there began another two years that the Rebbe edited *sichos*, in honor of the 150th anniversary of the passing of the Alter Rebbe. In the years that followed, the Rebbe would edit *sichos* for a period of two years, and as the third year approached, he would refuse to continue editing – each time for a different reason.

The Rebbe never responded directly to this fact, but *chassidim* concluded that the Rebbe had a particular reason why he didn't want to establish a "*chazaka*" of editing *sichos* for three consecutive years.

The Rebbe's editing of *Likkutei Sichos* was a brilliant revelation of light. At a farbrengen in 5732, the Rebbe made wondrous references to his essential role, including the editing of *Likkutei Sichos*. This meant that the editing of the *sichos* was a factor of primary importance in the spreading of the wellsprings of *chassidus*. It's enough if we realize that the editing of the *sichos* took a considerable amount of



the Rebbe's time, time that could have been spent responding to important questions, including life-and-death matters. In short, the Rebbe attributed great importance to the editing of the *sichos*, no less than matters of *pikuach nefesh*!

Nevertheless, the Rebbe did not permit an uninterrupted three-year period for editing *sichos*.

Since the Rebbe had edited *sichos* in 5736-5737, our assumption was that the Rebbe would not do any such editing in 5738. After the events of Shmini Atzeres that year, we were especially in serious doubt on this point. As a result, we thought that it would be improper to trouble the Rebbe, so as Shabbos Parshas Noach approached, we chose not to submit the *likkut* for editing. Then suddenly, the Rebbe issued instructions to submit the *likkut*.

At first, we were shocked. We didn't believe that this would happen, but the Rebbe had decided on the revelation of a new light. Thus, for the first time, the Rebbe would not only edit *sichos* for three consecutive years, but he even edited texts of the first *farbrengens* held after Simchas Torah.

It's interesting to note that the Rebbe's editing of this *sicha* was simply marvelous and most unusual. The content of the *sicha* dealt with the revelation of the mysteries of wisdom as a prelude to the coming of Moshiach, and the Rebbe wrote wondrous expressions in his edited version, even adding an entire section in own holy handwriting!

Today, with a perspective of several years, when we contemplate the changes in the Rebbe's conduct in the wake of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, we now understand that the main point of Rosh Chodesh Kislev is the great light that began to be revealed at that time.

First of all, as mentioned earlier, the Rebbe then began regular editing of *Likkutei Sichos*. During the *Mems*, it became a routine occurrence, and only those who were around before can

appreciate how great the revelation of the light was when the Rebbe began to edit the *sicha* every week. We, those who were privileged to be involved in preparing the *sicha* to go to print, saw the amount of time the Rebbe devoted to editing the *sichos*, and heard wondrous expressions from the Rebbe that were not said in public about its tremendous importance. We saw new revelations that had not existed prior

There is no question that Rosh Chodesh Kislev is the Yud-Tes Kislev of our generation. On Rosh Chodesh Kislev, a new phase in spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus outward began, particularly including the Rebbe MH" M's battles against those who "cursed the heels of Your Moshiach."

to Rosh Chodesh Kislev, 5738.

Even the Rebbe's *farbrengens* that took place after Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738 were of a loftier and more revealed nature. Similarly, the Rebbe's activities were spread to an infinitely greater extent than the period preceding Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

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The multitude of *farbrengens* and *maamarim*, including the new conduct of editing a *maamer* in preparation of almost every auspicious day on the Chabad calendar, began after 5738.

Similarly, we find in connection with the anticipation of the Redemption. In 5741, the Rebbe founded *Tzivos Hashem*, with the main task of bringing Moshiach with the demand of "We Want Moshiach Now!" The following year, the Rebbe began to reveal the acronym of each year in connection with Moshiach, thus indicating the substance of the entire year. This included a new line of Divinely inspired activities connected to the revelation of Moshiach, leading to the prophecy of "Here comes Moshiach." All this began in 5738, and *chassidim* alluded to its significance as the Rebbe mentioned in a *sicha* in the name of "a wise person": "Send, I pray, by the hand of whom **You will send**" ["You will send" – "*tishlach*" – the acronym for 5738].

We felt great joy over the revelation of *chassidus* and the spreading of its wellsprings to bring the revelation of "the Master, Malka M'shicha" on Yud-Tes Kislev, when, in the words of the Rebbe Rashab, the main dissemination of the wellsprings began. Similarly, all of us, even those who were born after 5738, must rejoice on Rosh Chodesh Kislev for the new revelation of light that commenced on that day.

Rosh Chodesh Kislev is the personal day of rejoicing for every *chassid* of the seventh generation, and each one of us must think about how this joy brings him to actual *avoda* in increasing the spreading of the wellsprings and particularly, the main *shlichus* to prepare the world to greet the Rebbe MH" M, immediately, *mamash*, NOW!

A CHASSIDISHE “THEFT”

BY T. YANKELOWITZ

As he did every Friday, Ariel Bibi went on Mivtza T’fillin in the business district of Ir Ganim in Yerushalayim. He set up his stand opposite a supermarket, where there was a lot of traffic Erev Shabbos.

Ariel offered his “wares” to the passersby, some of whom came over on their own, while others needed a little convincing. Some said they had already put on t’fillin, while others walked quickly past the

stand so as not to get caught. The latter didn’t want to put on t’fillin but neither did they want to refuse.

A traditional-looking Jew came over to the stand. It wasn’t that he wanted to put on t’fillin though; he wanted to challenge Ariel and to announce that he felt more distant from Judaism than ever. Ariel tried to convince him to do a mitzva but the young man refused.

While they spoke, Ariel caught sight of another young man in his

twenties, with an earring flashing in the sunlight and a wild afro hairstyle. Ariel followed him as he walked over to a kiosk.

Ariel had nothing to lose so he asked, “Come, my brother, maybe you’d like to put on t’fillin?”

Ariel didn’t really expect an answer, certain that someone with this guy’s appearance wouldn’t even look at a Lubavitcher. But to his surprise, the young man said, “Why not?”



Ariel commented to the first man, "Isn't it interesting. I was sure you would put on t'fillin and that he wouldn't, and it's reversed!"

Ariel wanted to engage the second fellow in conversation, but no sooner did he say the two words, "[The] Lubavitcher Rebbe," when the young man shivered. Ariel was shocked! Why did this man, who seemed so distant from anything Jewish, react so strongly at the mention of the Rebbe?

The young man told his story, which, if not for Mivtza T'fillin opposite the supermarket Erev Shabbos, we would never know took place!

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"When I was four years old, I was in the United States with my father. We visited the shul of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I remember we were in a long line, and the Rebbe was giving something out [it was probably kos shel bracha – T.Y.]. I was a mischievous little boy and I saw many bottles on the table near the Rebbe, which attracted me. Without thinking twice, I let go of my father's hand, ran to the head of the line and took a bottle!

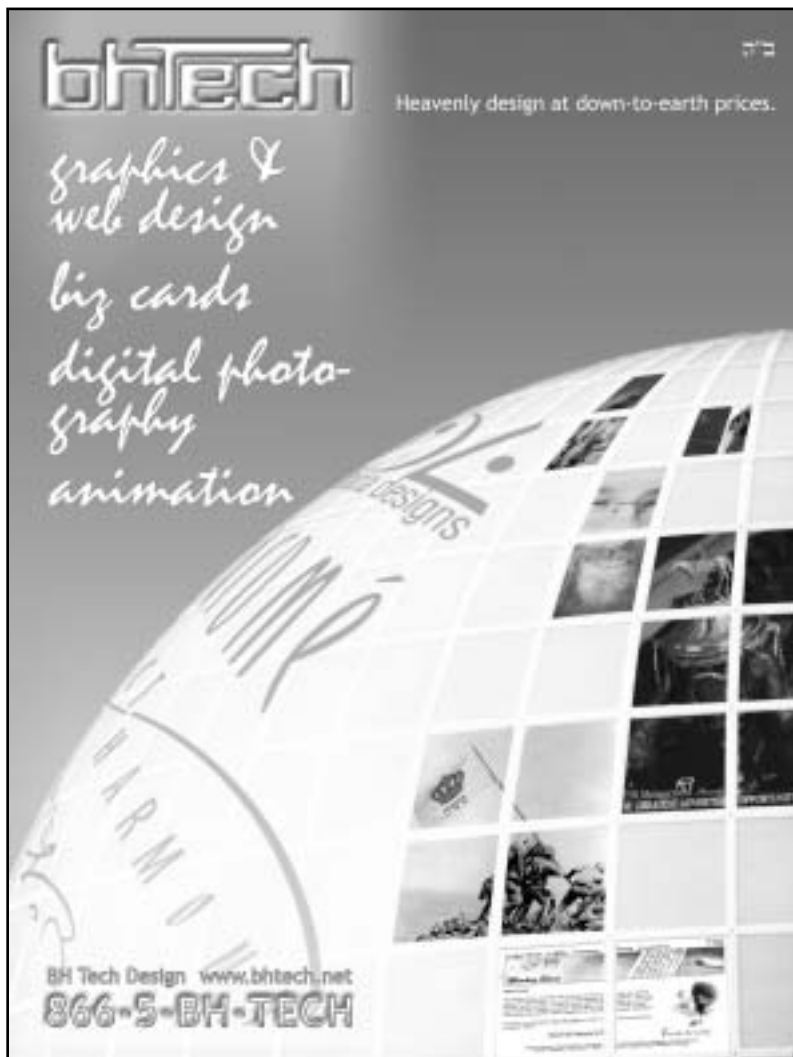
"Nobody paid attention, except for my father, when I suddenly reappeared with a bottle. My father was mortified, and when it was finally his turn, he returned the bottle and apologized for what I had done.

"The Rebbe looked at me and then motioned with his finger that I should come closer. The Rebbe said something and then took a bottle from the table and gave it to me. I didn't understand what the Rebbe had said, and it was only when we went outside that my father told me (along with a talking-to!) that the Rebbe had blessed me.

"Till this day, 19 years later, I have that bottle. I use it from time to time. When the amount drops, I add more to it so it never gets used up."

* * *

The three men stood at the t'fillin stand on the bustling street. Ariel came back down to earth, after having been transported to 770. He told the young man that he loved the story and what a privilege it was for him to have a bottle of the Rebbe's mashke. He told him how impressed he was by his *Chassidische hergesh* not to finish off the bottle, which is what any Chassid would do! Then and there, he arranged to learn Chassidus once a week with him.



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THE PARTISAN

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

*The Rebbe called the Chassid, R' Zushe Wilimovsky, "my partisan." Indeed, R' Zushe operated like a partisan. He was always available wherever he was needed, he jumped out and surprised people, he went on searches and brought back reports, did things covertly, and feared no one. * This is what he did as an actual partisan in the forests where he fought the Germans, and this is what he did as the Rebbe's partisan. * He died as a loyal soldier, in the sukka in the yard of 770, near the Rebbe. * Profile of a Chassid. * Part 1 of 2.*

THE REBBE IGNORED HIM

Erev Sukkos 5747

Elder Chassidim, rabbanim, askanim, and those who won raffles, crowded together near the Rebbe's room in order to get the Dalet minim. The distribution was done according to a list that the secretaries had, which the Rebbe himself had written.

After everybody picked lulavim or hadasim and the other minim, the door to Gan Eden HaElyon was opened and the Rebbe came out. One after the other, the Chassidim went by, and the Rebbe said to each one of them in Yiddish, "may all the *hamshachos* come down for the entire year." The Rebbe gave each one a special look along with the bracha.

R' Mendel Futerfas limped along slowly, and after him went R' Zushe, who only held a lulav. Unlike all the other times, this time he did not get hadasim for some reason. When R' Zushe passed by the Rebbe, the Rebbe stared off somewhere, as though he didn't see R' Zushe. R' Zushe continued walking and the Rebbe said nothing to him. Other Chassidim continued to pass by the Rebbe, and to each one, the Rebbe gave a bracha.

R' Moshe Orenstein: "The first night of Sukkos I arrived very late at the apartment of R' Moshe Yaruslavsky and his wife. She was still in the kitchen and I could see that she was worried. 'R' Zushe feels horrible.' I thought she was referring

to his health but she went on to say, 'The Rebbe did not give him hadasim and he's very worried.'"

The second night of Sukkos.

Many Chassidim danced on Kingston and Montgomery for Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. R' Zushe was late, which was unusual. Many remember how R' Zushe would dance at the Crown Heights Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. He always stood on a barrel or platform of some kind. He would then encourage the singing as he played the recorder. On Chol HaMoed it was a real recorder, and on Yom Tov it was a stick.

R' Zushe showed up late and as usual, he encouraged the singing. But he finished earlier than usual. He returned to 770 and went into the big sukka in the yard.

He suddenly didn't feel well and some Chassidim who were present took off his sirtuk and hat and helped him lie down on a bench. However, he got up immediately, put on his sirtuk and hat and lay back down again. A few minutes later, he passed away, at the age of 64.

That's when some Chassidim who had *farbrenge*d with him on Motzaei Yom Kippur, remembered what R' Zushe had said about the Chassid R' Shemaryahu Gurary, who had died two years before at Kol Nidrei in front of the open aron kodesh, very close to the Rebbe. R' Zushe had said, "I'm not as spoiled as him. The royal courtyard is good enough for me..."

There were some who

immediately connected his passing to what had happened at the distribution of the Dalet minim, when the Rebbe ignored him.

His funeral took place on Sunday, Chol HaMoed, 17 Tishrei, with thousands of shocked Chassidim in attendance. They had just seen the active R' Zushe rejoicing at the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva the night before! As per the Rebbe's instructions, he was buried not far from the Ohel.

Chassidim relate another amazing thing – that in the first days following R' Zushe's passing, when davening was over, the Rebbe would

turn to where R' Zushe used to stand, and would encourage the singing with a wave of his hand as though R' Zushe was standing there!

HE SAVED JEWS WITH MESIRUS NEFESH

R' Zushe Wilmowsky, who was known as R' Zushe Partisan, was born on 4 Nissan 5682. His father was Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok and his mother was Mariasha (Miriam). His father was the rabbi of the town Izyom in Russia, and in 5684, the family moved to Poland, where his father was appointed rav and av beis din in the city of Salz.

R' Zushe learned in local yeshivos. With the outbreak of World War II, when Russia conquered the area, yeshivos were closed, and he smuggled across the border to Lithuania, which was independent at the time. He learned in the yeshiva of Baranowitz, which was run by the gaon Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman (may Hashem avenge his blood). He learned with the Chassid R' Dovid Gershowitz. The two good friends met and separated a number of times until they both settled in Kfar Chabad many years later.

When the Germans captured Lithuania, the yeshiva wandered

R' Zushe playing a recorder at the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva



from place to place until it arrived in the town of Sambilshok, where the talmidim were hosted in Jewish homes in the area. R' Zushe lived with a family where the wife was a professional seamstress. Her work was so outstanding that the German officers wanted her work exclusively. They would come in the evening and force her to sew them what they wanted.

One night, when they had finished learning and R' Zushe went back to the house, he saw the family members packing and getting ready to leave. The woman told him that a German officer who liked her work had secretly told her that at dawn, all the Jews would be taken out and killed. He had advised her to flee immediately.

The woman suggested that R' Zushe join them, but instead of doing just that and saving himself, a very natural decision for those crazy times, he began going from house to house in order to tell the Jews of the town what awaited them at dawn.

German soldiers were already stationed at every street corner, and he dodged them with alacrity. He finished his rounds shortly before



R' Zushe as a young man

dawn and only then, fled.
With the first light of day, when

the Germans spread out to round up the Jews, they were surprised to discover empty houses. After the war, when R' Zushe went back to this town, he found out that 75% of the Jews had been saved!

SMUGGLING JEWS FROM THE GHETTO

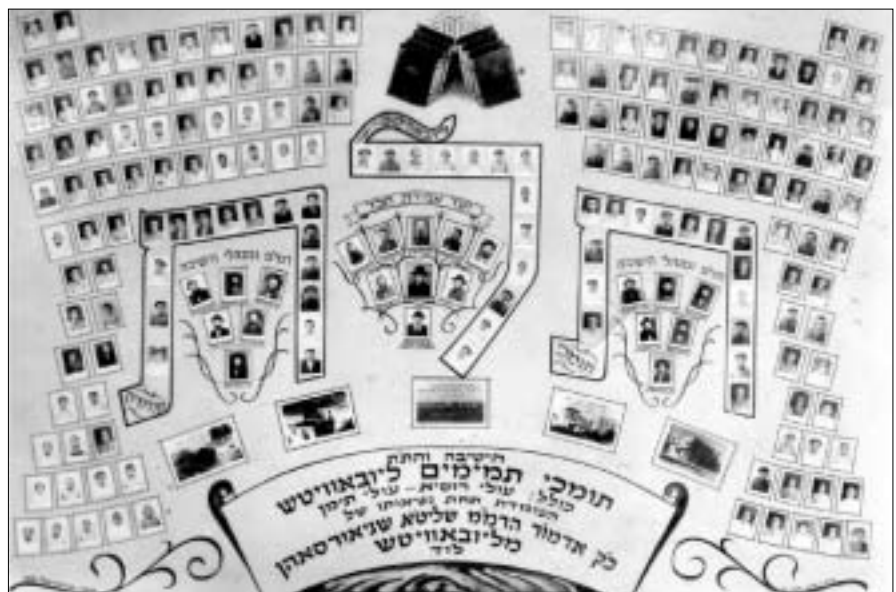
Like many other citizens of Europe, R' Zushe had to wander from place to place. From Lithuania, he went to Byelorussia, where the Nazis put him in the Lida ghetto. Then he was taken to a nearby labor camp. He met R' Dovid Gershowitz, his old friend, and together they managed to escape the camp and then joined a unit of partisans led by Tuvia Bielski.

Otriad Bielski was an official partisan unit, which was part of the partisan network in Byelorussia. It consisted of many families, not just fighters like other units. Unlike other partisan units, the first and most important goal of Tuvia Bielski in Otriad wasn't revenge, but saving Jews from the ghettos and labor camps. R' Zushe took part in this mission.

R' Zushe entered the ghetto, time and again, and smuggled Jews out



R' Zushe was a member of the hanhala



A picture of the students in the yeshiva in Lud in the early years



Erev Sukkos 5747, shortly before his passing, R' Zushe passed by the Rebbe and was ignored!

through the sewers. He did this holy work along with other partisans, until one time a number of them were captured. The next day all the Jews of the ghetto were sent to the extermination camp of Majdenek. Very few managed to escape at the last minute.

Most members of Bielski's partisan unit did not go on missions against the Germans, but did guarding and went on forays to nearby villages to get food. R' Zushe, a yeshiva bachur until the war, did not fight but joined these defensive and food foraging missions. Before every mission he prayed that Hashem watch over them. Even the atheistic communists among them respected R' Zushe, who was beloved by them all.

R' Zushe never worried about his own comfort, which was why he was first to volunteer even in places of danger or difficulty. R' Dovid Gershowitz: "We would go out on reconnaissance missions in groups of 4-6 people, and R' Zushe was always

"R' Zushe feels horrible.' I thought she was referring to his health but she went on to say, 'The Rebbe did not give him hadasim and he's very worried...'"

the first to check the area for mines. We slept by day and were up at night, when we did the work we had to do.

"We shot the Germans and killed many of them. Every so often, they would send planes to strafe the forests we were in. We knew the direction of the shooting from the tails of the planes. The bullets would hit the trees near us and sometimes we were in mortal danger.

"I was once sick with typhus and R' Zushe dug a pit for me and covered me with branches so I would be warm. He also prepared hot drinks for me. That was the medicine we had at the time, and baruch Hashem, I miraculously recovered."

WE'LL BEAT THEM!

Mr. Moshe Beirech, a Holocaust researcher and a friend of R' Zushe's from way back when, relates that under the difficult conditions they lived in, R' Zushe energized the partisans with simcha. "I don't know where he derived the strength from, but he always confidently said that we would beat them. Many despaired but he didn't break; he created a good atmosphere among the partisans."

R' Zushe came out of the war wounded in the legs. He suffered tremendously for years until he was healed. He would change the bandages on his legs daily and saw signs of gangrene. It was only after extended treatment that the wounds

finally healed.

After much travail and wandering, R' Zushe arrived in the Kromona displaced persons camp in Italy, where he became friends with R' Zalman Levin. Together, they set up a shul for the numerous refugees, and R' Zalman was the one who was mekarev R' Zushe to Chassidus.

R' Zushe made good strides towards Chassidus, to the point that R' Zalman marveled, "Everything I told him about the ways of Chassidus he implemented immediately, even though he came from the Litvishe world.

"Being the son of a Litvishe rav, he knew how to learn, whereas I was not able to learn in my youth because of the difficult circumstances in Russia. So I asked him to teach me Nigleh and I would learn Chassidus with him from the few maamarim I remembered from when I was a kid. I also told him Chassidic stories which I had heard from my father (may Hashem avenge his blood), and R' Zushe and I learned together for a long time.

"Zushe was receptive and there was nobody but me around to give him the spirit of Chassidus. It was my great privilege to mekarev R' Zushe to Chabad. He was forever grateful to me for this."

After moving to Eretz Yisroel, R' Zushe learned in Achei T'mimim in Tel Aviv and began learning Chassidus under the mashpia R' Chaim Shaul Brook. He received an order from the Rebbe Rayatz to study sh'chita, after telling the Rebbe everything he had undergone during the war years.

While still young, R' Zushe's energy and talents were recognized. The Rebbe Rayatz even requested information about his character.

In 1948, when R' Moshe Gurary of Tel Aviv was in 770, he was called to the Ramash (later to become the Rebbe), who showed him a note

Two weeks later, two officials from the Jewish Agency showed up. They expressed their surprise at what they saw, for the building had been designated as an absorption center for young couples, and here was a maggid shiur teaching Gemara!

written by the Rebbe Rayatz which said, "Please find out about the character of the bachur Z.W."

R' Moshe was surprised but immediately told everything he knew about R' Zushe. As soon as he was finished, the Rebbe went to report to the Rebbe Rayatz.

TOMCHEI T'MIMIM IN LUD

R' Zushe was a partisan not only in name and not only because of his "glorious military past," but with all his heart and soul. He knew that often you can only be victorious through partisan activities, as the following story illustrates.

It was the beginning of the month of Shvat 5709, shortly after thirteen Chabad families settled on the edge of the city of Lud, near the train station. R' Zushe realized that they had to establish a yeshiva for the children of these families and for



The historic letter in which the Rebbe told R' Zushe to start the Reshet



A constant source of simcha and encouragement

the other Chabad families that had recently arrived from Russia.

One day he went to Lud and saw a three-story building that had been a small hotel. The building was near the homes where the Chabad families had settled, and he thought it would be perfect for a yeshiva.

He didn't consult with anyone and didn't prepare a plan. He simply walked into the building and put a big lock on the door and that was that. This was now Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. Chassidic families expressed their surprise that someone took over a big building without permission. In the meantime, R' Zushe acquired minimal furnishings and the place turned into a yeshiva which included a cheider for children. Rabbi Meilech Kaplan was the maggid shiur.

Two weeks later, two officials from the Jewish Agency showed up. They expressed their surprise at what they saw, for the building had been designated as an absorption

center for young couples, and here was a maggid shiur teaching Gemara!

"Who gave you permission to learn here?"

They were told that it was a yeshiva and there was a menahel. The officials spoke with R' Zushe, who was sitting in his office in one of the buildings near the train station.

"Are you the menahel of the yeshiva?"

"Yes."

"Who gave you permission to start a yeshiva in a building that doesn't belong to you? This building is designated as an absorption center by the Jewish Agency!"

"I got permission from the military governor," he said coldly.

The officials asked to see the permit, but he told them that the permit was at the yeshiva and he invited them to follow him to go and see it. When they heard how confident he sounded and saw his

willingness to go and show them the permit, they said, "Never mind, we believe you." And they left.

That's how Tomchei T'mimim of Lud was founded. R' Zushe ran it from Shvat 5709 until Tishrei 5711 when R' Efraim Wolf took over. Thousands of T'mimim have learned, and continue to learn, in this yeshiva.

FOUNDING THE RESHET

In the first years after the War of Independence, R' Zushe worked among the new immigrants who arrived in Eretz Yisroel from around the world. He wanted to set up an organization to absorb the children of immigrants. He wrote to the Rebbe about this, and on 5 Tammuz 5711 the Rebbe responded with another suggestion, to establish the Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok.

R' Zushe went to work, receiving instructions from the Rebbe every so often about how to run an organization during the start-up process. A few months after receiving instructions to start the Reshet, four schools had already opened, without official permits. This was accomplished by running registration drives among the immigrants in the transit camps. In the introduction to the *Igros Kodesh*, volume 5, it says: "R' Zushe went right to work, and during the first months of 5712, he opened a number of divisions of the Reshet."

R' Zushe ran the Reshet until Rabbi Dovid Chanzin a"h was appointed to the position. R' Zushe continued to serve as a member of the hanhala throughout the years.

In the early years of his work, aside from starting the yeshiva in Lud, he also founded N'shei Chabad, disseminated Chassidic works, and was one of the outstanding workers for Tzach. It was all done with the direction and encouragement of the Rebbe.

(To be continued.)

SOULS IGNITING IN 770

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

Moving testimonials from young baalei t'shuva who came to visit Beis Chayeinu and became mekushar to the Rebbe after Gimmel Tammuz.

** Part 2 of 2*

“MY ENTIRE WORLD LOOKED DIFFERENT”

Doron Kissin relates:

After becoming religious, I was involved with the Chabad community in Hertzeliya, where they are all excited about going to the Rebbe. Their enthusiasm rubbed off on me, and at the beginning of Sukkos, I resolved to travel to the Rebbe MH”M for Simchas Torah.

A number of problems cropped up, and I wrote to the Rebbe about it. The answer was, “all the obstacles disappeared,” and after only three days, there I was at 770 for Simchas Torah.

Like many others, I was also affected by the simplicity of 770. It made me understand the significance of the true shepherd of Israel. Aside from that, before going to 770, I was afraid that because of my appearance I would feel uncomfortable. I didn't look like a Chassid yet and I didn't have a beard. However, when I arrived, I was warmly welcomed and I felt like part of the crowd and not an outsider.

The highlight of my first visit to the Rebbe was the hakafo. I stood near the Rebbe's bima, and although I hadn't seen the Rebbe before Gimmel Tammuz, I pictured the Rebbe encouraging the singing.

At that moment, I felt as though my entire world looked different. That incredible feeling that I was together with the Rebbe strengthened my desire to get closer to that “great light.”

My entire life changed and my progress in Torah and mitzvos accelerated. Even though I was still a beginner, I

resolved to begin living a Chassidic life and to establish a Chassidic home. As a first step, I committed to growing a beard.

I felt a tremendous connection to the Rebbe MH”M, bringing closure to the entire period throughout which I sought meaning in life. This feeling didn't depart even when I returned to

Eretz Yisroel; for over half a year, I was still under the deep impression of that trip.

“I UNDERSTOOD THAT I HAD COME TO THE HOLIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD”

Nir Donenfeld relates:

When I was taking my first steps towards becoming observant, I got to know the mashpia R' Reuven Dunin a”h, which was a great privilege. It was from him that I gleaned the importance of traveling to the Rebbe.

When my parents planned a family trip to New York, I decided to take that opportunity to visit 770. I told R' Dunin that I was going to 770. His face lit up and his smile told me he was extremely pleased with my decision.

But there was a problem. According to the original plan, I was supposed to go to the Rebbe at the beginning of Elul, and to stay in 770 until the week before Rosh HaShana. That's when my family would come and I would join the family trip. But then I realized that precisely at the time I was planning on leaving 770, was when thousands of Chassidim, including my yeshiva friends, were going to show up!

I just didn't know what to do. On the one hand, I had only just started learning in the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv one month before, and to forego the family trip seemed out of the question. On the other hand, the stories my friends told, as well as the atmosphere in yeshiva, which had made me come to 770, aroused a strong desire to remain in 770.



For days, I was plagued with the question of what to do, and I finally decided to write to the Rebbe. The answer, in volume 20, p. 255, was clear. The Rebbe writes:

I had said that, as in every year, you would come here for Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, and we'd see each other and talk. Apparently, various reasons prevented you from doing so and you were unable to make this trip. It's a pity, for as Chazal say, a person must greet his rav on Yom Tov.

May it be that this be compensated for by the letters of the Rebbe, my father-in-law. At least what can be put into writing, until we meet face to face.

I told my parents that I wouldn't be joining them, and to my surprise, they accepted it! Since my ticket was already issued, I planned on going to the Rebbe for Elul and Tishrei. Mashpiim in yeshiva advised me to make some good resolutions, so I learned the *kuntres Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel* in depth.



In addition, I learned the booklet, *Nos'im LaRebbe* published by Attah, and I began to understand the significance of going to the Rebbe.

During the taxi ride to the airport, I worried about not knowing a soul when I arrived in New York. But by Divine providence, the first bachur I met when I exited the taxi was someone from my city of Raanana. The year before, he had put t'fillin on me in school. When I saw him, I felt how the Rebbe was personally looking out for each of his guests.

When I entered 770, the first thought to enter my mind was all the special things the Rebbe enumerates in the *kuntres Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel*. When I thought about how I was in "the actual place of the Mikdash of the Future" (as the Rebbe puts it), I was very excited.

But I was most excited when I saw the porch from where the Rebbe had encouraged the singing of "Yechi." I thought of all the videos I had seen of the Rebbe

encouraging the singing of "Yechi," and the feeling of yearning to see our king welled up inside me.

I sat down to learn Chassidus before davening with one of the bachurim. After a few days of being with the Rebbe, my initial excitement was replaced with seriousness, and I joined the daily study schedule of the bachurim.

Although I didn't know much, I learned with bachurim and slowly progressed in my study of Gemara. I learned the structure of a page of Gemara, and my learning capacity far exceeded what I had achieved in yeshiva.

In 770, I got to know some bachurim, who helped me acclimate. All in all, they were very warm and nice to me.

I especially remember the t'fillos in the Rebbe's minyan. Each time they prepared the Rebbe's place, I would think of the Rebbe and ask him to reveal himself to us.

During my stay in 770, I progressed both in my learning and in my behavior with additional fear of Heaven. Being there on a constant basis gave me a special feeling of closeness to the Rebbe and all his inyanim.

Gershon Avtzon relates:

Rosh HaShana 5764, I went on Mivtza Shofar early in the morning, and by the time I returned to 770 the minyan was up to the repetition of the Shmoneh Esrei. A group of us bachurim who had returned from Mivtza Shofar got a minyan going for Shacharis in the back of 770, and we hurried along so we could join the Rebbe's minyan for t'kias shofar.

During the davening, I noticed a man who didn't appear to be religious sitting off on the side without a machzor. I offered him a machzor so he could daven.

He asked me my name and we began to talk. To my surprise, he said he lived in Brownsville, a neighborhood near Crown Heights. When I asked him why he bothered walking to 770 he said, "When I was in my thirties, I was overcome by depression. I had to leave my job at the local police station, and I stayed at home for long periods of time.

"One night, I tossed and turned and couldn't sleep. I remained awake for hours. When I saw that sleep was hopeless, I decided to take a short drive to get some fresh air. The streets were deserted at that hour, and I didn't think I would meet anyone.

"After a brief drive, I arrived in Crown Heights and to my great surprise, I saw a large group of religious Jews standing and talking. When I asked what they were doing out there at that hour, the Chassidim told me that the Rebbe had just finished farbrenging. They were standing there and listening to a review of what the Rebbe had said, and they invited me to come to 770 the next day to put on t'fillin.

"When I showed up the next day, I suddenly felt that my depression had disappeared. At first, I thought it was just a fleeting feeling, but after a few days I realized it was a miracle, in the merit of this holy place.

"Since then, whenever I feel down, I come to 770, and the feeling of sadness passes."

THE REBBE ANSWERED BEFORE I ASKED!

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

When Rabbi Dovid Zizov of Yerushalayim tells his miracle story, he chokes up, despite the fact that the story took place many years ago:

The story took place in 5740 (1980). About a year after I got married, I felt very strongly about immersing myself in my learning for at least two years, by way of preparing for shlichus. We were living in Yerushalayim and I studied in the Tzemach Tzedek Kollel in the Old City. My wife continued her studies in the seminary of Beis Chana.

A few months after we married, my parents said that the money we were paying in rent for our apartment would be better used as a down payment on an apartment of our own. We began apartment-hunting in Yerushalayim, but every time we thought we were close to signing a contract, something came up to prevent it from happening.

We gave up on finding an apartment at a reasonable price in Yerushalayim, and began looking in Beer Sheva, my hometown. It's much easier to find an apartment there, and within a few days we had bought a nice apartment. We rented it out and continued living in our rented apartment in Yerushalayim.

By the end of the year, I saw that I couldn't continue paying such a high rental fee, and I

decided to look for a shlichus after one year instead of two. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Lieberman, shliach in Ashkelon, suggested that I help him open a network of shiurim in Ashkelon. The municipality of London, England, had "adopted" the city of Ashkelon, and had given Ashkelon a nice sum

I spent an entire day in confusion when I suddenly had an idea. I remembered the story about R' Mendel Futerfas a"h, who wanted to send a pa"n to the Rebbe when he was incarcerated in the Soviet Union...

of money. The shliach in London arranged for a nice portion of it to be allocated to the shliach. This is why he had to present a list of existing programs, as opposed to potential programs, and why Rabbi Lieberman wanted me to get started immediately. He said that he had heard from a number of people that

I was the right person for the job, and he asked me to hurry and make a decision.

I was very uncertain. I thought it would be too much for me to handle, and didn't feel ready for shlichus. So I made two conditions: one – that I could learn in the local Kollel in the morning; and two – to wait until I received a bracha from the Rebbe.

I wrote to the Rebbe, described the offer, and asked for a bracha. While I was writing it, I received a phone call from the Chabad house in Beer Sheva. They had heard that I was looking for a shlichus and they suggested I work for them doing hafatza in the city in the afternoons and teaching in the local Chabad school in the morning.

I loved teaching and this offer really appealed to me, but since I had already spoken with Rabbi Lieberman, I said that I would present both suggestions to the Rebbe and do as the Rebbe said.

There were constantly new developments and I kept on postponing sending off my letter to the Rebbe. The dilemma about going on shlichus became more urgent when our landlord pressured us to renew our lease on our rented apartment in Yerushalayim. He said that if we didn't renew it, he would rent it to someone else.



he yelled into the phone, "Where are you? I've been looking for you for hours!" He said that he had received a phone call from the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Binyamin Klein, who relayed a number of urgent messages for various people,

I didn't know what to do. I didn't have the luxury of time, and remember, back then telephones and fax machines were not as readily available as they are today. I knew that receiving an answer from the Rebbe would take time, and I had to get back to the landlord with an answer within a few days.

I spent an entire day in confusion when I suddenly had an idea. I remembered the story about R' Mendel Futerfas a"h, who wanted to send a *pa"n* to the Rebbe when he was incarcerated in the Soviet Union. R' Mendel pictured himself standing before the Rebbe and giving him the *pidyon nefesh*. A few days later, his wife (who had already left the Soviet Union and lived in London) received a letter from the Rebbe which contained the following postscript: **The pidyon nefesh of your husband was received and will be read, at an auspicious time, at the gravesite of the Rebbe, my father-in-law.**

R' Mendel related this miraculous story many times, including the period of time that I learned in the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad. The story became the

topic of the day among the bachurim.

I decided to do the same thing, well aware that I wasn't on the level of R' Mendel. I put on my sirtuk and gartel and stood in front of a large picture of the Rebbe. I took the letter, read the Rebbe's and my own chapter of T'hilim, said my name and my mother's name, and after putting some coins in the pushka I asked the Rebbe to answer me somehow or other.

Of course, today this is common practice for many people, with or without the *Igros Kodesh*, but back then, this was highly unusual!

The next morning, I went to Kolllel, as I did every day. It was a Tuesday, and I felt strongly that everything would work out just fine. That night, when I returned home, my wife said in passing that Rabbi Efraim Wolf had called her parents and asked that I call him immediately. I knew R' Wolf but couldn't imagine what he wanted. Since we didn't have our own phone, I went to a public phone and dialed the number he had left.

When he heard that it was me,

including me. Since Ashkelon appeared in the answer, he had called the shliach in Ashkelon who knew my in-laws in Yerushalayim and gave R' Wolf their phone number.

I stood there in shock. I pinched myself repeatedly to make sure I wasn't dreaming or hallucinating. I had believed wholeheartedly that I would receive an answer from the Rebbe, but I didn't dream it would come in such a tangible way!

Eventually when I regained my senses, I told R' Wolf that I hadn't sent the Rebbe a letter. But he stuck to his guns and said in his characteristic way, "This is your answer from the Rebbe. Take it and be well."

A few years later, after receiving the Rebbe's bracha, we moved to Beer Sheva, where I opened a yeshiva for baalei t'shuvah called Darkei Avos. The yeshiva was opened with the help of Rabbi Krakover, and with the assistance of Professor Branover and Rabbi Grossman, and baruch Hashem, has been successful.

THE REBBE SAID THAT THE TERRORISTS ARE HITLER'S SUCCESSORS!

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN

*Rabbi Sholom Dovber Wolpo, one of the heads of the Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land, tells Beis Moshiach about the uproar generated by the letter he sent to the Attorney General. * "It's so hard for people to accept this comparison, because if it's true, then it would be impossible to expel Jews from their homes and replace them with Nazis!" * Exclusive to Beis Moshiach.*

You shook the country up; all the media is busy with your letter to the Attorney General!

They react that way because they were confronted with the truth about the prime minister and his supporters, who have switched from "pursuers of peace" to Nazi collaborators. The media is used to sweet lines like, "We have love and it will be victorious," and suddenly, they're hearing a different tune. Our point was not provocation, but to convey the Rebbe MH"m's clear message.

Where did the Rebbe say that terrorists are Nazis?

I personally heard the Rebbe say

so on Shabbos Parshas B'Reishis 5729 (1968), when he compared terrorists to "Hitler and his professors." And the Rebbe said, on Shabbos Parshas Bo 5741 (1981) that Egyptian president Sadat had ties with Hitler and his friends.

Is this an established historical fact or something the Rebbe revealed?

In my book, *Shalom, Shalom, V'Ein Shalom*, I printed the praise Sadat had for Hitler (may his name be erased). Sadat concludes, "We won't be surprised if a new Hitler follows in his footsteps." When Sadat visited Germany, he visited Hitler's Eagle's Nest. He dressed the honor guard of the Egyptian army in Wehrmacht

uniforms and with Nazi helmets. And when Sadat visited Yerushalayim, he wore a tie with swastikas on it. If that's what Sadat was like, all the more so the terrorists of our time!

Why do you think it's so hard for people to accept this comparison?

Because if it's true, then it would be impossible to expel Jews from their homes and replace them with Nazis! The fuss about using a Holocaust reference is just an excuse. The Klausenberger Rebbe zt"l went through all the horrors of the war, and lost thousands of Chassidim, as well as his immediate family. Yet, he wrote that terrorists are worse than Nazis! He added that the Belzer Rebbe zt"l (R' Aharon) said the same thing.

Why are they worse?

Other g'dolim explained this (someone told me that the Rebbe said this too but I haven't seen such a sicha), saying that Nazis did not commit suicide in order to murder Jews. The terrorists' hatred is so great that they are willing to kill themselves in order to kill Jews. Even Arab mothers happily send their children to blow themselves up so long as they kill Jews in the process.

The fact that terrorists are not as successful as the Nazis is only because in our generation, the last



generation of Galus and the first of Geula, Hashem is protecting us from them. And if we stood up to them, we would not have sustained the losses we have had until now. But as far as their desire for genocide is concerned, they are worse than the Nazis.

The Attorney General doesn't understand this?

I'm preparing another letter for him, and suggesting that he "mistakenly" enter Sh'chem (Nablus) or Tul Karem, or Ramallah, and see what happens. The only difference between Nazis and terrorists is that the Nazis did things in an orderly way and lined people up to be shot or to be sent to the gas chambers. When the Arabs catch a Jew, they lynch him, ripping him apart as an animal does.

We all saw pictures of the lynching a few years ago.

That's the basis for the disagreement between the Rebbe and the Israeli government. The Rebbe says they are Nazis, and "when someone arises to kill you, get up and kill him." Liberal Israelis say that terrorists are "freedom fighters," like the E.U. said about the Hezbollah.

The question is only how many Jews need to be killed, G-d forbid, in order for the government, the Knesset, and the people to come to terms with the fact that they're dealing with Nazis, whose sole goal is to kill all Jews! As the Rebbe put it in a Purim sicha 5738: The P.L.O. are the descendents of the wicked Haman!



A few years ago, when my friend, Rabbi Meir Drukman publicized that Arafat is a Nazi, the Minister of Education at that time, Yossi Sarid, forbade him from entering schools. This is precisely what enrages them. If Arafat is a Nazi, then the members of Peace Now are Nazi collaborators!

It's interesting to note that President Bush immediately realized that Al Qaeda aren't people to negotiate with. Even President Putin understands that he cannot make concessions to the Chechnians. It's only we who still don't get it.

Even if the terrorists are Nazis, it's still hard to call a Jew a collaborator with them.

I myself heard the Rebbe say about the Zionists who were alive during the Holocaust (referring to David Ben-Gurion, Yitzchok Greenbaum, and his friends) that they could have rescued Jews with money, but they didn't do it because, "only with blood will we acquire the land." In other words, the more Jews murdered in Europe, the more Zionism would garner worldwide support.

Zionist organizations were in close contact with the Nazi party and its leaders, and when they all already knew their plans of genocide, the Zionists refrained from calling a spade a spade.

(Rabbi Weissmandel revealed hair-raising facts in his writings, which were forbidden by the censor, and even more details came out in Menachem Grilak's *Sign of Cain* and *Am I My Brothers' Keeper* by Barak Ben-Amos. There were also articles in

various newspapers, such as those of Ben Pinchas HaKohen in *Hamodia* and Yechiel Abramson in *Mishpacha*. I have copies of these articles to refer to when I need them, and all of them contain official documents from the Zionist archives that testify to Zionist leaders' refusal to get involved in saving European Jews.

(For example, President Chaim Weizman wrote in 1937: "I was asked: ...to bring six million Jews to Eretz Yisroel? I answered: No...the elderly will die ... They are moral and economic dust in a cruel world ... Only a branch will be saved ... They must accept this." One of the heads of the Jewish Agency refused an urgent request for money which was needed to pay a captain of a ship to bring hundreds of Jews to Israel. His response: "Selectivity is a necessary factor in the problems of aliya to Israel ... One cannot imagine greater murderous weapons for the Zionist enemies than Eretz Yisroel flooded with the elderly or undesirables.")

Sharon can say that what he's doing isn't collaboration with terrorists but serves the interests of the nation.

Sharon does not say that in the country's interests these settlements should not exist. What he's saying is that since there's a political deadlock, therefore, in order to prevent the world from forcing unwanted concessions upon us, we ourselves have to take a political step and expel the Jews from Gush Katif. This is in order to show that we are making a concession to the Arabs, and by doing so we will find favor in the eyes of the nations of the world (this is the official reason for the Disengagement Plan).

In other words, just as in the time of the Holocaust, political considerations take precedence over security concerns. Not only that but they forcibly shut the mouths of the security experts, including the head

of the Shin-Bet, who says that the area will turn into an Al Qaeda terrorist headquarters, and the best weapons will be smuggled there. (The claim is altogether ridiculous, for in order to prevent the nations from forcing a political solution on us, we are forcing upon ourselves a situation so awful that the worst nations didn't consider it.)

But those who support Disengagement maintain that we must remove the settlements from the Gaza Strip in order to prevent our soldiers

The suicide-plague has spread from the terrorists to the Knesset, but the suicide bombers blow themselves up in order to kill those who they consider their enemies, while the Zionists commit suicide in order harm their fellow Jews.

from getting killed on the Philadelphia Corridor?

It's one of the lies that the government uses to poison the public. It's obvious to all (and this appears in official documents of the committee appointed by the government to investigate the ramifications of Disengagement) that even afterwards, the I.D.F. will have to remain in the Philadelphia Corridor, and that it will be responsible for whatever goes on in Gaza. Aside from that, what will the

army do when the Qassam missiles keep coming? It will have to re-enter Gaza and fight, so what will we gain by leaving?

Doesn't Sharon know that?

What more do you need than the announcement made by the leader of Hamas, the day after the Knesset vote on the Disengagement Plan, that the vote proved that terror had won. Hamas itself announces that Sharon, his government and his Knesset members, collaborate with them, but the prime minister and his colleagues shut their ears.

As we wrote to the Attorney General, what all the terror organizations failed to accomplish with 5000 explosions, the Israeli government and the I.D.F. are doing for them. They are Hamas' contractors.

Why do you mention the I.D.F.? Many people have asked that we not mix the army into ideological battles.

Look at what a world of lies we live in. The prime minister and his pals in Peace Now, as well as some liberal rabbis, keep repeating this line to the media: "Let's not mix the army into politics! Therefore, we can't tell the soldiers to refuse to carry out orders."

What hypocrisy! To order a soldier to forcibly evict Jews from their homes is not called involving him in politics. To tell a soldier in the engineer corps to use heavy equipment to destroy homes, hothouses and shuls is not called involving him in politics. To assign the military chaplains to move the graves of dozens of Jews who died al kiddush Hashem is not involving the army in politics. *But to tell a soldier, "don't raise a hand against your brother, don't fight Eretz Yisroel, don't aid the enemy" is called involving soldiers in politics!*

There's another point here. Every soldier is sworn in with his hand on a

Tanach to act on behalf of Eretz Yisroel and the Jewish people, but Sharon and the defense minister want to force tens of thousands of soldiers to break their vow and to fight to destroy our land, expel Jews, and to establish a Palestinian state. The government and Knesset are dragging Israeli soldiers along with them, making them betray the Tanach, their land, and their people.

How do you explain the fact that so many Israelis and elected officials are going along with this plan?

I have no explanation for it except that a *ruach shtus* (a spirit of folly) – and much more than that – has entered them. There is no rational explanation for their spiritual, rational, and moral decay. Not just Sharon, but even those who were

considered the leaders of the Right: Netanyahu, Livnat, Mafdal, etc.

The suicide-plague has spread from the terrorists to the Knesset, but the suicide bombers blow themselves up in order to kill those who they consider their enemies, while the Zionists commit suicide in order to harm their fellow Jews.

Look at what the media is doing. When there's a demonstration against Disengagement, it's barely mentioned on the radio and TV, but when there was a demonstration on Motzaei Shabbos in favor of the expulsion, then it was like Russia's Pravda! All the radio stations, etc., broadcasted the demonstration. They didn't even broadcast the news, for they had a live broadcast of the "Death March."

On the day of the vote, all the

papers had blue and white headlines like on Yom HaAtzmaut. Hip, hip, hooray! They're going to expel thousands of men, women, and children from their homes and give their land away to terrorists!

Is there a connection between the Disengagement and the memorials for Yitzchok Rabin?

His family members are right when they say that "Rabin's Legacy" has permeated all segments of the nation, Right and Left. What is his legacy? Let them spell it out! That it's okay to sacrifice thousands of our people and to have tens of thousands injured in order to make the goyim happy!

This is also the legacy of Golda Meir, who didn't want to call up the reserves on the eve of the Yom Kippur War, in order to find favor in the eyes of the nations of the world. She did this *even though, as she put it, "she knew there would be a price to pay."*

This legacy was adopted by Sharon. He destroyed the settlements in Yamit in order to protect Gaza, Sh'chem, Yericho, and Beit Lechem. He gave away these cities in order to save the settlements in Gush Katif. Now he wants to destroy these settlements in order to save Yehuda-Shomron, and then he'll destroy Yehuda-Shomron in order to save Yerushalayim, and so on. He doesn't care about the blood price to pay at every stage, which is known about in advance; the main thing is that he will be recorded in the history books as a peacemaker.

I send a letter to the prime minister every few days. I once wrote him that he will be written about in the history books as the one who expelled Jews from their land, in third place, after Nevuchadnetzar and Titus.

After the recent attack in Be'er Sheva, they found the hand of the terrorist, and within minutes they



identified him, because his fingerprints were in the police records. In other words, he was in jail before and was released. I wrote the prime minister and told him that he was personally responsible for the deaths of these Jews because he freed the terrorist, among hundreds of others.

Aren't you afraid of the threats of Minister Shitrit and Moshe Negbi, who have asked the Attorney General to put you on trial for incitement?

The prime minister's office also wrote me that my letters were given to the "proper parties." I am not an inciter. I just give people food for thought. If the Attorney General thinks I am wrong, let him explain why terrorists aren't Nazis, and how Sharon doesn't help them. Why isn't the man who freed terrorists responsible for the consequences? Why shouldn't he be compared to Nevuchadnetzar and Titus?

In fact, Sharon is a lot worse than those two. At least they didn't betray their people, whereas Sharon wants to help our enemies and expel his fellow Jews.

The spokesman for Tzach wrote an article in *Kfar Chabad* which said that there are groups on the Right that don't like the government's being compared to Nazi collaborators.

The article stated exactly who didn't like it. For example, Yisroel Harel, someone who met with Arab delegations in order to get the peace agreements moving along. He also said why he isn't happy – that he heard complaints about it at Bar-Ilan University... So they want to coerce us to make the Rebbe's words fit the line of thinking of Harel and Bar-Ilan.

The entire "reengagement council" [a gathering meant to oppose the "disengagement council"] agrees to a national referendum, something the Rebbe strongly opposed. So should we not oppose a national referendum?

His position is that we have to speak b'ofen ha'miskabel...

At that same "reengagement council" meeting, they also attacked rabbanim who said soldiers should refuse to obey orders, and the spokesman for Tzach who attacked us, is the same person who wrote an article two weeks ago which said they have to refuse orders. Why didn't he consult with Moshe Arens first? Did Yisroel Harel and Bar-Ilan agree to his article of a few years ago in which he called Rabin a traitor?

We all knew R' Berke Wolf a"h, who made connections for Chabad in the media. R' Wolf saw his role as the person who brought the Rebbe's message, as sharp as it was, (during the Who is a Jew debate) to the media. Yet today, there are people who think that the connection Chabad has with the media is the other way around – that we are supposed to read all the secular papers and hate-filled articles, and adopt their ideas! If the journalists think that belief in the Rebbe MH"M is not something people want to hear, then they stop talking about the sichos of 5751-2. If the television reporters think that Chabad shouldn't openly get involved in the war for shleimus ha'Aretz, then they try to prevent Chabad houses from getting involved, etc.

Everybody knows that my partner, R' Yekusiel Rapp, is the one of the few people who has been devoting himself, with mesirus nefesh, for many years, to promoting shleimus ha'Aretz. As for me, 25 years ago I received clear instructions from the Rebbe about how to publicize his views on shleimus ha'Aretz. I have written three books on this subject, all with precise instructions from the Rebbe in writing and in person, including instructions to convey messages to the media about this. I am certain that his holy instructions will direct me so that I don't do

anything that is not in accordance with what he wants.

What will I say to my grandchildren in another few years when they ask me: You had a shlichus from the Rebbe in shleimus ha'Aretz. Why didn't you turn the world over to bring the Rebbe's message to the public, namely that the terrorists want to do to us precisely what the Nazis did to our ancestors? Why didn't you rip the veil off the faces of our leaders who collaborated with the Nazis?

What will I answer them? That I was afraid of the legal pundit Moshe Negbi?

You mentioned the belief in Moshiach. Even Sharon and Peres spoke about that in their last speech.

It just goes to show that this is what the war is about – not about disengagement, but about something much deeper. Are we a nation like all the nations, and therefore, it is political considerations that must direct us, or are we a Messianic nation of "I believe," in which case, what guides us is our cleaving to Toras Yisroel, Am Yisroel, and Eretz Yisroel, under the leadership of the Nasi HaDor Melech HaMoshiach?

Where do you think we're heading?

The fact is that the situation has become worse, and at an accelerated pace. Today they don't talk merely about giving away land in exchange for a peace agreement, but simply about establishing a Palestinian state with nothing in exchange.

And even those who oppose it (including g'dolei Yisroel) are not opposed to peace agreements that include giving away land. They are just opposed to disengagement with nothing to show for it. This means that the Rebbe is the only one fighting the battle for shleimus ha'Aretz. If we, the Soldiers of the House of Dovid, don't lead this fight, who is going to do the work for us?

What should we do?

I can't point to any one thing and say that it will change the situation, but it's clear to me that when we present the Rebbe's message to the people, it has to make a difference. What we have seen is that the best publicity is the bus ads. We have done it twice, during the Likud referendum and in recent weeks. It cost us \$80,000, and so we ask Anash to help us pay for ads like these. Not everybody is able to demonstrate in the streets, but when a sign he paid for is seen on the buses, and informs thousands of people what the Rebbe's view is, there's no greater protest than that.

We have to pay for the earlier campaigns and have to start a new one, and we can't do it without the help of Anash in Eretz Yisroel and abroad.

Who should the money be given to?

We are going to be sending out letters to all of Anash in Eretz Yisroel. Every city has someone in charge, and their names will be publicized. In New York, money can be given to R' Yekusiel Rapp, who works day and night for shleimus ha'Aretz.

I'd like to mention something R' Rapp thought of, for the day of the Knesset vote. We put a full-page ad in *Maariv* with a huge picture of the Rebbe. There's no question that the Rebbe will be victorious. I'd like to mention R' Motti Anati of Florida, who paid for that ad.

What can you say to encourage the settlers?

On Motzaei Shabbos, when I was in Miron, after visiting the *baal ha'hilula*, R' Leib Baal HaYisurim, in Tzfas, I asked the Rebbe, through the *Igros Kodesh*, what to do on behalf of shleimus ha'Aretz and what to do so that the Rebbe MH"M will win the Wars of Hashem. The answer I opened to was in volume 8, p. 194:



His family members are right when they say that "Rabin's Legacy" has permeated all segments of the nation, Right and Left. What is his legacy? Let them spell it out! That it's okay to sacrifice thousands of our people and to have tens of thousands injured in order to make the goyim happy!

Don't be fazed by those who oppose this. It's enough for a slave to be like his master. For they opposed the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe and the Rebbe, each one in his generation. But in our days, we have merited that through the *mesirus nefesh* of our N'siim, in whose day the victory of Chassidus was revealed and publicized, all those who rise up against it, in the ways of Avigdor, etc., will immediately have their shame revealed in public, and their downfall is assured ahead of time.

I have no doubt that the Rebbe will win, and the shame of all the Leftists, including those among us, will soon be publicly revealed.

I have one request of our friends, the settlers: There's no question that Sharon's power is solely because there are still *b'nei Torah* who maintain that the State is *is'chalta d'Geula*, who even on the eve of the expulsion call the State, "*reishit tzmichat Geulateinu*" (the beginning of our Redemption), and call the government that collaborates with Nazis, "*kisei malchut Hashem*." This gives power to the *sitra achra* of the ministers and Knesset members, who represent the Satan in the government and Knesset. If the blue and white flag was taken down and replaced with a Moshiach flag, and if "HaTikva" was replaced with the "Ani Maamin – Moshiach song," the government's power would be nullified and the threat of expulsion would disappear.

As it said further on in the Rebbe's letter:

And if sometimes it takes a bit more time (i.e., the victory over the opposition), it is only because the Chassidim give them substance. This can be inferred *a priori* from the fact that we know how pained the Alter Rebbe was for having drunk a cup of tea in a misnaged's house. May the sins, not the sinners, cease. With blessing, I await good news.

“THE 1ST TO BE GATHERED IS THE HALF-TRIBE OF MENASHEH”

BY AVRAHAM RAYNITZ
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

For photographer Eli Yona the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel take up a central role in the course of his life. Twelve years ago, he requested and received the Rebbe’s bracha to travel in search of the lost tribes, and found a whole state in northern India with two million people who identify themselves as “B’nei Menasheh.”

When Eli Yona davens on Rosh HaShana and comes to the *posuk* “and the lost from the

land of Ashur and the banished from the land of Egypt will come,” tears come to his eyes. For him, this is not just another *posuk*; it is an ideal that occupies a place of primary importance in his life. He recalls at that moment the stories of his parents about their days of wandering during his childhood, when he escaped from Iraq, crossing through valleys and mountains together with them en route to the Promised Land. During those difficult days, he thought much about the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, recalling their stories that he had heard so often as a young boy. And so he decided that when he would grow up, he would set out on a journey in search of these lost tribes.

Life flowed faster than the river

Sambatyon, and just ten years ago, after countless life changes, including becoming a ba’al t’shuva and taking thousands of pictures of the Rebbe, Eli Yona finally succeeded in realizing his lifelong aspiration to take a trip in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel.

5753. Several good years after he first had the privilege of seeing the great and holy light of the Rebbe MH”M, Eli Yona knew that you don’t take serious steps in your life without asking the Rebbe. He proceeded to write the Rebbe a letter describing his great interest over the years in the lost tribes, and he asked for a bracha to travel to East Asia. The Rebbe’s reply was not long in coming - “*Bracha l’n’sia*” (blessing for the journey).

At first, he was shocked. He was not expecting to receive a clear answer so quickly on such an important matter, and he thought that perhaps he

hadn’t sufficiently explained in his letter what his intentions were in relation to his research of the lost tribes. He asked the Rebbe again, explaining his intentions in the fullest detail, and received again the same clear answer: “*Bracha l’n’sia*.”

Before setting out on his thrilling journey, he paid a visit to Eretz HaKodesh, where in a case of incredible Divine Providence, he spent Shabbos on the Gush Katif settlement of Neve Dekalim, and delved into the mystery of the lost tribes.

During his Shabbos prayers, he came across a group a religious Jews, davening with unique devotion. They were brown-skinned, but with clearly Oriental facial features. Eli inquired, and they told him that they are members of the lost tribe of Menasheh, living today in northern India. It turned out that the previous year, twenty members of the tribe emigrated to Israel, and after undergoing strict halachic conversions, received official immigrant status.

“I was mesmerized by them,” Eli recalled. “They told me that they came from a strip of land in northern India on the border with Bangladesh, and their ancestors were originally from China. The Chinese emperors abused them, burned their Torah scrolls, and sold them as slaves. It was deeply moving. Suddenly I realized that this

could explain what had happened to the lost tribes.”

THE REBBE ON “THE TRIBES OF AFGHANISTAN”

Eli inquired as to who brought this group of young people, and was introduced to Rabbi **Eliyahu Avichayil**, Chairman of The Amishav Association, which specializes in finding survivors of Jewish tribes in distant locations throughout the world, and received the following information from him:

In the northeastern Indian state of Mizoram, there dwells a large tribe called Shinlung with a population of nearly two million people(!), which according to their tradition are descendants of the tribe of Menasheh. This tribe was discovered more than a century ago by Christian missionaries, and over a period of seventy years, most of the members of this tribe converted to Christianity. However, thirty years ago, many of them began the process of returning to Judaism.

Today, several thousands within this tribe conduct a Jewish lifestyle, and some of them even send their children to learn in Bombay’s Jewish day school - more than six hundred miles away!

The most exciting aspect to all this is that we are not talking about some primitive little village, but an entire state. It is indeed a most amazing

“It was deeply moving. Suddenly I realized that this could explain what had happened to the lost tribes.”

phenomenon when the majority of residents in a normal established state with an independent government and legislature sees itself as part of the Jewish People, as descendants of the tribe of Menasheh.

This opinion is widespread not just among the citizenry, but even within the ruling authorities. When Rabbi Avichayil came to the region for the first time, he was greeted as a visiting diplomat. He was most impressed by their deep connection to Judaism, and their fervent desire to come to Eretz Yisroel and live as true Jews. Their desire to emigrate is not based on economic considerations, as living conditions in Mizoram are comparatively good, and it is the only Indian state not to be classified as poverty-stricken.

In his conversations with Rabbi Avichayil, Eli Yona learned that the Rebbe had been kept well informed

regarding Amishav Association’s activities. As early as 5738, Rabbi Avichayil was privileged to receive a handwritten answer from the Rebbe: “On the matter of the tribes of Afghanistan, they are surely consulting experts in this important field.”

In 5742, Rabbi Avichayil sent the Rebbe the booklet “The Lost From The Land of Ashur.” The Rebbe thanked him with a *bracha* of “much appreciation,” noting that “surely he has spoken face-to-face with leading rabbanim *shlita* on the problem of the ‘lost,’ in his words, for there is obviously no need to explain how complicated this whole matter is, a most serious halachic matter demanding knowledge of all its details, etc.”

This great innovation started early in the *Nuns*, when the Rebbe was speaking about the beginning of Melech HaMoshiach’s activities in the world, including the ingathering of the exiles of Israel, as a large group of this tribe’s members arrived to settle in Gush Katif. Rabbi Avichayil, who was not fully supportive of this step, contacted the Rebbe again, asking whether to bring more such groups to Eretz Yisroel, where they should undergo conversion, and if the groups should consist of unmarried people or families. The answer he received astounded him: “Bring additional groups of unmarried people for now, and convert them in Eretz HaKodesh. Blessing for success.”

When Eli Yona heard all this in great detail, this reinforced his belief that the Rebbe agreed with the entire issue.

He decided to make his journey together with Rabbi Avichayil, and asked that he should join him. Rabbi Avichayil agreed, and Eli Yona returned to New York until all the preparations for his trip had been completed.

During the interim, he learned that several rabbanim had raised questions on the entire matter. Eli quickly reported to the Rebbe on recent



Tribe members greet Eli Yona with joy

developments, and after a few hours, the secretariat informed him that he had received a bracha from the Rebbe. Two days later, Rabbi Avichayil updated him with news that those rabbanim had removed their opposition to the emigration of the tribe members to Eretz Yisroel.

KIDDUSHIN, YIBUM AND CHALITZA, AND...BEN SORER U'MOREH

Not long afterwards, the pair set out on their journey, accompanied by the lost tribes researcher Rabbi **Yehonasan Segal**. Even after their arrival in Bombay, India, there were considerable difficulties to reach the area, where Indian soldiers were battling terrorists, and a serious storm in the region delayed them for several additional hours. Only in the merit of the Rebbe's bracha did they succeed in reaching their destination.

Upon their arrival, crowds of children from the surrounding villages participated in a festive welcome prepared in their honor. Eli mingled among those assembled, distributing pictures of the Rebbe, and trying to teach them "Moshiach, Moshiach, Moshiach," the hit song at the time.

One of the young people who came to the welcome ceremony was a teenage girl who was known to be a mute. Eli gave her a picture of the Rebbe, and to everyone's surprise, the girl began to speak a few words - in Hebrew. It didn't take long before the story was publicized in the local papers with a picture of the Rebbe MH"M appearing prominently.

Eli spent considerable time among the tribe members, identifying dozens of signs of their Jewish origin. They are accustomed to conduct a wedding by giving the woman a ring under a

canopy, the mitzvos of *yibum* and *chalitza* are observed with the utmost precision, and similarly, they have a tradition regarding the mitzva of *ben sorer u'moreh* (a stubborn and rebellious son), who after three warnings is driven out of the community.

As an expert photographer, Eli managed to document the lives of these tribe members and illustrate the "pintele Yid" preserved within them - mezuzos on doorposts, synagogues with drawings of the menorah from the Beis HaMikdash (with diagonal branches, according to the Rambam!), and other amazing pieces of evidence.

He was surprised to discover that men go with fringes, similar in appearance to tzitzis, on the four

contained in the amulet.

For thousands of years, these tribe members stringently married only among their own ranks. However, as the harsh years of exile had their effect, a sizable percentage of the tribe was sold as slaves, and forced to assimilate among foreign nations. As mentioned earlier, Christian missionaries discovered them about a hundred years ago and destroyed most of their holy artifacts. For a lengthy period of time, they were left with only memories and their song about "Our Ancestor Menasheh," "who took us through great rivers and beyond mountains, and brought us to a strange land." Still, many continued to pray in the direction of Yerushalayim, and kept the general principles of Judaism as received from their elders.

In lengthy conversations held with Eli Yona, the tribal elders told about the good times prior to the arrival of the missionaries, when every village had a Kohen named Aharon, who served as village leader, a position that was handed down as an inheritance. The kohen's garments included a linen ephod, an embroidered coat, and a belt.

As mentioned earlier, the tribe of Menasheh numbered about two million, and they enjoyed full autonomy. Eli Yona met with the regional governor, who said candidly as he pointed to the tribe members who attended the meeting, "You see our Jews?" The governor then corrected himself and said, "Are only they Jews?" and then pointed to his wife, declaring, "She is a Jew and also I am a Jew. This whole country is Jewish!"...

Even the local priest, a tribe member who the missionaries trained to spread Christianity, asked to join the prayer services and started coming back to his Jewish roots.



Several B'nei Menasheh members, draped in their tallisim, with their synagogue in the background

corners of their garments, while women cover their heads and are stringent about lighting a candle every Friday before sundown. He also met several tribe members who wore large amulets with the eternal Jewish words "Sh'ma Yisroel" written within them. They treated the amulet as a Divine mystery, as they didn't understand the meaning of the words. The tribe leader would wash his hands prior to placing the words on the parchment that was



Rabbi Avichayil (left) and Eli Yona (second from right) with regional policeman



Dancing to "Moshiach, Moshiach, Moshiach" at a Melave Malka on Motzaei Shabbos



Members who claim to descend from Shevet Efraim welcome the delegation

Today, each village has a synagogue where the tribe members pray on Shabbos and Yom Tov. These synagogues are filled with an aura of Judaism, even though they have no holy Jewish items, not even a seifer Torah, as the missionaries forcibly took everything.

On this journey, Eli also visited southern India, where he discovered another tribe, whose members claimed to be descendants of Efraim. The guests were honored with a choir performance of a song on the Exodus from Egypt. According to the tribe members, the song, which is performed at every public tribal function, has accompanied them throughout their years of exile. The lyrics refer to the holiday of Pesach, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillars of cloud and fire, the drowning of the Egyptians in the sea, and the water that came out from the rock.

When he returned from his passage to India, he sat with Rabbi Elimelech Shachar, who transcribed a full written report, which Eli then submitted to the Rebbe. The faxed report was read to the Rebbe by one of the secretaries, who told him afterwards that the Rebbe gave a smile of deep satisfaction.

MENASHEH FIRST

A few months ago, a high-level rabbinical delegation, sent by the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel, HaRav HaGaon Shlomo Amar, made a weeklong investigative trip to northeastern India to determine the Jewish background of the "B'nei Menasheh" tribe. Rabbi Zion Bo'aron, *av beis din* of Petach Tikva, headed the delegation.

One of the participating rabbis, Rabbi Eliyahu Birnbaum of the Amishav Association, said that the delegation visited Mizuram and Manipore, home to nearly six thousand people who see themselves as descendants of Jews, and who want to emigrate to Eretz Yisroel.

"There is no question that they must undergo halachic conversion," Rabbi Birnbaum said. "There are no historical documents that can attest to their Jewishness, due to the fact that in India this was passed from generation to generation via oral tradition. Therefore, we took testimony from community elders, heard stories about their traditions and customs, and investigated dozens of people, including neighboring residents who are not connected to the B'nei Menasheh. We will submit our findings to HaRav Amar in the coming weeks."

We cannot close without mentioning the wondrous midrash that appears in *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer* (Ch. 17): "The Holy One, Blessed Be He...in the future will gather in Yisroel from the four corners of the earth. The first that he will gather in will be the half-tribe of Menasheh."

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LIVING WITH MOSHIACH

BY SARAH GRANOVETTER, YERUSHALAYIM

My friend, Yehudis Wisnefsky, and I were chatting on Yeshiyahu Street in Yerushalayim. Her van was parked across the street and she was keeping an eye on it because the parking-meter money was just about finished. We became engrossed in conversation and suddenly noticed a meter-man approaching the car, examining the meter. Oh-oh! We ran across the street and he said to us, "Is that your car? This one with the Lubavitcher Rebbe – Moshiach Ba poster on top if it?"

Yehudis replied that yes, it's her car. He said, "The meter was out of money. If you hadn't arrived I would have put more money in the meter myself."

I flagged a taxi on King George street and got in. The driver was a typical Israeli cab driver. I noticed a picture of the Rebbe stuck in his light fixture on the ceiling of the cab, and mentioned it. Whereupon he takes down the picture and smothers it with kisses! Then he points to a second picture of the Rebbe MH" M Shlita that he keeps in the back of the cab!

TOO OLD TO CHANGE? NO WAY!

My not-yet-religious 82-year old mother-in-law, may she live and be well, goes with me to shul for Rosh

HaShana services every year. This year, as usual, she brought along several dresses to wear. The first night she wore a dress with long sleeves. Then she told me she was going to wear the same dress to shul for the rest of the Yom Tov because her other clothes have short sleeves and she doesn't want to wear the short sleeves to shul

Bill Gates is a bridge addict and attends some of these tournaments. My husband presented him with a copy of one of our books – inside was a 7 Laws of Noach card.

anymore. During the holiday, my 10-year old son showed her four possible covers for a booklet he's making. One had the Rebbe MH" M Shlita's picture on it, and the other three had various illustrations. "Which should I use?" he asked. "The one with Moshiach on it," was

her reply.

My husband Mattisyahu (Matthew) and I write about bridge for a living. There is a whole "bridge world" filled with Jewish bridge players who unfortunately are in the "children taken captive" category and have little or no knowledge of Yiddishkeit. Even speaking about G-d is a "no-no" for many of them, and many are intermarried. Until a few years ago, my husband and I tried to keep religion out of our relationships with other bridge players, until I had a dream. I was sitting at a long table filled with bridge players discussing bridge hands, and the Rebbe MH" M Shlita was sitting at the head of the table, totally ignored. The Rebbe MH" M Shlita inclined his head toward me and said, "You have to tell them who I am." When I woke up the next day, I remembered the dream but was mortified at the thought of discussing Moshiach with these people.

In truth, some months passed before I had the courage to do it. To date, we have a long way to go, but we do try to identify the Lubavitcher Rebbe as the Melech HaMoshiach, and so far, while we haven't exactly shaken the bridge world with the news, we have met with no resistance!

At bridge tournaments, which are held for 10 days in hotels, my husband makes Kiddush on Friday night. It's an open house, and many people come (including the non-Jewish spouses of some of our friends). One fellow, however, refused to participate. He said he had a bad experience in Hebrew school (more than 30 years ago!) and just couldn't bring himself to do anything religious. Finally, he found himself in a room next door to my husband's, and needed to drop off something in my husband's room. He came in just as Kiddush was starting. He said he couldn't bring himself to make Kiddush, but he'd do it the next week if he won a prestigious event he had entered. He won! True to his word, he did come and make Kiddush the next week for the first time in his life. On that same night, a world-champion-at-bridge friend of ours lit Shabbos candles for the first time in her life (she is in her mid-sixties).

Bill Gates is a bridge addict and attends some of these tournaments. My husband presented him with a copy of one of our books – inside was a 7 Laws of Noach card. (We don't know if he read it.)

The top-flight bridge players here in Eretz Yisroel are very anti-religious. Although we have lived in Eretz Yisroel for 11 years, we have never participated in international events as representatives of Israel (which we did for America a number of times) because the other players felt angry that we wouldn't play on Shabbos. Recently, the star Israeli female player has asked me to be her partner in international competition! She and her husband came for dinner, and despite the fact that we asked them not to bring wine (they wouldn't know

which Kashrus to buy), there was no negative reaction and the atmosphere was totally friendly and warm!

We have lived in our apartment in the Rehavia section of Yerushalayim for just over a year. When we first came, there was a problem about the Moshiach flag that we displayed on our balcony. The building is occupied by mostly non-observant Jews, and two people in particular were extremely

One of the two angry neighbors came to the door and shrieked at my husband for 20 minutes. He tried to explain that the flag is good for everyone who lives in the building, and for all the people who see it, but she could not be swayed...

angry about the flag. Although we had the right to display the flag, we had to be considerate as well. For a while, we did not put out the flag, then we couldn't stand it and put out a little tiny flag. Finally, we put out the big flag again.

One of the two angry neighbors came to the door and shrieked at my husband for 20 minutes. He tried to explain that the flag is

good for everyone who lives in the building, and for all the people who see it. She could not be swayed, but we kept the flag outside. When Purim came, our son delivered a Purim basket to each resident in the building, including this lady. I saw her in the street a few days later and she thanked me profusely and said she never expected it. Last week I saw this lady outside on Erev Shabbos. I said "Shabbat Shalom!" and she responded, with a big smile, "Gutt Shabbos!"

We also have a big Melech HaMoshiach poster taped to our balcony window. One night we heard a knock at the door as we were eating the Maleva Malka meal. At the door was a lady who saw the poster from the street and wanted to know if we had any extra ones we could give her (which we did).

From *The Alshich Tanach Series, The Book of Daniel*, regarding chapter 12, verse 12:

"Our King Messiah is destined to be hidden after he is revealed and then to be revealed again."

* * *

"May the 'running to the performance of a mitzva' – the efforts to gather Jews in shul for Torah study – lead to the time when we run to greet Moshiach. Indeed, there will be no need to run, for Moshiach will come directly here to the [Previous] Rebbe's shul and house of study. Then, 'a great congregation will return here,' the Jewish people, together with all the elements of the world which they elevated, will come back to Eretz Yisroel, to Yerushalayim, and to the Beis HaMikdash."

(Parshas BaMidbar, 2nd day of Sivan, 5750)

THE GAON AND TZADDIK: REB CHANANYA YOM TOV LIPA DEITCH ZT”L

BY REB SHALOM BER WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



Reb Chananya Yom Tov Lipa was born in 5668 in the city of Sabrantz, to his father, the *gaon* and *tzaddik*, Reb Shmuel Aaron *zatzal*, may G-d avenge his blood. (Reb Shmuel Aaron was a *rav* in the Mishkoltz community, and the author of the Torah commentary, *Shem Ahron*). In his youth, he studied in Uhel under the holy *gaon* and chief rabbinical judge, Reb Dovid Dov Meizels *zatzal*, author of *Shalos U'tshuvos Binyan Dovid*, and, and later, in the Hanshavitz yeshiva, under the *gaon* and *tzaddik*, Reb Yoav Adler *zatzal*. Reb Chananya excelled in his Torah studies, and was promoted to Maad yeshiva, where he became a close disciple of the holy *gaon* Reb Mordechai Leib Vinkler *zatzal*, author of *Levushei Mordechai*, who also ordained him as a rabbinic authority. Reb Chananya also received rabbinic ordination from the *gaon*, Reb Shaul Brach of Neitra, and the *gaon*, Reb Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky, head of a rabbinical court in Jerusalem.

In 5693, Reb Chananya Yom Tov Lipa married the daughter of the famous *gaon*, Reb Yosef Abales *zatzal*, head of the rabbinical court

of Shaloy, and for the next four years, taught Torah to his students. In 5697, he was accepted as head of a rabbinical court in the town of Davshina, and he remained there until 5705. Then WWII broke out.



The holy *gaon* found himself wandering through forests and under places where he might remain unnoticed by the enemy.

His entire community was wiped out, but through great miracles, the *gaon* and his entire family survived. After the war, he was accepted as *rav* of Helmitz where he served until 5709, when he moved to the United States and settled in Cleveland.

Reb Chananya Yom Tov Lipa had a special affinity for the mitzvah of Tahara. Being also one of the most brilliant scholars in all areas of Torah, and especially the laws of Mikva, he began to devote himself with self-sacrifice to heightening Mikva awareness, and building Mikvaos, throughout the United States. He also published tens of *s'farim* on the subject of Mikva, and the keeping of [Avrohom's] holy covenant, in three series of *s'farim* called *Taharas Yom Tov*, *Yesod Yosef*, and *Zera Yitzchak*. His *s'farim* also include hundreds of his halachic correspondences with the leading Torah sages of the generation.

The *gaon's* scholarship, and his works on Tahara, received wide and extraordinary acclaim from the Torah scholars of the generation:

The *gaon* of Tchebin wrote: “My friend, the *rav* and *gaon* . . . descendant of holy ones . . . more than once have I praised these precious *s’farim*, which are filled with guidance and the pure and holy fear of G-d . . . fortunate are you, and fortunate is your lot.

Reb Moshe Fienstein: “With regard to your mighty deeds in fixing [the breaches in] Mikva [observance] in our country . . . thank you for this great endeavor. Heaven has granted Your Torah Honor this great mitzvah . . .”

Reb Yitzchok Hutner: “My friend, the *rav*, *gaon*, *tzaddik* . . . and man of great accomplishments . . . Fortunate are you . . . in having been selected to bring into your home this forsaken mitzvah, which is so vital to our existence. All the purveyors of purity are with you in their prayers, and they bless you to merit expanding and glorifying your Mikva rectification enterprise.”

The rabbis of the Eidah Hachareidis, likewise, exceed the norm in their heaping of praises upon Reb Chananya Yom Tov Lipa:

Reb Yisroel Yitzchak HaLevi Reisman wrote: “Your Exalted Highness does not need my approbation for such a holy compilation filled with Torah and Awe of Heaven.” Rabbi Dovid HaLevi Yungreis: “The great and precious man, pillar of purity, famous and celebrated *rav* and *gaon*, man of great accomplishments, who brings merit to [the people of] Israel.” Reb Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss: “Your honor, my close and cherished

friend, the famous and celebrated *gaon* and *tzaddik*, renowned for your compilations on [the subject of] purity, and your great deeds to strengthen the pillars of Torah and [Divine] awe.”

The *gaon* passed away on Rosh Chodesh Mar-Cheshvan, 5751, at the age ninety-three, after having merited to establish, restore, and correct, hundreds of Mikvaos throughout the United States and beyond, and transforming the state family purity observance among



The Taharas Yom Tov, Reb Chananya Yom Tov Lipa Dietch, zatzal.

the Jewish people.”

SAVE THE SOUL OF THE JEWISH BACHRIM

In a letter to the *gaon* dated 8 Iyar, 5714, the Rebbe confirms his receipt of the former’s *s’farim* series entitled, *Taharas Yom Tov*. The Rebbe proceeds to write some profound instructive comments, encompassing both the revealed and esoteric dimensions of Torah, on

subjects included in the *gaon*’s books on the laws of Mikva and the rectifying of breaches [in the observance of Avrohom’s] covenant. The Rebbe prefaces his remarks with the following introductory remark:

Among Anash [of Lubavitch] it is not customary to publish *s’farim* dedicated to explaining the cause of this sin; indeed, it is not even our custom to address this topic in public. Possibly, this is based on the Tzemach Tzedek’s teaching that the fear of this sin and the [anxious] thoughts [caused by this fear], can have the same effect as [sinful] thoughts. Nevertheless, in this country, where there has been a great breach in matters relating to this sin, and no one decries and denounces . . . this, nor even bothers to explain how it destroys one’s body and energy, and evaporates his life — in addition to defiling and dragging down his soul — . . . there is room to say that printing and publicizing, and even addressing in public, the severity of this sin and the defect it causes is appropriate — if only to rescue the souls of the Jewish bachurim from descending etc”

Among the Rebbe’s comments, he reinforces the *Yesod Yosef*’s teaching that the study of the Torah’s inner dimension is a remedy for this transgression. The Rebbe also cites the *Zohar* [III, 230a] as a source for the teaching that a *Tamim* is someone who does not even have sinful thoughts: “His inside is like his outside with regard to all his limbs/organs — the internal ones and the external ones.”

**MISTAKEN — ACCORDING
TO NIGLEH**

In a seven-page letter to the *gaon*, dated the first day of Chanuka, 5721, the Rebbe draws on halacha, kabbala and Chassidus in his profound comments on the *gaon's seifer, Zera Yitzchak*, and on his *Taharas Yom Tov* series, volumes 6-10. The *gaon* printed the letter at the beginning of volume ten, entitled *Yesod Yosef*. Above the letter, the following words appear: "Approbation of the holy *Admur*, the holy *gaon* of Lubavitch *shlita*, scion of holy one's . . . glory of the generation . . . the honorable and holy *Admur*, our teacher, Reb Menachem Mendel Shneerson *shlita*, of Lubavitch." Among the brilliant comments, there is lengthy discussion about the Yerushalmi custom that children do not follow

The Rebbe also cites the Zohar [III, 230a] as a source for the teaching that a Tamim is someone who does not even have sinful thoughts: "His inside is like his outside with regard to all his limbs/organs — the internal ones and the external ones."

their father's coffin at his funeral. The Rebbe writes there that he saw a certain author who denigrated this practice, writing that we are not permitted to tell the Jewish people to practice customs "based on these types of hidden matters." As proof to his contention the author says that "the Torah explicitly states: 'And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan.'" The Rebbe then writes: "As with all who wish to separate the Jewish people from the Torah's inner dimension, thereby defaming the Torah's mystical side, this author has stumbled in a matter of revealed Torah — in his own words, "The Torah says, explicitly" that Yaakov said to Reuven, "My strength and the first of my vigor." In other words, the reason behind this practice did not apply to Reuven [and the brothers]."

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