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BEIS MOSHIACH

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U.S.A

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

ERETZ HA'KODESH

ת.ד. 102 כפר חב"ד 72915
טלפון: (03) 9607-290
פקס: (03) 9607-289

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

Beis Moshiach (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$130.00 in Crown Heights, \$140.00 in the USA & Canada, all others for \$150.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshiach, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiach 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409.

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THE PARADOX OF EXILE

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'YIGASH; 5TH DAY OF TEIVES, 5751

1. The beginning of this week's parsha speaks of the encounter between Yehudah and Yosef – VaYigash eilav Yehudah [“And Yehudah approached him”]. This event can be interpreted on three different levels.

a. From Yehudah's perspective: Yehudah was under the erroneous impression that Yosef was an Egyptian, second in command only to Pharaoh. His approach towards Yosef therefore was as one who wished to convince a non-Jewish ruler to release Binyamin.

b. In actuality: In truth, Yehudah was not dealing with a non-Jewish ruler, but with the tzaddik, Yosef.

c. In the spiritual realms above: “Yehudah” is the name used to refer to every Jew (as we are called, “Yehudim”). The word “eilav” refers to the essence of G-d, as the Sifri explains on the verse (D'varim 4:7), “All who call to Him (eilav)” – “To Him, not to His attributes.” The word “approach” stands for prayer,

through which a Jew becomes attached to and unified with G-d.

We have explained on many occasions that all interpretations of a single event are connected with one another. We will therefore explain the connection between these three explanations, and also the practical implication and lesson contained therein regarding how to help us serve G-d better.

We must first explain the relevance of the first of these three interpretations. Yehudah's approach was based on a misunderstanding of the situation, based on his inability to identify Yosef. His approach nevertheless provides an eternal lesson for us.

This is because the Torah is eternal, and everything written in it is also eternal. This can be seen clearly from the Rogatchover's analysis of Moshe's oath to never return to Egypt, which was later annulled in order to allow Moshe to take the B'nei Yisroel out. If one would make an oath today “like Moshe's oath,” it would nevertheless be valid. The reason for this is that once something is written in Torah, it acquires eternal significance.

Similarly in our case, since Yehudah's misimpression was recorded in the Torah, it is of everlasting importance.

Furthermore, the lengthy account in the first part of the parsha is exclusively according to Yehudah's mistaken impression. This shows us that not only can we derive a lesson from his perspective, but that it contains the lesson of primary importance.

What is this lesson? Yehudah thought that he was dependent upon the approval of a non-Jewish ruler in order to help Binyamin. This is similar to the status of the entire Jewish people in exile, when we depend on the kindness of the non-Jewish nations around us in order to lead our lives as Jews in peace and comfort.

The reality of the situation, though, was that Yehudah was really not dependent on a non-Jew at all. This ruler, as he found out later, was really Yosef, and therefore a Jew was really in charge. The same applies to the Jewish people in exile. Although it appears that the non-Jewish nations are in control, in reality the Jew is the

baal ha'bayis of the world, and he has the ability to influence the nations to carry out his will.

How does the Jew acquire such an amazing power? This is because he has attached himself to G-d. His strength is therefore not his alone, but that of G-d Himself. And G-d, who is the "King of all kings," guides the nations of the world to act according to His will and the will of the Jewish people.

With this we can understand the connection between the three levels of interpretation listed above. Even when the Jewish people are in exile ("a"), it is revealed that it is the Jew who is really in control ("b"). And how does the Jew acquire this power? – through his connection with G-d ("c").

This lesson (that even in exile, the Jew is baal ha'bayis over the world) is especially stressed on Shabbos VaYigash. In addition to reading the first part of the parsha – as we do on the previous Shabbos, Monday and Thursday – we read the entire parsha, as well as the beginning of Parshas VaYechi at Mincha.

Later in the parsha, Pharaoh himself tells Yosef that he is giving "the choicest part of the land of Egypt" for him and his family. In the end of the parsha (in today's portion), the land is actually given to them, "as Pharaoh commanded." The last verse of the parsha concludes, "And Yisroel lived in Goshen in the land of Egypt, and they inherited it and multiplied in great numbers." This statement is followed in Parshas VaYechi by the verse, "And Yaakov lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years," meaning that the best years of his life ("17" equaling the numerical value of "good" – tov) were those years spent in Egypt. These verses show that the nations themselves

provided the Jews with great prosperity, even in exile.

All other exiles stem from, and are compared to the Egyptian exile. From all this we learn that even when we are in exile, the nations themselves will provide for all of our needs, both material and spiritual.

Ultimately, of course, this is insufficient. Although we have all

These two extremes are characteristic of exile. On the one hand we see that the world gets lower and lower the longer we are in exile. Simultaneously, though, there is a continuous addition of Torah and mitzvos which brings us closer and closer to redemption.

good things both materially and spiritually, the main thing is missing – we are still in exile! Everything is insignificant when compared to the tremendous pain of exile! Parshas VaYechi is therefore followed by Shmos, which is the parsha and the book which deals with redemption.

2. Until now we have discussed the lesson of Parshas VaYigash vis-à-vis our status in exile. The main

lesson, however, regards how this is a preparation for redemption.

This can be understood in view of another explanation given in Chassidus of the approach of Yehudah to Yosef, VaYigash eilav Yehudah. It is explained that the difference between Yehudah and Yosef is analogous to that between the earth and the heavens, inanimate objects and plant life, action and study. Which is higher, the aspect of Yehudah or that of Yosef? The verse which begins our parsha implies that Yosef is higher than Yehudah, since he must be approached. On the other hand, the Haftora (Yechezkel 37:19,24) implies that Yehudah is higher: "I took the stick of Yosef...and placed upon it the stick of Yehudah...and my servant Dovid [from the tribe of Yehudah] will rule over them."

In reality both are true, but in two different eras. During the time of exile, Yosef (the heavens, plant life, study) is higher, but in the Messianic Age, the superiority of Yehudah (the earth, inanimate objects, action) will be revealed.

The advantage of the realm of action is hinted to in G-d's statement regarding the world (Isaiah 43:7), "It is for My glory that I have created it, formed it, and also made it (af asisiv)." These three expressions (created, formed and made – barasiv, yetzartiv, asisiv) correspond to the three realms of Bria, Yetzira and Asiya. These in turn correspond to the three realms of human activity – thought, speech and deed.

There is a great difference between the lowest of these three realms and the higher two. Thought and speech are similar in that they both are connected with the thinker and the speaker. Action, however, primarily deals with the object being acted upon. Similarly, there is

a qualitative difference between Asiya and the more spiritual realms of Bria and Yetzira. This is the significance of the word “also,” or af (“also made it”), which separates the first two expressions from the third. This separation highlights the fact that the realm of action (Asiya) cannot be compared with the other two.

The same point can be seen in the shape of the Hebrew letter hei. The hei is composed of three lines which represent thought, speech and action. There is a space, however, between one of the lines and the other two. This sole line corresponds to action, which is distinct and removed from thought and speech.

This all brings out how much higher the aspect of Yosef is over that of Yehudah. There is, however, a tremendous advantage which Yehudah has over Yosef – an advantage which can be clearly seen by the comparison with Asiya. Although it is the lowest of the worlds, Asiya is the ultimate purpose for the creation of all the worlds. And this goal is to make a dwelling place for G-d specifically through the realm of action.

According to this, the gap between the third aspect and the other two is for the opposite reason. Asisiv cannot be grouped with the other two because it is far superior, to the extent that the reason for the existence of the other two is solely for the existence of the third. This is also conveyed by the word af mentioned above, even in the plain meaning of the verse (“I also made it”), which is that the word af comes to add something much greater.

The same can be said for the third line of the letter hei, which transforms the letter Dalet to a hei. The letter Dalet stands for poverty

(dalus), and the one line transforms it into the letter hei, which is contained in G-d’s name.

These two extremes of low and high are characteristic of exile in general. On the one hand we see that the world gets lower and lower the longer we are in exile. Simultaneously, though, there is a continuous addition of Torah and mitzvos which brings us closer and closer to redemption.

This duality of exile is also seen in the usage of the word af. The Midrash (Eicha Rabba 1:57) says, “The Jewish people were hit with the word af, as it is written (Lev. 26:41), ‘I will also (af) walk with them sporadically.’ They were also comforted with the word af, as it is

The gentile nations themselves provided the Jews with great prosperity, even in exile.

written (Ibid. 26:44), ‘Yet, also (af) then, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not abhor them nor spurn them...’”

The Alter Rebbe explains that the word af itself indicates something negative. The positive side of af comes only when the negative has been reversed and transformed into something positive, a process which we perform via our G-dly service in exile.

With this we can understand how the prosperity of Yaakov and his family in Egypt represents not just the positive side of exile, but the preparation for redemption.

In general, serving G-d despite

the difficulties of exile shows the tremendous strength of the bond between the Jewish people and G-d. The special type of service described in Parshas VaYigash represents a transformation of the negative side of exile (Pharaoh, Egypt, etc.) to the positive, as Pharaoh himself gave the choicest land to them. It is this transformation which is the preparation for redemption.

This is actually not just the preparation for redemption, but part of the redemption itself – the transformation of exile itself to redemption (from gola to geula). All of this will be revealed when Moshiach comes, and we will see how all the difficulties of exile were brought upon us only to make the revelations of redemption that much greater.

This transformation of exile through the assistance of the non-Jewish nations to Jews has been seen in our generation in a large measure. The reason for this is that before redemption, we are given a “taste” of what the redemption will be like; and the closer we get, the greater the revelations are.

We see this in particular regarding the Previous Rebbe, who after being hounded by the Russian government, came to this country, where he was free to keep Torah and mitzvos. Now after the “Year of Miracles” (Shnas nissim) and in the “Year in Which ‘I Will Show You Wonders’ “ (Shnas niflaos ar’enu) that same government is allowing – and even assisting – Jews to leave their difficult situation in exchange for freedom. In this way they are experiencing a taste of redemption even during exile, similar to the prosperity of Yaakov even though he was in Egypt. As mentioned above, the reason for this is because we are standing on the very threshold of the redemption.

This same point also finds expression in this particular time – the Shabbos immediately following Chanuka. The Chanuka Menora is lit only after it becomes dark outside. The lighting of the Menora represents how every Jew helps illuminate the darkness of exile through Torah and mitzvos. In addition, the Menora is lit facing the outside, representing the transformation of the darkness of the world to light and holiness.

3. As mentioned above, the superiority of the realm of action will be revealed in the Messianic Age. Therefore, in view of our proximity to the redemption, we must add even more in concrete action.

One of the main aspects of redemption is the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash. This is closely connected with this Shabbos in two ways: 1) It is the Shabbos after Chanuka, which is connected with the Chanuka (inauguration) of the Beis HaMikdash, and 2) Parshas VaYigash and the advantage of Yehudah over Yosef, which corresponds to that of inanimate objects over plant life. This matches

the advantage of the Beis HaMikdash over the Mishkan, since the former is made of stone, whereas the latter consisted of wood.

Therefore, our preparation for building the Beis HaMikdash should involve something similar, i.e. building new houses (and adding to existing houses) which will be used for Torah, prayer and g'milus chassadim – “miniature sanctuaries” (Mikdash me’at). This means both public buildings and private dwellings, including the rooms of even small children. They should all be made into homes in which Torah, prayer and g'milus chassadim penetrate and fill every corner.

This idea is contained in the well-known term, Bayis Molei S'farim, a “home filled with books.” Every home should contain not just a Siddur and Chumash, but a large number of holy books. Furthermore, the holy content of the books should fill and penetrate the entire home, even the areas which are empty of books. And although the house contains other objects as well, they are all

secondary and nullified to the books. Even more so, the effect of the books is felt even outside the home, just like the mezuzah, which protects its owner both in the home and outside.

This is connected with the Fifth of Teives, which is a particularly auspicious time for holy books: when the Federal Court issued a favorable ruling regarding the library of the Rebbeim. May it be G-d's will that the job be completed and that all writings of the Rebbeim be returned home. And those who have been involved in this until now should continue until they are totally successful, in the words of our Sages, “To the one who began the mitzvah we say, ‘Finish it!’ “ And G-d, who tells us that He also fulfills all the mitzvos, should Himself finish what He started and ensure their success.

And may all our positive resolutions regarding buildings of holiness hasten even more the arrival of Moshiach, and may we be lead by Yaakov Avinu and the Previous Rebbe and all the tzaddikim to the Holy Land immediately.

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By the Grace of G-d
5th of Teves, 5732
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. David Horowitz
World Union Press
United Nations
New York, N. Y.

I was saddened to learn of the passing of your venerable father Rev. Aharon Horowitz, of blessed memory. Having been blessed with such a ripe old age and a full life, serving various Jewish communities in the Old and New Worlds, ~~your~~ ~~into~~ ~~TRUTH~~, peace to him; will certainly be missed by many. I extend to you, and to all the bereaved family, my sincere condolences, and the traditional blessing:

הקיום ינחם אהבכם במרוך מאד אבלי ציון וירושלים

May G-d comfort you in the midst
of the other mourners for Zion
and Jerusalem.

The text of this "Blessing to the Mourner," hallowed by tradition of many generations, is significant and meaningful. At first glance, the relevance of personal mourning to that of national mourning is somewhat incongruous, since the former is fresh and vivid, while the latter, though unforgettable, is nearly 2000 years old.

However, precisely in the coupling of the two together lies the inner aspect of the comfort. For just as the loss of the ancient glory of Jerusalem and the Beth Hamikdash is shared by all Jews, so a personal loss is shared by all Jews, inasmuch as the Jewish people is like one family, indeed like one organism, as our Sages expressed it.

Furthermore, just as the consolation for the national bereavement is sure to come with the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the Holy City, and of the Beth Hamikdash, as has been faithfully promised by G-d through His sacred Prophets, so assuredly will G-d fulfill His promise for the resurrection and the awakening of the Sleepers in Dust, to rise and sing G-d's praises.

Finally there is yet another point which is shared by both the personal bereavement and national bereavements: Just as in the case of Zion and Jerusalem, it was only their material aspects, the wood, stone, gold and silver, that were consumed, while the real Sanctuary "The Beth Hamikdash" that abides in the heart of each and every Jew remains

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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.

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THE INNER MEANING OF HEI TEIVES

BY RABBI SHOLOM YAAKOV CHAZAN
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

If we adopt the approach of the Rebbe MH”M regarding the parallel between the winter months and the summer months, as brought in numerous sichos, we reveal some marvelous things in relation to the month of Teives, including the auspicious day of Hei Teives, which combines the announcement of the destruction of the holy city with the beginning of the era of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash.

Hei Teives, the auspicious day that we commemorate as a holiday, is mentioned in Torah sources in an entirely different context: “And it was in the twelfth year, in the tenth [month] on the fifth day of the month of our exile, there came the escapee [this is the angel Michoel] from Yerushalayim, saying, ‘The city has been struck.’”

A contradiction? Not necessarily. If we adopt the approach of the Rebbe MH”M regarding the parallel between the winter months and the summer months, as brought in numerous sichos, we reveal some marvelous things in relation to the month of Teives, including the auspicious day of Hei Teives, which

combines the announcement of the destruction of the holy city together with the beginning of the era of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash.

FIVE DAYS BETWEEN THE 12TH AND THE 17TH

The Rebbe explains in numerous sichos the parallel between Sivan, the third summer month when the Torah of nigleh was received, and Kislev, the third winter month when Chassidus was revealed.

If we continue along these lines, we can make a similar comparison between Tammuz, the fourth summer month, and Teives, the fourth winter month.

Torah sources mention the month of Tammuz in connection with destruction and exile. During this month, we observe the Fast of the 17th of Tammuz and the commencement of the Three Weeks. In this generation, an additional aspect to the month of Tammuz has been revealed that seems to be the total opposite of the central events in generations past: the redemption of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

An apparent contradiction emerges: If the main aspect of the month of Tammuz is destruction and exile, how can it also contain a redemption? Today, in our generation, what is the true aspect to this month – exile or redemption?

The Rebbe explains (*Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 18, from p. 308) that the true essence of the month of Tammuz is redemption, and this applies to the true and inner nature of the 17th of Tammuz and the Three Weeks as well. The inner love of Alm-ghty G-d towards His people is so deep that it even descends and clothes itself in “g’vuros” (Divine severities). While the full revelation of this love will be with the true and complete Redemption, we can already begin to experience this inner revelation at these final moments before the Redemption, which began to shine during Chag HaGeula, Yud-Beis Tammuz.

In other words, despite the fact

that for thousands of years the month of Tammuz has symbolized the beginning of the exile, in our generation the inner truth to this month has been revealed through the release of the Rebbe Rayatz as a month of redemption.

On what date was the true inner nature of this month revealed? Yud-Beis Tammuz, exactly five days before the 17th of Tammuz, a date that has symbolized the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash.

FIVE DAYS BETWEEN THE 5TH AND THE 10TH

The month of Teives, the fourth winter month, is similar to Tammuz. The entire month is considered difficult for Divine service, as it is not illuminated with the “sun of Hashem.” Torah sources also mention the month of Teives in connection with destruction and exile, as its central observance, which symbolizes the month’s entire content, is the Tenth of Teives. This fast day is more serious and stringent than the other rabbinic fasts. According to the Abudraham, if it were to fall on Shabbos, the fast would not be postponed, as the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash actually began on this day.

However, the Rebbe explains in sichos (see Vol. 15, from p. 382) that the revelation of the **essence** shines specifically during this month of hiding and concealment. Yet, throughout all the generations, this revelation has been enwrapped in concealing severities, culminating in the events that led to the Fast of Asara B’Teives. But in our generation, the sparks of the Redemption and the inner love have begun to be revealed, to the point that “the body derives enjoyment from the body.”

On what date was the true inner nature of this month revealed? Hei Teives, exactly **five days** before Asara B’Teives, a date that commemorates the destruction of the Beis

Specifically on a day during the month of Teives, symbolized by cold, darkness, and destruction, there is “the transformation of darkness into light,” and the beginning of the era of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash.

HaMikdash.

It is interesting to note the Rebbe’s conduct on the first Hei Teives (5747), when a correction was made to the error that brought the beginning of the siege upon Yerushalayim. The Rebbe explains in his sichos that the siege began on Asara B’Teives in a manner of “the king of Babylon drew near to Yerushalayim,” which was meant to bring true unity and prevent the destruction, similar to providing treatment before the wound has been inflicted. However, Am Yisroel did not take advantage of the unique situation to increase in Jewish unity, and thus, the siege resulted in the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash. It can be said that this point was corrected by the Rebbe on Hei Teives 5747, when immediately upon receipt of word of the court decision,



2 Kislev 5748.
The s’farim return to 770.

the Rebbe made the unprecedented step of announcing to Jews all over the world that they should write letters in request of all their most heartfelt wishes. The Rebbe would then make a special trip and take these letters to the Ohel.

In light of all the aforementioned, we can understand why specifically on the date that Yechezkel received the bitter news of the fall of Yerushalayim and the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, there also came the announcement of “And the soul of their father Yaakov was revived” – Didan Natzach”!

Our generation, the generation of the Redemption, is the time when the light of the Redemption begins to shine. As a result, specifically on a day during the month of Teives, symbolized by cold, darkness, and destruction, there is “the transformation of darkness into light,” and the beginning of the era of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash, as we will soon discuss.

VICTORY OF THE LUMINARY

To understand the connection between Hei Teives and the Redemption, we should first explore the unique quality of the victory of Hei Teives, the victory of Chassidus that “the nasi is everything.”

On all the other holidays of redemption for our Rebbeim, the war was against Chassidus, i.e., the accusing forces in heaven charged that it was not yet time to reveal Chassidus on such a wide scale, and this resulted in the Rebbe’s physical imprisonment. However, this *kitrug* was not on the essence of the **leadership** of the Rebbeim.

In contrast, regarding the court case over the *s’farim*, the war was against the Rebbe’s **leadership itself**, to the point that one of the claims was that the Chabad-Lubavitch movement is no longer active. When the members of Vaad Agudas Chabad proposed to the Rebbe that he should make a compromise on the *s’farim*, the Rebbe pounded his hand on the wall and said that this is a war over the “*beinkel*” (the chair; i.e., the nesius itself)!

In other words, despite the fact that this outwardly was a court case over the *s’farim* in the Rebbe Rayatz’s

was not established as a everlasting holiday!

However, the court case over the *s’farim* was a *kitrug* against the leader of the seventh generation himself (see the sichos from Motzaei Zos Chanuka 5746 and Hei Teives 5747). This took expression in a variety of ways, e.g., the Rebbe stopped saying maamarim, and went to the Ohel every day for the duration of the case. It even took form in the theft of the *s’farim*, an actual blow against the Rebbe’s **vitality**.

Thus, when this spiritual *kitrug* was nullified and the federal court issued its “*Didan Natzach*” verdict, this served as a declaration before all the nations of the world that “Moshe is true and his Torah is true” with the decision that the *s’farim* belong to the Rebbe, in a manner of “And the soul of their father Yaakov was revived.”

THE ERA OF THE BUILDING OF THE BEIS HA’MIKDASH

The unique quality of Hei Teives even surpasses the other auspicious days of the seventh generation, e.g., Yud-Alef Nissan,

Chaf-Ches Sivan, Rosh Chodesh Kislev, since it was the **Rebbe himself** who established it as an everlasting holiday, while the other days were established by Chassidim.

This means that we are not simply talking about a personal redemption regarding a specific personal event that occurred in 5747. This redemption is the opening to the true and complete Redemption of the Jewish people. As the Rebbe proclaimed (sicha, Shabbos Parshas VaYigash 5747, *Seifer HaSichos* 5747, Vol. 1), this marked the beginning of the era of



library, this was not sufficient reason to establish a holiday for generations in honor of the return of the *s’farim*. In fact, when the *s’farim* actually returned to 770, the Rebbe ordered that everything should be done quietly, without public celebrations!

In Cheshvan 5738, manuscripts from the Rebbeim arrived from Warsaw for the Rebbe. This gave the Rebbe tremendous joy, as we can see from his letter to the attorney who dealt with the matter, showing the Rebbe’s unique feelings of simcha from receiving these manuscripts. Nevertheless, the day of their arrival

the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash. The Rebbe thus turned the exile and destruction of the month of Teives into redemption.

It is interesting to note that after the *s'farim* actually returned to 770, the Rebbe said (sicha, Shabbos Parshas VaYeitzei 5748, *Seifer HaSichos* 5748, Vol. 1) that the buttons have already been polished, and now all that remains is to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

This is the reason why the victory took expression specifically in a federal court. As the Rebbe explains in relation to Yud-Tes Kislev (*Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 25, from p. 186), the Alter Rebbe emphasizes in his famous letter that his redemption was before all the nations and their ministers. Since the Alter Rebbe's redemption was a preparation for the true and complete Redemption, which will be for the entire world, it must take place before all the nations and their ministers, i.e., the work of Chassidus must be instilled and recognized within them as well. Similarly, regarding our discussion, since Hei Teives marked the beginning of the era of the Third Beis HaMikdash, it also must be instilled within all the nations of the world (as is explained regarding the quality of the Second Beis HaMikdash, built by Cyrus). Therefore, its announcement was also accepted in federal court, i.e., even the nations of the world recognize and

Its announcement was also accepted in federal court, i.e., even the nations of the world recognize and acknowledge the eternal truth of the leader of the generation.

acknowledge the eternal truth of the leader of the generation.

PUBLICIZING THE MIRACLE OF HEI TEIVES

The above has a connection with the events of the days of Chanuka, which precede Hei Teives. The Rebbe explains (*Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 25, from p. 327) that the reason the miracle took expression specifically through the lights of the menorah is because the Jewish people fulfilled Torah and mitzvos with true self-sacrifice. Therefore, G-d also expressed His love for the Jewish people through the miracle of the lights, as the menorah expresses G-d's love for Israel: "testimony that the Sh'china dwells in Israel."

In a similar fashion, even though

the court case dealt with several issues unrelated directly to the *s'farim*, the whole affair came to a head over the ownership of the library. There was nothing more valuable and precious to the Rebbe than the *s'farim*, as is known how the Rebbeim related to their texts and manuscripts as an **integral part of their vitality**. Therefore, G-d brought the "*Didan Natzach*" over the kitrug against the Rebbe via the issue of the *s'farim* and manuscripts.

This auspicious day must be publicized to the whole world, in a manner of "*pirsumei nisa*" (see sicha, Shabbos Parshas VaYigash 5748, *Seifer HaSichos* 5748, Vol. 1), particularly since the Rebbe also ordered us to go out to the world and proclaim that the era of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash began from that day.

This is all the more applicable since the sicha from Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751, when the Rebbe instructed us to publicize that there is a prophet among the Jewish people and we must listen to his advice and instructions as actual prophecy, especially the announcement of the Redemption. We must proclaim this openly and not *ch"v* engage in various interpretations of the Rebbe's words, i.e., suggesting *r"l* that the Rebbe said one thing and meant something else.

All this is in accordance with the content of the Rebbe's famous reply in connection with the court case over the *s'farim*.

After the Rebbe approved the public declarations, stating that publicizing the proclamation brings the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M, his intention was very clear! Spreading the announcement of the Redemption must be instilled in such a way that the whole world will proclaim:

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach Lolam Va'ed!

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DISCOVERING A TREASURY OF MANUSCRIPTS

INTERVIEW BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

*In recent years, Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan, editor of Beis Moshiach, has presented hundreds of maamarim and letters of the Rebbeim that were previously unknown, as well as thousands of fascinating documents that shed a new light on Chabad history. Starting with the writings and diaries of the Rebbe Rayatz, continuing with the diary of Rabbi Boruch Shneur Schneersohn, the Rebbe's grandfather, and concluding with the diary of the wedding of the Chassid R' Eliyahu Chaim Altheus. * In honor of Hei Teives, the Holiday of the S'farim, Rabbi Chazan tells us about the source of the great treasures: the archives of the Rebbe Rayatz that were taken by the Nazis and ended up in archives of the Russian military. * Part 1 of a 2-part special interview.*

In recent years, you have presented an enormous treasure of rare manuscripts to the worldwide Lubavitch community, mainly through *Beis Moshiach*, but also by printing s'farim through *Otzar HaChassidim*. How did you come across such a large treasury of never-before published manuscripts and documents?

It's a long story that began in Shvat 5757. I received a phone call from a friend of mine in Crown Heights, who told me that a Stoliner Chassid had brought him photocopies of letters of our Rebbeim. The Stoliner Chassid had made the copies in Russia, and informed the directors of official Chabad institutions, such as Agudas Chassidei Chabad (Aguch) and the Lubavitch Library, but for some reason they didn't express much interest. So he was looking for people who would take an interest. Since my friend is no maven in manuscripts, he asked me to go with him to meet the Stoliner Chassid.

At first, I thought he was probably a dealer in old manuscripts who was

trying to profit at the expense of Chabad Chassidim. Having experience in this area, I knew that a large part of the Rebbe Rayatz's archives had been lost in Warsaw during the war, and that there were dealers who stole manuscripts from this archive.

Over the years, they came to sell these manuscripts to Lubavitch at exorbitant prices. They were seasoned dealers, and therefore they didn't flood the market with them; every few years they would bring out a single volume. Sometimes they would even divide a book into sections, and sell each section separately. In the library there is a complete booklet they divided into parts, and they burned the edges to make it look more authentic. They would sell it to the highest bidder, and many innocent people fell into their trap and paid exorbitant prices for these booklets. What wouldn't you do to give the Rebbe nachas?

I realized that this was truly something special. Naturally, I didn't display my excitement, because I was convinced that he was a dealer and that the price would be commensurate to my excitement...

I thought that perhaps this was one of these dealers, but regardless we arranged to meet.

He asked that we meet on Monday night. This was very inconvenient for me because at that time we closed the

new issue of *Beis Moshiach* on Monday nights, but I had to agree.

I went with some others, and we met the Stoliner Chassid, whose name is Yochonon Berman. He took out his photocopies, put them on the table, and asked me to look at them.

When I took a look, I realized that this was truly something special. Naturally, I didn't display my excitement, because I was convinced that he was a dealer and that the price would be commensurate to my excitement. I spoke as calmly as I could and got to the point: what was this collection and where had it come from?

He told his story, and it turned out he wasn't a dealer. He was the representative of Stoliner Chassidim in Russia and he worked on their behalf in Pinsk. As part of his job, he decided to search for the lost archives of their Chassidus, which according to tradition had been lost in Russia. He began to look around in archives in



his free time, but didn't find anything.

Two years previously, he went to the military archives. In the military archives are hundreds of thousands of collections that the Nazis stole from all over Europe, and loaded on to trains heading for Germany. It was towards the end of the war and the Russians got hold of the train and rerouted its destination for Moscow. The Russians placed all the collections in a number of buildings around Moscow. These military archives are closed to the public, and you need special permission to look through them. Searching through them isn't easy because the material is not catalogued. You simply have to open boxes and search through archive after archive.

He managed to get permission to enter the place, and searched for the Stoliner archive. He didn't find it, but apparently he had found the Lubavitch archive.

How did the Lubavitch archive get on the German trains?

When the Rebbe Rayatz left Poland in the middle of the war, he couldn't take the huge archive with him, and was forced to leave it in Warsaw. The safest place in Warsaw, or so they thought, was the American embassy building, which enjoyed diplomatic immunity. Those close to the Rebbe used their connections and succeeded in having the Lubavitch archive placed in the embassy for safekeeping.

The Nazis, of course, disregarded the law and ransacked the American embassy. Some of the manuscripts remained in Warsaw, and after the war, were transferred to a library in Warsaw. This was discovered after a few years, and in 5738 (1978), they managed to rescue it from there and bring it to the Rebbe. As for the rest, they were sure it had been burned or stolen. They had pretty much given up hope of ever finding it.

Well, the rest of it wasn't burned and wasn't stolen by dealers; the Nazis confiscated it and the Russians took it

from them to Russia. It is this archive that the Chassid found.

And then he came to you?

No, not so fast. As soon as he found the archive and realized that he had a real treasure belonging to Lubavitch Chassidus, he went to his Rebbe and asked him how to proceed. It is to this Chassid's credit that he did so, for it is hard to find upstanding people these days, and other people would have tried to sell the archive. The Stoliner Rebbe said that since it belonged to Lubavitch, it had to be given to Lubavitch gratis, aside from whatever expenses that entailed.

As soon as he found the archive and realized that he had a real treasure belonging to Lubavitch Chassidus, he went to his Rebbe and asked him how to proceed.

He went to the Lubavitch Library in Crown Heights, the ideal place for something like this, and showed them photocopies. He was completely taken aback when they didn't seem interested, and sent him to the offices of Aguch.

He offered the treasure to Aguch on condition that they pay for his expenses, which included airfare and certain gratuities. Everybody knows that in Russia, in order to get into a closed military area, you need to grease the wheels. In those days, the Russians' ambitions weren't great, and the money needed for cooperation was consequently not much, relatively

speaking.

Aguch expressed interest. They even paid him a small sum as an advance payment, and promised to give him the rest of the money. He told them that when he was paid in full, he would go back to Russia and bring photocopies of the collection.

A month went by, then two months, and Aguch did not get back to him. He waited for over a year, and after calling them a few times and seeing that they weren't serious, he decided to try to find people in Lubavitch who cared about the Rebbeim's s'farim, who would agree to pay him for his expenses, at least what he had spent until now. And that's how he came to me.

Why would he give the collection of the Chabad Rebbeim to a private individual, even though he is a Lubavitcher?

You're right. He said that his Rebbe had warned him not to give it to a private individual, but only to an organization that represented Chabad. He met with us, as private individuals, but he wanted to know which Chabad mosad we represented.

I told him he was right for asking, and I would get permission from official persons to handle this. I went to the hanhala of Merkaz L'Inyanei Chinuch and the Secretariat, Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson and Rabbi Leibel Groner, and told them the whole story. They immediately expressed their approval, knowing how dearly the Rebbe regarded the manuscripts, and said I could represent them and carry on.

I contacted the Stoliner and reported to him that I had received permission from the hanhala of Merkaz L'Inyanei Chinuch and the Secretariat to act on their behalf. He went to his Rebbe and told him what I had said. His Rebbe then said that if Rabbi Groner and Rabbi Simpson were involved, then he had the green light to deal with me.



A list of booklets in the archives
in the handwriting of the Rebbe MH"TM



A list of booklets in the archives
in the handwriting of the Rebbe Rayatz

You are a private individual, yet you dealt with the manuscripts of the Rebbeim. But you never worked on obtaining manuscripts, just in deciphering them. How did you get involved with this?

I remembered the sicha the Rebbe said on Shabbos, Parshas Shmos 5748, in connection with the first attempt to redeem the Lubavitch collection in the Lenin Library, from which it was clear that every Chassid is obligated to get involved in matters such as these.

This is what the Rebbe said:

The matter of pidyon shvuyim, redeeming captives, applies (not only to the Jews themselves but) also to their belongings... And since this is so, when you hear that there are belongings – s'farim and manuscripts of a tzaddik and nasi in Israel – that are in exile and captivity (not only in a place that is completely the opposite

of where it belongs, but even in a place that is not its rightful place) you must try as much as possible, to the point of mesirus nefesh, to redeem them from exile and captivity, pidyon shvuyim, and return them to their proper place.

Furthermore, the obligation to make this effort falls upon whoever hears about it, as the Baal Shem Tov taught that whatever a Jew sees or hears is a lesson in his service of Hashem. Naturally and obviously, there is a difference in how one can get involved. There are those who can and should get involved in pidyon shvuyim directly, and there are those whose involvement is through the recitation of T'hillim and the giving of tz'daka, etc., in the merit of the successful pidyon shvuyim.

My involvement wasn't personal but on behalf of the Merkaz L'Inyanei

Chinuch.

What was your agreement with the Stoliner?

Since I wanted to be sure this was something serious, as it entailed large expenses, I told him I would get involved on two conditions: 1) As soon as he began working with me, it had to be in utter secrecy. He was forbidden from telling anyone that he was working with me, and naturally, he couldn't provide information to others. 2) If he was really interested in the collection getting to Lubavitch, I wanted to travel with him to see the archives, so he could show it to me, and together we would locate the collection.

As soon as he agreed, especially to the second condition, I was absolutely convinced that he wasn't a dealer who was trying to exact an inflated profit. A dealer never reveals the source of

his finds! I realized that he was really being straight with me, and he simply wanted to help Lubavitch regain its collection.

I began making preparations for the trip. I applied for a visa and we decided to leave right after Pesach. He made Pesach in Pinsk and we agreed that on Isru Chag I would leave New York and meet him in Moscow.

He called me on Chol HaMoed and said that maybe the trip ought to be postponed. May first was coming up, and that is the Russian Independence Day, when they celebrate for two weeks and people don't work. He was afraid that the places we wanted to go to would be closed and the trip would be a waste of time.

It sounded logical but I didn't think he was right, since we had already arranged our visit to the archives, and in Russia you can never know what will happen the next time you try to get in. I wrote to the Rebbe and from the answer I opened to in the *Igros Kodesh* it was clear that I should not change my plans and that I should leave as planned. The letter said that when it comes to spreading the wellsprings, you shouldn't be fazed by difficulties and trials.

I called him and read him the Rebbe's answer, and he was excited to hear that even today you can get answers from the Rebbe. After hearing the Rebbe's answer, he changed his opinion and we went back to the original plan.

So on Wednesday, Isru Chag, I flew to Moscow. I took along food for a week, because I was supposed to stay there until the following Wednesday. As he expected, the archives were closed on Thursday and Friday, and we had to wait until Monday.

You were born in Moscow. Did you tour the Jewish sections of the city?

Of course. It was interesting to me

to visit the places I remembered from my childhood. The first place I went to was the big shul. When I got there, I saw that nothing had changed except for some renovations. It was as if time had stood still for decades, from the time when I would go with my father to shul on Friday to use the mikva.

I also visited the shul of the shliach, Rabbi Yitzchok Kogan, and I saw his mesirus nefesh, which is truly amazing. He filled a number of roles simultaneously: rav, shochet, and director of all the activities that took place there. I was also impressed by the way he welcomed me. He didn't ask me why I had come but how I was managing.

I also visited the yeshiva. At that time, the yeshiva was located at the other end of the city in an unfriendly neighborhood. Stones were often thrown at those who attended the yeshiva, yet I felt very good within the four cubits of Tomchei Tmimim.

I met a group of bachurim from New York at the yeshiva. They were there to run a Tzivos Hashem camp during Pesach, and before returning home to New York, they had planned a trip to Lubavitch. Their plan was to leave right after Shabbos and to return Sunday night. Since I didn't have anything to do until Monday, I was happy to join them. I figured I would use the opportunity in order to ask for a bracha for my shlichus.

I spent Shabbos in the yeshiva so I could leave with the bachurim right after Shabbos. This also helped me avoid having to deal with problems of staying at a hotel with electronic doors. On Friday night, I was invited to eat with Rabbi Avrohom Beckerman. I was amazed at his and his wife's mesirus nefesh.

They lived in a small apartment and food was limited, not so much because of money but because it was hard to obtain kosher food. Yet he had invited me and the bachurim for the Shabbos meal and even urged us to

join him for lunch too.

On Motzaei Shabbos, we headed to the train. We wanted to board but the ticket collector said there was only place on the train for those who bought a ticket at the counter. At the ticket counter, they told us that they had no more tickets, and so we went back to the ticket collector and told him that we had to go. He said it would cost us dearly. We gave him some cash and suddenly there was room on the train.

We went to Smolensk, and from there we took two taxis to Lubavitch. When we got there, I was overcome with emotion. Any Chassid would be excited to visit the town that was the cradle of Chabad Chassidus, from which a light went out to the world for over a hundred years. But I felt a special connection to the place, because after years of research, some of which centered on events which took place in Lubavitch, I had a special place in my heart for the town itself, even the houses and roads.

Before we entered the Ohel, we immersed in the river. It was extremely cold because at that time of year the snow is melting.

It was Sunday, the eve of Chaf-Ches Nissan, and after saying T'hilim we reviewed the Rebbe's sicha of Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751 about the obligation of every Chassid to do all he can to bring Moshiach. We sang the niggunim of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, and proclaimed, "Yechi," and asked that the merit of the Rebbeim stand by us so we could fulfill our mission and bring about the hisgalus of the Rebbe.

I wanted to say a special prayer for the success of my personal mission but since I wanted to keep the reason for my trip a secret, I sufficed with a general bracha. On behalf of all those present, I asked that each one succeed in his mission.

We returned to Moscow Sunday night where I met Yochanon Berman

at a hotel. The hotel where we met faced the Kremlin, and whenever I passed it, I was reminded of how I would pass the Kremlin with my father and he would warn me not to raise my head and not to look at the Kremlin. In those days, that would have been enough to get us arrested...

I got up very early Monday morning. I went to the mikva, and after Shacharis we headed for the archives belonging to the Russian army. In Moscow at that time, you could stand on the street and stop the first passing car. You would ask if he was heading where you wanted to go, haggle over the price, and if he offered a good price then you simply got in and he took you to your destination. These were not taxis, but a way for people to earn extra cash. The driver could have been a lawyer or doctor who had to get to his office on the other side of the city, but he was interested in earning some extra rubles on the side.

We went bearing “gifts from America”; gratuities, if you will. One official received an expensive perfume, another one got a nice box of chocolate, the director got a wad of greenbacks, and all the doors opened up to us. Although officially, they only show five files a day, they agreed to show us any file we wanted, with no limitations.

Since it was all packed in boxes without a catalog, we had a serious problem: We didn't know what to ask for!

What did you do?

I began to check the files Berman had already found. He had found only five or six files, and we got those. Since they didn't allow us to search the boxes on our own, we had to try our luck according to the file numbers. We took the files he had already found and asked for the number that preceded it and the number that followed it. Every file that I got was an archive of another

Jewish community, and it was painful to see the Jewish treasures that had been stolen during the war. But this was not what we were looking for.

We tried another number and another number, until we found another Lubavitch file. Out of the dozens of files we requested, we found only one file belonging to Lubavitch.

I went to the hanhala of Merkaz L'Inyanei Chinuch and the Secretariat, Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson and Rabbi Leibel Groner, and told them the whole story. They immediately expressed their approval, knowing how dearly the Rebbe regarded the manuscripts, and said I could represent them and carry on.

What was your reaction when you got the first file?

It's hard to describe. These were original manuscripts of the Rebbeim. We were holding a booklet written by the Tzemach Tzedek! There are no words to describe the feeling, especially for one who knows how the Rebbe regarded the manuscripts. As the Rebbe said in his famous letter to the lawyer Mr. Shustek, “regarding the

deep meaning that these writings had to my father-in-law, the Rebbe, as it was for all the rest of the Chabad Rebbeim who preceded him...a deep soul connection above and beyond the connection one has towards books and manuscripts that do not contain similarly holy contents. Many of these writings are the heart and soul of the holy Chabad literature.” I had an uplifted and deep feeling that cannot be put into words.

I cannot tell you how excited I was when I held the booklet, “*Yoveil Hu Avi*” in my hands. It is the largest Chassidus booklet that exists, and it contains nearly one thousand handwritten pages of the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbeim would label the booklets according to the first maamer in the booklet.

When I got this thick booklet and I saw the first maamer, I realized I was holding the legendary booklet that, from the reshimos of the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Rayatz, we knew existed but had never seen... I thought to myself at that moment: It would be interesting to know how the *bichel* feels now. After sixty years in captivity along comes a Chabad Chassid on the Rebbe's shlichus, and he holds it...

Berman didn't know why I was so moved. I explained to him a little bit of how the Rebbeim regarded their s'farim and I told him that I felt like someone who visits a jail and meets his best friend who was in jail for sixty years without being able to see any of his friends!

That day, we found thirty handwritten booklets of the Rebbeim, including the handwritten Responsa of the Tzemach Tzedek. (Just a few years earlier I had worked on the new edition of the Tzemach Tzedek's Responsa!) I wrote down the details about every booklet I got, its name, its number on the Rebbe's list (see further on) and its file number in the Russian military archives, the number of pages it contained and from which Rebbe it

was.

At first, we thought of photocopying all the booklets, but then we realized we needed special permission for that. We distributed some more “gifts” and got the permission we needed, but the problem was the price – a dollar per page!

The files we had gotten that day consisted of over ten-thousand pages, and we didn't have the money to copy them. I decided to copy those things that were most important to me. That very day I found the maamarim of the Rebbe Rashab from the year 5663, in the handwriting of the Rebbe Rayatz. It was a full year's worth of maamarim, which we didn't know existed, and since I had been involved in printing maamarim of the Rebbe Rashab, and I had a special feeling for it, I asked that they be copied first.

Since they only had one copying machine, they could only do some of the copying and they said we would get the rest when we came back the next day.

When I returned to the hotel, I had no appetite. I was sated on the writings! I was so excited I couldn't sleep, and I called Rabbi Groner to tell him what I had discovered. I told him that when he went to the Rebbe's room, he should report to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha for even greater success the next day.

I didn't want to talk too much on the phone, and I spoke in hints which he understood quite well. I could sense the great excitement in his voice when he heard that this was the second half of the Rebbe Rayatz's archives.

The next day we were at the military archives at nine o'clock. We brought more gifts and the doors were opened to us. I have to say that all the gifts we gave out that week didn't even add up to \$300. At that time, the Russians didn't have great expectations and this small outlay of gifts held the

doors open for us for a week!

We got the photocopies we had asked for the day before, and continued searching. We went through hundreds of files, and among every few dozens files we found something that belonged to Lubavitch. We found a sort of catalog that day, which, from what I could make out, a Jew had written in 5717-18, but this catalog didn't help us much since the Jew who had made it either didn't understand how to make a catalog or he stopped in the middle. In any case, the catalog wasn't arranged properly. It was also written in Russian, and I only

The files we had gotten that day consisted of over ten-thousand pages, and we didn't have the money to copy them. I decided to copy those things that were most important to me...

...speak Russian but don't read it. My friend Berman helped me read the catalog and here and there we managed to find another file and another file.

Did the files have anything marked on them that indicated that they were from the Rebbe Rayatz's archives?

No. Each file had a few booklets, and they did not say which archives the files had been taken from.

What made you conclude it was the Rebbe Rayatz's archives? Maybe it belonged to a Chassid who had booklets of Chassidus?

At that time, every Chassid had some booklets, just like today, every Chassid has printed s'farim of the Rebbeim. What helped me was a precise list that the Rebbe had made for the Rebbe Rayatz's archives.

The Rebbe took this list out of his private collection in 5738. After they returned the manuscripts from Warsaw, it was discovered that many manuscripts had been stolen and fifteen booklets had made their way to the Hebrew Library in Yerushalayim. When they were asked for these booklets, since they belonged to Lubavitch, it had to be proven that these booklets were actually from the Rebbe Rayatz's archives, and not some Chassid's collection.

For this purpose, the Rebbe produced a photocopy of a detailed list that he had made at the time, when he had arranged the Rebbe Rayatz's archives. Every booklet in the archive is described in this list: what the first maamer is and how many pages the booklet contains. Most of the booklets were returned based on this evidence, after they were found to perfectly match the description the Rebbe gave.

Since I had a copy of the Rebbe's list, I compared the description of the booklets to the files I was looking at. They were a perfect match. Not only handwritten manuscripts authored by the Rebbeim were on this list but also those of other transcribers were described in detail, and that's how I knew that these booklets were also from the Rebbe Rayatz's archives.

In addition, this list also gave me an idea of what I was looking for, and it helped me tremendously. That day, I found another few dozen files from the Rebbe Rayatz's files.

That afternoon we were given interesting information. We were told that the Russian military had another archive, and it was worth searching through it.

(To be continued.)

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CONQUERING QUITO

BY SHOLOM BER KROMBY

*He is in Quito, the capitol of Ecuador for nearly a year, and despite this brief span of time, he has managed to make inroads among the Jews in the community there and among the Israeli tourists who visit this exquisite country in droves. * They are there with the Rebbe's brachos. * The story of a young couple, shluchim unfazed by physical and spiritual distance, preparing the Jews of Ecuador to greet Moshiach!*



Rabbi Tomer Rotem speaking with mekuravim

In the Rebbe MH”M’s first maamer, “Basi LGani,” he told the story of how the Rebbe Maharash made a special trip to France in order to save a Jew from assimilation. The Rebbe added that the Rebbe Maharash’s time was very precious to him, and nevertheless, he personally made the trip to a distant country in order to save a Jew. It is a story that characterizes shlichim and shlichus at the ends of the world.

When we talk about the shlichus of R’ Tomer and his wife Rivka, Rotem, to Ecuador, this is really the story that describes it – a trip to the ends of the world, to reach out to Jews, and to prepare the few Jews in Ecuador to greet Moshiach.

When Tomer and his wife wrote to the Rebbe about their desire to go on shlichus to Ecuador, the story mentioned above was in the letter they opened to. “This story,” says Tomer, “is with my wife and me all the time. Baruch Hashem, we see how the Rebbe guides us each step of the way, and we just carry out what he says.”

A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

Ecuador, the smallest country in the Andes mountain region, is one of the most fascinating tourist attractions in South America. The colorful culture and the colonial architecture are well



preserved, and it has stormy vistas and dense rain forests. Ecuador has more points of interest than many other countries double its size. When you land in the picturesque capitol Quito, you discover that you are, at most, a day’s travel away from the Amazon Jungle, from the snowcapped peak of an active volcano, and from the wheeling and dealing of the local artisans.

Ecuador, as its name implies, lies on both sides of the equator, in the northwest of South America. It shares a (disputed) border with Peru on its south and east, a border with Colombia on the north, and the Pacific Ocean borders it on the west. Quito is somewhat north of the center of the

country, in one of the valleys of the Andes, only 22 kilometers south of the equator. Guayaquil, the second largest city in Ecuador, houses its only large port, and lies along its steamy southern border, north of the border with Peru.

The one thing you can say for sure, about the weather in Ecuador, is that it’s never predictable. It’s not unusual to experience all four seasons in one day!

This is the country that Tomer and Rivka Rotem traveled to. To be more precise: they went to the 400 Jews living in two communities, some in Quito, and about 150 families in Guayaquil, as well as to work among the many Israeli tourists who visit Ecuador to see the incredible sights and the exotic rain forests.

The decision to move to Ecuador wasn’t made suddenly. It began when Tomer was in Lima, Peru, where he served as a shochet and as the person responsible for kashrus in the city, alongside the shliach, Rabbi Shneur Zalman Blumenfeld. In addition to his work in kashrus, he took an active part in the Jewish community. He made connections and got to know dozens of the Israeli locals.

He heard about the neighboring country of Ecuador which has two Jewish communities, numbering 400 or so Jewish families. One community is in Quito, and it has about 250 families, and the other one is in Guayaquil, which has a smaller community of about 150 families.

At that time, Rabbi Blumenfeld was looking for a couple to go on shlichus to Ecuador. A number of couples went to check it out, but didn’t take the position. Tomer joined the couples on these visits and he became acquainted with the Jewish communities.

Even before he married, he knew he wanted to go to Ecuador. All he needed were the Rebbe’s bracha and his future wife’s agreement. Both conditions were filled simultaneously. On the day of their l’chaim, Tomer and his kalla spoke about going on

shlichus. Tomer said he wanted to go to Ecuador. They wrote to the Rebbe and the letter the kalla opened to was addressed to the father of Rabbi Blumenfeld, and was sent by the Rebbe after the latter had gone on shlichus to Brazil, also in South America!

After their first year of marriage, the couple felt it was time to go on shlichus. Tomer spoke to Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson, director of Merkaz L'Inyanei Chinuch, in order to have his shlichus approved. On 11 Shvat, he received the green light to go on shlichus to Ecuador. Now, all Tomer had to do was get ready to leave.

Tomer went to Eretz Yisroel for the purpose of leaving for Ecuador as soon as possible. In his most optimistic moments, he never dreamed that after only two weeks he would be on his way to Ecuador with his wife.

The preparations for the trip were made with maximum speed. The couple sold the furnishings of their apartment and left Eretz Yisroel in Adar 5764, in order to conquer another corner of the globe and to prepare it for the coming of Moshiach.

They could sense the presence of the meshaleiach in the airport, and his concern with all the details of the shlichus. They had a lot of luggage, which needed special permits so they wouldn't have to pay exorbitant fees. Upon their arrival in the airport, the person in charge of luggage asked them why they had so much, and Tomer said that they were going to be the Rebbe's shluchim in South America. When he heard this, the official took out a roll of stickers and gave them to Tomer to put on all his luggage, giving him permission to take it all.

The flight to Ecuador stopped over in New York for a few hours, and the couple used the time to make a quick visit to 770 before leaving for the front lines.

THE FIRST PURIM IN QUITO

The arrived shortly before Purim, and they began preparing for the

holiday by getting a list of the Jews in the community in order to send them mishloach manos. Purim morning, the new shluchim went to the center of the city with their list, mishloach manos, a pair of t'fillin, and a kosher megilla. This Mivtza Purim was carried out in the form of house calls and it made a tremendous impression on the locals. Most of them were amazed to discover a Chassidic couple on their doorstep, informing them that they had moved in to the neighborhood!

Even those who had encountered shluchim around the world found it hard to believe. Why did a Chassidic couple have to move to this distant city?

Others were moved by the fact that a couple had come to their homes, and it made them feel that someone cared about their Judaism. For some of them, this was the first time in their lives that they had heard the reading of the megilla. And for many of them, this was the first time in their lives they had put on t'fillin.

It was with this spirit of simcha that the couple began their shlichus. In the

days that followed, they searched for a suitable apartment, because upon their arrival they lived in two rooms in a hotel. Here too, they saw how the Rebbe guided them. The apartment they found was just right. After they signed the contract and moved their belongings, the first Chabad House in Ecuador was a reality!

Their finding this apartment led an assimilated family to return to its roots. This is how it happened:

On the ground floor of the building in which they rented an apartment, is a large supermarket. One morning, when Tomer went into the supermarket, the owner mentioned that her family is Jewish. Her official papers, which she brought the next day, had her parents and grandparents' names, and they were Jewish names. Later on, he learned that the grandmother had served as president of the Jewish community in Quito. Her daughter had married a gentile and the family was nearly lost to the Jewish nation.

The Rotem family became friendly with her, and she introduced them to her brothers and sisters. On her

THE IMPACT OF ONE FAMILY

Just as the Rotems arrived in Quito, the Jewish community finished building a new building with a shul and mikva. The building cost four and a half million dollars. The problem with it was that it was built far from the city and you needed transportation to get there. In addition, a Conservative rabbi had come to serve as rav of the community.

The shluchim resolved not to get involved with community politics and to get involved with the Jews of the community in their own way. When they checked with Rabbi Rosenfeld, shliach in Colombia who was in touch with the local community, they were told that the new mikva was not kosher.

Of the entire community, only one family used the mikva. This was an Israeli family, which had moved to Ecuador and found itself without any religious amenities. They began to pay dues to belong to the Jewish community, which enabled them to use the mikva. When they heard that the mikva wasn't kosher, they began flying to Colombia to use the kosher mikva there.

Before this, Tomer had spoken with the Conservative "rabbi" about the problems with the mikva, but he chose to ignore the problems. It was only the fact that one family made a special trip to Colombia that made an impression on him, and he contacted Rabbi Y.Y. Feigelstock of Argentina and invited him to Ecuador to fix the mikva.



Immersing new pots on Erev Rosh HaShana



The shliach's father-in-law, Gidi Sharon, in the courtyard of the shul with the ambassador and Israeli tourists

brothers' next visit to the city, Tomer put t'fillin on them for the first time in their lives.

The landlord from whom they had rented the apartment, works as a teacher in a military school. On one of his visits, Tomer spoke to him about a "Moment of Silence" in schools, and about thinking about the Creator. When he heard this, the man agreed to include this in his lectures, and now he begins his classes with a Moment of Silence.

QUITO BURNS ITS CHAMETZ

As soon as they moved in, the Rotems began their preparations for Pesach. They had a large shipment of matzos, which they had brought with them from Eretz Yisroel for the community and for the public seider. They bought a large amount of wooden spoons, candles, and feathers, and that's how they improvised b'dikas chametz sets.

The sets were ready a few days before Pesach. They put a paper with

the brachos on it into every b'dikas chametz set, with some explanations about the upcoming holiday. Once again, they made house calls. In the few remaining days before Pesach, Tomer and his wife managed to make the rounds of most of the Jews in the city and give them shmura matzos for the seider and a b'dikas chametz set.

They still didn't know where the Chabad House seider would be held. Everything was new and foreign to them. This time as well, help came from an unexpected quarter. A group of Israeli families living in Quito organized a communal seider for the local Israelis. They were happy that the shluchim had come to town. So before Pesach the place was properly koshered, the food was carefully prepared, and all the preparations were made with the utmost care.

Thanks to a successful seider, dozens of people expressed an interest in continuing to take part in the shluchim's ongoing activities.

SMALL STEPS TOWARDS A BIG GOAL

After Pesach, the daily routine sort of work began. This work consists of tiny steps, one soul and another soul, one mitzva and another mitzva, on the way towards the big goal: preparing the world for Geula.

Each day, Tomer went to the stores in the center of town in search of Jews among the store owners. Slowly, he established connections with them and they began to expect his regular visits.

Tomer took Judaism another step forward, with pride. On one of his trips by local bus, he noticed a Jew from town. Tomer suggested he put on t'fillin, at the station in the center of the city. The man tried to get out of it but finally got up his courage and agreed to do it. What a sight this was, one that awakened Jewish pride right there on the streets of Ecuador. The same scene took place the next day. When the Jew finished putting on t'fillin, he said that he was so moved that he resolved to

continue putting t'fillin on daily!

Tomer began running groups in the homes of local Jews as well as shiurim in private homes.

Each week he gathered the Jewish children for a special project that took place in their home. About twenty children participate regularly, and so that you appreciate that number, you should know that throughout Ecuador there are only fifty Jewish children!

Another thing that Chabad Houses in far-off places like Quito do is reach out to Jewish prisoners. Tomer spoke to the authorities and learned there was one Jew who was sitting in jail near Quito. On his first visit, Tomer discovered that the man was in touch with Rabbi Yitzchok Fein of B'nei Brak, and even received copies of *Beis Moshiach* and *HaTamim* occasionally, which he found interesting.

Stories about lost Jewish souls in Quito are common. One day, Tomer learned about a Jew of Iraqi origin living in the city. Tomer called him up and the man told him that his mother emigrated from Iraq to Eretz Yisroel around the time of the Six Day War.

MEETING SATMAR CHASSIDIM

A group of Satmar Chassidim recently went to Ecuador to supervise the kashrus of products imported from Quito. One of them went to the supermarket in search of kosher food and was floored when he caught sight of a frum woman. When he recovered from his shock, he asked her what a frum woman was doing in Quito.

Mrs. Rotem told him that she and her husband were shluchim of the Rebbe. She invited him and the other men for supper at their home. The mashgichim sat with Tomer and farbrenge for hours. The very fact that they had met shluchim in Quito, of all places, made a tremendous impression on them.

However, the traumatic absorption process in the shadow of the war made her leave for Ecuador, with the intention of forgetting about her Judaism.

She made every effort so that her son would know as little as possible about his Judaism, and his education consisted of nothing Jewish at all. The connection between Tomer and this man is deepening since the latter has shown a great interest in Judaism.

In another case, a girl from a Chassidic home married a Jew who was completely nonobservant. As a result, her family cut off their ties with her.

A few months ago, this couple came to Quito to take care of various things, and one day, the woman came to the Chabad House and asked Tomer to be mekarev her husband to Chassidus and the Rebbe. In Quito, of all places...

Another story has to do with a young man living in New York who ended up in Ecuador. He met the shluchim and committed to putting on t'fillin daily. He bought a pair of kosher t'fillin from the Chabad House in Peru as well as a Chabad tallis and began davening Shacharis every day.

On Erev Rosh HaShana, he wrote to the Rebbe and included his intention of traveling to the Rebbe at the first opportunity. In the letter he opened to in the *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe was writing to someone who wanted to

meet the Rebbe, but as the man wrote in his letter, he couldn't meet with the Rebbe face to face. The Rebbe suggested that since the Rebbe learned Nigleh and Chassidus, he should unite with the Rebbe through learning. The man in Quito who opened to this letter was thrilled.

On Erev Rosh HaShana, Tomer was invited to the Israeli embassy to speak to the staff and security men about the significance of Rosh HaShana. Before he began, he suggested that the men put on t'fillin.

The first to put on t'fillin was a kibbutznik, an Israeli who is generally far from being observant. When the others saw him put on t'fillin they were most impressed, and they all lined up and rolled up their sleeves.

Tomer developed a special relationship with the members of the Israeli embassy and with the family of the Israeli ambassador. When the ambassador's son went off with some friends on a trip outside Quito, a passing car hit the son as he got out of his car. He needed to be hospitalized and the ambassador's wife immediately contacted the Chabad House and asked Tomer to bring a dollar from the Rebbe.

Every month the Chabad House produces a brochure that is sent to 250 Jewish families in Quito and 150 families in Guayaquil. New names are periodically added to his list as new



Shliach Tomer Rotem with the Israeli ambassador to Ecuador, and Tmimim, Hillel Yani and Bentzi Sasson



Divrei Torah at the bris mila

Jewish families are discovered.

Tomer was asked how he manages, far from any religious and Chassidic Jews. He answered, "It isn't easy. There is a lot to contend with. Being far from our families is very difficult, but this is our shlichus and we try to do as best as we can.

"I thank Mendy Hendel, director of the Chabad Center to Greet Moshiach, for his help at all stages of our going out on shlichus. And he sends us the *Beis Moshiach* every week, which gives us the ko'ach and chayus to go on. Through the *Beis Moshiach*, we feel connected to the Chabad community and to what's going on in Eretz Yisroel and around the world."

A BRIS MILA IN QUITO

The Rotem's first child was born last Av. Despite the enormous difficulties and fears, they decided not to go back to Eretz Yisroel for the birth. The bris took place in Quito with the participation of the Jewish community, Israeli businessmen, the people from the embassy, and others. It was one of the most joyous and special events that the Jewish community in Quito had experienced in years.

The bris took place in the shul and the celebration was held in the community building. The mohel was Tomer himself, supervised by an expert mohel who came from Brazil.



The Israeli ambassador was kvatter at the bris of Sholom Dovber, the shliach's son

In addition to the joy over the birth of his son, there was an extra-special feeling about there being yet another Jewish child in Quito. For many members of the community, this was the first time they had attended a proper bris.

TISHREI IN ECUADOR

Two bachurim, Ben-Tziyon Sasson and Hillel Yani, joined the Rotems for Tishrei to help them with their shlichus. They brought great spirit to the community and contributed tremendously to all aspects of the shlichus.

Although they were only three men, they still went on the traditional *tahalucha* with the seasonal mitzvaim. On Rosh HaShana and Sukkos, they

did two *tahaluchos*. Tomer went in one direction, and the Tmimim went off in a different direction with addresses provided by Tomer. They visited Jews and blew the shofar for them and brought them the four minim on each of the holidays.

Building a sukka in Quito is complicated. In order to build in the courtyard, they needed the permission of all the people who lived in their building. Even harder than that was obtaining the material they needed to build a sukka.

One of the mekuravim, a young man who describes himself as "a Jew who doesn't believe" lived in Eretz Yisroel in the past and was active in Leftist groups. Despite his distance from anything Jewish, he developed a warm relationship with the Chabad House and he visits the Rotems often.

He works in construction, building wooden structures and tents. When he heard about the sukka problem, he offered his help to Tomer. He brought some workers and they build a beautiful sukka in no time.

The Rotems visited Guayaquil one day of Chol HaMoed. Until Sukkos, the members of that community had been in contact with the Chabad House by phone, but it became necessary to visit the city in person. Most of the Jews in Guayaquil were aware of the existence of the Chabad House because of the monthly brochure they had received from the Chabad House.

One of the members of the community in Guayaquil, who is in constant contact with the shluchim and loves their work, had prepared a kosher meal for the Jews of the city. So the members of the community were able to enjoy a proper Sukkos meal. This turned into a *farbrengen* and a *Simchas Beis HaShoeiva*.

The Rotems plan on expanding their outreach and even on bringing out another couple to help them with their work.

GERSHON WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDERSTANDABLE

BY T. YANKELOWITZ

A few weeks ago, on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, I attended a bris of the son of a good friend, and heard a great story. Even before the bris, I knew that the birth and bris were connected with a miracle, but I had no idea what a moving story was awaiting me.

The baby is the son of a couple who have been very involved in building the Chabad mikva, Mei Menachem in Kfar Chabad B, and this, in itself, is very moving. Whoever walked into the Beis Rivka shul, walked in smiling. We were all thrilled to participate in a simcha that involved a recent miracle of the Rebbe.

Even before the baby was brought to the shul, people speculated about what name it would be given. Those who knew the family were sure that the baby would be named Gershon after his grandfather a”h, a wonderful person and a warm Chassid. Others thought that since it was Rosh Chodesh Kislev, the baby would be named Menachem Mendel. Some inventive people came up with the idea of calling the baby Mei Menachem!

The baby was brought in and handed over by the kvatter, and finally reached the sandek. The mohel did his work quickly and we listened to the brachos. What would the name be? Gershon? Menachem Mendel? All three

names? In another moment, we would know.

The uncle who was honored with the recitation of the brachos had no idea that in another second he was going to “drop a bomb.”

“And his name in Israel will be...”

The father whispered to the uncle. Those standing on the side tried to read his lips, to know the name a second before everybody else, but couldn’t make it out.

“Yosef Yitzchok.”

What?! The first child, born in the merit of working on the mikva, with a bracha and guidance from the Rebbe, on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, and his name is Yosef Yitzchok! If they had named him Gershon, after his grandfather, that would have been understandable, but Yosef Yitzchok?

As soon as the bris was over, some people rushed to leave, taking some cake and wishing mazal tov on their way out. The baby’s father stopped them with a few words: Stay for the meal – there’s a story.”

After washing and beginning the meal, and after reviewing a maamer, the father told the following story:

You all know that we had to wait a number of years to expand our family. Whenever we asked the Rebbe for a bracha for more children, we got answers in the *Igros Kodesh* that had to do with

building a mikva. The need to build a mikva here, in Kfar Chabad B, was something we knew about, but we didn’t dream that we could take on the project ourselves.

One day, as you all know, there was a meeting of all the women’s organizations in the Kfar, and the Rebbe responded to the women’s report by saying (among other things) that the mikva should be built. People got serious about it, and the mikva became a reality. Many miracles took place but my wife and I did not experience our personal miracle.

Before Tishrei 5754, we felt we had to travel to Beis Chayeinu in order to fundraise for the mikva. In between davening, shiurim, and farbrengens, we met with potential donors, shluchim, and Chassidim, in order to talk about the mikva.

My wife did the same thing among the women. She participated in gatherings and farbrengens, and wherever she went, she told stories about the miracles experienced by those who were involved with the mikva. She got the women to open their hearts and their pocketbooks to donate to this worthy cause.

While busy with meetings, I thought about our situation and the following idea occurred to me. I had heard that some people who wanted a bracha for children would promise Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai that they would name their child

after him. In many instances, this helped. For me, this entailed mesirus nefesh, for my father had died and I had planned on naming my first son in his memory. I thought that perhaps I ought to set aside my personal wants, and do things differently.

I walked around ruminating about this idea for a few days, until I came to the firm conclusion that I wanted to tell the Rebbe that despite my wanting to name my son after my father, I was committed to naming him Menachem Mendel. I didn't know how to tell the Rebbe about this, and I still hadn't discussed this with my wife. I didn't want to discuss it with her at this point because we weren't even expecting a child. Anyway, I knew she would be happy about the name, and I planned on telling her about it when a child would be born.

We reported every step we took, in connection with the mikva, to the Rebbe. One time, we opened the *Igros Kodesh* to an answer about making a farbrengen, and my wife was helped by our host to do this. Women came and the topic was the mikva, of course.

While the farbrengen was in full swing, I returned to our hosts after yet another fundraising meeting. I was emotionally and physically exhausted, and I went up to our room. I saw an open volume of *Igros Kodesh* on the table. I realized that my wife had gotten an answer from the Rebbe in connection with the farbrengen, and had left the volume open so I could read it when I came home.

It was volume 14 and it was open to pages 256-7. I began to read letter #15 and was stunned. You have to understand that throughout the time we had worked on the mikva, we had received wondrous instructions from the Rebbe, that were amazingly precise,

but this was something else entirely.

The beginning of the letter is about building, with which we were busy, of course. Then the Rebbe goes on to say: **"I received your letter ... and I read at the end of the letter about your decision – which is certainly the opinion of both of**

For me, this entailed mesirus nefesh, for my father had died and I had planned on naming my first son in his memory. I thought that perhaps I ought to set aside my personal wants, and do things differently.



The yarmulke that drew down the bracha

you, of you and your wife – that when Hashem blesses you with a son, you will name him Yosef Yitzchok for length of days and good years. May the desires of your hearts be soon fulfilled in this for good and may you raise him to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds, to

be a Chassid, Yerei Shamayim, and a Lamdan." Tears filled my eyes. I couldn't have asked for more.

I knew it was time to include my wife, as the Rebbe had mentioned. When she had opened the *Igros Kodesh*, she hadn't known about what I had been contemplating for days.

What I was left wondering was whether the Rebbe's answer meant I should use the Rebbe's own name (since the Rebbe often referred to himself in terms of the Rebbe Rayatz), or the actual name of the Rebbe Rayatz. In the end, we decided that the name would be Yosef Yitzchok, just as the Rebbe had written in the *Igros Kodesh*.

Parenthetically, our trip wasn't crowned with unusual success as far as money was concerned, but we returned with something we hadn't dreamed of: a promise of a son, who would be named Yosef Yitzchok, and would grow up to be a Chassid, Yerei Shamayim, and a Lamdan.

We returned home to Kfar Chabad and were immediately thrown back into the reality of daily life, our work in getting the mikva built. In order to bring the Rebbe's bracha down into this physical world, we decided that what could be better than a yarmulke with the child's name and "Yechi" on it?

We ordered one from a woman who decorates kippos, but she was busy with a family simcha and wasn't able to do it. We felt that the delay was holding back the bracha.

We finally got the beautiful yarmulke, and just around that time we could already tell the Rebbe good news that his bracha would be fulfilled in an auspicious time.

* * *

The father of the baby finished his story and showed everybody the yarmulke.

WE'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO

INTERVIEW BY AVROHOM RAYNITZ

*When they put up the “Hichonu L’Bias HaMoshiach” signs in Eretz Yisroel and “Moshiach Is On His Way” signs in the U.S. they said this was Phase One of the mivtza. The next stage was supposed to be a massive explanation of the topic of Geula. This stage has yet to be implemented in a serious way. It’s time to move on! * An interview with Rabbi Zushe Silberstein, shliach in Montreal and director of the Moshiach Information Center. * Part 3 of 3*

(Continued from last week.)

THE UNIQUENESS OF MIVTZA MOSHIACH

What’s the difference between Mivtza Moshiach and the other mivtzaim?

Mivtza Moshiach is unique in that it is the “gateway” through which all the other mivtzaim pass. It’s not another mivtza like the others, which is why it is hard to precisely define it. When you talk about Mivtza T’fillin, you know that it means putting t’fillin on people. Mivtza Mezuzah is to put mezuzos up on the doorposts of Jewish homes. Mivtza Moshiach means to begin living differently, like a Jew in Yemos HaMoshiach. To live our daily lives in consonance with the

true reality in which we live, the Geula reality. It means living on a higher and more refined spiritual level in every aspect of our lives!

In order to understand how to live in Geula times, the Rebbe told us to study inyanei Moshiach and Geula. When we understand what a Geula davening looks like, what Geula learning is about, how interactions with others – including those of husband and wife, are supposed to be – we know what “preparing ourselves and one’s household to greet Moshiach” is about. This kind of preparation includes every aspect of our lives.

At the beginning of the 90’s, we had a billboard here in Montreal that said two words, “Bienvenu

Moshiach.” In French, this has a double meaning: “Welcome Moshiach” and also “Accept Moshiach.” I got a phone call from someone I knew for years, who wasn’t interested in progressing in his observance of mitzvos. In a trembling voice, he asked me to bring him a pair of t’fillin immediately. From the way he sounded, I thought someone in the family must have died, but he told me that he was asking for t’fillin because of the billboard. “I saw that Moshiach is about to come, and I want to be ready!”

He understood “prepare for the coming of Moshiach” to mean to begin living as a Jew ought to live. Obviously, this is true for each on his level. A Jew who never put on t’fillin before has to begin putting on t’fillin. A religious Jew, who never learned Chassidus before, has to begin learning Chassidus. And a Chassid who is lacking in hiddur mitzvah has to begin beautifying mitzvos!

When we learn more inyanei Moshiach and Geula, we realize that what Geula is really all about is the revelation of G-dliness, “and the earth will be full of knowledge of G-d like water covers the seabed.” In Yemos HaMoshiach, we will only be aware of Elokus, and this is what we have to begin living with now, taking more of an interest in G-dliness, in spirituality.

Everybody can explain this point, and more importantly, live it. The

Rebbe says that a Chassid has to act in such a way that when he walks somewhere, people see that here walks a “Moshiach Yid.”

If this is true for every Chassid, how much more so for the shluchim. A man’s shliach is like himself, and as the Rebbe said about himself, “I am crazy about Moshiach,” so this is how it should be for every shliach. Everything we do, every project and every mitvza, has to be **openly** focused on the main thing: **Moshiach**.

Are you saying that Mivtza Moshiach has to be openly a part of all the mitvzaim? Because some say differently and prove it from the correction made by the Rebbe to the sicha said at the Kinus HaShluchim 5752, where it said that all the details in the avodas ha’shlichus “must be openly permeated with this point,” and the Rebbe deleted the word “openly.”

Chassidim always enjoyed seeing the Rebbe’s corrections to the sichos, but they also knew that we learn the directives from the printed sichos. In the edited and printed sicha of the Kinus HaShluchim 5752, you might be surprised to hear, it says black on white that Mivtza Moshiach has to **openly** permeate the avodas ha’shlichus of every Jew.

Just one page before the paragraph in which the Rebbe deleted the word “openly,” the Rebbe left in the word “openly”: “In every single shlichus of a Jew ‘to serve his Maker,’ he receives, as it were, ‘everything he has’ from the sender (Hashem), including the ko’ach of the very essence of G-d, (which includes ‘everything he has’). This is in order to accomplish the unification of the neshama and body of a Jew in this physical world, and in a way that all the details and details of the details in the avoda of a Jew are **openly** instilled with the one and only point and purpose: **the revelation of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.**”

Mivtza Moshiach means to begin living differently, like a Jew in Yemos HaMoshiach. To live our daily lives in consonance with the true reality in which we live, the Geula reality. It means living on a higher and more refined spiritual level in every aspect of our lives!



After the Rebbe said that the avodas ha’shlichus of **every Jew** has to be **openly** instilled with this point, there is no need to repeat this. And it’s self-understood that when the Rebbe writes on the next page that all the details of the avodas ha’shlichus have to be permeated with this point, that the avodas **ha’shluchim** also has to be **openly** permeated with this point.

What does this mean? Simply, when you go put on t’fillin with people, you have to tell the Jew that by putting on t’fillin he is preparing himself for Geula. In every mitvza that we do, we have to emphasize that this mitvza prepares him for Moshiach.

You use the phrase “prepare us for Moshiach” as opposed to “hasten the coming of Moshiach.” Why?

The Rebbe said that Moshiach is already here. He is revealed to us and has even begun doing what Moshiach does. This is why the Rebbe didn’t say that our job is to **bring** Moshiach, but to **be mekabel** him. Not just to prepare the kabbalas panim, the welcome, but to actually welcome him! You can’t make a reception to welcome someone if the person isn’t there!

This is one of the main things in the new avodas ha’shlichus since 5752. It’s no longer about doing things to hasten the Geula, but doing things to **prepare ourselves** for the Geula which is already here. To put it in other words, the Rebbe took us out of Galus. Now we have to take the Galus out of ourselves!

EVERYBODY CAN DO IT!

We spoke before about the lack of literature and material on Geula. From your experience, can you tell us what should a lone shliach do with the limited resources available to him?

A lot. Although there isn’t enough organized material, every shliach can accomplish a lot in his city and his

surroundings. I'll give you a little example. Every shliach can easily print a business card, which has one of the Internet website addresses that explain inyanei Moshiach and Geula. If he printed up a few thousand of these, and gave one to every Jew he met, within a short time thousands of Jews would check out information on Moshiach.

There are also flyers and brochures published in the past that can be ordered and used.

You run the Moshiach Information Center. What is it?

I have a list of fax numbers of hundreds of shluchim around the world, and every week I send them *Lebben mit Moshiach*, a leaflet about Moshiach and Geula. Shluchim in the U.S. and Canada get it in English, and the rest of the shluchim get it in Lashon HaKodesh. (If someone would like to receive it, I'd be happy to add his fax number to the list.)

The purpose of the fax is to be m'chazek the shluchim, but I know that many of them make copies of it and give it out to their mekuravim.

We distribute a brochure called *Highlight* once a month, which takes a look at the events that took place that month from a Geula perspective. It has various sections including a story and food for thought.

I've been putting this out for years, and baruch Hashem, it has taken off. I know of shluchim in France who translate it into French, and lately it has been translated into Russian. It's distributed around the world.

We produce special brochures for the mitzvaim that openly instill a message of Geula. Even Chanuka and Shabbos candles kits are used to disseminate the besuras ha'Geula.

Do you get feedback?

Lots. I'll tell you one story. One Friday I was busy making last minute preparations before Shabbos when



the phone rang. It was an hour before Shabbos and I thought of ignoring the phone, but it didn't stop ringing and I finally answered.

"Rabbi, can you tell me what the weekly Torah reading is?"

I told her, and she said, "Could you tell me a Torah thought on the parsha?"

She told me that she had guests for Shabbos and she wanted to tell them a d'var Torah. When I asked her where she was calling from, she named a city I hadn't heard of somewhere in the U.S.

Why did she call the Chabad House in Montreal? She had gotten one of our brochures and had liked the contents, and decided to call. Now she's in touch with Chabad in

her area.

THE HARDEST TEST OF ALL

13 years have passed since the Kinus HaShluchim 5752, and over 10 years have passed since Gimmel Tammuz 5754, and we still don't see the Geula. What do we do?

There's no question that the biggest problem is the passage of time. I teach inyanei Moshiach and Geula in the seminary here in Montreal, and this week one of the girls came over to me after the class and began to cry. She said, "At least you were there. You heard the Rebbe say the sichos, but we who did not see or hear the Rebbe, how can we be excited and yearn to see the Rebbe all the time?"

She was right. Every day it gets

harder. The Gemara says about Chananya, Mishael, and Azarya that if they had been tortured for a long time they would not have withstood their test. It's easier to withstand something for a short time, as hard as it might be (and the three of them were thrown into a furnace!), than to be tested for a long time.

So how do we overcome this test?

The first thing is: we need the Rebbe. In the meantime, we simply must learn the Rebbe's sichos. There is no other solution. We know that Chassidim do not have doubts in emuna, in the merit of learning *Tanya*, which arouses the inner spark of the soul. The same is true for learning the Rebbe's sichos: it strengthens our emuna and our longing to see the Rebbe.

We recently read in the Torah about the Akeida, Avrohom's final test. One of the interesting details about this test is how long it took from when Avrohom was told to go to the Akeida to when he finally arrived there. The distance between Chevron and Yerushalayim doesn't take even one day. Why did it take Avrohom three days? The Midrash on the verse, "And he saw the place from a distance," says that Avrohom saw the place move further away. Whenever he thought he was approaching Har HaMoriya, the mountain moved further off. This was the hardest part of the test.

When we hear a command from Hashem, we get caught up in a fiery enthusiasm, and we can withstand a test, but after hours of walking go by, and your thoughts are constantly churning, then you can become doubtful and the test gets bigger from moment to moment.

This is our test. On the one hand, the Rebbe said we already have the revelation of the existence of Moshiach, and Moshiach has begun his work; the Geula is already here and we just have to open our eyes.

We saw open miracles in 5751 and 5752, and heard the Rebbe say amazing things about the prophecies of Geula that have already started being fulfilled. Then came Gimmel Tammuz 5754, "the third day," and "and he saw the place from a distance" – it seemed as though the whole thing had moved off into the distance. The years go by and here we are in 5765. It seems so distant, and it's a big test.

In order to pass the test, we need to be like Avrohom Avinu. He said, "I am ready," and speedily went to carry

This is one of the main things in the new avodas ha'shlichus since 5752. It's no longer about doing things to hasten the Geula, but doing things to prepare ourselves for the Geula which is already here.

out the shlichus he was given. He knew he had a shlichus from Hashem and he did not take any obstacle into consideration – not from the Satan, who tried to stop him with a river, and not the angel Michoel!

The Midrash says that when the angel Michoel came and said, "Don't send your hand out [to touch] the boy," Avrohom refused to listen and said, "I received a shlichus from Hashem, and an angel, with all due respect, is not qualified to cancel a shlichus from Hashem."

It was only after a voice came from Heaven and said that the angel was speaking on Hashem's behalf that Avrohom listened.

At the Kinus HaShluchim 5752 we got a clear shlichus from the Rebbe. We need to say, "I am ready," and carry out the shlichus without taking any obstacles into consideration, neither physical obstacles, like a river, nor spiritual obstacles, like an angel. Nobody can stop us from carrying out this shlichus. He can be the closest person to the Rebbe, he can be the most spiritual individual, mamash an angel, it makes no difference. We heard the shlichus from the Rebbe and only the Rebbe himself can change the shlichus. As long as we didn't hear the Rebbe change the shlichus, this is the shlichus we must carry out!

In order to carry out this shlichus properly, we have to keep reviewing the Rebbe's sichos from 5752, in which the Rebbe presents the new shlichus, especially the sicha of the Kinus HaShluchim 5752. Every time you learn the sicha, you discover new depth to it.

THE REBBE IS RUNNING THE SHOW

In conclusion, tell us some miracle stories that have happened lately.

I once saw a sign on a Chabad House that said, "We Don't Believe in Miracles." And underneath that was another line which said, "We Live Them Every Day." That's the life of a shliach. He doesn't need to believe in miracles because he lives them.

We see young shluchim today who go out to a new place and have incredible success. There is an incredible growth in buildings going up in mosdos Chabad around the world. Does anybody think that this success is derived from the shluchim's abilities? Not even a fool thinks so. They all know that it comes from the

Rebbe. It's just as the Rebbe said at the first Kinus HaShluchim in 5748: You are given everything: children, health, and ample parnasa. Just carry out the shlichus!

I'll tell you a few of the miracles that I see at the Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Montreal, where I am a member of the Vaad ha'Gashmi. At this yeshiva there isn't a designated menahel who is responsible for everything; a committee helps the hanhala run the yeshiva. You would think this is a recipe for failure, but when the Rebbe runs the yeshiva, the yeshiva grows from year to year, completely beyond the natural order of things.

A year and a half ago, we had a meeting before the new school year began and we figured out that in order to meet all the yeshiva's financial obligations, we needed \$80,000 immediately. We were still sitting and thinking about where we were going to get a sum like that from when the secretary came in and gave me a fax. It was a fax from an accountant, announcing that the yeshiva had received an inheritance and we should contact him as soon as possible. I called up and the accountant told me that we could get \$20,000 right away and two days later we would receive another \$100,000.

It was in the will of Mrs. Berger, a woman who was in touch years ago

A few days later, at ten in the morning, the secretary of the yeshiva called me and told me that we had to pay the city taxes to the tune of \$45,000 by three p.m. and there was nothing to pay it with.

with the previous menahel of the yeshiva, Rabbi Aryeh Leib Kramer a"h, and before she died, she decided to give her money to the yeshiva. At that time, we had bought a building for the dormitory for the mesivta, and we decided to name the building after her. Due to technical reasons, this got delayed and just three weeks ago we had the ceremony. We invited everybody involved including the accountant, of course. At the end of the ceremony, he came over to me and asked me to call him.

A few days later, at ten in the morning, the secretary of the yeshiva called me and told me that we had to pay the city taxes to the tune of

\$45,000 by three p.m. and there was nothing to pay it with. I remembered what the accountant had told me and I called him. He said some money remained, but he didn't know how much, probably around \$50,000. He asked me to call him back the next day. Based on this, we sent the bank a check for \$45,000.

When I called him the next day, his secretary told me that he looked into it and the check was ready. I sent someone over to get the check, and it was for \$60,000.

These miracles have become routine for us. Every two weeks, when we have to pay the staff's salaries, we see a new miracle and money comes in. We have been operating for three years like this, and we see clearly how the Rebbe is the one who is running this mosad.

The number of talmidim here has increased, and we hired additional staff. We have even raised salaries and every two weeks the staff gets paid. It's really miraculous!

I am sure that every mosad, every shliach that runs his activities with real achdus – over here, baruch Hashem, we have terrific achdus among the members of the vaad – will see the Rebbe's brachos fulfilled in every area. And he will be able to dedicate all his resources to spiritual activities to prepare his city to greet the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach immediately!

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FACING THE GREEKS AND HELLENIZERS

BY SHAI GEFEN

THE RELIGIOUS HELLENIZERS

We just told the story of Chanuka and spoke about the Misyavnim, the Jews known as Hellenizers, who aided the Greeks in their war against the Jews. When we imagine the Misyavnim, we picture Jews who threw off the yoke of Torah and mitzvos, wicked people whose goal was to destroy anything holy. However, some of the Misyavnim may also have appeared to be religious, like those who knowingly aid those who want to uproot the Torah and the Jewish people from Eretz Yisroel. 290 million shekel are enough for the Misyavnim of our generation to be willing to sell out their people. Each generation has its Misyavnim.

Time after time, the chareidi Jews consider money the be-all-and-end-all. Money is definitely vital, for “if there is no flour, there is no Torah,” but we have never seen in Jewish history that Jews were sold out for money, thus endangering the lives of millions of Jews. In our generation, along come religious Jews who are supposedly the models of religious behavior, who prove that the Misyavnim are not necessarily only those in the Shinui party.

It's painful to write this, but the chilul Hashem that they are causing, the degradation of Torah, cannot pass without comment.

Tommy Lapid and his ministers, who had to leave their upholstered seats last week, said it the way it is. He said, “How is it that those chareidi Jews who voted against Disengagement because G-d told them to are now helping the Disengagement and the budget that will fund the Disengagement?”

That question has no answer.

After so much chilul Hashem, why are people surprised to see a racist and anti-Semitic party like Shinui become popular? Why be upset by Shinui when they maintain, correctly, that the chareidim only care about “kneidlach”?

In a sicha said on Motzaei Zos Chanuka 5746, the Rebbe spoke about those religious Misyavnim who collaborate with our enemies and aid them in reaching their goal. It's shocking to see how relevant this message is now. The Rebbe also explains why he cries out about shleimus ha'Aretz when it doesn't seem to help:

What is the purpose in all this talking? On the contrary, since they will get angry about talk like this, they will take their anger out by not giving towards those things associated with those who speak up against them!

Therefore, first and foremost, when it comes to literal bloodshed, there is a mitzva of “not standing by

your brother's blood.” The fact that so-and-so and so-and-so are quiet – I don't know the reason for that; you'll have to ask them. In addition, when it comes to something that you really care about, that really hurts – you don't think about whether crying out will help or not. You cry out because you care!

Most importantly, a Jew by nature is a “dreamer,” as it says regarding Yosef, who was a “dreamer,” and as it says in the verse, “leading Yosef like sheep’ – all Jews are referred to as Yosef.” So all Jews are like Yosef, “dreamers,” and this nature gives a Jew the ability to tolerate the suffering of exile, especially – the pain and suffering that Jews cause to themselves, “your destroyers and wreckers will go forth from you.”

Since this is the case, Jews – the grandchildren of Yosef – remember about Yosef's dreams, and although he sat in jail, in the end he reached the point where, “without your permission nobody will raise his arm and leg.”

(The Rebbe smiled and said) I don't think that my crying out will help that they won't raise an arm or leg without getting permission from me – I don't dream to that extent! The dream is that maybe, perhaps, the crying out will help so that from now on they will really guard the Old City of Yerushalayim,



Chevron, Sh'chem, and even – Tel Aviv!

The Rebbe ended with something connected with Chanuka: **There is the “wicked Greek empire,” which is in Syria, in Amman and in Saudi Arabia, and the like, whose hand is outstretched to rule, may Hashem protect us, the nation dwelling in Tziyon. For this goal, they seek Misyavanim collaborators, including a Jew who received a religious education, who does a number of good things in his private life, and in matters having nothing to do with the party – he has a positive regard for religion, and would do a favor for a religious Jew. This is the feeling of any Jew in general, and especially that of a Jew who lives in the Holy Land. All the more so a Jew who saw open miracles in his personal life, and even the greatest miracle – that he was given (through natural means) the ability to make decisions regarding the pikuach nefesh of hundreds of thousands of Jews, to help them, may Hashem protect us, realize their goal.**

THE BUDGET IS STAINED WITH JEWISH BLOOD!

Following the budget crisis, we thought it a good idea to publicize what it said on the signs that the Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land, put up in chareidi neighborhoods. At least those signs expressed outrage against the tremendous betrayal by our chareidi brethren.

To the chareidi and dati parties: Selling out the Jews of Gush Katif and expelling them, and putting all the Jews of Eretz Yisroel in terrible danger, in exchange for a bribe of hundreds of millions of dollars, is money dipped in Jewish blood, money that will cause spiritual and physical damage to whoever will be involved with it.

We call upon you at this final moment with a great outcry: Do not be accomplices to this crime! Don't repeat the mistakes of the past!

Turn away from these wicked people and have nothing to do with them, lest you be consumed along with them (BaMidbar 16:26).

This is what the Lubavitcher Rebbe said about the severity of taking bribes from the government in exchange for support and agreeing to giving away land:

“They take bribes, money for the yeshivos. You cannot build a chinuch for Torah and fear of Heaven on money stained with Jewish blood!

“Not only can yeshivos not be built with this money, and students cannot be educated to fear of Heaven with this money, moreover the Gemara says that even a bathroom cannot be built with this kind of money!” (sicha D'varim 5739)

THE RIGHT IS THE LEFT

We will cite a quote in the name of the one who said it, and with Hashem's help, this will bring Geula to the world (as it says in the Mishna in Avos). This is from the Israeli media, quoting someone who, up until recently, told us that he is a “Leader on the Right,” Avigdor Lieberman. He and his party, HaIchud HaLeumi,” brought the Disengagement Plan upon us, among other things. Here's his comment:

“If we have to choose between a vision of a complete Israel and unity within the nation, there is no question that achdus is more important, and we are better off foregoing land.”

No. This statement was not made by an extreme Leftist, and not by anybody in the Labor party. This was said on Friday by the chairman of the Yisroel Beiteinu movement,

Tens of thousands who will come and bodily defend Gush Katif and thousands of soldiers and police officers who will listen to their conscience – they will save the day. This, and only this, is what we need to work on now.

Avigdor Lieberman, in a debate with the chairman of Yachad, Yossi Beilin, before the students of the experimental and democratic school, district 6 (Rogozin) in southern Tel Aviv.

Beilin himself, who apparently had anticipated the old debate, was amazed by the discovery of a new ideological partner, and he said, “Five years ago, I would not have believed that Lieberman would say such a thing. Understand, he is one of the most extreme representatives from the Zionist Right. If this is our debate today, over where the land exchange will take place, then you have to understand what a revolution has taken place. We are in agreement that we need a Jewish and democratic state, even if the price entails dividing the land.”

It would be humorous if it didn't

have to do with security. Before the elections, they will come and tell us bubbe maisos again. This time though, they have announced that they are more clever about it. They will make two parties, with each one presenting a different agenda, and right after the elections, they will join forces.

But we know already that the Right has become worse than Beilin. Even Beilin couldn't believe how he has succeeded in his brainwashing campaign. So whoever plans on supporting those parties is better off supporting the original and not the pathetic counterfeit.

Today it is more obvious than ever, that only the Torah will not be changed, and only he who follows the path the Rebbe has shown us, has a chance of prevailing over the media propaganda. The one who sticks to the *Shulchan Aruch* will know how to face seemingly impossible situations.

We Lubavitcher Chassidim must get the Rebbe's message out, because today there is only one voice giving a response and a solution to the defeatists on the Right and the Left. There is only one person whose words are eternally true, whose view doesn't change with the vagaries of time.

We must speak up and oppose giving away any land, against any concession to the Arabs, for our lives are at stake.

LIKE S'DOM

Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu was taken this week for a police investigation after he prohibited the selling of a home to an Arab in the holy city of Tzfas. Rabbi Eliyahu's p'sak din was supported by rabbanei Chabad as well as other rabbanim.

In an enlightened country such as Israel, this necessitates an immediate investigation. Rabbi

Eliyahu differentiated between Arabs and Jews, and we, the enlightened ones, are very concerned about the Arab minority. Our government is so eager to help the Arabs that the Arabs can even put bombs on buses, as long as they are not discriminated against.

Justice such as this is not an innovation of the Zionist state. We had an enlightened state like this

In the name of falsehood and democracy, all sorts of injustices are permissible, for they are legal. But when a rav paskens a halacha that you may not sell a home to an Arab because of the danger that this entails, he is considered a criminal who has to stand trial.

4000 years ago: S'dom, whose laws were like our Israeli laws today. Here are some examples: Thousands of Jews are expelled from their homes solely because they are Jews. The Sharon government will throw legless children out of their homes, as well as widows and orphans; they will exhume the dead from their graves, destroy shuls, and expel thousands of Jews solely

because they were born to Jewish mothers and are settlers. And if you say that's racist, the Sodomites will immediately charge you with incitement.

In the name of falsehood and democracy, all sorts of injustices are permissible, for they are legal. But when a rav paskens a halacha that you may not sell a home to an Arab because of the danger that this entails, he is considered a criminal who has to stand trial. The rav didn't say anybody should be thrown out of his home, and didn't even say the dead should be removed from their graves. He didn't say children who had their legs blown off should be thrown out of their homes and their homes given to the terrorists who tried to murder them, and therefore, he will stand trial.

And guess who will get the Nobel Peace Prize?

I direct the following words to Rav Eliyahu and the few rabbanim who haven't caved in to the threats of our government. You will be remembered in Jewish history as heroes who did not fear the wicked government, at a time when the Jewish nation was in a coma on the eve of the Geula, you stood on the frontlines and loudly declared the word of Hashem, the halacha. *Chizku v'imitzu.*

THE GOLAN AND YESHA ARE ONE AND THE SAME

The slogans such as, "We have love and it will triumph," or the cliché that we need to "settle in people's hearts," were proven irrelevant in one day.

The headlines last week were about the president of Syria who sent messages that he is ready to talk with Israel. That was enough for everyone to give Assad the Golan until the edge of the

Kinneret, because he wants to come to Yerushalayim. It shows that the real problem is not that of Arabs in Yesha, and not the extreme image of settlers. In the Golan, as you know, we don't have problems like that. The following are a few lines from an article that Elyakim HaEzani wrote on this subject:

"Unlike Yesha, the Golan is not 'beyond the Mountains of Darkness.' There isn't, and never was, an Intifada there. All Israelis travel there, and its vistas are beloved: skiing on the snowcapped Chermon, wine and apple tasting, waterfalls and other attractions. And there are no Arabs in the Golan (and Arabs are why some Israelis are afraid of traveling even to Yerushalayim), and even the most extreme Leftists won't ask, 'Why did we push ourselves in among the Arabs?'"

"And in the Golan there is no Gush Emunim which is hated by the Left. Most of the people living there aren't religious, and the founding father is Yehuda Harel from the Golan Heights, a real Mapai'nik. Most of the people in the Golan vote Labor. They are not 'extremists.' They have never gotten negative headlines like, 'destroyers of Arab olive trees,' for example. They never had to 'settle in people's hearts,' because they have been there all along.

"Nu? President Assad of Syria gave one hint and the Golan is now

on the market of the Israelis who give away things for free. The Sharon government has yet to show any interest; it's busy regurgitating the Gaza Strip and northern Shomron without choking, but the media has already given an opening to those who would abandon the Golan, and the commentators have already begun prattling and gazing longingly at the Golan, as the new area from which to withdraw. The complaints are already being voiced: Assad says he's ready to negotiate, and without pre-conditions, and he only (only!) wants to continue where we left off, and we should be quiet? Are we going to reject this window of opportunity for a breakthrough?"

"The Golan will have one more line of defense, the Jewish settlement of the Gaza Strip and northern Shomron. If the latter stand and do not fall, the Golan will not fall, because no other settlement will fall. That's if we succeed in our war to instill in the collective Israeli consciousness that we do not uproot settlements for any reason, and any political plan or political 'solution' has to abide by this ironclad rule: the transfer of Jews, the expulsion and uprooting, cannot be and will never be a part of any political equation. Just as in our days it wouldn't occur to anyone to bring human sacrifices to the Molech of peace or – just as it isn't politically correct to speak about transferring Arabs.

"If the anticipated battle in Yesha will succeed in establishing this ironclad rule about Jews, as it has been accepted about Arabs, the Golan will be saved. Therefore, if the Golan wants to remain alive, it should help Gush Katif and send thousands of people there, because that is its Stalingrad. That is the last stand, the first and last opportunity to cut down, once and for all, the threat of transfer.

"Explanations are unnecessary. We may not concede on weapons, and first and foremost on the call to disobey orders to pull Jews out of their homes – merely for the sake of a nice image. The image will only earn us a tear shed over our graves, G-d forbid, nothing more.

"I was told that Rav Neria z"l wrote in his diary that when Yamit was destroyed, Commander Chaim Erez, the man who carried out the expulsion, said: If there were 20,000 people here, I would tell the government I could not do it.

Tens of thousands who will come and bodily defend [Gush Katif] and thousands of soldiers and police officers who will listen to their conscience – they will save the day. This, and only this, is what we need to work on now. We need the army to tell the Destroyer in the Prime Minister's office, 'Stop, I can't do it,' so that he will be forced to tell his masters in Washington, 'I can't do it.' We, and only we, can make this happen."



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AN EYE-OPENING FARBRENGEN AT 770: WE'RE TALKING GEULA, NOT POLITICS!

BY CHANA KATZ

Was this why the Chassid traveled half-way around the world? To attend this particular Shabbat farbrengen at 770?!

He asked the speaker if he could talk with him for a moment afterwards. With tears in his eyes, he embraced him and said he was very affected by his speech.

For 36 years, ever since he came back from his station in Korea during the Vietnam War, the Chassid carried a pain deep inside him. Upon his discharge from Fort Lewis in Washington State, he was told to take off his uniform because if he went out with it he “would be spat upon,” as was happening to soldiers in uniform at that time. But the whole issue got swept under the rug, and his pain – the pain of tens of thousands – festered for years.

Who would have thought this subject would resurface almost four decades later at a typical Shabbos day farbrengen on Eastern Parkway? Actually, it had surfaced a little earlier than that during the recent American presidential elections. But the Chassid lives in Eretz Yisroel and didn't know it.

The Chassid naturally saw the Hashgacha Pratis in it all. The speaker saw the Geula in it all. And as soon as Shabbos came to an end, a call came back half way around the world...

“You know I don't like to hear about politics on Shabbos,” he began to explain. “But there was this guy farbrenging...and he told my story...”

To his other half in Eretz Yisroel, barely a teenager during the Vietnam War, the whole topic seemed so distant...and....why was a Lubavitcher Chassid still upset so many years later about an American Army uniform?

Talk to Baruch Bush in Crown Heights, the Chassid answered, his voice still quavering with emotion. He'll explain the whole story.

* * *

Baruch Bush is a professor of law at a New York law school. He's lived in Crown Heights for the past 24 years. He came from Berkeley, California, where he was *mekareved* by R. Chaim Itche Drizin, Chaim Citrin, and Yosef Langer. Now he's on a rotating list of speakers who farbreng regularly at 770. One of his favorite topics is the Rebbe's *hooaa* that the Geula is already unfolding before us and we just have to open our eyes to see it.

Thus, we may appear to be discussing an aspect of the American election here. But what we're really going to look at is a glimmer of the Geula...

* * *

“We know that when Moshiach

is going to come nothing can be concealed anymore,” began Bush. “Anything swept under the rug, anything not dealt with, will have to be dealt with. Once the king comes into the palace, all has to be revealed, and then cleaned up, fixed, as finally happened here in this election.

“Something very astonishing happened in this past election campaign. It's said that time heals all wounds, but time doesn't heal all wounds and didn't heal these wounds. A deep pain and hurt that had been buried in American society for over 30 years was just left to fester.”

We're talking about the Vietnam era war veterans, whose service was despised and unappreciated, even to the point of their being considered war criminals.

Then what happened in this last election was astonishing. This became a central issue of the election and there was a huge outpouring of passion and feelings from...*and for...* those veterans. “Finally these men got their due, they got the recognition and thanks they deserved for their service.”

* * *

Back in 1953, when the Chassid's uncle returned from American military service, the uniform, and what it represented,

was still valued. His uncle had given him the brass buttons from his uniform, and it had meant a lot to him. It inspired him to volunteer to serve his country more than a decade later. Little did he know how despised those very buttons would be when he returned with an honorable discharge.

Interestingly, Bush himself was supportive of the anti-war movement as a college student in 1971.

He was unfamiliar at the time with the Rebbe's depiction of America as a "malchus shel chesed," a country that was based upon doing kindness that didn't fight wars merely for selfish reasons.

"In the President's declaration of war in Iraq, he spoke directly to the Iraqi people and said, 'You no longer have to fear the tyrant anymore. The time of your liberation is near,'" said Professor Bush. "A soldier such as this Chassid and his uncle represents the principles of a country that sacrifices to bring liberty to another country. To wear the uniform of this

country, which stands for a profound, decent, and humane value, and be told you'll be spat upon is a wound to the human spirit."

* * *

In the recent election, one of the candidates touted his record of service in the Vietnam War. But upon a closer check, it was revealed that this candidate had returned with a very negative view of America's role in that war, and he made those views public at a time when American servicemen were still imprisoned and being tortured

The Rebbe said to him, "Thank you!" and he later said it was the only time he ever really felt true comfort from all that he had sacrificed.

in enemy prison camps, so that they felt deeply betrayed.

"It was a boil in the body politic that finally burst," said Bush. "Now, in 2004, these men who were prisoners of war came out for the first time in over three decades and said they had never spoken their piece. They had let ride the unanswered dilemma: Was Vietnam the right thing to do and did the people who fought, fight honorably...or were we doing a beastly thing?"

A large part of the campaign then became dedicated to the former servicemen telling their stories. Radio talk shows were focused solely on this topic. And an interesting thing happened, noted Bush. At the end of each phone call, the radio host would *thank the ex-serviceman* for having served their country.

It reminded the Chassid of the time a wounded veteran from one of Israel's wars came before the Rebbe in his wheelchair with a group of former soldiers. The Rebbe said to him, "Thank you!" and he later said it was the only time he ever really felt true comfort from all that he had sacrificed.

* * *

Were it not for the Rebbe's horaa, said Bush, this phenomenon from the election could still be explained in standard, logical, political terms. "But if we look through the Rebbe's eyes, we see instead that it was because nothing can remain unfixed, since the time of Moshiach is here....This was not a normal event and the significance of it was because of the Geula. This is an example of the Geula unfolding.

Professor Bush also pointed to other examples of this during the election. "This was an election with a lot of passion on both sides.

What is passion? Passion is the



heart, *lev*. We know that when we see that the generation has the face of a dog, it is a sign of the imminent arrival of Moshiach. What is *kelev* (dog)? *Kol lev*, all heart. All emotion. A dog has no intellect; just emotion. So here we saw an election where great numbers of people were acting primarily on emotions.

“After the election results came in, a prominent editor of a lefty magazine noted that people in Ohio said that they voted because of moral values. He admitted feeling ‘sad and isolated from my country’ because half did something he just couldn’t understand - they put moral values ahead of food on the table.”

Thus, the election didn’t represent just a victory for a particular candidate; as Bush explained, it represented a victory

for a certain hierarchy of values in this country....,” of *ruchnius* (spirituality) over *gashmius* (materialism).”

* * *

Davening at 770 with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach is always a privilege. But the Chassid didn’t learn until later the details of Hashgacha Pratis that surrounded this particular Shabbos farbrengen. You see, Professor Bush had meant to discuss the elections in general and portray it through Moshiach’s eyes and the Geula. The aspect of the war veterans was only a small aspect of this subject. But as he was sitting with his wife going over some of the points he was going to discuss that Shabbos, his wife asked him why he hadn’t included the aspect of the veterans.

That’s why he also realized the Hashgacha Pratis when the Chassid

came up to him afterwards and put his arms around him with tears in his eyes.

* * *

“We’re told when Moshiach comes – it should be right away – that a Jew will be paid back, compensated for every tiny tzar that’s he’s ever had, even to the extent of putting his hands in his pocket for a penny and coming out with a nickel,” said Bush. “What does it mean to be compensated? He’ll see the Hashgacha Pratis..”

“The phenomenal thing is that something in front of our eyes can be awesome and we don’t even notice. The Rebbe said we have to notice, we have to ‘open our eyes and see.’ He can’t get inside and open up our eyes. This is what we have to do... And we will see that the Geula is already here.”

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GOING FORWARD TO GREET MOSHIACH

SPEECH OF RABBI CHAIM YITZCHOK COHEN TO THE 5TH EUROPEAN MOSHIACH CONGRESS:

I would like to extend a hearty Shalom Aleichem to all those Shluchim and visitors who have come to join us on this auspicious day from Europe, India, Israel USA & Canada, who all wish to help ensure that we complete the task that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Shlita has given to each and every one of us assembled here to be Mekabel P'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu, and the Hisgalus should take place Mamash NOW!

Reb Mendel Futerfas o.b.m. used to tell the following story which has made a lasting impression on me and which I have told at practically every family gathering, because I feel it has an extremely important message for each one of us, and I take the liberty of repeating it again for those who may not have heard it yet.

Deep within the endless forests of the Soviet Union, on the very edge of Asia, there was a small village whose residents made their livelihood from the production of honey. Experience had taught that the very best way to protect their beehives from passing "thieves" – wild animals that roamed the forest and loved to eat honey – was to place them high up in the tree tops and thus avoid the animals' reach.

The most famous "honey thief" of them all is the bear, great numbers of which populated the dense forests of this region. Unfortunately for the villagers, the bear is an extremely agile and nimble creature that can climb a tree in the blink of an eye and plunder the entire contents of the beehive with several swipes of its mighty paws. With its thick and impenetrable fur, the swarming bees are no more than a cloud of buzzing mosquitoes. Furthermore the bear is very strong and fast, and thus it is quite dangerous to antagonize one openly.

Recognizing that conventional warfare would not succeed against such a foe, the villagers devised a clever ruse to safeguard their honey. Cutting off a great branch from the tree, they would tie it in front of the hive in such a way that if someone (or something) tried to approach, the branch would swing back and hit the intruder in the face.

The bear, for all its agility and cunning, is not too bright an animal. The "attack" of the tree branch would send it into a snarling rage, prompting it to thrash out again with even greater force. According to the law of physics, the harder one applies force to a tree branch thus rigged up, the more forcefully it will fly back and smack him in the face. The result of this contraption was an extremely angry bear that would try and get the better of the tree branch over and over again. Swat, smack, Swat, smack. The bear would be so involved in its war against the branch that the beehive and its honey were forgotten.

This was the moment the villagers were waiting for. Emerging from their hiding places they would pounce on the defenseless animal, this one with his knife and this one with his club, until the bear was dead. Its flesh and fat ("Bear schmaltz") would feed them throughout the winter, while its valuable hide was sold to a factory

to be transformed into an expensive coat. This was the fate of the luckless bear: Having lost sight of the original objective in the heat of the pursuit, it ended up wasting its energies fighting an inanimate branch...

The moral of the story? A person must never lose sight of his objective and allow himself to be bogged down in nonsense along the way! Even if one thinks he has suffered an unfair blow from this one or that one – forget it. It's just not worth getting sidetracked. It's only a "transplanted" tree branch placed in your path by the "other side," for the purpose of diverting you from your true goal.

In reality, we all have amazing innate powers; everyone knows this, even the "other side." For that reason no one is willing to attack us directly, for whoever does so will surely lose. In the words of Dovid HaMelech during his battle with Goliath: "You come to me with a word and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the L-rd of Hosts; the G-d of the armies of Israel you have taunted." The outcome of such a battle is obvious.

Not only that, but the more the "other side" is interested in diverting attention from the "honey" – our true objective – the more it realizes that conventional tactics will not succeed. For the Satan himself knows that when one walks "in the name of the L-rd" – in

the name of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Shlita – no power in the world can triumph.

The Satan will therefore try to draw a person into fighting an imaginary battle in the hopes that he will be distracted and forget his original intention. The Satan wants us to expend our precious energies fighting make-believe branches and fall from the tree, broken and defeated, G-d forbid.

Only one thing is required of us at present, that we go forward "to greet

Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actuality."

Don't pay attention to any obstacles that threaten our progress. Just move forward and keep on going, for our king, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Shlita, is at our head. He and only he directs the battle. He and only he is guiding us along the proper path. And we, the Rebbe MH"Ms Chassidim, are following right behind him, looking neither to the right nor to the left. We will never divert our attention from the Rebbe MH"Ms explicit command: to proclaim the message of the imminent Redemption throughout the entire world, and publicize that even now "there is a judge and advisor of our generation, a prophet of our generation" and that "the Nasi is everything" – in the literal sense of the phrase.

I call upon you all to strengthen your personal connection with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, follow his directive and commands, hearken to and accept his advice, and believe in and publicize his prophecies including the foremost prophecy ("which is certain") of "Behold, Melech HaMoshiach is coming" immediately.

And before the end of this Congress we should all merit the Hisgalus of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach immediately NOW!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed!

Don't pay attention to any obstacles that threaten our progress. Just move forward and keep on going.