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Shleimus HaAretz / Rabbi Shalom Ber Wolpo

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TOGETHER TOWARDS THE REDEMPTION

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'YAKHEL; 25TH DAY OF ADAR I, 5752

The message of Parshas VaYakhel and Parshas Sh'kalim: unity with other Jews, unity within one's own being.

Generally, the parshiyos, VaYakhel and P'kudei are read together. As explained on previous occasions, when two parshiyos are combined, they form a single entity. Thus, when these two parshiyos are combined, the intent is not that there are certain aspects of the reading that are relevant to Parshas VaYakhel and others to Parshas P'kudei, but rather, that every element of the Torah reading has a combined message VaYakhel-P'kudei.

Herein lies a fundamental lesson in our service of G-d, for the totality of the mission with which we are charged to fulfill in this world is crystallized in the two thrusts VaYakhel and P'kudei.[446]

To explain: VaYakhel, "And you shall gather," points to the unification of all the entities in this diverse world, uniting them within the domain of holiness. P'kudei, by

contrast, means "counting," and highlights how every entity possesses its own unique importance. For every creation was given a unique nature with which it can serve G-d.

Although the sequence of the two parshiyos indicates that VaYakhel prepares one for P'kudei, VaYakhel represents an independent service in its own right. This concept receives greater emphasis this year, when VaYakhel is read and studied as a separate parsha.

In particular, the message of VaYakhel applies to the Jewish people and alludes to their being gathered together to form a single collective entity in the spirit of the mitzvah, "Love your fellow man as yourself." This is possible, because all Jews share a single essence; all are "truly a part of G-d from above."

The importance of this service is emphasized by the fact that the Alter Rebbe placed the declaration, "Behold I accept upon myself the fulfillment of the mitzvah, 'Love your fellowman as yourself,'" at the very beginning of the prayer service,[447] making it the foundation of one's daily activities.

In simple terms, this command means that when a person sees another Jew, he should try to unite with him, for in truth they share a fundamental commonalty. This applies, not only to the Jews in one's immediate community, but to all Jews, even those far removed, indeed, even those in a distant corner of the world. Needless to say, the manner in which these feelings of unity are expressed will differ in terms of the practical means of expression available, but the feelings of oneness are universal in nature.

Even when the distance is also spiritual in nature, i.e., when another Jew does not share one's level of Jewish observance, one should focus on the connection shared and not on the differences. In regard to one's personal conduct, one must emphasize two modes of serving G-d – striving both to, "Turn away from evil and do good." When, however, one relates to another individual, one must channel one's energies solely in the path of "Do good."

Although there may be times when another individual's conduct warrants reproof, before speaking one should question whether he is

fit to be the one to administer it. Furthermore, if reproof must be given, it should be offered gently, which will obviously enable it to be accepted more readily than harsh speech. Moreover, such words should be spoken only on select occasions.

These concepts are reflected in the verse, "One who withholds the rod hates his son," which indicates that stiff rebuke may be given only when the relationship between two individuals is like a father and a son. There are two concepts implied by this verse: Firstly, that to give rebuke, one must love the other person just as a father loves his child. And also that the difference in level between the two people must be as radical as that between a father and a son. This is not true in most cases. Since all individuals share a fundamental equality, it is appropriate that they relate to each other as equals.

This is the message of Parshas VaYakhel, that one seek to unite with every member of the Jewish people. This service receives greater emphasis at present, when we are sitting together in a farbrengen, when our feelings of Ahavas Yisroel are actually expressed. When we say, "Behold I accept upon myself the fulfillment of the mitzvah, 'Love your fellow man as yourself,'" this is a private statement.[448] In contrast, the present gathering is an opportunity for these feelings to be actually expressed.

This approach, the thrust to unite with one's fellow Jews, will lead to the ultimate fulfillment of VaYakhel, the ingathering of the Jewish people to Eretz Yisroel. And here, a significant lesson results from the fact that VaYakhel and P'kudei are read as separate parshiyos. There is no need to wait for P'kudei, the census of the Jewish people, for the beginning of

VaYakhel, the ingathering. On the contrary, the Jews will first gather together in Eretz Yisroel, and afterwards, there will be a census.[449]

This is particularly relevant in the present year, a year of "wonders in all things," for a foretaste of this ingathering is being experienced at present with the aliya of Jews from many different countries to Eretz

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Furthermore, with the
exception of the
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Eretz Yisroel...***

Yisroel. Throughout the centuries, there were always Jews who made aliya. At present, however, there are far more Jews gathering in Eretz Yisroel than ever before and indeed, this has attracted the attention of the entire world.

In this context, it is worthy to note an enigmatic phenomenon. Although Rav Mendel of Horodok and several other Rebbeim settled in

Eretz Yisroel, none of the n'siim, from the Baal Shem Tov to the Previous Rebbe ever made aliya. Furthermore, with the exception of the Previous Rebbe, none ever even visited Eretz Yisroel. And in the Previous Rebbe's case, he explained the reason for his visit: as a substitute for the visit to the graves of the Rebbeim in Lubavitch and Rostov.

The above concepts also relate to the special Torah reading of the present week, Parshas Sh'kalim. We find that the Torah explicitly commands that "the rich shall not give more... than a half-shekel." On the surface, this is difficult to understand: All the offerings in the Beis HaMikdash were required to be perfect and complete. Why in this instance were we required to give no more than a half-shekel? Also, since the Torah requires us to give only a half-shekel, why does it mention that an entire shekel is twenty geira? Seemingly, all that concerns us is the ten geira of the half-shekel.

In resolution: This command clarifies that a Jew cannot become a complete entity a "holy shekel, unless he joins together with another Jew. Each Jew himself is ten geira, a half[450]-shekel. When, however, he joins together with another Jew, they reach twenty[451] geira, a complete entity.

Parshas VaYakhel and Parshas Sh'kalim also emphasize the need for establishing unity within one's own self. Indeed, the establishment of such unity makes possible the establishment of bonds of unity with other Jews.

This endeavor is illustrated in a renowned chassidic story: Rav Zalman Aharon, the elder son of the Rebbe Maharash, once asked his uncle, Rav Yosef Yitzchak, if he recited his prayers b'tzibbur, "with the community." Rav Yosef Yitzchak answered in the affirmative. The

very next day, however, Rav Zalman Aharon noticed that his uncle prolonged his prayers, lingering far longer than any congregation would.

“You told me you prayed b’tzibbur?” he asked.

“I do,” his uncle replied. “B’tzibbur literally means ‘with the collective.’ After I marshal together the ten components of my soul, I pray.”

Similarly, in regard to Parshas Sh’kalim, another explanation of the reason why only a half-shekel was given was to emphasize that a Jew’s second half comes from above. Thus the Maggid of Mezritch interprets the expression shnei chatzotzros, (lit. “two trumpets”) as shnei chatzi tzuros, “two half-entities,” for a Jew and G-d are both “half-entities” until a union is established between them.[452]

In this context, we can understand why a Jew’s day begins with the declaration Modeh Ani. Even before a person says, “Behold I accept upon myself...,” as soon as he arises from sleep, he declares Modeh Ani.[453]

What is the core of this declaration? That a person gather together his entire being and devote it to G-d.

To explain: Seemingly, before a person is able to make such a declaration, he should consciously perceive G-d’s presence. This in turn would appear to require that he contemplate the world around him until he comes to the realization that “the entire earth is filled with His glory.” Only then, would he be able to make an all-encompassing commitment to G-d.

We, however, do not need such preparation, for our connection with G-dliness is intrinsic and constant, shaping our thinking processes even when we sleep. Indeed, a person’s bond with G-d may be even greater

when he sleeps than when he is awake, for then his conscious, intellectual faculties do not control his thoughts. In their absence, his essence can surface. And the essence of every soul is connected with G-d at all times.[454]

When a person arises from sleep,[455] however, he becomes conscious of himself as an individual entity, and indeed, as a powerful entity.[456] Nevertheless,

A Jew’s service begins with gathering together the different aspects of his own being. Afterwards, he gathers together with the entire Jewish people, and then, gathers together every element of the world and shows how their entire existence is intended to carry out G-d’s will.

as soon as he feels his own existence, he gives himself over to G-d with thankful acknowledgement.[457] And this enables him to perceive how “great is Your faithfulness,” i.e., how every entity in the world reflects G-d’s gracious kindness. In this manner, he is able to collect every entity in the world at large under the all-encompassing banner of G-d’s service.

To summarize: a Jew’s service begins with gathering together the different aspects of his own being. Afterwards, he gathers together with the entire Jewish people, and then, gathers together every element of the world and shows how their entire existence is intended to carry out G-d’s will.[458]

In this manner, every moment of a Jew’s life should be one in which he “wakes up from sleep,” and begins with Modeh Ani. And then his entire day is healthy in both a spiritual and a material sense.[459]

And this will lead to the ultimate process of ingathering, the ingathering of the dispersed Jewish people. G-d will “sound the great shofar... and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land.” “A great congregation (— all the Jews of the present generation and all those of the previous generations —) will return here.”

And this will happen in the very near future.[460] And then we will proceed “with our youth and with our elders... with our sons and with our daughters” to Eretz Yisroel, to Jerusalem, and to the Third (and threefold[461]) Beis HaMikdash. May this take place in the immediate future.

MORE THAN A GEOGRAPHIC INGATHERING

Sound the great shofar for our freedom; raise a banner to gather our exiles, and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land.[462]

Three times a day we express this fervent wish – that Moshiach come and gather our people to Eretz Yisroel, the eternal heritage of our people.[463] This involves more than a mere geographic movement on the part of our people. At that time G-d will “bring us together” and establish unity among us, for in

that age, the Era of the Redemption,[464] “there will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor competition.”

The events of recent years point to the imminence of that era; many signs of the Redemption are appearing. The wondrous ingathering of hundreds of thousands of Jews to Eretz Yisroel is surely an obvious harbinger of the ultimate ingathering of our dispersed nation. Surging waves of migration that stand out boldly in our nation’s history are now reaching our holy land, including hundreds of thousands of people who were forcibly held back for decades.[465] Indeed, the very nations which had previously blocked their emigration are now granting them permission and even assistance to settle in Eretz Yisroel.[466]

INTEGRATING A FRAGMENTED PERSONALITY

Together with the foretaste of the Redemption that we have been granted, we have also been given the potential to anticipate the Redemption and incorporate the spiritual ideals of that era within our everyday life. In this vein, the concept of gathering in the dispersed has relevance within every individual’s personal world, and likewise within the sphere of our relations with others.

It is not only a nation that stands in need of ingathering. In our time, we often encounter fragmented personalities, people who find difficulty integrating their various drives and motivations. The source for this centrifugal thrust lies in a lack of coordination within our multifaceted spiritual makeup. We have ten different potentials[467] and we have been given an ongoing, lifelong task of establishing harmony between them.

This endeavor is illustrated in a renowned chassidic story: Rav Zalman Aharon, the elder son of the Rebbe Maharash, once asked his uncle, Rav Yosef Yitzchak, if he recited his prayers b’tzibbur, “with the community.” Rav Yosef Yitzchak answered in the affirmative. The very next day, however, Rav Zalman Aharon noticed that his uncle prolonged his prayers, lingering far longer than any congregation would.

“Didn’t you tell me you prayed b’tzibbur?” he asked.

“I do,” his uncle replied. “B’tzibbur literally means ‘with the collective.’ After I marshal together the ten components of my soul, I pray.”

The unity established is not manufactured, but rather reflects the inner truth of every person’s being.

A BOND ABOVE CONSCIOUS THOUGHT

How is such a unity established? How can a person bring the divergent thrusts of his personality into harmony? – Through dedicating them to G-d. When a person makes an all-encompassing commitment to G-d, he gains a wholesome sense of fulfillment[468] that enables him to establish harmony among the diverse elements of his being.

The unity established is not manufactured, but rather reflects the inner truth of every person’s being. For the soul is “an actual part of G-d from above.”[469] Consequently, all of its potentials reflect this fundamental G-dly core.

This process of establishing

internal harmony is reflected in the very first statement a Jew makes upon rising: Modeh Ani – “I gratefully acknowledge...”[470] What is the core of this declaration? – That immediately upon awakening, a person gathers together his entire being and devotes it to G-d.

To explain: Seemingly, before a person is able to make such a declaration, he should consciously perceive G-d’s presence. This in turn would appear to require that he contemplate the world around him until he comes to the realization that “the entire earth is filled with His glory.”[471] Only then would he be able to make an all-encompassing commitment to G-d.

We, however, do not need such preparation, for our connection with G-dliness is intrinsic and constant, shaping our thinking processes even when we sleep. Indeed, a person’s bond with G-d may be even greater when he sleeps than when he is awake, for then his conscious intellectual faculties do not control his thoughts. In their absence, his essence can surface. And the essence of every soul is connected with G-d at all times.[472]

When a person rises from sleep, however, he becomes conscious of himself as an individual entity, and indeed, as a powerful entity. Nevertheless, as soon as he becomes aware of his own existence, he gives himself over to G-d with thankful acknowledgement.[473] And this enables him to perceive how “great is Your faithfulness,” i.e., how every entity in the world reflects G-d’s gracious kindness.

NOTES:

446. In a larger sense, this mission involves, not only humans but the totality of creation. In regard to men, our Sages teach, “I was created solely to serve my Creator.” And similarly, the creation at large exists for a single

purpose to express G-d's will.

447. Prayer is essentially a person's request for the fulfillment of his own needs. Thus it relates to Parshas P'kudei, where the emphasis is on the importance of every individual particular. Before this service, the Alter Rebbe emphasized the importance of Ahavas Yisroel, the lesson of VaYakhel.

This sequence is reflected in the very beginning of the prayer service, the verse "How goodly are your tents O Yaakov." Our Rabbis explain that this verse refers to the separation of the tents into tribes, i.e., each service standing out as a distinct entity.

448. For the preliminary stages of the prayer service are often recited at home, before one joins together with a community.

449. Taking the census of the Jewish people will take time, for a census must be carried out in an orderly manner. Therefore, first there will be the ingathering of the exiles, VaYakhel, and then afterwards, after we have left the exile, the census will be taken.

450. The concept of being a half relates to the service of having "a broken, and crushed heart," which makes one worthy of the assurance that "G-d will not scorn."

451. In Kabbalistic terms, twenty is associated with the S'fira of Kesser, a perfect level which leads one to "lift up one's heart in the ways of G-d."

452. Here again there is a connection to the number twenty, for this is the sum reached when a Jew's ten faculties are combined with the ten S'firos from above.

453. The declaration "Behold, I accept upon myself..." begins the prayer service, but well before a Jew is able to make such a declaration, he begins his day with Modeh Ani.

454. Note the Rambam's statements in Hilchos Gerushin 2:20 that every Jew desires to fulfill G-d's will at all times.

455. Since a Jew's essence is connected with G-d at all times, he does not sleep because of his own individual desire, but only as a response to G-d's command, "And you shall show very careful concern for your lives."

456. A Jew's existence is kevua, "fixed

and permanent." And our Sages teach that the existence of an entity which is kevua cannot be nullified even when mixed together with a quantity one thousand times greater than itself.

Moreover, the Hebrew word for one thousand *elef* also relates to one of the terms used to describe G-d, 'Alufo' shel olam, "L-rd of the world." A Jew's existence cannot be nullified even in the face of Alufo shel olam. For Alufo shel olam refers to G-d as He descends and limits Himself in order to allow for the possibility of worldly existence. A Jew, however, is one with G-d at a level which transcends worldly existence entirely.

457. In the Mishneh Torah, Hilchos T'shuva 3:4, the Rambam speaks of "those who slumber in the vanities of worldly existence." The fundamental unity all men share with G-d affects these individuals despite their "sleep." Accordingly, their "slumber" will surely be only temporary. Ultimately, they too will "wake up" and develop a conscious relationship with G-d.

458. This reflects the connection between the ten utterances of creation and the Ten Commandments.

459. Indeed, the material and the spiritual are fused together into a single entity. For Modeh Ani reflects a oneness with G-d's essence and at that level, there is no difference between material and spiritual existence.

460. Indeed, it is possible that the prophet Eliyahu has already come to Tiberius and announced the coming of Moshiach.

461. I.e., inclusive of the different advantages possessed by both the First and Second Battei HaMikdash.

* Epistle 31. For an elaboration of the teaching of the Arizal that all the souls of the Jewish people are essentially the limbs of one and the same body, see also Mitzvas Ahavas Yisroel in Derech Mitzvosecha, by the Tzemach Tzedek.

462. Daily liturgy, Siddur T'hillas Hashem, p. 55.

463. Note Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim 11:4, which specifies the ingathering of the dispersed remnants of Israel as one of the principal indicators by which the coming of the Redemption can be

ascertained.

464. Rambam, op. cit., 12:5.

465. Needless to say, settling the vast hosts of immigrants in Eretz Yisroel requires massive resources. It is a unique privilege and responsibility to help meet this challenge, and offer substantial assistance. (See the address of the Rebbe Shlita to the participants in the Machne Israel Development Fund, in Sichos In English, Vol. 47, pp. 216-221.)

466. Unfortunately, there are still isolated countries that prevent Jews from emigrating. Nevertheless, the successful immigration of the many Jews who have reached Eretz Yisroel will generate spiritual influences that will facilitate the immigration of their brethren. See the maamer entitled Amar R. Oshia, 5739 (published in Seifer HaMaamarim – Meluket, Vol. IV, p. 89), which explains a similar pattern of spiritual causality.

467. These ten qualities in turn further subdivide, producing the full range of emotional attributes. See Tanya, ch. 3, and "Mystical Concepts in Chassidus," by R. Jacob Immanuel Schochet, ch. 3, sec. 6 (Kehos, N.Y. 1988).

468. In a related context, the Maggid of Mezritch offers a non-literal interpretation of the phrase (BaMidbar 10:1) *shnei chatzotzros*, (lit., "two trumpets"), rendering it as *shnei chatzi tzuros*, "two half-entities." A Jew and G-d are both "half-entities" until a union is established between them.

469. Tanya, ch. 2, paraphrasing Iyov 31:2.

470. Siddur T'hillas Hashem, p. 6.

471. Yeshayahu 6:3.

472. Note the explanation of the Rambam in Hilchos Gerushin 2:20.

473. In the Mishneh Torah, Hilchos T'shuva 3:4, the Rambam speaks of "those who slumber in the vanities of worldly existence." The fundamental unity all men share with G-d affects these individuals, despite their "sleep." Accordingly, their "slumber" will surely be only temporary. Ultimately, they too will "wake up" and develop a conscious relationship with G-d.

המטה העולמי להצלת העם והארץ

HAMATEH HA'OLAMI LEHATZALAT HA'AM VEHA'ARETZ

Urgent call to Anash around the world

Emergency Lifesaving Fund

We are about to launch a major campaign to rescue the Jews of Israel and the land of Israel. Great sums of money are needed for this undertaking to succeed. The protest gathering that will be held in Banyanei Ha'uma, and, even more so, the activities that will begin immediately thereafter cost thousands of dollars.

We implore all *Anash* communities around the globe: set up a special fundraising committee, and appoint an energetic *bachur* to head the fundraising efforts! We ask you to please understand the urgency of this matter — it is a life and death issue in every sense! If every single *Anash* community in the world participates in the efforts to finance the struggle to save millions of Jewish lives, we can succeed in our undertaking. We simply cannot afford to delay — Jewish lives are at stake!

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Shofar Association



LETTERS

BEFORE TRYING THE UNTRODDEN PATH

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

You can send or deliver the correspondence to:

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

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

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

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

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By the Grace of G-d
17 of Teves, 5747
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 20th of Kislev, with enclosures.

I was, of course, impressed with your efforts to disseminate Yiddishkeit, etc. However, a word of caution is in order, and I trust you will not take it amiss.

I trust you are aware that there is a wealth of Rabbinic literature by leading Torah scholars of past generations, including highly inspirational texts, timeless in their appeal, and not, G-d forbid, "dry commitment" as you put it. These great works, and their authors, present a well-trodden path that has helped our Jewish people overcome trials and tribulations in times of crisis as well as prosperity. Surely this great treasure should be fully utilized, before seeking new and uncharted ways. Indeed, experience has shown how the respective seekers fared, those who followed the well-trodden path and those who tried new ways.

I do not wish to elaborate on the above, as I do not know you personally, and your letter was informative rather than advice-seeking. But my impression is that you could provide your own elaboration if you so desire.

One final remark: It is well to bear in mind that one of the outstanding and redeeming characteristics of the contemporary young generation is that when they are presented with, and see, authentic Yiddishkeit, their response is a positive one, even if not instantaneous; but sooner or later it bears fruit.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

GREETING MOSHIACH IN MY FAMILY, TOO

BY RABBI ZALMAN NOTIK
MASHPIA, YESHIVAS TORAS EMES, YERUSHALAYIM

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

The shlichus of preparing the world to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu doesn't end at the other side of the door before you walk in the house. Smile, pick up your little child as he joyfully runs towards you, dance with him, and feel at that moment that you are "greeting Moshiach Tzidkeinu."

R. Dovid is an excellent educator, who has achieved very impressive successes in nurturing young people. In all of his varied approaches in education, the common denominator is "education out of love" and the ability to detect the positive potential that exists in each student.

All of us have heard about "education out of love," and the subject has become so commonplace that we all feel that we're so wise and understanding in our knowledge of the secret of education with a loving smile.

However, when this R. Dovid came home after an exhausting day in cheider or yeshiva, the first

sentence out of his mouth is, "Moishy, why didn't I see you davening in shul?"... R. Dovid bursts forth with a slew of questions, using the very tone of voice he rejects in his lectures.

This phenomenon not only exists among educators who deal with young people but also those who work with adults, i.e., Chabad House directors and prominent community leaders. Community members can speak about the wonderful smile on the lips of their community leader, the young and dynamic shliach with the patience of a tzaddik who listens to everyone's troubles with a calming smile that releases all the tensions, who gets down to the level of

children, even ready to help a little Jewish child who lost his precious collection of stickers in the street.

But they were never in the home of this successful shliach, and for whatever reason, they apparently never saw how his sweet smile turns into a sour expression the moment he enters the house. Every joke told by one his children grates in his ears like the sawing of wood in a lumberyard. When his Zalmi shows him the 90% he got on his test, his eyes are closed as he drifts into a snooze. It's a good thing for him that he has guests at his table on Friday night, for the guests are "mivtzaim," and to outsiders, you have to smile. As for the leftovers from his cheerful expression and positive attention, he leaves them as crumbs on the table for his son...

Educators will tell you that the meaning behind this phenomenon is linked to the fact that these people are simply spent of all their strength and don't have even one iota of positive attention to give to their children. Suddenly, the bell rings, the door opens, and a young man, a Jew with a searching neshama, walks in. Wonder of wonders, miracle of miracles, the

shliach becomes a Lubavitcher again with a warm heartfelt smile, endless patience, a magnificent educator, one who is worthy of imitation and much praise. This is proven by the fact that he always seems to have a few “cannonblasts” of love left in his arsenal to fire – only, just for outsiders...

As with every such injustice, there suddenly pops up the chassidic explanation that this is part of the great self-sacrifice required in order to bring Moshiach – abandoning the family and all else in order to pave the road towards the hisgalus of Melech HaMoshiach. Did we say “road”? This is merely a detour, and every time it reaches the door to the shliach’s home, it bypasses the entrance.

As with all problems in our times, the real solution comes from living with the days of Moshiach in the most correct and befitting manner, built upon the true understanding of what Moshiach is and what Redemption is really all about.

At the foundation of the concept of “the days of Moshiach,” is the saying, “*Ein od milvado*” (There is nothing else besides Him). This is the entranceway to the revelations of “the days of Moshiach,” both material and spiritual.

The teachings of chassidus, the beginning of “the sparkle of the light of Melech HaMoshiach,” reveals the infinite shine of G-dliness in everything in this world. First and foremost, it reveals itself to us in the Torah. A Jew who learns chassidus is privileged to see the infinite nature of G-dliness in the Torah. Afterwards, this is drawn down into the created world, where he sees unlimited Divine revelation. In practice, everything touched by chassidus reveals its infinite essence, and thus, becomes connected to the entire Torah as

well as everything in the world.

If we look at the Mishkan, for example, from a non-chassidic point of view, while the building of the Beis HaMikdash is a very important subject in Judaism, perhaps even the most important, it is certainly not the only subject. There is a wide variety of subjects in Yiddishkai, and all of them are important. Of course, the Beis HaMikdash is very important and holds an esteemed place in Judaism, but it seems a bit far-fetched to suggest that it is Yiddishkai’s central and sole focus...



However, every Lubavitcher child knows that there is a maamer called “*Basi L’Gani*,” which brings to light the fact that everything in Judaism focuses on a single subject: the Beis HaMikdash, on the level of “*ein od milvado*.” Starting from a Jew’s “*Modeh Ani*” in the morning and finishing with his sleep, this represents the revelation of the wondrous G-dly unity in Torah through the revelation of chassidus in the world during the days of Moshiach (as we have already seen from the scientific discoveries in recent years).

Similarly, on the subject of the final shlichus, “to prepare the world to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu,” thank G-d, we have been privileged to see in recent years Jews of all backgrounds joining the ranks to spread Yiddishkai – and more power to them!

Picture this: A chareidi Jew, a dedicated family man, is privileged to have a little Divine inspiration. He decides that he has to do something for the Jewish people, and so he opens an office for the advancement of Torah values to reach Jews in all avenues of Jewish society. With tremendous self-sacrifice and his great concern for the preparedness of Am Yisroel, he decides to devote many hours to this holy work. The task leaves its mark, and he comes home totally exhausted, tense, and sometimes irritable. Family life has been disrupted, the children are neglected, and the wife bemoans the day that her husband changed from a selfish person to a visionary with high ideals...

However, a Jew who has been privileged to learn chassidus, particularly in the generation that has merited the revelations of “the days of Moshiach” and the teachings of Melech HaMoshiach, acts and feels differently. When the Rebbe touches upon the idea of shlichus, it turns into a boundless concept that unites and includes everything within a Jew’s life and all his obligations. A Lubavitcher chassid knows that when he comes home, he doesn’t go to rest and release himself from his shlichus for a few hours to garner the strength he needs to get back to work with a double portion of renewed energy. **Absolutely not!** Before entering his home, he stops for a moment and contemplates the words of “*ein od milvado*” – “there is nothing else besides” the shlichus to prepare the world to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

It doesn't end at the other side of the door before you walk in the house. Smile, pick up your little child as he joyfully runs towards you, dance with him, and feel at that moment that you are "greeting Moshiach Tzidkeinu." Sit with the family at supertime, tell a chassidic story or give over a short sicha on the importance of *avodas Hashem*. Go out with the family once in a while to a nearby park and roll on the spacious green grass with the kids. What's the problem? Aren't they also Jews who need a little outreach in the pleasant and peaceful ways of Torah? If the cell phone rings – don't answer it. Put on an answering machine instead that says, "*Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach*. I'm busy right now preparing the world to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu. Please leave a message."

This is the meaning of "*ein od milvado*": Your whole life is shlichus. Be aware of this fact, and go out and start feeling the days of Moshiach.

However, if you still feel your animal soul nagging you right before you walk in the house, reminding you that you're tired and

"Listen, if you were to meet a Jew right now who was thirsting to hear some chassidus, you would suddenly feel the adrenaline flowing through your veins. So please, you have a family that is thirsting for you to give them a little warmth, love, Yiddishkait, and some Moshiach and the Redemption to boot. Get to work."

exhausted, right down to your last ounce of strength, go back and tell him: "Listen, if you were to meet a

Jew right now who was thirsting to hear some chassidus, you would suddenly feel the adrenaline flowing through your veins. So please, you have a family that is thirsting for you to give them a little warmth, love, Yiddishkait, and some Moshiach and the Redemption to boot. Get to work."

Here's a little tip: When you finally get in the house, turn off all the phones for a while, exactly as you would do when you have a meeting with a wealthy contributor, as you know deep in your heart that your own family contributes more.

Maybe, just maybe, this is one of the interpretations to "*Melech HaMoshiach E'Olam Va'ed*" – the boundless revelation of "*Va'ed*" (infinite, according to chassidus, as explained above in connection with the instilment of the concept of shlichus also in the shliach's family life) in accepting the sovereignty of Melech HaMoshiach and his revelations in the life of one's family.

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

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An International Campaign

To Study Inyanei Geulah U'Moshiach

Temimim from around the world, unite to present a joint gift in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan - 103 years

Track I: It's in Your Hands!

1. Content to learn:

First Stage: From Sunday, 18 Adar I - Thursday, 5 Adar

Content to learn: 4 sichos.
1) דברו החלבוני של מלך המשיח - החזרת שליטת התורה והמצוות
2) קונטרס חלבות של תורה ומצוות 3) נגזרות חטאות המגולת
4) דבר מלכות ש"ס אחרי"ק ה'תשס"א

Test:
Wednesday, 5 Adar II, multiple choice test, easy to medium level. 256 total points: 16 questions, 16 points per question, + 2 extra credit.

Second Stage: Thursday, 6 Adar II - Wednesday 26 Adar II

Content to learn: 4 Sichos
1) Two eras in Yemos Hamoshiach. 2) The coming of Eliyahu Hanavi. 3) קונטרס תורה חיים מאתו חנא
4) דבר מלכות ש"ס אפרו ה'תשס"א

Test:
Wednesday, 26 Adar II, Multiple choice, medium level
320 points: 16 questions, including one essay question. 20 points per question, and one extra credit.

2. Sedarim and Shiurim:

1. Over the course of the campaign, there will be daily sedarim to learn the sichos of this campaign.
2. This campaign also includes a weekly lecture in Inyanei Geulah U'Moshiach

Sedarim:
28 Sedarim; participation in each seder is worth five points, for a total of 140 points.

Shiurim:
4 Shiurim, attendance at each shiur is worth 20 points, for a total of 80 points.

3. Prizes:

The top 103 finalists will receive a set of "Likutei Sichos on the Parsha" - 46 volumes.

The next 103 places will receive a set of Sefer 'Maamarim Melukat' - 6 volumes. Anyone who earned more than 350 points and was not a first or second place finalist will receive the new sefer, 'מאמר חמלק'

Track II: Guaranteed Track

1. Content to learn:

Sunday, 18 Adar I - Wednesday, 26 Adar II

Content to learn:
Learn 2 sichos L'girsu: 1) Two stages in Yemos Hamoshiach. 2) דבר מלכות ש"ס אחרי"ק ה'תשס"א

Test:
Wednesday, 26 Adar II, multiple choice, easy level
210 points: 10 questions, 12 points per question, and one extra credit.

2. Shiurim:

As part of this campaign, each week there will be a shiur in Inyanei Moshiach and Geulah
4 shiurim, attendance at each shiur is worth 20 points, for a total of 80 points.

3. Prizes:

Anyone who earns 200 points will receive a set of Hagaddah shel Pesach plus the new sefer, מסעור חמלק
Anyone who earns more than 150 points will receive the new sefer, מאמר חמלק

All participants in this campaign will be entered into a raffle. One representative of all Temimim will be chosen to fly to New York for Yud Aleph Nissan.

הזכייה בכרטיסים פתוחים בנוסף ל"אז ביום ה'תשס"א.

Anyone who participates in both Track I and Track II will receive the greater prize of the two. The Likutei Sichos and Maamarim Melukat will be distributed at the office of Atah in 770, except in special circumstances.

Campaign Office: Igad Talmidei Yeshivot, Central Lubavitch Yeshiva, Beis Moshiach 770
Telephone: 718-773-4939 Fax: 718-735-7279 Email: Ato770@Gmail.com

Long Live the Rebbe King Moshiach Forever and Ever



NO WONDER IT HAPPENED TO THE BOY BORN OF THE REBBE'S BRACHA

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

Rabbi Eliyahu Altabe and his wife have just completed one year on shlichus in Marseilles, France. Over 80,000 Jews, 10,000 of whom are traditionally observant in some form or another, live in Marseilles. The Altabes focus primarily on reaching out to Jewish students. In addition, Rabbi Altabe serves as the rav of the Heichal Shlomo congregation located in the Marlon neighborhood.

Erev 3 Tammuz of this past year, Rabbi Altabe was sitting in shul with his congregants and farbrenging. Shortly before the end of the farbrengen, one of the men went outside and to his dismay saw the door of Rabbi Altabe's car lying on the pavement. He realized it had to be either a break-in or anti-Semitic vandalism, and he hurried back inside to tell the rabbi what he discovered.

Rabbi Altabe went outside and saw that his briefcase with his t'fillin, mezuzos which he had taken to be checked, and a list of all his mekuravim, had been stolen. For a few long minutes, he thought of all the work that had gone down the drain. The damage to the car paled in comparison.

Rabbi Altabe quickly recovered his composure and repeated to himself that it was all b'hashgacha pratis, by Divine providence. A member of the congregation put the door back in place.

Rabbi Altabe was extremely busy at this time of year with a Summer Yeshiva that he was making for students, and his busy calendar didn't allow him to think too much about what had happened. Despite the great

loss, he believed it was all for the best. After the davening the next morning, he tried to reconstruct his list of mekuravim.

That afternoon, he got a phone call from a woman named Mrs. Butboul. She asked him whether he had lost a briefcase. When he described the contents and she confirmed that they were in the briefcase, he was thrilled to hear that she had it.

Rabbi Altabe took the woman's address and arranged to pick up his briefcase. She explained to him that

For a few long minutes, he thought of all the work that had gone down the drain. The damage to the car paled in comparison.

after calling a few numbers written on papers in the briefcase, she realized that the briefcase had to belong to him.

The students were happy for their rabbi and they joined him on the trip to the woman's house. She lived not far from the shul, in an area populated by many Moslems.

When he arrived at her house, Rabbi Altabe was happy to see a mezuzah on the door. The woman gave him the briefcase, and he was thrilled to see that all its contents were intact!

Feeling so grateful to her, Rabbi Altabe suggested that since he was in her house, b'hashgacha pratis, he would be happy to examine the mezuzos in her house if they hadn't been recently checked. The woman said they had been checked over ten years ago. Rabbi Altabe asked whether he could remove them, and the woman was quite willing.

As Rabbi Altabe took down each mezuzah, he told her about his shlichus. When the woman heard him mention the Lubavitcher Rebbe, she grew very excited. She pointed out a picture of the Rebbe on the wall behind the front door and began telling her story.

She said that eight years had passed since her wedding and she had no children. She went to top doctors but nobody could help her.

One day, her aunt went to the Rebbe for dollars and she asked the Rebbe for a bracha for her niece. "The Rebbe gave her an extra dollar to give to me and gave a bracha for a child. A few months later, when my aunt came to France, she gave me the dollar, and a few days later, I discovered I was expecting! I gave birth to a son that year, and this year we will be celebrating his bar mitzva. We don't forget the Rebbe's bracha!"

"Now that I hear that you're a shliach of the Rebbe, I'm amazed when I think that the child who was born thanks to the Rebbe's bracha is the one who found your briefcase!"

Rabbi Altabe and the students with him were quite moved by the hashgacha pratis. It inspired them with emuna and bitachon as much as many shiurim.

‘OPENING OUR EYES’ ON THE MIDRECHOV

BY SHLOMO ROKEACH

*The Moshiach Center on the Midrechov in Yerushalayim is only two years old, but it has managed to initiate a wide range of activities that, in other places, usually takes much longer to implement. There’s a kollel, shiurim for men and women, and a variety of activities for newcomers and Anash. * An interview with Doron Oran, director of the Moshiach Center, a man who is always b’simcha, not only in Adar.*

You can’t miss the Moshiach Center in the Yerushalmi Midrechov (pedestrian mall). The huge picture of the Rebbe MH”M and the Moshiach flags make it readily identifiable. The flight of stairs ascending from the Midrechov leads you inside – to a different world.

Doron Oran welcomes me. It’s nine p.m., which is the middle of a busy day here. If I thought we would sit down and talk – well, that’s not exactly what happened.

One of the mekuravim was standing and talking with Doron. One look at the stubble of his beard, and the hat and jacket he was wearing, indicated to me that this

was a new mekurav. I waited patiently until the conversation was over, and hoped that we could sit and talk then.

However, Doron apologized and explained, “We’re about to start the video.”

I didn’t know why it would take so long to get a video started, but a glance from the balcony explained it all. Down below, right in the middle of the busy street hung a screen a floor high! Binyamin, a staff member, was working on preparing the machine that would show a video of the Rebbe to the crowd on the street. Doron let down the electric cables and I went downstairs to watch in

amazement as a crowd began to gather.

Finally, Doron took me on a tour of his place. We began in a room furnished like a zal in a yeshiva. To my surprise, Doron explained, “We have a shul here and a kollel, in the heart of the Midrechov.” Imagine that!

* * *

For three years, Doron was active at the Chabad house in the Gonen neighborhood of Yerushalayim. Then he worked for the Chabad house in Kiryat Menachem.

One day, as he was learning the sicha in which the Rebbe said we are in Yemos HaMoshiach, and we just need to open our eyes, Doron asked himself, “Why aren’t we opening our eyes?”

He wanted to start an organization to do just that, but his mashpia, Rabbi Zalman Notik, said that rather than start a Moshiach center, Doron should take the message out to the streets. Doron took his advice to heart and was off to the races.

“We started fifteen shiurim on inyanei Moshiach and Geula throughout the city, creating a chayus in the besuras ha’Geula for many people. We hung up signs with excerpts of sichos on inyanei Moshiach and Geula in chareidi

neighborhoods. We organized a convoy of cars decorated with Moshiach signs and drove around the streets of Yerushalayim once a month. The city definitely warmed up as a result!

Doron also initiated a special program of learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula for fathers and sons. He printed a special booklet called, "Abba! Let's learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula," and gave out thousands of copies throughout Yerushalayim. He offered expensive

“What I saw in the bar wasn't real simcha. Here, where the Chabadnikim are singing, is where the real simcha is.”

prizes and motivated many children, along with their fathers, to learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula together.

“We distributed thousands of sichos of the Rebbe on inyanei Moshiach and Geula, and we make public Kiddush Levana ceremonies every month,” says Doron.

On 3 Tammuz, they held a farbrengen, which was attended by about 1000 people, many of them not Lubavitch, all of whom sat and watched a video of the Rebbe.

Doron and his staff, which has grown over the years, have also worked on the fight for shleimus ha'Aretz and promoting the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach. They have organized demonstrations and protests for shleimus ha'Aretz, some of which were prominently covered by the national media.

“During the demonstrations we were able to do lots of mitzvaim. I remember that we once held a demonstration on a Friday, at a location where a number of influential government figures convene, even though we didn't have a permit. Opposite us, a group of young people, 'Students in Green,' demonstrated for the army to leave the territories. As we usually do on these occasions, we danced.

“I noticed a guy with long hair who came out of the students' protest tent, and when he caught sight of us he called out to his friends, 'Hey, come and see what's going on here.' Within the hour we were friends with the longhaired guy and some of his friends.”

In the course of his work, Doron felt a certain difficulty in orchestrating activities in Yerushalayim. “I simply did not have someone to organize the work. There was no central place where you could get brochures, or an organized place where programs could be held. I felt more and more strongly that we had



Displays that illustrate the signs indicating who Moshiach is, from the Rambam



A joyous occasion – a Hachnosas Seifer Torah

to have one place in Yerushalayim where this could all happen, a place where people could turn to for anything having to do with Moshiach, whether distributing brochures, stickers, sichos and the D'var Malchus, as well as a place where farbrengens would be held regularly, and Moshiach activities would happen. At the same time, I wanted it to be a warm and inviting place.

“It occurred to me that women have various workshops and lectures, but what about the men? Why didn't they have an organized place for these activities? I decided that the time had come to do something about this.

“After a few months, we picked the Midrechov in the center of Yerushalayim. I knew this was the best place for a Moshiach Center, because it's in the center of things.”

The Center was opened, and it does indeed open people's eyes. Doron's goal is to run a center that disseminates information about the leadership of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, to whoever is willing to listen, to religious and not-yet-religious Jews.

One of the first things they did was promote writing to the Rebbe. “Since I opened the Center,” says Doron, “several thousand people have written to the Rebbe. People are constantly coming up here, asking, consulting, and involving the Rebbe in their affairs.”

For many people, writing is just the first step. The Rebbe says that when you connect to the Rebbe, there's bound to be something that follows. “I see many Jews who, after writing to the Rebbe, are mekusharim. The person understands on his own that the Rebbe is Moshiach, and he makes good resolutions, like putting on t'fillin, etc. The connection to the Rebbe has an unbelievable effect.”

Doron figured there was no reason why the writing should only take place inside, when there was a very busy t'fillin stand outside. Doron said that “the situation today is such that we are not the only ones promoting t'fillin. There are at least three other, non-Lubavitchers, who have these stands, and it was obvious to me that we weren't going to be just another t'fillin stand on the street. We were going to have the Moshiach stand.

“We are not the only ones promoting t'fillin. There are at least three other, non-Lubavitchers, who have these stands, and it was obvious to me that we weren't going to be just another t'fillin stand on the street. We were going to have the Moshiach stand.”

“Since we opened a place to write to the Rebbe, people don't stop coming. I think this is the simple meaning of a ‘Moshiach stand,’ i.e., a place where people come and connect to Moshiach, accept his Malchus, and do what he says.”

The Center holds shiurim and farbrengens on Geula and Moshiach. Rabbi Noam Harpaz's weekly shiur on the D'var Malchus is taped and disseminated. Everybody, not only

the Lubavitchers, knows where to get material on Moshiach.

This is why two young men came into the Center one day. One of them introduced himself as “Micky from Tzofim,” and they explained, “We are the Moshiach team at Tzofim, and our topic this year is Moshiach. We want to learn about Moshiach and we need Moshiach flags and stickers.”

The Moshiach Center grew. The Granovetter family moved nearby and pitched in, and helped formed minyanim. Store owners in the area were excited by the Center, and the Center now has a minyan for the three t'fillos every day. People join the minyan from off the street too.

Passersby who stop in, find themselves in an atmosphere like 770. Before Shacharis there's a fifteen-minute shiur on Moshiach and Geula followed by the joyous singing of “Yechi.” The davening itself is especially lively and warm, and is of course, followed by lively dancing.

There's a shiur on Moshiach and Geula after Mincha too. And Doron keeps coming up with new ideas. If there's a shul, there ought to be a kollel too. Rabbi Granovetter donated the money, and the kollel was a happening thing. Rabbi Harpaz was enlisted and people from the Midrechov are able to learn. The crowd keeps on growing. The people working at the stand outside suggest that people go up and listen to a shiur. Some agree, and that's how the group of regulars continues to grow.

After Mincha, the Center moves into afternoon mode. Raffi gives shiurim over the phone for an hour, and then there's another shiur for new visitors. Raffi also checks t'fillin and mezuzos, for which there is a big demand.

The Center has some unusual people helping out too. While we were talking, a man came in who

looked familiar. I thought I had seen him downstairs on the street asking people for money. Doron told me that indeed, that is what the man does, but that's not all. Not surprisingly, he began to take an interest in the Center's busy stand. While he collected money, he noticed miracles taking place at the Chabad stand.

He went over to Doron and said he wanted to write to the Rebbe about a shalom-bayis problem, and he wanted to bring his wife to write to the Rebbe. How surprised the woman was when the first part of the page she opened to, dealt with

precisely the source of their problem. The problem they had struggled with for years was quickly resolved.

* * *

The Center really took off in a big way when a new staff member, Yaakov Bruchman, joined. Yaakov had worked for Chabad in Ramat Aviv, and the Moshiach Center of the Midrechoy quickly realized what an asset he is.

Yaakov is the "house father" and he helps with everything the Center needs. He arrives at the Moshiach Center at dawn, arranging and cleaning up the place for a new day

of work. The first rays of the sun begin to appear as Yaakov boils water for coffee and tea, and arranges cookies on the table.

The first visitors show up, some of whom are coming from a night of partying and want some spirituality. Others are early risers who want to learn Chassidus before going to work. Yaakov welcomes them all, and usually a shiur takes place.

"The homey feeling is very important," says Yaakov. "It makes people feel comfortable, and the warm feeling, in a certain way, is more important than anything else. It's very important to me that there is



always something to eat here.

“We were helped in this in an interesting way. A woman came to one of the women’s shiurim and she enjoyed it so much that she began coming regularly. She said she worked in a food emporium and every day we get the leftover sandwiches.

Yaakov is enamored by the Center. “I love this place,” he says with a satisfied smile. “You constantly feel the Rebbe here. It’s a special

atmosphere. The place is always alive. I can wholeheartedly say that you see G-dliness here constantly. The miracles roll about the streets of the Midrechov.”

The regulars show up for Shacharis. Some of them work on the Midrechov and others are Anash from Yerushalayim. Yaakov supervises the davening, and immediately afterwards he makes his rounds of the stores in the area. He has a route in which he visits each

storekeeper at least once a week. Each visit provides a full helping of Torah and mitzvos. With some of them, he sits and learns Chassidus. Yaakov has a special touch and is much beloved.

* * *

The Moshiach Center is not only a bustling place with farbrengens and Moshiach-related activities, but it’s a place that has changed the face of the Midrechov. The storeowners on the Midrechov are exposed regularly to the besuras ha’Geula, and all know where to go for inyanei Moshiach in Yerushalayim.

Doron says, “We work together with all the Chabad houses in the city, with Anash, and with anybody who is interested.”

The T’mimim learning in Toras Emes come and farbreng at the Center, and contribute towards the Chassidishe atmosphere. The kollel shiurim have regular attendees, and the classes are growing, not to mention writing to the Rebbe, which goes on all the time. Storeowners feel at home, and they sit down to write to the Rebbe unaided. Many of them have already committed to learning Chitas, Rambam, and even to going to the mikva.

“We had a Sheva Brachos here for an employee of one of the stores,” says Doron. “The Center is part of the family.”

Thursday nights are very special at the Moshiach Center. The T’mimim bring large groups of youth from the street, and everybody sits down to farbreng with the weekly mashpia. The farbrengen begins with a live broadcast of Mincha at 770. They all stand and say “Yechi” along with the crowd in 770, and then they sit down to farbreng.

“The farbrengens have an enormous impact on the crowd. It’s amazing to see the young people off the street sitting with the T’mimim

YEMOS HA’MOSHIACH ON THE MIDRECHOV

The man behind the scenes and the spiritual leader of the Moshiach Center is Rabbi Zalman Notik, mashpia in Yeshivas Toras Emes in Yerushalayim. He publicizes the besuras ha’Geula in Yerushalayim, particularly at the Moshiach Center. He describes the outstanding success the Moshiach Center enjoys as follows:

“Things move so fast at the Moshiach Center. In one year of work, the Center accomplished what normally takes much longer in other places. The kollel, the shiurim for men and women, and many other programs, were put together within months.

“This is thanks to the Rebbe’s bracha for course, which accompanies us throughout. It must also have something to do with the name of the place, the Moshiach Center.

“In the Yemos HaMoshiach, we know things will move faster, as the verse says, before they finish plowing, they’ll already begin harvesting. The same is true here, where we can see signs of Yemos HaMoshiach, one of them being the speed at which things take place.

“And another unique thing, there’s a combination between the outreach work being done as well as the work among Anash. At the Thursday night farbrengens, you can see mekuravim and young people from the street, along with Anash and old-timers, all sitting together and farbrenging without anybody feeling that one is more important than the other. This too is connected with the prophecies of Yemos HaMoshiach, ‘a man won’t teach his friend because they will all know Me.’

“No less important is the last point, which is the cooperation between the Moshiach Center and the Chut HaMeshulash, devotedly run by Yigal Goldstein.

“The Chut HaMeshulash reaches out to kids on the fringe, kids who have left their families for various reasons. Among other things, the Chut organizes Shabbos meals for them. The one who runs the Chut on Shabbos is usually Doron Oran of the Moshiach Center.

“So the thread that runs through it all is Yemos HaMoshiach, a time when there will be no jealousy, and no competition, which benefits everybody.”



A meeting in a restaurant quickly turns into a farbrengen



Raffi giving a shiur over the phone

and saying l'chaim, warming up with the light of the besuras ha'Geula."

Every Erev Shabbos and Yom Tov, girls volunteer to distribute candles, and on the Yomim Tovim, the place is packed. On Pesach, for example, dozens of people attended the seider.

"On Purim we repeated the Megilla all day long, at least twenty times. We gave out mishloach manos to passersby and people said to us, 'You've really changed this street!'"

During Tishrei the sounds of the shofar, minyanim for t'fillos, and apple and honey were followed by the sounds of clucking chickens for Kaparos. Then a huge sukka was erected and the four minim were available and of course, there was a Simchas Beis HaShoeiva every night.

"We've been enormously successful. People love joining in the dancing. Dozens of kids with ponytails and earrings joined in and danced until they were dripping sweat. We decided to continue with Tishrei all year round and to have dancing every week. We saw that nothing attracts the kids like simcha [see box]."

In the middle of the interview, a woman walked into the Center. She wanted to write to the Rebbe and she needed someone to translate the answer into Russian. Doron asked his wife to help the woman, and I looked

UNBRIDLED JOY

Doron relates: How influential is simcha? Here are two stories:

During the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva, a boy who was dressed as a chareidi came over to us, telling us that on the previous Chanuka he had spiky hair.

"Thanks to you, I look like this," he said. He said that on Chanuka he had visited a bar, and when he came out he saw us dancing and singing on the street. He thought, "What I saw in the bar wasn't real simcha. Here, where the Chabadnikim are singing, is where the

real simcha is."

Doron continues – a few days later, I witnessed the following:

We took a Torah down to the Midrechov for Hakafos Shniyos. During the singing and dancing, we sold the hakafos with the Torah. Some guys bought a hakafa for their friend, and he happily danced with the Torah.

The following Thursday night, that same guy came to the farbrengen with a kippa and he told us that he decided that he was going to wear a kippa from then on.



Keeping in constant contact with the store owners on the Midrechov

around, trying to digest everything I had heard about this place. There was just so much going on here!

“And that’s not all,” continued Doron. He brought me to the other part of the Center and we passed an office and kitchen. Doron pointed to another room and said, “This is the women’s area.”

We entered a small room, elegantly appointed. A small couch and a guitar seemed to stand out. This is where the women’s classes are held.

“We have very nice programming for women. Additionally, we have classes for the English-speaking people on the Rechov. Rabbi Yehoshua Appel gives a class in English at a coffee house downstairs and the shiur is packed.

It seems as though you have everything covered!

“To begin with, we decided that our target audience is all of Yerushalayim. Besides the everyday work we do here, on Chai Elul we organize an event at a large hall. We’ve had about 500 people attending. We’ve held Siyumei HaRambam and other events too.”

“On Purim we repeated the Megilla all day long, at least twenty times. We gave out mishloach manos to passersby and people said to us, ‘You’ve really changed this street!’”

Where does the money come from for all this?

“Like everybody else, we also have miracles. Our monthly budget runs in the tens of thousands of shekels. A woman began attending the women’s classes. One day, she asked me if I knew of a Chabad house that needed a computer. I told her we could use a computer! I didn’t know how serious she was.

“That same day, she came back with the most advanced computer, as



Protest vigil to publicize what the Rebbe said about shleimus ha’Aretz

well as all the accessories.”

In conclusion...

“The main thing today, in my opinion, is to learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula from the D’var Malchus, and to write to the Rebbe. This is what gets Jews involved. In order to do this, we have to realize our full capacities, to reveal our inner strengths. When we fully utilize our strengths and talents, we certainly hasten the revelation of the Rebbe MH”M.

OFFICIAL APPROVAL

Shortly after we opened the Center, a municipal worker passed by who was doing a local inspection and he saw the Midrechov’s new attraction (meaning us). He entered the Center and ordered us to take down the Moshiach flags and all the signs out on the balcony.

Oy! We had just opened the Center and we were faced with this problem. We decided we would take down some signs, for the meantime, but we wouldn’t remove the Rebbe’s picture no matter what!

Some time went by and one day we had another visit from the same government official. It was after we had started a shiur on the D’var Malchus, which we broadcast to the street on a loudspeaker. The official came upstairs to yell about the loudspeaker, but before he did so, he was actually convinced to sit down at the shiur.

He enjoyed it so much that he told us to hang the Moshiach flag back up, and he said, “If you have any problems, call me.”

WHEN THERE'S A WAY, THERE'S A WILL

PART I

The Merkaz Dovrei Ivrit in Montreal is a busy place. Aside from Anash, the talmidim-shluchim, and the locals, who daven and learn here, you will also see many drop-ins. Some come to put on t'fillin. Others come for shiurim. Some come for a hot meal, while others come to sit in the library to read a book or watch a video.

Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Cohen tells one of the many amazing *Igros Kodesh* stories that took place at the center:

It was two days before Rosh HaShana 5764, and Dovid P., a member of Anash, sat down to write a *pidyon nefesh* to the Rebbe. He listed all his loved ones for a good and sweet year. As he wrote his wife's name, he sighed. It was five years since he had become religious. He learned Chassidus every day, had a beard, and had recently started wearing a sirtuk. His children were enrolled in the Rebbe's schools and were progressing nicely.

However, his wife, despite the progress made by the family as a whole, was unwilling to cover her hair in any way! He thought about the hours spent discussing this. Even his daughters were in favor of it but his wife said: nothing doing!

He knew that wearing a sheitel brings brachos to the home, but it wasn't up to him. "I tried everything," he wrote to the Rebbe, "from here-on-in, the rest is up to the Rebbe

himself." He dared to write that and even added that it should happen before Rosh HaShana!

Feeling optimistic, he took his wife and one of his daughters shopping. They passed a sheitel store and he slowed down and nearly stopped at the entrance. He looked questioningly at his wife and said, "What do you think?" and she said, "Enough already! Stop with this nonsense. You know very well what I think about it. Just

*"Enough already!
Stop with this
nonsense. You know
very well what I think
about wearing a
sheitel."*

continue driving."

His feeling of hope and faith vanished. He had so anticipated a miracle, but it hadn't happened. He mumbled, "Okay, okay, I was just kidding," and continued driving. He figured he just didn't deserve a miracle.

PART II

Dovid prefers snoozing in his car than walking around. He gave his wife the credit card, leaned his seat back,

and relaxed. Two hours later, they were back, and for some reason his wife and daughter were grinning.

"Is something funny?" he asked.

"No, not really."

"How did the shopping go?" he asked.

"Baruch Hashem, great!" said his wife, but Dovid sensed something was up. His daughter looked at them and laughed, but he chose to ignore her. His wife handed him one of her packages.

"What's in it?"

When she didn't respond, he opened the box and to his amazement he saw a **sheitel!**

"I don't believe it!" he said in amazement.

"Continue not believing," she said with a smile, "because the other sheitel is on my head!"

* * *

His wife explained: "We went around the mall and in the middle of our shopping we went into a store and asked to use the bathroom. It happened to be a sheitel store. I felt uncomfortable walking in just to use the bathroom and to be polite I said that I was interested in being **measured** for a sheitel, with no obligation on my part.

"The woman took out a sheitel that was identical to my hair and hairstyle, and on the spur of the moment I decided that I would cover my hair from now on. Why not?"

R' HILLEL: TZADDIK AT BIRTH

Chassidic stories from the notes of R' Avrohom Weingarten a"h, l'ilui nishmas his son, R' Matisyahu Aryeh a"h.

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY Y. BEN BORUCH

THREE EXPLANATIONS OF "EMES"

R' Shmuel Levitin said he heard the following story from R' Dovid Zev of Yekaterinaslav:

R' Shlomo, brother of R' Pesach Malestovker, lived in the city of Stratov. R' Shlomo was sick, and some of the great Chassidim, disciples of R' Hillel of Paritch, went to visit him. Among them were R' Dovid Zev of Yekaterinaslav and R' Gershon Ber of Pahr.

When they arrived at R' Shlomo's house, they found his brother, R' Pesach, there. When they asked him to say Chassidus, he refused. R' Pesach generally did not review Chassidus outside of his city of Podovranka, where Chassidim went to hear Chassidus from him, including R' Zalman Chaiken (great grandfather of the Ramash [the Rebbe MH"m]).

But when his brother, R' Shlomo also asked him to say Chassidus, R' Pesach couldn't refuse, and he reviewed the maamer on the verse, "Hashem is close to all who call Him, to all who call Him in truth." He explained that "in truth" has three meanings: 1) with truth, 2) to the truth, 3) within truth. And he explained each level at length.

As he said the maamer, R' Pesach

made a movement with his hand as a sign that he had said more than enough (which was his way), and he stopped in the middle of the maamer.

(R' Shmuel Levitin, who was the grandson of R' Gershon Ber of Pahr, added that he found handwritten notes by his great grandfather, which had a summary of this maamer that R' Pesach said.)

*They answered:
Learning Chassidus
helps us understand
the simple meaning of
the words.*

A TZADDIK BEFORE HE WAS BORN

At that time, R' Dovid Zev reviewed a maamer he heard from R' Hillel of Paritch. The maamer was very deep and dealt with lofty topics.

When R' Pesach heard it, he said: Why do you review "lofty Chassidus"? It is completely beyond you! Do you compare yourselves to R' Hillel? R' Hillel was a tzaddik in his mother's womb!

In order to illustrate that point, R' Pesach said:

R' Nachum of Chernobyl once went to the town of Brahin, where R' Meir, father of R' Hillel, lived. When he left the town, the townspeople accompanied him. Among them was R' Meir, who carried R' Hillel, his young son.

When little R' Hillel saw R' Nachum, he began to shout: Tatte, I see fire!

His father asked him: Where do you see fire?

The child pointed at R' Nachum and said that he saw fire over the head of the tzaddik.

WHAT DO YOU DAVEN WITH?

R' Pesach asked: What do you daven with (i.e., with which maamarim do you daven)?

They answered: With the simple meaning of the words.

R' Pesach asked: If so, why do you learn Chassidus?

They answered: Learning Chassidus helps us understand the simple meaning of the words.

EVEN WHILE SLEEPING

R' Hillel of Paritch was known for being particular about everything,

whether major or minor. He was extremely careful about rising for the elderly, to fulfill that mitzva. They say that when R' Hillel slept, and an elderly man entered his room, R' Hillel would sense it immediately and would jump out of bed, to fulfill the mitzva of rising for the elderly.

GRATITUDE

R' Hillel once said: I am grateful to my father for not covering my feet (when he slept at night) from when I was four years old.

HALF A CHASSID

R' Shmuel Levitin related that he heard the Rebbe Rayatz say, "The Tzemach Tzedek once said: I have two and a half Chassidim, and the half is R' Hillel of Paritch (i.e., he was half a Rebbe himself).

NESHAMOS

Neshamos from the World of Truth would go to R' Pesach Malestovker every Erev Shabbos before Mincha so he could rectify them. He would send the neshamos to R' Hillel.

IT DISTURBS ME!

R' Zalman Chaiken of Podvranka (great grandfather of the Rebbe) was a disciple of R' Pesach. When he was an

older man, R' Pesach lived with this disciple and R' Pesach asked that his wife not make his bed.

Once, R' Zalman's wife made the bed by mistake and R' Pesach sensed that this had happened and he yelled, "Why did she do that? It doesn't allow me to think Chassidus!"

THOUGHTS

R' Pesach was a very spiritual man. Once, when R' Pesach was davening, a young bachur stood nearby, thinking "foreign thoughts." R' Pesach sensed this and he said to the bachur, "Your foreign thoughts do not allow me to daven."

DINIM ON THE MOURNER

R' Shmuel Grunem related: R'

Hillel was very careful not to daven with a minyan in which a mourner was chazan, saying that dinim (severity) rests on a mourner.

R' Berel Rivkin added that there had to be a source for this in halacha, and it's in the tractate K'subos (8a) where Rav holds that, "chassanim are part of the minyan but not mourners." The P'nei Yehoshua explains that a difference is made between a chassan and a mourner because it says, "when ten eat together, the Sh'chita is among them," but the Sh'china does not rest in a place of sadness. Therefore a chassan, who is happy, is part of a minyan; a mourner, who is sad, is not part of the minyan.

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SOLDIER OF THE CAUCASUS

BY PINCHAS ZARCHI

This is the fascinating story of Mordechai Giladov, a traditional Jew who didn't know how to daven from a siddur, who became the rav and spiritual leader of Nal'chik in the Caucasus.

I sat together with Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzal, shliach and rav of Natzeret Ilit, Mordechai Giladov, a warm Jew from Nal'chik in the Caucasian Mountains, and Levi Shuvayev, who is about to leave for his hometown, Nal'chik, in order to be a shliach and rav in that city.

Caucasia or the Caucasus (Russian *Kavkaz*) is distant and obscure. You are unlikely to see it make headlines, and if not for the tragedy in the school in Chechnya, a republic in northern Caucasus not far from the area, the place would have remained dormant for years to come.

The Caucasus is divided into republics, and each republic has Jews, most of whom are what we loosely call Sephardim, who came there from Iran and Eretz Yisroel. Nal'chik, the focus of this article, is in the republic of Kabardino-Balkaria.

The fascinating history of this community is of interest not only to

acolytes of Jewish history. According to the traditions of the "mountain Jews," some of them are remnants of one of the families of the tribe of Binyamin that had to leave Eretz Yisroel even before the destruction of the Mikdash. Some claim that they are from the Ten Tribes exiled before the destruction by the Assyrians.

Tradition has it that they went until the northern part of the Caspian Sea. When the rest of the nation was exiled to Babylon, a hundred or so years later, they met their brethren who had arrived there previously and had acclimated to the area. From there they went to Persia (Iran) and they comprised the beginnings of Persian Jewry. In the next phase, they wandered further, to the area of the Caucasian Mountains.

In the Gemara, there are mentions of the Jews of Derbent, as well as references to the era of Tigranes I, known as Tigranes the Great, king of Armenia, who

conquered "Palestine," and brought many Jewish captives to the Caucasus. The rest of the Jews (mostly in other parts of the Caucasus) came from Persia hundreds of years ago.

Despite the passage of thousands of years, the Jews of the Caucasus held on to their deep ties with Judaism. Like the Jews of Bucharria and Georgia, throughout the millennia they observed chuppa and kiddushin, sh'chita, kashrus, bris mila, and holidays. They are famous for their outstanding hospitality. Their language is a Jewish one mixed with Persian, the Kurdish language, Turkish, and the like.

Mordechai Giladov has an illustrious family tree. From both sides he is a descendent of rabbanim and chachamim. His maternal grandfather was Rabbi Yecheiel and his paternal grandfather was Rabbi Boruch Giladi ben Rabbi Yitzchok. His uncle, Rabbi Binyamin, learned in Vilna and married Rochel, a daughter of Ashkenazi rabbis in Vilna.

"My grandfather, Rabbi Boruch, was killed al kiddush Hashem in the courtyard of his home by the Communists in 5679 (1919). Sadly, he was not the only one. His son, my father, was only six years old at the time, and he was taken, along with other orphans of murdered rabbanim, to educational institutions

run in the spirit of Lenin. My father then studied law in Leningrad, and when he became a senior magistrate, he returned to Nal'chik, where he ran the municipal courthouse.

"His brothers were also raised and 'reeducated' by the Communists, but this didn't help him because in one of the famous purges, he was exiled with many others, never to be heard from again (may Hashem avenge his blood).

"Despite my father's communist indoctrination and his high position, he was a Jew who was strong in his faith. He lived the same paradox as many Jews in the Caucasus: on the one hand, they had been educated as communists; on the other hand, the pintele Yid was stronger than their heretical indoctrination. Although my father did not know Torah except for the little bit he had learned from his father until the age of six, brachos and some davening, his pintele Yid burned fiercely.

The person who came with the goods, would leave it under a rock at the foot of the bridge, and walk away. Then he would call me and ask me how grandma was doing. That's how I knew to look under the bridge in the agreed-upon spot, for a precious package.

"My father used his position at the courthouse to release Jewish

prisoners, and he replaced them with others. When one of his Jewish acquaintances had a son, they would ask him to arrange the bris mila. He arranged the brissin for many Jewish babies. He was 'our man' in the court system."

THE BLOSSOMING OF YIDDISHKAIT IN THE CAUCASUS

Let us go back to the period following the end of the Cold War, to the end of the 20th century. When the Russians annexed the Caucasus to their empire, the borders between Russia and the Caucasus opened and business began to flourish. Many Ashkenazi Jews arrived in the area and met their Jewish brethren whom they didn't know existed. Jewish soldiers of Ashkenazi extraction, who served in the Russian army, also came. They came for training, and they encountered a thriving Jewish community. When they saw that the "mountain Jews" observed Torah and mitzvos as they did, they began to join them. The mountain Jews, famous for their hospitality, hosted their Ashkenazi brothers and they became friends.

As a result, many Ashkenazi Jews settled there and even opened an Ashkenazi shul according to their own customs.

The grandfather Rabbi Yechiel was a very special individual. He married a wealthy girl, as his father-in-law was a contractor who supplied goods for the Russian army, but he didn't lose his yiras Shamayim. He educated young Mordechai, implanting within him a love for mitzvos and teaching him all the prayers by heart. Mordechai remembers him well, for his grandfather lived until the age of 114!

His family was very particular about kashrus, especially for Pesach, when they kept many extra



Mordechai way back when

hiddurim. Mordechai remembers the huge oven that stood in the center of the room in which they prepared bread and cakes. When Pesach approached, they broke the oven and built a new one. They baked their matzos in the brand-new oven, and after Pesach, they continued to use it until the next Pesach, when they broke it and started all over again. “We didn’t have the concept of kashering,” says Mordechai.

They punctiliously kept mitzvos, and every boy had a bar mitzva and put on t’fillin. In the good years, there were sofrim in the Caucasus, but as with many Jewish communities, the elders passed on and there was nobody to replace them. So they had to import tashmishei k’dusha from Moscow. Many Jews attended shul daily, not to mention Shabbos and Yomim Tovim.

Only two Jews out of tens of thousands, dared to cross the line and assimilate, and this was despite their formal communist and atheistic education. “Nothing could shake the firm foundations that were set by our parents in earlier generations,” says Mordechai.

“One of the things they were very particular about was the laws of mourning during the Three Weeks, when we sorely felt how we lacked the Beis HaMikdash. Throughout the entire three-week period, we refrained from eating meat. We, the little children, remembered the churban because we didn’t get candy throughout the Three Weeks.”

THE ELDERS OF THE COMMUNITY GIVE ME A MISSION

As I sat facing Mordechai, who told me with sparkling eyes about the Jews of the Caucasus, the Rebbe, shlichus, and mesirus nefesh for a life of Torah and mitzvos in Nal’chik, it was hard for me to understand



With rabbanim in Moscow

“I became nervous, but they were not afraid. The Rebbe had sent them and they weren’t afraid of anything.”

how someone who hadn’t known how to daven had become a rav and spiritual leader of a community. Seemingly, here was a young Jewish man from the Caucasus, who had gone through the typical route of Communist schools, earned a doctorate at a dental school, then army service, work, and marriage.

“The big revolution in my life took place in 5731 (1971). It was after I had gotten married and was about to become a father. I went to shul with a specific goal in mind, to pray for an easy birth for my wife. The elders of the community who still attended shul daily, made a peculiar request of me – that I learn how to perform bris mila. They

maintained that the community’s mohel was elderly and we had to make sure that the next generation had mohalim.

“But why me, I asked them. I told them that I wasn’t an ardent mitzva observer. They were happy though, with my medical background, being that I was a dentist. I told them that I loved religion but I wasn’t actually religious. I didn’t think I was spiritually suitable to be a mohel, to take on this responsible position, but they insisted and said that it was enough if I learned the technicalities of circumcision and the blessings. This is what was important to them.

“The elders’ wish was not fulfilled but it was the beginning of a spiritual arousal for me. Something had been ignited, though it took time for it to grow into a large flame.

“Baruch Hashem, Hashem accepted my prayer and my wife gave birth to a healthy son. I continued at my job and life went along pleasantly enough, without any unusual occurrences.

“A year later, I went to Leningrad



Mordechai lighting the menorah with a boy from the Caucasian community

to visit my brother. He studied engineering, then married and moved to Leningrad. Being traditional, I looked for a shul there

but my brother had no idea where to find a shul in his city. After extensive searching, I found a shul. I entered and met two old men and one young



Mordechai's grandfather Rabbi Yechiel, a chacham from the Caucasian community

man. The young man immediately came over to me and asked me if I was Georgian.

“I am Jewish,’ I answered.

“He asked me if I knew anything about Judaism, and I said that I was G-d-fearing and traditional. It turned out that the young man was a Lubavitcher, and he gave me a pocket siddur with a Russian translation. He gave me yet another precious gift, the five books of the Torah. In those days, this was a great treasure. We stayed in touch and he sent me people with additional Torah and Jewish material.”

How were they able to give you Jewish material in communist Russia?

“That’s a story in itself. Near my house was a bridge. The person who came with the goods, would leave it under a rock at the foot of the bridge, and walk away. Then he would call me and ask me how grandma was doing. That’s how I knew to look under the bridge in the agreed-upon spot, for a precious package. Among the pages I received, were also pages of *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* and the like.

“The bachur from Leningrad told Betzalel Schiff, director of SHAMIR, about me, and he asked me for addresses of other Jews whom I knew, so that basic Jewish books that SHAMIR had translated into Russian could be sent to them. I supplied him with many addresses, and he sent them s’farim. The communist censor wasn’t pleased with the number of Jewish books that began pouring into Nal’chik, and many s’farim were confiscated. Still Tzalke (Betzalel) continued to send the s’farim.

“In 5734 (1974), my wife was expecting, and one night I dreamt that I saw a distinguished Jew with a beard. He asked me what name I would give the son who would be

born, and I told him. He asked me what name I would give the next son and I answered him again, and then I woke up. When I say 'woke up,' I meant physically and spiritually. From then on, I began putting on t'fillin daily.

"Shortly thereafter, my wife gave birth to twins! As I told the old man in the dream, I called one Dovid (for Dovid HaMelech) and the other one Gilad, for the founder of our family, Rabbi Gilad.

"After the birth of my twin boys, I decided to listen to the elders of the community and to study mila and sh'chita. They gave me a certificate to the office of the chief rabbinate of Moscow. Near the office was a yeshiva founded by Rabbi Levin, rabbi of Moscow. I registered for classes at the yeshiva, which was under Rabbi Fishman. I was the talmid of Rabbi Yisroel Schwartzblatt.

"In those days, I owned a textile factory, and I could allow myself to put away sums of money in order to

Mordechai remembers two "pearl merchants," who came one morning to Nal'chik. "They looked for me and in talking to them, I quickly realized that they were a very different sort of pearl merchant, i.e., pearls meaning Jewish souls. They were shluchim of the Rebbe who came in the guise of merchants.

support my household while I studied and was away from home. I studied for four years, in the course of which we were supported by the money I had saved. I flew home once a month from Moscow to Nal'chik and back."

SECRET SHLUCHIM

"In 5734, Levi Asherov, a Jew from the Caucasus, went to the Rebbe in Brooklyn. He had a yechidus, and he told the Rebbe about the Jews of Nal'chik and about me. The Rebbe asked him detailed questions about the community. I know that Rabbi Schwartzblatt of Moscow was also asked about me, and he confirmed that I was indeed his talmid and that he had given me smicha as a mohel and shochet.

"In 5738, I began to get more involved with the Jews of my community, and I wasn't only the mohel and shochet, but also the one to turn to for all Jewish needs in Nal'chik. I did this for 18 years until I moved to Eretz Yisroel in 5756. I helped and was involved in everything Jewish and made sure there were results.

Mordechai remembers two "pearl merchants," who came one morning to Nal'chik. "They looked for me and in talking to them, I quickly realized that they were a very different sort of pearl merchant, i.e., pearls meaning Jewish souls. They were shluchim of the Rebbe who came in the guise of merchants. They stayed with us for a few days. They farbrenge with us, learned, and helped us in those things in which we needed their aid.

"They were the first shluchim, and since that first time, in 5738 (1978), we were often visited by the Rebbe's shluchim."

Mordechai continued his monologue in his unique combination of Ivrit, Russian, and many hand motions. Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzfel sat and listened in



The Jews of Nal'chik reciting Tashlich during the Aseres Yemei T'shuva



A bar mitzva ceremony in the courtyard of the shul

fascination, asking questions and interjecting comments every so often. I was so inspired! We also had the feeling that the Rebbe was crumbling the Iron Curtain from a number of directions simultaneously, but to sit with a Jew who lived through that time, and was part of the process, was another matter entirely. I couldn't wait to hear more of Mordechai's story.

"Among the shluchim who came to us were Rabbi Chaiken and his wife. I remember a pair of shluchim who came in 5748 (1988), when the first cracks in the communist wall



With Rav Chaiken in Caucasia

were seen, although the Soviet Union was still stable and strong. They stayed at the hotel, and after a farbrengen, we accompanied them back to their hotel. It was 2 a.m. and they were so uplifted in spirit that, oblivious to the late hour and the danger, they began talking loudly. Speaking is dangerous enough, but suddenly they burst into song, 'Nyet nyet nikavo.'

"I became nervous. We were four people: the pair of shluchim, my dear talmid Levi Shuvayev, and myself. Nothing ended up happening but what impressed me was the shluchim's courage. They were not afraid. The Rebbe had sent them and they weren't afraid of anything."

MOVING TO ERETZ YISROEL

"In 5749 (1989), I went to Eretz Yisroel for the first time, with tourist papers. My old friend, Betzalel Schiff, welcomed me and took care of me throughout my visit. In Eretz Yisroel, I had the z'chus to write to the Rebbe for the first time, to write to the one who had worried, encouraged, and worked tirelessly behind the scenes. I wrote to the Rebbe about my desire to make

aliya.

"After sending the letter, I was told that I needed lots of patience because an answer by mail took between one month and two months to arrive, and by that time I was supposed to have returned to Nal'chik.

"But an open miracle took place, and three days after sending the letter, I received an answer! Yes, in the mail! The Rebbe wrote that it wasn't the right time to make aliya just yet, and that I had to remain in Caucasia and continue doing what I was doing.

"Betzalel asked me if I knew addresses of Jews in my city so he could send s'farim again. I told him that I knew 20,000 addresses. He laughed and said that he didn't have that many s'farim, but I gave him many addresses. Two months later, all of Caucasia was flooded with s'farim in Russian. The KGB wasn't at the height of their strength at that point and most of the s'farim made it to their destination.

"I returned to Nal'chik and made yearly visits to Eretz Yisroel, while my children had already officially made aliya and one son lived in Natzeret Ilit.

"I became acquainted with the Caucasian community in Natzeret



Mordechai at the signing of the k'suba of a Jew in his community

Ilit, which had more than 600 families. On one of my trips to Eretz Yisroel, I met the chairman of the religious council, Menachem Veknin. He said that he had heard about me, and my work in the Caucasus, and that he would be happy to give me a position as mashgiach for kashrus if I moved to Natzeret Ilit.

“Hearing that, and seeing that there was much work to be done among the Caucasian families in Natzeret Ilit, I began thinking more seriously about aliya.

“The council chairman agreed to allocate a small building in the neighborhood for a shul for Caucasian Jews. When I saw there was a serious foundation to build on, I made aliya and settled in Natzeret Ilit. I continued my work and we set up a center of operations, shiurim, and a Kollel Levi Yitzchok for the seniors.”

* * *

Indeed, during the five hours of the interview held in the Caucasian center in Natzeret Ilit, the place was busy. Jews were in and out, learning, talking, and spending their day in a holy place. Every Jew feels at home and Mordechai is loved and revered. The community is close to the Rebbe, Chabad, and Geula. On every shelf, you can see Lubavitch material in Russian or Hebrew.

On the wall facing me is a picture of the Rebbe. This picture has a story. A member of the community, Arthur Rachnayev, drew it in an unusual way. He doesn't use paintbrushes, just his fingers, yet the painting (unlike many others) portrays the Rebbe nicely.

Mordechai, in addition to his role in running the community is a mashgiach for the Rabbanut in Natzeret Ilit run by Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzal. When they sit together, you can easily sense the love and esteem that the two feel for each other.



R' Mordechai Giladov with Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzal, chief rabbi of Natzeret Ilit



The shul in Nal'chik

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

In the middle of the interview, someone wanted to speak with Mordechai. When Mordechai returned, he said, “This Jew also has an interesting story. He devotedly helps renovate and maintain the shul. He is a scion of Jews who joined the Jewish people 300 years ago in Russia. Because they converted, they were exiled to Azerbaijan where they lived as full Jews.

“When they made aliya, they were not accepted as Jews because of problems in proving their provenance. Naturally, they were very insulted since their grandfathers had had mesirus nefesh for Judaism, yet they were rejected as Jews in Eretz Yisroel even though generations had passed since the conversions.

“The end of the story was that an expert in these matters established that their conversion was 100% and all ended well.”

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From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



PART IV

AVOIDING A CHAZAKA

Years later, when the *Admur's* wife passed away (on 20 Tammuz, 5724/ June 30, 1964) the Rebbe did not pay him a *Shiva* call. To the question of his followers, the *Admur* replied: “The Lubavitcher Rebbe does not want to establish a *chazaka* by paying three *Shiva* calls to the same home.”

LISTENING TO THE REBBE

Rav Gurary related some miracle stories to me, which took place with the Rebbe at the beginning of his leadership; some of these stories were connected with his father-in-law, the *Admur* of Kopishnitz ז”ל.

1. “Before the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, I had a partnership with someone in a certain business. There were some problems with the merchandise we were selling, so I asked the Rebbe if I should continue with this. The Rebbe said: ‘My father-in-law (*der shver*) was certainly aware of what you are involved in [and he did not tell you to stop], so, for now, continue with this — but only until the end of this year, since this year still belongs to him (the Rebbe Rayatz). For everyone else, the year ends on Rosh HaShana, but for

us, it ends on Yom Kippur; therefore you can continue until Yom Kippur.’

“As a result of the Rebbe’s surprising answer, I notified my partner that on Erev Yom Kippur, my involvement in the business would be coming to an end. Before Yom Kippur, we sold a bundle of merchandise and send it to the purchaser, but due to some technical problem at the shipping service we used, the package was not actually sent until after Yom Kippur. When I told my partner that I no longer had anything to do with this package, he argued that since we made the deal with the seller before Yom Kippur, the package was still connected to the previous year. In the end, he convinced me, and we ended up sending the package together. Well, wouldn’t you know it — of all the packages, there was a legal problem with this one, and we ended up paying ten times its worth. I ended up losing all the profit I earned in the months preceding this shipment. This was my lesson in listening to everything the Rebbe says without being a wise guy.

2. “Subsequently, I started a new business, and decided to bring in the Rebbe as a partner — in other words, half of all the earnings would go

towards the Rebbe’s projects. Baruch Hashem, I was very successful in this. One time, however, some of my partners and I bought a lot of merchandise, and the value of the merchandise took a sudden and drastic dive. My father-in-law, the *Admur*, advised me to sell the merchandise immediately if I wished to avoid additional losses. The Rebbe, on the other hand, told me not to sell, but to continue holding on to the merchandise. Every-so-often, the Rebbe inquired about the status of the merchandise. Back in those days, whenever the Rebbe went to the *Ohel*, he would be accompanied by *Anash rabbanim*; I was fortunate enough to be among them. On a few such occasions, before entering the actual *Ohel*, the Rebbe asked me to pick up the phone and find out the current status of the merchandise. Meanwhile, my father-in-law was turning over the world to get me to sell it.

“There eventually came a point where I had no money of my own left, and if I continued holding on to the merchandise I would lose money belonging to others. So I went in to the Rebbe, and I told him that while I could have self-sacrifice when it came to my own money, I could do not so with the money of others. When the

Rebbe saw that I was giving up, he said I could sell. He added humbly: 'I think this happened to me because of the fact that I, a young man, went against [the advice of] your father-in-law, the *Admur* of Kopishnitz.' Then he suddenly said, "Since you lost money because of my advice, be so kind as to write down the amount that you and all the partners lost on a slip of paper, and I promise you that both you and they will soon earn everything back.

"I did as the Rebbe requested and, a few days later, a new line of business opened temporarily and came our way. We earned everything back in a very short period of time. Amazingly, right after we made the money back, this line of business ceased to exist, as though it had been created just so the Rebbe could give us back the money.

"But what's even more interesting is that immediately after I sold the previous merchandise, its value began to increase at a very quick rate. It was soon worth much more than it had been worth originally. Had I had the brains to withstand the test and wait a few more days, I would have become very wealthy from this, because I had owned a very large amount of this merchandise. We see a fascinating thing here: the moment the Rebbe saw that I was no longer withstanding the test, and that I did not have sufficient faith in his prediction [that the value would increase], he agreed to let me sell, and even justified the loss, explaining that it was the result of his having advised me against my father-in-law. In the end, however, things went exactly as the Rebbe had forecast; for my part, I received another lesson in what it means to listen to the Rebbe without any questions."

3. "I was once having trouble with my income tax. They wanted me to pay a lot of tax, and I argued that they were demanding more than they had the right to demand. I took them to court, but I lost the case. So I took them to court a second time, and as a result, they asked me to sign a compromise. I asked the Rebbe what to do and he said, 'Open a *Chumash* and you will immediately see the answer in Rashi.' I did as the Rebbe suggested, and randomly opened a *Chumash*. The *seifer* opened to the beginning of *Parshas Lech Lecha*. I looked at the *Chumash* uncomprehendingly¹; I could find no connection between Rashi's comments and my situation.



"So I went in to the Rebbe again, and I said, 'I don't see anything in Rashi.' The Rebbe asked for the *Chumash* and I showed him the Rashi I had opened to. The Rebbe looked into the *Chumash* and said, 'You don't see what it says here? But the answer is stated clearly!?' I looked again, but I still did not comprehend. The Rebbe pointed to the end of Rashi's comment on the words '*V'hyeh Bracha,*' and said, 'Rashi here says, '*becha chosmin*' [with you they conclude, or, with you they sign], — that's an indication that you should sign the agreement and close the case."

ONLY WHAT G-D WANTS HIM TO KNOW

4. "On a number of occasions I asked the Rebbe various questions on Rashi's commentary on the Torah, and I received amazing answers. Allow me to share with you two such questions concerning Rashi's comment that when Sarah heard about the *Akeida* her soul flew out of her:

A. Surely, [after G-d's instruction to him], Avraham told Sarah that G-d had commanded him to take up Yitzchak as an offering. Since Sarah was on very high spiritual level, why did her soul depart? The Rebbe answered: "There is the head, and

then there is the heart"² (i.e., even though she knew that this was G-d's commandment, and she accepted this in her mind, the knowledge that Yitzchak had, supposedly, been slaughtered as a sacrifice was nevertheless too much for her heart).

2. Since Sarah was a prophetess, how could she not have known that, in fact, Yitzchak had not been slaughtered? The Rebbe replied, "Who says a prophet has to know everything?" I mentioned the fact that G-d told Avimelech that Avraham would know that the former had not touched Sarah because Avraham was a prophet. I also mentioned that the *Tanya* says that one may ask a prophet [even] about things relating to his physical/material needs. The Rebbe answered: "A prophet does not know everything; only what G-d wants him to know."

NOTES:

1 Lit., Vi a hun in Bnei Adam — i.e., like a [kapos] chicken looks on as the people recite the customary "Bnei Adam" prayer.

2 "Dos iz kop un dos iz hartz."

WE MAY NOT HIDE THE REBBE'S VIEW!

*A compilation of sichos and horaos of the Rebbe
about the obligation to protest*

BY SHAI GEFEN

As Chassidim, we know that the Rebbe's view is what decides how we ought to conduct ourselves. As the Disengagement Plan is in high gear, there are still people trying to quiet the voice of protest, claiming that other approaches must be taken, that we should not express a clear, sharp, and direct protest about this suicidal process.

The Rebbe's view on this topic was published, as per the Rebbe's instructions, in a book called, *Daas Torah B'Inyanei Eretz HaKodesh*, by Rabbi Sholom Dovber Volpe, as well as in the series of s'farim called, *Karati V'Ein Oneh*.

It's no secret that the Rebbe's view detracting from "spreading the wellsprings outward." The Rebbe referred to this a number of times, saying that he was protesting even though he knew it had adverse effects, but inyanei shleimus ha'Aretz and pikuach nefesh superseded everything else.

This was also the case in 5750, when the Rebbe prevented the establishment of a government that (merely) **spoke** about concessions, despite the great loss Chabad suffered as a result. This is the way it was then, and the way it has been throughout the years, when the Rebbe firmly led the battle for shleimus ha'Aretz.

The bottom line is **what the Rebbe said** (in response to a question from Tzach) – that the Chabad houses ought to **openly** deal with inyanei shleimus ha'Aretz in the name of Chabad. To help those who are confused about what the Rebbe actually held, we bring the following excerpts:

"WITHHOLDING SALARY FROM A LUBAVITCHER TEACHER BECAUSE I PROTEST ABOUT SHLEIMUS HA'ARETZ"

Although this is the protest of an individual, since it takes place in the presence of other Jews, it will certainly be heard via telephone in a number of places. And since people will hear this, they will surely react...

Since there are teachers who need to receive a salary, and therefore need aid and various kinds of support, they made it so that these teachers have a difficult time receiving their salaries, or only part of their salaries, because I protest that they should not give back an inch of land to the Arabs...

His goal is seemingly to cause me to stop talking about this, but he is doing this despite the fact that he knows that it won't be effective, and he will not accomplish anything by withholding money. How does he know that I am not frightened by this?

Since this isn't the first time this has happened...

(Shabbos Parshas BaMidbar 5739)

THE SITUATION ISN'T HOPELESS AND WE MUST PROTEST

May the protest help so that at least they "fulfilled their obligation" with the withdrawal and downfall we had until now. If they will be satisfied with this, it will force them to rectify the previous withdrawals and downfalls. As for those who claim that it's hopeless, and what can be done, let it be known that we live in a world in which nothing is hopeless, even regarding matters of material concerns.

If they stand strong, they will get back everything that belongs to the Jewish people according to Torah, in ways of pleasantness and ways of peace, and in ways permissible while in Galus.

(Shabbos Parshas BaMidbar 5739)

"IF THERE WAS A SHARP PROTEST, IT WOULD ULTIMATELY SUCCEED"

In my opinion, the main thing [to be done] now regarding the security situation is to protest in the sharpest manner possible against concessions to all the pressure pertaining to the



security situation, which ultimately means that there is no limit to concessions.

Another important point, in my opinion, perhaps because I am too optimistic, is that if this protest was non-stop and exceedingly sharp, as the situation demands, it would ultimately succeed, and in the near future.

(24 Shvat 5741)

PROTEST AGAINST GIVING AWAY LAND, EVEN IF IT INTERFERES WITH SPREADING THE WELLSPRINGS

This is the only way to know whether it is permissible to give away land or not: If, when they give the land, “the land will be easy for them to conquer” or not!

The question about giving away land depends on nothing else – not on receiving money for yeshivos, receiving honor, or that it will interfere with spreading the wellsprings and mitzvaim. The only question is: Will the land be easy to conquer?

(VaYakhel-P’hukdei 5740)

I WILL NOT CHANGE MY APPROACH; I WILL NOT BE QUIET REGARDING DANGER TO LIFE

I hold of the educational approach that when speaking about something having to do with danger to life, you may not be quiet, even when you know that while you speak (or tomorrow, or some time later), so-and-so will relate lashon ha’ra to so-and-so.

It won’t bother me, and therefore I am not one of those that it harms. What hurts is that afterwards, a Jew comes and says things that never happened. This is not about the prohibition of, “lo sichanem” (do not allow the goy to reside in the land) or the like, but pikuach nefesh!

So that people should not err, they said and reiterated and wrote and printed and publicized and asked that all who are interested should publicize this – that in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, Hilchos Shabbos, siman 329*, it speaks clearly about this. Yet despite this, it has no effect; he didn’t “get” it, since he is bribed!

As I said before, this is what I learned in my childhood. I don’t say I take pleasure in this, and it’s exactly the same feeling when they speak of me honorably as when they speak the opposite way, but I’m not going to change! I’m not about to change the approach which was paved for me by my father [R’ Levi Yitzchok] and teacher and father-in-law [Rebbe Rayatz], which is to ignore that which is the opposite of honor, and to ignore even a decree of the nations of the world!

(20 Av 5739)

RELIGIOUS JEWS GATHER AND DON’T SPEAK AGAINST GIVING AWAY LAND?!

When many dozens of Jews who are all religious convene, all of whom review the sidra each week, including the weeks when it talks about the real borders of Eretz Yisroel – additionally, some of them read the newspapers and know what the state of the world is now – and this gathering is for the purpose of strengthening Torah and Judaism, then how is it possible that they spend three days together and spoke about all the important matters, and they made good resolutions, but when it comes to something associated with danger to life to more than a few dozen Jews, they didn’t mention it?

And nobody speaks up!

I told him – you can ask him: There is a din in *Shulchan Aruch* that one who is silent or one who waits until they come and ask him about pikuach nefesh, the *Shulchan Aruch* says that “one who [waits until he] is

asked is disgraceful.” He also knows about this din too! This is not proper according to *Shulchan Aruch*! “Do not stand by your friend’s blood,” means, according to *Shulchan Aruch*, that even when there is a doubt, or a shadow of a doubt, or even a thousandth of a doubt, that perhaps protesting may help, then he *must* protest!

This is not the place for intricate discussions and you don’t need to ask anyone. The *Shulchan Aruch* was published in Tzfas by the Beis Yosef, and it has a clear psak din, and he does not pasken a law without reason such that you can argue about the reason, but he says the reason: “it will open the land before them.”

(VaYeitzei 5740)

I WILL FIGHT WITH ALL MY STRENGTH SO THAT THE GOVERNMENT FALLS APART

I always fought for a government of Shamir, and just as I did all that I could to ensure that a government led by Shamir would be formed, if they continue this way regarding talks, then I, Menachem Mendel, will be the first to fight with all my strength against Shamir so the government falls!

Until now, only Shimon Peres was against the Shamir government, but if Shamir continues in this direction regarding autonomy talks, then I too will be against Shamir’s government.

If Shamir cannot withstand the pressure of the gentiles, he should openly announce that he cannot withstand the pressure and can no longer be the prime minister!

(10 Shvat 5752)

DISENGAGEMENT PREP COURSE

Rabbi Sholom Dovber Volpe spoke with an Israeli policeman who completed a course that prepared him for the Disengagement.

Timetable: **as of May 15th**, all roads to Gush Katif will be closed and it will be declared a **closed military zone**; nobody will be allowed in or out. As of **June 15th**, there will be no vacation for policemen. All officers will be on duty for two and a half months and will **not be allowed to go home**. The Disengagement will begin on **July 10th**, and will take at least two months.

*Huge gatherings will be held for the wives of police officers in order to explain to them the importance of what is happening and so that they understand **that they will not see their husbands for two and a half months**, and they shouldn't be upset about it because their husbands are needed for an important operation.

***Every settler will be assigned four police officers.** That is, four for every family member.

*Each Disengagement team will be accompanied by a **video photographer**, who will tape every move and intimidate the settlers, so that they don't respond to the Disengagement with force or act violently towards the police.

*The police will work **without their ID tags**. Among other concerns, this will also prevent the settlers from taking anybody to court for violence. The policemen were guaranteed that the department that investigates police internal affairs will not deal with complaints during the months of the Disengagement, and even afterwards, it

will turn a blind eye and will protect the policemen as much as possible. They were told explicitly that for "little things" like **breaking the arm of a settler** while evicting him, no file against them will be opened.

*The courses included lessons on **hand-to-hand combat, with emphasis on how to inflict pain without leaving a mark**. For example, if a mother is holding her baby and they want to evict her, they first have to forcibly take the baby from her. They are taught various methods of how to inflict **pressure on various joints** and methods on how to **twist hands** "gently," and then she will have to loosen her hold on the baby. It will all be done in a way that **afterwards, she won't be able to show signs of violence**. After removing the child or children from the mother, they will give the children immediately to a social worker and then they will drag the mother to the bus and only afterwards, bring her the children.

*As soon as they manage to remove the family from their home, the moving companies will remove the furniture and load it on trucks. After finishing clearing out the contents of the house, **they will immediately seal the doors and windows** with bricks, etc., so that the house can no longer be occupied. Once the sealing of the house is completed, a guard will be assigned to the house.

*The Disengagement will take place yishuv by yishuv; not all at once. When

they finish with one yishuv and seal the homes, they will leave soldiers to guard the yishuv so settlers cannot try to return.

*The evicted people will be sent to live in caravans or hotels set aside for this purpose, and they will be under guard so they cannot demonstrate, obstruct roads, etc.

***A large proportion of the policemen are not Jewish. They are happy at this opportunity to throw Jews out of their homes.**

*The Jewish soldiers are terribly shaken by all this and during the breaks spoke among themselves, saying that **just from the course itself they need psychological help**. After the course, all the officers will take workshops with psychologists who will help them deal with the horrible work they have to do over a two-month period.

***In conclusion, the police officer told me: The settlers do not understand what is in store for them. There is no way they can prevail. Aside from their eviction and the giving of their homes to terrorists, they will watch strangers pack their belongings and of course, items will be stolen from them.**

***They will be herded like cattle to various centers. The Disengagement and everything connected with it will break them. They will no longer be able to function as normal people.**

However, we believe that "Many are the thoughts in the heart of man, and the counsel of G-d will prevail!"

B.H

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