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# A PAUSE TO ABSORB

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



## SHABBOS PARSHAS P'KUDEI; 4<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF ADAR II, 5749

1. Today we concluded reading the second Book of the Pentateuch – Shmos. Every completion in Torah should bring an increased awareness and a greater effort to evaluate and renew the Divine service associated with the just completed cycle, with the intention to properly prepare for the coming phase, in this case the Book of VaYikra.

This practice may be applied to the various cycles that we experience during the year:

The last month of the year, Elul, is the month of reckoning for the past year, as well as the time of proper preparation for the future.

The final day of the Hebrew month is Erev Rosh Chodesh, a propitious time for retrospection and preparation for the coming new month.

Erev Shabbos, at the close of the six weekdays is a time for adding up all the activities of the week and preparing for the new week.

So, too, each evening before retiring during the Shma one must

take a retrospective look at the day before reciting the words “In Your hand I place my soul.”

Likewise when we complete the study of a book of the Torah it is an appropriate time to review the theme of the concluded book, and its lessons in Divine service, as well as to make preparations for the future. Torah is very precise and this process of account-taking itself is alluded to at the close of the Book of Shmos and the beginning of VaYikra.

The book of Shmos gives us a total glimpse of man's Divine service. Starting with the story of how the Jewish people came to Egypt, it alludes to the descent of the soul into the corporeal body and materialistic world. This is followed by the story of the punishment of Egypt through the ten plagues which once again alludes to the Divine service of purifying and refining the materiality of the world. This leads to the Exodus – to be freed of the yoke of Egypt and the worldly limitations as a preparation for the time when “you will serve G-d on the mountain.” At the Mattan Torah experience, the division between

the lower and upper worlds was eliminated and G-d descended to Mount Sinai and gave us the Torah. At the same time we received the power to transform the physical world to holiness and create a dwelling place for G-dliness in the world.

This effort reaches its perfection when the Sh'china rests in the Sanctuary that was built with the contributions made by the Jewish people for the Mishkan. All this is recorded in the Book of Shmos.

At the close of Shmos in the portion of P'kudei the Torah makes an account and summary of all the materials used in making the Sanctuary. This gives us a clear lesson of the importance of making such an account at the close of a section of Torah. The name of the portion, P'kudei, itself means “the sum” – the account of all the donations to the Mishkan and all the vessels and objects made to be part of the Mishkan. In a sense here we have the summary of the Divine service which is discussed in Shmos with the goal of making a dwelling place in the lower worlds.

In our Divine service we must also make a similar reckoning in

our work to make a dwelling place for G-dliness, at the close of Shmos. It should be clear and precise so that we may say Eleh P'kudei – these are the accounts of the Sanctuary which the Jew makes.

Rashi was very specific in his explanation of the opening words of P'kudei:

In this section are enumerated all the weights of the metals given as a contribution for the Tabernacle, of silver, gold and copper, and also there are enumerated the vessels used for every kind of service in it. (Rashi, Shmos 38:21)

This lesson may be applied in a symbolic sense to every individual. Gold, silver and copper allude to three areas of man's Divine service and to the three levels man may attain. On each level man must use the different powers and means at his disposal "gold" "silver" and "copper," to build the Sanctuary for the Holy One, Blessed be He, and then one must be ready to account for everything he has done.

Similarly one must list all the vessels – when one makes himself a vessel for G-dliness and likewise when he transforms the world to be a vessel for G-dliness.

Not only must we be aware of the vessels produced – but we must also be aware of how the vessels are used for the "service" of the Sanctuary. Just as the portion of P'kudei goes on to describe how the vessels were made and how they were used in the service of the Tabernacle.

In Chassidic terms a Jew's Divine service must include the theoretical aspects of Torah study as well as the practical side of mitzvos.

Another point to be gleaned from the accounting of the

Mishkan. Not until after all the account-taking did the Torah tell us that the Mishkan was actually erected – for only then was it apparent how all the parts fit together to form one Sanctuary.

Chassidus explains that the personal efforts in the counting process awakens the yechida – the essential (unique one) of the soul. With this approach all the person's individual efforts are unified and

*Just as in P'kudei, by making the Mishkan we did not lose sight of the individual components that united to form the Mishkan, so too, by making a dwelling place for G-dliness we infuse spirituality in all the various components and all the levels so that each item becomes holy*

united with the One Ruler of the world, and G-d says "I will dwell among them"; the world is then influenced on all levels to truly be a dwelling place for G-d.

Now, just as in P'kudei, by making the Mishkan we did not lose sight of the individual components that united to form the Mishkan, so too, by making a dwelling place for G-dliness we infuse spirituality in all the various

components and all the levels so that each item becomes holy and this holiness comes in a revealed way. The word Eleh – these are – has the gematria of 36, add the three letters (E'L'H') and we have 39, add 1 for the word and you have 400, alluding to the 40 minus 1 categories of work prohibited on Shabbos (the same categories of work which were used to build the Mishkan). Chassidus teaches that human Divine service completes the void in the "40 minus 1" so that the gematria of 40 is completed. The power to do this comes from Moshe who is mentioned in the opening verse of P'kudei.

At the close of the book of Shmos one might assume that having made the summary and account of all the activities discussed in Shmos, and having actually built the Mishkan one might assume that now there is time to relax and stop working. At this point an important message is brought to us in the final Rashi of the portion.

The Torah concludes Shmos with these verses:

[Later], when the cloud would rise up from the Tabernacle, it [would be a signal] for the Israelites to move on, [and this was true] in all their travels. Whenever the cloud did not rise, they would not move on, [waiting] until the day it did. G-d's cloud would then remain on the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night. This was visible to the entire family of Israel, in all their travels. (Shmos 40:38)

What connection is there between the narrative of the construction of the Mishkan and the travels of the Jewish people? Here we speak of the fact that the Sh'china came to dwell in the Mishkan.

Rashi comments:

This was visible to the entire family of Israel in all their travels – at every masa which they made (according to Rashi this means: at every station at which they stopped) the cloud rested upon the Tabernacle in the place where they encamped. A place where they encamped is also called masa (the literal meaning of which is “journey”). Similar is, (Gen. 13:3) “And he went on to his resting place (L’maasav)” (cf. Rashi on this verse); similar also is, (Num. 33:1) “These are the Massei” – “the places of encampment.” Because from the place of encampment they always set out again on a new journey therefore all the different stages of their journeys (including the places where they encamped) are called masaos. (Rashi, loc. cit.)

The Torah adds the subject of travels at this point to teach us that when the Jewish people camped and the cloud of glory came to rest, one might think that they would remain in that place, having reached some goal. We are therefore told clearly that the cloud would again rise and move on, that the Jewish people were constantly moving ahead and rising to greater heights. This aspect is so important that Rashi tells us that even the place of their encampment was called a masa – a travel place. Because from that stop they once again traveled. So a Jew must always feel that no matter where he may be standing, at whatever encampment he may be, there must always be another movement ahead.

A Jew must always improve and increase so that a Jew’s resting place is his embarkment point to greater heights.

Thus, we take a lesson that wherever a Jew rests, and resting is necessary and required by Torah,

he must know and sense that he must resume his travels to go higher and higher – to the point that the encampment itself seems to be a movement.

Now that we conclude the book of Shmos we likewise understand that together with all the accomplishments of our Divine service in the themes of Shmos – the construction of the Mishkan and the glory of G-d in the Mishkan – we do not rest – but must immediately move on to a

***Teachers and educators who learn with children cannot assume that the child will, by some G-dly miracle, suddenly absorb the lessons, rather they must work hard to teach in a way that the child can understand and absorb.***

new book in the Torah.

At the close of Shmos the glory of G-d filled the Mishkan and Moshe could not enter. Then at the beginning of VaYikra Moshe clearly rose to a higher level and G-d called to Moshe and he entered the Sanctuary.

The Torah is eternal and its message guides us even today. Moshe’s power to advance was concentrated in his humility which was alluded to in the small “Alef” of VaYikra. We, too, have a spark of

Moshe in us and by learning Torah we can draw that power of growth into ourselves.

If we work at removing the gross concealment of our corporeal animal soul G-d will also reveal to us lofty and G-dly things. We may not even sense this G-dliness in our daily experience but it will affect our souls and trickle down even to our physical existence.

May G-d grant that everyone should experience the loftiest revelations in wisdom, understanding and knowledge; and in thought, speech and action. To feel the revelation even though we do not understand it – sometimes someone feels elevated and cannot explain how he got there. This is the extension of VaYikra – the call to Moshe.

On the other hand, this new elevation should not blind one to think that it is enough. And here Rashi also illuminates the point.

Rashi tells us that when G-d spoke to Moshe He would pause between one section and the next. Why was this necessary? To give Moshe time to absorb each subject and contemplate between topics. If this was so in the case of Moshe when he was learning from G-d, how much more so when a human students studies from a human teacher!

When G-d taught Moshe in the Tabernacle, He did not want the process of learning to be miraculous – that Moshe should absorb everything without any diligence or time for reflection. Rather G-d paused to give Moshe the chance so that he should not be too excited and that he should not assume that study does not need deep thought and contemplation. Moshe had to concentrate and absorb his lessons. Only after absorbing one lesson was he taught the next subject.

In human teaching a person may sometimes be very excited about some new insight in Torah and then he will not give the matter proper attention to understand it properly.

There is the story of the bright Chassidic scholar who once was so overwhelmed by a maamer he was studying that he cried out "Holy words, but incomprehensible!"

We must remember that although the words are truly holy, they are in our realm and we must understand them, and we have the potential to clearly understand with wisdom, understanding and knowledge. But this needs diligence and concentrated study – not a psalm.

Teachers and educators who learn with children cannot assume that the child will, by some G-dly miracle, suddenly absorb the lessons, rather they must work hard to teach in a way that the child can understand and absorb; with the right mix of pauses, for the child to contemplate and

comprehend.

Thus, on this week when we conclude the book of Shmos and we start VaYikra it is the appropriate time for this retrospective overview of the just concluded period in which there was emphasis on making a dwelling place for G-d out of the contributions. Vessels were prepared and the level was attained to enter the Sanctuary, through the study of Torah. There must also be the necessary pauses to contemplate and absorb.

This must also be applied in working with others, they too, should adopt this path and influence the whole world.

All the preparations for Purim should be made, to study the laws of Purim and to see that all Jews have all their needs to fulfill the mitzvos of Purim, reading the Megilla, sending food gifts to friends, charity to the poor and the festive Purim meal. In general, Adar is a good time to increase charity.

May all the above increases in our good action and Divine service merit the building of the Mishkan – but now we speak of the Holy Temple – the Third Beis HaMikdash. Rashi says that the verse "HaMishkan Mishkan" (at the beginning of P'kudei) alludes to the Beis HaMikdash. Rashi presents this as the plain meaning of the verse. Although Rashi's reasoning is not clear, it is clear that when we see the Third Beis HaMikdash we will learn the "New Torah" which will be taught from the Sanctuary and we will "see," as well as understand.

May all this come speedily and truly now. May "redemption be brought close to redemption" in a reversed order: first the ultimate redemption, then the redemption of Purim and then the redemption of Pesach, and may we see true "wonders," even as compared to the wonders of the Exodus.

All this with joy and glad hearts.

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# IT'S 3 MILLIMETERS OFF?! IT SHOULD BE MUCH BIGGER!

BY BORUCH MERKUR

"This is Dov Lavnuni," says Rabbi Groner, the Rebbe's secretary. "He has constructed a model of the Beis HaMikdash, according to the opinion of the Rambam."

R. Dov presents the model to the Rebbe, constructed precisely, at a ratio of 1/200, and points out the Sanctuary, the gates....

The Rebbe gives him a bracha for success. R. Dov goes on to ask for specific brachos, but the Rebbe's attention is apparently on the model. "Where is the ramp?" the Rebbe asks.

"The ramp?" echoes R. Dov, trying to determine what the problem is.

"The ramp of the altar," says the Rebbe.

"Here is the large altar, here is the small altar..." It is difficult to comprehend what the Rebbe is getting at; the ramp is in plain view.

"It should be much larger."

Much larger? The model is small to begin with! "It is proportionate. It's only so big. It's 1/200..." R. Dov offers.

"Most probably you measured it," concludes the Rebbe. "May it go well. Much success. May G-d grant you the merit to soon see the Third Beis HaMikdash."

"Amen!"

\* \* \*

This gem, as seen on Jewish Educational Media (JEM), closes with an illuminating

epilogue: "Before printing his book [*The Temple in Jerusalem*], Rabbi Lavnuni checked and corrected the ramp, which was off by three millimeters on the model[!] – over half a meter in real-life."

What exactly did the Rebbe mean when he said that the ramp "should be much larger"? It was only off by three millimeters!

Evidently the Rebbe was seeing it in real-life, seeing a more than half-a-meter eyesore on the image of the Holy Temple, which had to be exact. As Rambam writes regarding the altar and the ramp, "Any stone which had been blemished the amount that would cause one's fingernail to catch on it, as when checking a knife for *sh'chita*, is disqualified for use in the ramp and the altar, as it is written, 'whole stones [should be used to] build the ramp of Hashem...' So too, regarding the stones of the Sanctuary and the courtyards – they were whole." (Hilchos Beis HaB'chira 1:14)

In fact, the whole purpose of the Beis HaMikdash, the induction of the Sh'china into a physical structure, is only accomplished when the entire structure is complete and whole, according to the exact specifications enumerated in halacha. The Rebbe discusses this concept, in regard to the Holy of Holies, in the following sicha (entitled "The Space of the Aron is Not Part of the Measure" in

*Hilchos Beis HaB'chira L'HaRambam: im Chiddushim u'Biurim):*

The Sages say [in Yoma 21a] that “the space of the aron is not part of the measure.” Indeed, in this regard there were two opposites coexisting: (The space of) the aron had a measure, as it is mentioned explicitly in Torah [Truma 25:10], “two and a half cubits is its length, etc.” But at the same time, this space “is not part of the measure.”

That is, in the Holy of Holies there was the union of space and hyperspace, a fusion of space and non-space as one.

This dimension of the union of finite and infinite is a function of the Divine Essence, which is *nimna ha'nimnaos* (the ultimate paradox).

In greater depth: Regarding the concept of “the space of the aron is not part of the measure,” the emphasis is not only that the aron contained two opposites – ‘measure’ and ‘not part of the measure’ – at once, but more so: “it is not part of the measure” resulted specifically from the fact that the aron had a measure (limit); were the aron not to be made in the measure specified explicitly in the Torah, it would not have contained the sanctity of the aron, etc., and of consequence, [it would] also [not have effected] the miracle that “it is not part of the measure.”

\* \* \*

Just a few weeks ago, on Shabbos Parshas Tetzaveh, a Lubavitcher rosh yeshiva from California was visiting Toronto for a chasuna. He davened at the Chabad yeshiva, where his nephew, Rabbi Akiva Wagner, is rosh yeshiva. As usual, after “Lecha Dodi,” the bachurim broke into a joyous “Yechi Adoneinu...”

The next day, after Krias ha'Torah, the visitor was asked to speak. After much thought, the rabbi spoke, elaborating at great length on the above sicha, and relating it to our daily avoda – that all our activities, such as attending seider on time, etc., should be exact and calculated, measured, complete. Specifically in this manner do we draw the Sh'china into the world, bringing about the revelation of the Essence, beyond measure, within the finite world. The key is, he continued, to be exact, to the letter; not a millimeter short of the measure nor a

millimeter beyond it, doing the will of our Creator exactly as outlined in the Torah, keeping to the Rebbe's instructions exactly as he said them and not...

At this point the rosh yeshiva insisting on being brief and not “getting into politics,” “but you understand the point,” he said, segueing into other topics.

After Musaf, Rabbi Wagner approached his uncle in a friendly, familial way, and quipped: **You sound just like a Meshichist! That's what the Meshichistim say: do exactly what the Rebbe says!**

\* \* \*

The key is to stick to the Rebbe's words, then we are sure we won't end up lacking. If we pursue the Rebbe's inyanim wholeheartedly, in full measure – as the full 32 cubits (*leiv*, heart) of the ramp of the altar – then the Rebbe's words will surely penetrate and have their effect. As the Mittlerer Rebbe responded to Reb Hillel Paritcher's question of whether he should review Chassidus in towns where the people have no conception of Chassidus, quoted in the *HaYom Yom* of 24 Adar Rishon: **The soul hears words of Chassidus. It is written, “Flowing from Lebanon” [Shir HaShirim 4:15]. “Lebanon” is spelled (in Lashon HaKodesh) *leiv* [i.e., Lamed-Beis, which equals 32] *Nun*. “Lebanon” thus represents *chochma* [*leiv*, 32 Pathways of Wisdom] and *bina* [*Nun*, 50 Gates of Understanding] of the soul. When the soul hears, from there [i.e., its source in *chochma* and *bina*] issues forth a “flow” streaming into the illumination of the soul which enlivens the body, strengthening the “do good” expressed in the 248 commandments and the “turn from evil” expressed in the 365 prohibitions.**

By being wholehearted and complete (*leiv*), focused on following the Rebbe's words to the letter, which has always been the goal of *Beis Moshiaich*, we will, *b'ezras Hashem*, attain the perfection of *Nun*, the 50 Gates of Understanding, *Shaar HaNun* – especially having attained the level of 500, the completion of 50. We will thereby go out of the state of sickness (“*choleh*” – “sick” is the numerical equivalent of 49) and exile, to the true and complete Redemption with the Rebbe MH”M at our lead. May it happen now!



# SECULAR EDUCATION? – WHAT TO REINFORCE IN THE FORMATIVE YEARS

*Letter from Adar 5722*

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

B'ezer 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.



Jews have always been a “minority among the nations,” even in the best of times. At the same time “their laws differ from those of any other people,” and they differ not only in regard to special occasions, or special aspects of life, such as Shabbos, or Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, but they differ in their way of life and in every aspect of the daily life. For the Jew, the Torah and Mitzvot are the guide of daily life and the source of life and true happiness, and this is the simple meaning of “Toras Chaim” – Law of life, and the definition of the Mitzvot as the essence of Jewish life, “whereby Jews live.”

It is clear that being in the minority, Jews must have special reinforcement from childhood on, in order to be able to hold their own in the face of overwhelming odds.

If it was difficult enough to live as a Jew in countries where Jews were persecuted, confined to Ghettos, etc., there was one redeeming factor at least, namely that under those circumstances Jewish adherence and loyalty to the Torah and Mitzvot was not put to the test. An individual Jew could sever his ties with his people, but that involved a sudden and complete break; it was therefore rare and extreme. But in the free countries, and under present economic and social conditions, there are no outside barriers separating Jew from gentile; the road to assimilation is wide open, and the danger is all the greater since the process is a gradual one. No sudden break with tradition is entailed, but gradual deviation, step after small step, leads in that direction. There is a well-known parable for this, about the boy who strayed from the road and later found himself in the midst of the woods. He got there by making a small false step off the road, which led to another, and yet another.

The conditions and environment in a country such as this can, therefore, [require] an even greater spiritual reinforcement of the Jewish boy and girl than ever before and elsewhere. This reinforcement must be of such strength and duration that the Jewish child will always be conscious of the fact that no matter what the environment is, he is the bearer of the sacred tradition of the Divine Torah and Mitzvot, and belongs to a people that is holy and different. For this, it is essential that right from the earliest childhood to adolescence the Jewish child should receive the fullest possible Jewish education, throughout his formative years.

Hence, when a Jewish boy completes his compulsory education, it is an absolute must that for a couple of years, at least, he should dedicate himself to the exclusive study of the Torah and sacred subjects, in a most conducive atmosphere of a Yeshiva, without distraction of secular studies, all the more so as the teenage [years] are crucial and formative and of lasting effect, in the crystallization of the character.

This would have been my opinion even if the college entailed more than the distraction of secular studies. Actually there is much more involved. Theoretically a college and its faculty should not try to impose any particular views, much less a way of life, on the students. Actually however, the student cannot help being impressed, on the conscious and subconscious level, by the views, outlook and way of life of his professors. These, as well as the whole atmosphere of a college, are unfortunately, not comparable with the Jewish way of life, and frequently if not always, quite contradictory to it. This is so even in colleges which are theological, or having so-called religious studies. Needless to say, the whole atmosphere of college is in violent conflict with the Shulchan Aruch way of life, whereby the Jew is totally committed – in every detail and aspect of his personal daily life – to the Torah and Mitzvot and the service of G-d, as is written “You shall know Him in all your ways,” to which a whole chapter in Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim (Ch. 231) is devoted: note there.

In other words, the Jewish boy (or girl) entering college, yet desiring to retain the Jewish way of life in accordance with the Torah, finds himself tossed about in the raging waves of conflict between two contradictory worlds. He is at a further disadvantage in finding himself in the minority camp, since

those sharing his views and convictions are few on the college campus, while the forces pulling in the opposite direction are overwhelming, forces he must confront at every turn – among the student body, faculty members, text books, newspapers and periodicals. It is very doubtful whether even an adult and mature person who is subjected to such “shock treatment” day after day, would not be shaken; how much more so a teenager.

Needless to say, I am aware of the argument that many Yeshivah boys attending college, or even college graduates, remain loyal to the Torah and Mitzvot. The answer is simple. The number of such students and graduates who have not been seriously affected is relatively small indeed, much smaller than imagined. They are so exceptional that the wonder of it attracts attention, since those that go astray under college influence are taken for granted, while the one that still puts on Tefillin calls forth amazement. One may use the analogy of the shoe-shine boy who became a millionaire and everyone talks about him. It is not because he was a shoe-shine boy that he attained success, and no one will suggest that in order to become a millionaire one should start in the shoe-shine business. The greater the exception and sensation, the greater is the proof of the rule.

Some people ask, if there is really such a conflict between attending college and remaining an observant Jew, I can speak from experience and personal knowledge, having attended various colleges and seen the painful inner upheavals of Jewish students, and having for many years been the confidant of Jewish students who are otherwise reluctant or ashamed to open their hearts, I can therefore state with the fullest measure of conviction and responsibility that he who sends his child to college during the formative years subjects him to shock and profound conflicts and trials and invites quite unforeseen consequences...

To put the matter in bolder relief, by way of illustration. Take the general attitude to polio, G-d forbid, and the precaution taken against it. Fortunately, the incidence of polio is not widespread, and where it strikes, it cripples only a part of the physical body; yet though the odds are farfetched it would be reckless not to take the necessary precaution. Unfortunately, the victims of college education are numerous indeed and most widespread, by far in the majority, and the harm is even more far-reaching.

Another point which is often the subject of misconception – the importance attached to a college degree from the economic point of view. Statistics show that the majority of college graduates eventually establish themselves in occupations and business not directly connected with their courses of study in college. The moral is obvious.

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# WHY THE NEED TO ‘MAKE FOR YOURSELF A RAV’?

*An inquiring look into the Rebbe’s instructions to appoint mashpiim*

BY RABBI CHAIM ASHKENAZI, MASHPIA, YESHIVAS TOMCHEI T’MIMIM, LOD

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

## BY FORCE OR WITH PLEASURE?

When Moshe Rabbeinu appointed the leaders of tens, of hundreds, and of thousands, at the advice of his father-in-law, Yisro, the Torah states, “They would bring the difficult case to Moshe, and all minor cases they would judge themselves.” The question is asked: Which cases are considered difficult and which are easier or “minor”?

A similar question can be asked about the Mishna’s instructions, which the Rebbe made into a “mivtza”: “**Aseh Lecha Rav**” (make for yourself a rav). At first glance, the intention and urgency connected with this directive is not clearly understood. It’s quite obvious that if I come across a halachic question, i.e., what happens if I forget to say “*Yaaleh V’Yavo*” or “*Tal U’matar*,” which types of labor are permissible on Shabbos, what constitutes chametz that is forbidden during Pesach and even after Pesach, etc., I won’t decide such matters on my own. If

I know how to read and understand the Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe or HaRav Yosef Caro, I can look inside and act accordingly, and in the event that I can’t understand, I’ll ask someone who knows. If so, what exactly is the instruction to make a rav, and why is it stated with the words “*Aseh Lecha Rav*”?

As is known, the word “*aseh*” is interpreted as meaning coercion, from the same root as “*get m’useh*” (a forced divorce). If so, it’s not understood why turning to a rav has to be through coercion. When a person comes to a fork in the road and doesn’t know which way to go, he turns to someone local who knows the way. Does this mean that he is forcing a rav upon himself? On the contrary, it’s a pleasure that, *baruch Hashem*, there is someone who can show him the way so he doesn’t have to waste his time, his energy, and his money by making a wrong turn somewhere and then having to go back. So why does the Mishna use the word “*aseh*”?

It appears, however, that this is not the intention of the Mishna or the Rebbe shlita. When a person doesn’t know a certain thing and is neither embarrassed to say that he doesn’t know nor avoids asking questions, he sees this as help and even thanks the person who provided him with the answers. This can be compared to a tour guide who doesn’t need to force his guidance upon the tourists.

“*Aseh Lecha Rav*” is primarily in situations where a person is not prepared to admit that he is responsible for the damage that has been caused, and thus, there is a need to force him to have *bittul* towards a rav. This is for two reasons: First, it will injure his ego if he tells the unvarnished truth about what’s happening. Secondly, the rav will tell him that he has to make some changes. People are generally repelled by change, due to laziness, pride, or because they fail to grasp the full extent of the destruction caused by their conduct. To clarify this matter, we’ll bring a few illustrative stories.

## DON'T HANG THE MATERIAL PROBLEM ON A SPIRITUAL "HANGER"

One of my friends told me a story about how vandals broke into his car, ripping out and destroying everything that they could get their hands on. Deeply grieved over the financial loss he had sustained, he wrote a letter to the Rebbe, adding with some resentment, "There was a Chitas in the car!..." The Rebbe shlita replied (not verbatim, but with great clarity): You didn't lock the car and you didn't install an alarm, so what are you complaining about? Recently, a similar story has been publicized, about a resident of Crown Heights who wrote to the Rebbe after thieves had broken into his house, asking if he should check his mezuzos (as the Rebbe connects everything related to a lack of good health, parnasa, etc., to non-kosher t'fillin and mezuzos). The Rebbe shlita responded that he should check to see if his windows were closed!

Another story that has been making the rounds concerns someone who asked the Rebbe about the custom to fold one's tallis on Motzaei Shabbos as a *segula* for *shalom bayis*. The Rebbe told him that the *segula* for *shalom bayis* is if on Motzaei Shabbos, he rolls up his sleeves and helps his wife do the dishes! I also heard that a certain chassid came to one of the previous Rebbeim with a complaint that he has no *shalom bayis*. He was a wealthy man who gave money to his wife for all her needs, so he could fulfill his obligations to her. The Rebbe replied: If you are wealthy, then go together with her for a few days to a hotel or a resort.

By the same token, there's the well-known story that has passed throughout the generations about the Jew who built a sukka, but without complete walls. Instead, he



*A resident of Crown Heights who wrote to the Rebbe after thieves had broken into his house, asking if he should check his mezuzos. The Rebbe responded that he should check to see if his windows were closed!*

left an open space less than three handbreadths from the ground, as halacha considers this to be as if it was closed up, and then the man went to sleep. When he woke up the next morning, and found that the candlesticks and all the silverware in the sukka had been stolen – he was totally astounded.

After all, according to halacha, the sukka was sealed up – how did the thief get in?

Similarly, there is the yeshiva saying: Why did Avraham Avinu have to look for a shidduch for his son Yitzchok? The Midrash tells us that Avraham had a daughter – couldn't Yitzchok have married them? (Naturally, this would not be possible since the Avos fulfilled the entire Torah.) The answer is that it's impossible to marry the Midrash; you have to marry a woman!

## HOLD FAST TO ONE, BUT DON'T RELEASE THE OTHER

There's a story about a chassan who went into yechidus, and the Rebbe asked him about the preparations for the wedding. The chassan, simple chassid that he was, understood that the Rebbe was referring to the spiritual preparations. He proceeded to tell the Rebbe that, *Baruch Hashem*, he's learning the necessary subject matter, being more stringent in his fulfillment of mitzvos, etc. The

Rebbe shlita replied: I was referring to the wedding hall, a place to live, etc. In contrast, another chassan went into yechidus, and the Rebbe asked him the same question. This chassan was a bit more into physical matters, so he naturally thought that the Rebbe meant the material preparations. When the chassid said that everything has been taken care of – an apartment, wardrobe, the hall – the Rebbe replied that he was referring to the spiritual preparations – t’shuva, learning the halachos, etc...

There have been many other occasions where a person could argue that the Rebbe MH”M is speaking about physical and spiritual matters in the same breath. For example, a delegation of community representatives from Kfar Chabad once had a yechidus with the Rebbe shlita, who spoke about the urgent need to install a central sewage system in Kfar Chabad. Not long afterwards, at a farbrengen in Yerushalayim, a very chassidic young man explained to me and the other T’mimim that if the Rebbe shlita spoke in yechidus about a sewage system in Kfar Chabad, he was certainly referring to the need to clean out all the spiritual filth from our own personal drainpipes. Among the participants at the farbrengen was a resident of Kfar Chabad, who immediately replied, “I live in Kfar Chabad, and I suffer because there’s no sewage system there. I’m telling you – the Rebbe meant it in the physical sense as well.”

This brings to mind how since 5730, the Rebbe would speak sharply and with great pain for hours at farbrengens against territorial compromise on Eretz Yisroel. There were mashpiim who said afterwards that the Rebbe shlita was referring with much anguish to how a chassid gives control of another part of his body, his

garments, even his home *ch”v* to the yetzer ha’ra. On the other hand, the *askanim* immediately understood the need to publicize and take action in every appropriate manner to influence the decision-making powers in the government of Israel not to return any physical territory.

From all the abovementioned stories and many other famous incidents, a clear picture develops: There are people who are inclined to cast everything aside for material action. Others try to solve their problems by saying that everything depends upon the spiritual side. Neither approach is correct, and thus, they don’t solve the problems. This is usually due to an unwillingness, conscious or not, to take personal responsibility and to solve it by investing an effort to change our way of thinking or acting or both. In other words, this is a mode of conduct that stems from the animal soul and the yetzer ha’ra.

### HE TRAVELS ON YOUR PASSPORT AND WITH YOUR VISA...

On more than one occasion, a student of Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim asked the Rebbe for permission to travel to 770 – *Beis Chayeinu*, claiming that this is the only place where he can succeed. The Rebbe would respond that the same yetzer ha’ra that is keeping you from learning where you are – will be traveling together with you! At first, it would seem obvious that the light of G-dliness shines far greater in the Rebbe shlita’s *Daled amos* in achieving the desired change towards success in Torah study. So why is this not a fitting aspiration? However, it should be clear to each of us that when someone who truly works on himself in making relative progress wants to travel to the Rebbe shlita to progress even further – this is

most proper. However, someone who wants to travel to the Rebbe shlita without a desire to work on himself, since his primary purpose is to place the blame on his presently inadequate spiritual environment, will achieve nothing from making the trip.

In a similar vein, chassidim say (as is written in Parshas Shmos), “You’re lazy, lazy, therefore you say, ‘Let us go, let us sacrifice’” – you don’t want to work, so you say, “Let us go, let us sacrifice,” i.e., when I’m with the Rebbe, I’ll be a different person. You don’t seem to notice that this whole idea is coming from the yetzer ha’ra. He’ll be there with you – though in truth, it will be **mainly** him – on the same plane, in the same seat, using the same ticket, the same passport, and the same visa.

Let’s take another example from our daily lives: Here’s a chassidishe young man, devoted with all his heart and soul to the Rebbe’s mitzvaim, his Chabad House activities, or his work with a certain shliach – totally involved in his spiritual obligations with no free time to help his wife do the dishes, etc. – he only has time to fold his tallis. He is constantly busy learning with himself or with others, but he has no time to learn calmly and patiently with his children, and to give them the feeling that he is turning his full attention to them and their needs. The end results, *lo aleinu*, are not surprising – the son grows up without the support of a loving and caring father, and ends up displaying his prowess in a variety of undesirable activities to fill in the gap.

For his part, the father is completely perplexed by his son’s decline and drawbacks, first on the spiritual level and then eventually in the more material realm. He is stunned – What happened? How did this happen? I’m a shliach of the

Rebbe, totally dedicated to his activities, and I have no time for my family because I'm so busy (and this is all true). Sometimes, he even adds in bewilderment, "I made my son a big bar-mitzvah, I bought him the most expensive t'fillin – Rashi **and** Rabbeinu Tam, I even sent him to the Rebbe shlita for the bar-mitzvah, I pay huge sums of money for private teachers... How did this happen?" This is exactly like the chassid who cries bitterly, "I put a Chitas in my (unlocked) car – how did the thief break in?"

### DON'T RELY UPON MIRACLES

I once heard a story from HaRav R. Chaim Shaul Brook about a Jew who was in the midst of a journey in a four-wheeled wagon, when suddenly one of the wheels broke. This Jew was a big Torah scholar, so he made a *kal v'chomer*: If you can travel in a wagon with two wheels, then you can certainly travel in a wagon with three wheels. The journey resumed, but due to the shaking caused by the missing wheel, a second wheel broke. The Jew steadfastly continued with his scholarliness, despite the wagon driver shouting that it's impossible to go any further. "You're an ignoramus of a wagon driver," he said. "Don't you know that there are thirteen principles in Torah, and Torah runs the world? If there's no *kal v'chomer*, then there's a *g'zeira shava*, which proves that you can travel in a wagon with two wheels. They kept on going until the faltering wagon naturally broke yet another wheel. The wagon driver screamed to the highest heavens, while the Torah scholar looked at him with utter disdain, as he recalled the Gemara that states that such an imbecile can be ripped open like a fish, even on Yom Kippur. "We have another *kal v'chomer*!" he cried. "A sled has no

wheels, but we still have one wheel!" So the journey continued, for what could the wagon driver possibly say to refute such a marvelous scholar? Of course, it didn't take long before the last wheel broke.

Now the wagon driver was certain that his suffering had come to an end. Not a chance. He had failed to comprehend the greatness of this *talmid chacham*. "Now we have another *g'zeira shava*," he claimed, "and a *g'zeira shava* is a halacha given to Moshe at Har Sinai – no arguments! Maybe you didn't receive this *g'zeira shava* from your rabbis, but I accept it. Just trust me and keep moving!" The horses

### *Escaping from one's obligations, hiding behind spiritual excuses of emuna and fear of G-d, does not achieve miracles...*

dragged the wagon, and *baruch Hashem*, and the travelers eventually reached their destination, broken and exhausted. Every bone in their bodies ached and some were even cracked, but the strength of Torah had prevailed...

What we obviously have here is a classic case of avoiding responsibility to solve the problem as it should be. True, there are situations where a miracle happens – He who said that oil burns, will say that vinegar burns. The Baal Shem Tov once told his chassidim to light candles of ice, and they actually burned. There was also a case of a simple Jew who crossed a

river by spreading out a handkerchief because he once saw the Baal Shem Tov do it – and there are many other such stories too numerous to mention. This represents the power of *tzaddikim* to do miracles, as is explained in *Shaar HaYichud V'HaEmuna* regarding how G-d included *Midas HaRachamim* in the Creation. Thus, even simple people can do miracles, provided that they are done with honesty and sincerity. Escaping from one's obligations, hiding behind spiritual excuses of *emuna* and fear of G-d, does not achieve miracles...

This is similar to the story about the husband whose wife complained that she couldn't bathe the children because there was no hot water in their old broken-down boiler that had to be replaced. "Say a pasuk of T'hilim," the husband told her, "and everything will be fine." A day passed, and the wife came back to her husband and said, "I've already said a whole chapter of T'hilim, and there's still no hot water!" The husband's conclusion: Apparently you didn't say it with a full heart or with complete faith in G-d...

It's quite clear that this husband needed to get money to repair the boiler, by working or through some other legitimate and kosher method. The problem was that he didn't want to go out and work. Therefore, "you don't want to work, so you say, 'Let us go, let us sacrifice' – go say T'hilim. This does not stem from faith or reliance upon Torah, halacha, and spiritual action – this is simply "playing stupid."

### IS HE JUST ON THE WALL OR DOES HE LIVE WITHIN YOU?

An Anash member, whose children *r"l* didn't turn out so *chassidish* (to put it mildly), complained: I don't understand – I got married at the instructions of the Rebbe shlita, otherwise, I would

have remained the rest of my life in 770. My *aufruf* was in the Rebbe's minyan. As a chassan, I was in yechidus, received a bracha from the Rebbe for the wedding, and even received a bottle of mashkeh at the farbrengen to pour "L'Chaim" at the farbrengen and at the wedding, as was customary for many years. At the wedding itself, we were extremely stringent in all the Chabad customs right down to the letter. At home, pictures of the Rebbe shlita are hung up all over the place, and I travel frequently to 770 to be with the Rebbe. My entire house is filled with the Rebbe and his leadership – so why didn't this have any influence over my children?

Of course, we can't possibly know or understand the reasons why, however, in this instance, his friends told him that he reminded them of a certain story:

A man walks into a restaurant and sees the owner, who outwardly does not seem to display true *yiras Shamayim*. When the man inquires about the kashrus supervision, the owner replies, "100% kosher l'mehadrin! Look, there's a picture of the Rambam on the wall, so you needn't worry that we would bring in something that is not befitting such a picture."

"If your picture was hanging on the wall, and the Rambam was walking around as the boss," the man replied, "clearly there would be no question that everything here is absolutely kosher. However, since the Rambam is hanging on the wall and your appearance indicates that you're the boss, this is by no means a stamp of approval for everything that goes on here, which may even be the exact opposite of what is kosher."

Similarly, we find with this chassid, his friends told him, "Everything you've said about how

you supposedly invested in the building of your marriage and home is just a picture of the Rebbe shlita on the wall," they said. "However, in practice, you – the *baal ha'bayis* – don't display this openly to your family. This means that you're connected not to the Rebbe, but to your egoism. As stated in the pasuk and explained in *Tanya*, marriage represents the concept of "And Adam **knew**" – the connection that is not hung on the wall, rather the one that connects the Rebbe shlita and his instructions to you and subsequently, to the members of your family.

Even when the Rebbe shlita said to numerous shlichim that he takes the education of their children upon his shoulders, this meant that after you fulfill your obligations, and since the conditions on your shlichus on his behalf do not leave you with much time to deal with such matters, the Rebbe accepts the responsibility for what you are not able to do. For example, if you're on shlichus where there's no Jewish day school, no shul, and needless to say, no Talmud Torah – even if you invest much effort in your children, bringing in a yeshiva bachur to learn with your sons, it's quite obvious that there will naturally be an educational gap, because they are not learning in a Talmud Torah with other children of the same age. In such a case, the Rebbe shlita takes it upon himself that they will not lack anything. However, when he hasn't fulfilled his obligations, making excuses that he's busy with 'Let us go, let us sacrifice' – what do you expect is going to happen?

### THE TRICKERY OF "AN OLD AND FOOLISH KING"

Even people who are not necessarily involved in spiritual matters use these excuses. With rare exception, one cannot expect to derive profit without proper

investment, and we obviously do not draw up plans for our lives on the basis of such exceptional cases. A person cannot decide that certain general principles do not apply to him – only G-d can do that. It should be clear to everyone that avoiding responsibility towards *avodas Hashem*, whether on a personal level or in connection to his wife and children, through investing more and more effort into his own personal sense of satisfaction, claiming that he is simply too busy at work or in community matters, will get him nowhere. Even if he succeeds in achieving certain material objectives – giving adequate financial support to his family, his community, etc. – he still has not fulfilled his true obligation. He is merely sticking his head into his own business affairs and even *ch"v* risking the stability of his own home. He acts like an ostrich who thinks that if he doesn't see how his domestic tranquility is crumbling, then it really isn't crumbling, and even if it is, he is not to blame. Even someone who starts firing away with excuses such as "the Rebbe's picture is on my wall, so what do you want from me?" is at fault for the situation he has created. "A person's foolishness will distort his path, and his heart will rage against G-d," i.e., he goes around with resentment against G-d and the Rebbe shlita – Why did you tell me to get married? Why did you give me this shidduch? Why? Why?... Such ostrich-style conduct is one of the tricks of the yetzer ha'ra, who is the craftiest of all.

I once saw the personal writings of a chassid in connection with the story in the Gemara about Rabbi Eliezer ben Durdaya, who first asked, "Request mercy upon me, heaven and earth," and then afterwards, he turned to worship the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, etc. The chassid



explained as follows: In the beginning, Rabbi Eliezer ben Durdaya already knew that his situation was not good and that he needed to change direction. However, he first cast everything upon heaven and earth, etc., with all types of excuses, implying, "I am not to blame; I want to be good, it's just that the weather, other natural phenomena, or a simple case of bad luck -are all causing me to do otherwise." This proved useless in getting him closer to G-d, as this was not the real problem. Eventually, he realized that he really was at fault, and everything that he was blaming for his guilt had no real influence over him at all. So he placed his head between his knees and cried, coming to a state of true t'shuva and great love of G-d, to the point that even tzaddikim could not attain such a level.

If so, what is the solution to deal with such a cunning yetzer ha'ra? In the past, chassidim would go into yechidus in order to clarify exactly where they're holding, and if they have gone wrong somewhere. This is one of the interpretations of the word **yechidus** – clarification. In other cases, they would make this determination with their mashpia. This stands in contrast to those who think that yechidus or speaking to a mashpia is in order to get advice on how not to sin and how to do mitzvos. This is why we have a Shulchan Aruch, and what's forbidden is forbidden – period. The advice comes primarily in order to know how not to fall into the deceptive trap of Eisav, who captured with his mouth, and afterwards, Lavan, known as Lavan HaArami (the deceiver), and then Bilam, who stealthily tried to curse us with his tongue – and other illusive names the yetzer ha'ra has acquired whenever we succeed in exposing him. Every time we reveal his disgraceful character, he is

forced to change into some other identity to keep surviving, as we know from other bankrupt individuals. So goes the clever saying: Why did Yisro have seven names? – Because he had seven daughters, and after the wedding of each one of them, he went bankrupt. Thus, he had to change his name each time.

HaRav R. Chaim Shaul Brook used to ask: Why is the yetzer ha'ra called "a fool"? He's smarter than all

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of us combined, and the proof comes from how he manages to convince and confuse even very intelligent people. He explained as follows: A billionaire who argues and fights over every last dollar is the ultimate fool. Similarly, we all say to the yetzer ha'ra, "You have billions of people out there. Why do you invest all your time and effort in me, as if you have no one else to keep you busy?..."

## **TELL THE DOCTOR WHAT THE REAL PROBLEM IS**

For this reason, the Rebbe MH"m established and even obligated us to appoint a personal rav. Furthermore, even if a person can't find someone as suitable as he would like, then he should pick someone else of lesser stature for now, but he must not go without his "*Aseh Lecha Rav*." As we mentioned earlier, the yetzer ha'ra is very crafty, and when he sees that his patient is preparing to take a rav, who will lift his head from out of the sand and show him the error of his ways, he puts his craftiness to work. "I don't need a rav," "I know what any rav will say," "I can teach the rav myself," "I'll look for a rav befitting my stature," etc. In fact, he's already chosen his rav – a very great and prominent rav, known in the Torah – and the Torah is eternal. He's thousands of years old with much experience and practical application. Who is he and what's his name? – he can't tell yet. When did he meet him? When was the last time he spoke to him? He can't say. Then we find out who he is – he's the rav mentioned in Seifer B'Reishis (33:9): "And Eisav said, 'I have a *rav*'!"

Only when he accepts a rav and his advice is there a chance that he will see if he is sticking his head in the sand like an ostrich or walking with assurance along the correct path by taking full responsibility for his actions.

However, it is important here to emphasize what is the appropriate way to turn to one's "*Aseh Lecha Rav*" in order to achieve the proper objective. We can learn this from R. Chanoch Hendel, a chassid in the days of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab. When he saw the students in Lubavitch getting ready to go in to yechidus, he told them, "Dear *kinderlach*! Tell the Rebbe what **you don't want to tell!** Even though

you can't lie to the Rebbe, nevertheless, if you reveal one handbreadth to the Rebbe and then cover up two, you will not make yourself into a proper vessel to receive what you need, and thus, you will not have a successful yechidus.

This applies to an even greater measure when you turn to your "Aseh Lecha Rav," who is flesh and blood just like you are, only that the Rebbe shlita gives him the strength to be the channel in giving over what the Rebbe wants you to receive. If you deceive him, i.e., not describing the problem for what it really is, rather just presenting it in the way you want so that he will not place any responsibility upon you, this automatically creates a situation where your rav will fail to give the proper guidance you need. Such a scenario befits what the Rebbe Maharash said: You can't fool the whole world, nor can you fool me. All that's left is for you to fool yourself – and what's the trick to fooling someone as dumb as you?

This is similar to the person who went to a most prominent doctor, who was known for his expertise in making a quick and accurate diagnosis of the patient's condition, and giving him the correct treatment without the need for numerous tests, etc. The person left this doctor's office with a grin, and said: I succeeded in fooling this big and famous doctor. My head hurts, and I told him that it's my stomach that's bothering me. He believed me, and gave me a treatment for my stomach... Regarding such a conquest, you can say: One more victory like that, and he's done for.

There are those who avoid appointing a personal rav. Others accept a rav, but fool him by giving him inaccurate information and maintaining his right to secrecy and to remain silent. Such people are simply trying to deceive the greatest and most famous professor – the

Rebbe shlita – as he has established that any guidance from him must specifically come by means of a **rav**. This is not due to this rav's unique qualities, rather what the Rambam writes regarding the blessing of the *Kohanim*. They don't create the bracha; they merely fulfill the mitzvah – and you standing before them, not behind them, with head bowed and true bittul, draw forth the influence from G-d – the One who truly bestows the blessing.

### THE SOURCE OF THE BRACHA

Anyone who avoids turning to a rav because he is worried that he will have to take responsibility for his actions, looking instead for an

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easier and safer way to solve his problems, can be compared to the person who was standing and looking for something under the street light. When people asked him what he was trying to find, he replied that he had lost an extremely valuable object. "Where did you lose it?" they asked him. "Across the street," he said. "But if you lost it across the street," they queried, "then why are you looking over here?" "Quite simple," he answered. "It's very dark across the street. Here, the light's better." Naturally, he came up empty-handed.

Similarly, when someone turns to a rav with a nice and pleasant version of his tale, he's obviously looking in the wrong place – where it's dark – and he won't find the cure for what ails him.

There's also the story about the person who would walk in the street and talk to himself (this was obviously in the days before cell phones...). When he was asked why he did so, he gave three reasons: 1) he found no one smarter; 2) he doesn't interrupt; 3) he agrees with everything he says. No need to explain where this guy's holding.

By the same token, when a person turns to a rav to get rubber-stamp approval of anything he says, his situation must be really bad. Furthermore, if this is a family man, someone responsible for students or a community, or a person whose words are heard by people throughout the world, the lack of a "rav" to show him the way, unbiased by any sense of self-love, is a dangerous risk for him and all those who depend upon him.

It is quite clear that the Rebbe MH"M issued his orders as a judge and counsel. His decrees are truly the ultimate good, i.e., it's worthwhile for us to fulfill them. As the Rebbe shlita said once at a farbrengen: My sitting on this chair is only for the purpose of doing good, and not *ch"v* the opposite.

Chassidim have been accustomed to say that when Moshiach comes, he will heal all those who are sick – except for the stupid ones. Why? Because the infirmed will swarm to him, requesting that he cure them from their illness. Only the stupid will not come, since they believe that they are the smartest ones of all. Therefore, before the coming of Moshiach, the Rebbe MH"M has commanded us to utilize the opportunity to turn to our "Aseh Lecha Rav." Then, we may know what our problem is, and deal with it as we prepare to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu. And even if we can't solve the problem entirely, at least we'll know that we should ask Melech HaMoshiach to provide us with the remedy we truly need.



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## 103 sets of Likutei Sichos on the Parsha It's in Your Hands

The Top 103 finalists  
Will receive a set of  
Likutei Sichos on the Parsha (46 volumes)



## Second Prize

The Next 103 Winners  
Will Receive a Set of Maamarim Melukat



350 Points and Up  
Or  
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In the Guaranteed Track  
Will Win the Sefer 'מאמר המלך'

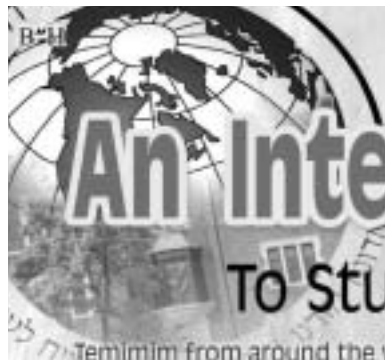
## And More Additional Prizes

For Details, See our Bulletin

Or Ask the Representative of Your Yeshiva Long Live the Rebbe King Moshiach Forever and Ever

Campaign Office: Igud Talmidei Yeshivot Central Lubavitch Yeshiva Beis Moshiach 770 Telephone: 718-773-4999 Fax: 718-735-7279 Email: Ato770@gmail.com





# 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) דברי חסידות של מלך המשיח - חזרות שלישית תעורר ומסגרות
- 2) קונטרס חסידות של תורה ומצוות (3) נבחרות חסידות המגילה
- 4) דברי מלכות ש"ס אחרי"ק ה'תשנ"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 חזון מאחורי חזון
- 4) דברי מלכות ש"ס אחרי"ק ה'תשנ"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 חסיד'.

## Track II: Guaranteed Track

### 1. Content to learn:

Sunday, 18 Adar I - Wednesday, 26 Adar II

**Content to learn:**

Learn 2 sichos L'girs: 1) Two stages in Yemos Hamoshiach. 2) דברי מלכות ש"ס אחרי"ק ה'תשנ"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, מסערת חסיד.  
Anyone who earns more than 150 points will receive the new sefer, מאמר חסיד.

**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.**

הזכיה בכרטיסים תענית במימון ל"א גיטן ה'תשס"ה.

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.

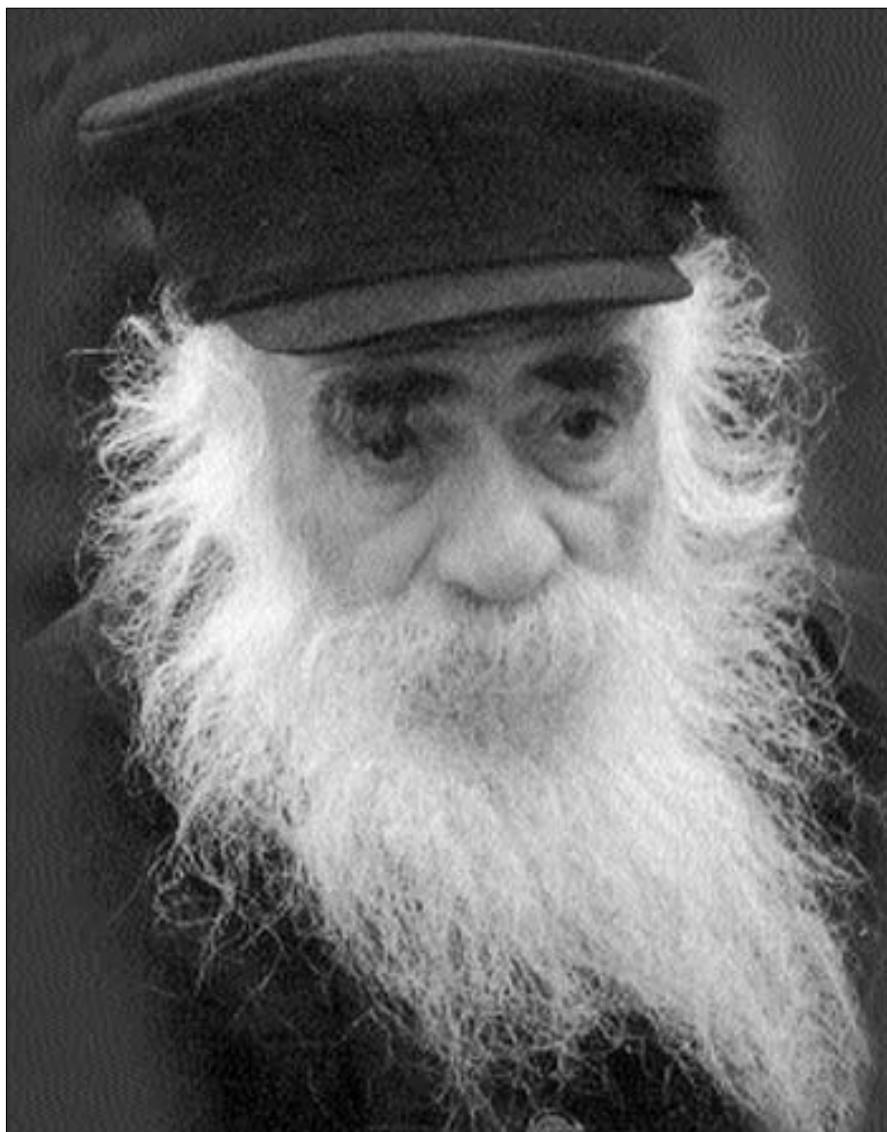
Campaign Office: Igud Talmidei Yeshivot, Central Lubavitch Yeshiva, Beis Moshiah 770  
Telephone: 718-773-4939 Fax: 718-735-7279 Email: Atah770@gmail.com

**Long Live the Rebbe King Moshiach Forever and Ever**



# ‘THAT’S WHAT AHAVAS YISROEL IS ALL ABOUT!’

BY MENDY BRAND



R' Michel Vishedsky of Kfar Chabad told the following story at a farbrengen:

We are at a Chassidishe farbrengen and we are telling Chassidishe stories, but the point is to bring us to achdus and ahavas Yisroel. It's very easy to say "ahavas Yisroel," but to have true ahavas Yisroel is not so easy.

When I was in Samarkand, I was at the home of R' Chaim Zalman Kozliner a"h, and the mashpia, R' Mendel Futerfas a"h was there too. R' Mendel was in Samarkand after being released from Soviet prison before he left Russia.

While they were sitting there, one of Anash (whose name I won't mention for obvious reasons) approached R' Mendel and said, "R Mendel, a certain Jew has a tzara. A family member is sick. Oy, oy!," sighed the man, "I can't take the suffering of my friend. I'm sick over it. I don't know what to do with myself..."

R' Mendel replied, "What? It pains your heart? Are you eating less? Are you unable to sleep? Have you lost weight? How is your 'sickness' over his plight manifest? Are you truly bothered by the situation? No. You don't really care.

When something happens that you *really* care about, even a little bit, you immediately lose your appetite and can't sleep. That shows it really bothers you! That's ahavas Yisroel! Why are you telling me stories?"

R' Michel went on to say that he saw, with his own eyes, how R' Mendel practiced what he preached.

A few years earlier, when my family lived in Chernowitz which is near Sadigora, R' Mendel lived there too, and he spent a lot of time at our house. Another Jew, by the name of Herschel Rabinowitz, also frequently came by.

Herschel had served in the house of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, the rav of Yekaterinaslav, and the Rebbe's father. When R' Levi Yitzchok was exiled by the cursed communists, Herschel helped R' Levi Yitzchok get ready to go. Years later, after R' Levi Yitzchok passed away, Herschel moved to Chernowitz.

In nearby Sadigora is the plot where the Ruzhiner tzaddik is buried along with his wife, some of his holy sons, and their wives. The plot was not surrounded by a fence and there was barely anything left of the gravestones. Sheep wandered about and even impure animals frequented the area.

It's interesting that despite the missing markers, people knew exactly where the graves were and many people came and prayed there, including gentiles.

Herschel was bothered by the fact that the holy Ruzhiner was not

getting the honor he deserved, and he decided to build a gravesite and to fence in the plot. He built a stone structure like a ceiling-less room and put up a fence. But shortly afterwards, some ruffians tore down what Herschel had built.

Herschel was undeterred and he rebuilt the structure, and once again, gentiles tore it down. The same thing happened a third time. Herschel began rebuilding it for a fourth time, but when he had nearly finished the

***R' Michel said: I saw  
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That's what ahavas  
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That showed he really  
cared!***

job, he was stricken by a severe heart attack, to the point that the doctors despaired of his life. They told him that the prognosis for a man of his age who suffered such a severe heart attack is grim.

When R' Mendel heard what the doctors said, he immediately fainted.

R' Michel said: I saw it with my own eyes. That's what ahavas Yisroel is all about! That showed he really cared!

We could end here, having

brought out that lesson, but let's continue and see what happened with R' Herschel and the graves:

After R' Mendel was revived, he sat with my father (the mashpia R' Moshe Vishedsky a"h) and they discussed what they could do for the complete recovery of Herschel Rabinowitz. They concluded that the Ruzhiner tzaddik did not want a structure built on his grave and they decided they must immediately break it down. They sent my brother Ben-Tzion and I to take down the building.

After we took down the structure that R' Herschel had put up, he immediately began to do better and ultimately had a full recovery. He was still bothered by the fact that tzaddikim were buried in an undignified manner. After consulting with my father and R' Mendel, they decided that although they wouldn't build a structure, they had to do something to protect the dignity of the tzaddikim.

They decided to place one large, round stone over all the graves as one. This would mark the graves and would prevent animals from walking there because if they attempted to climb the stone, they would slide off, since the stone was smooth and rounded. It would also prevent gentiles from doing damage.

They made the stone and covered the graves, and many Jews, including many Lubavitchers, visited the graves, as well as, l'havdil, many gentiles.



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# ADVENTURES IN AVENTURA

*Amazing success for a young couple on shlichus in Aventura, Florida.*

BY MENDEL TZFASMAN

What is “Aventura”? One answer is: it’s an exclusive area north of Miami. Another answer is it means “adventure” in Italian. In the brief time I spent with the shliach in Aventura, I can testify that the city lives up to its name. I spoke with the shliach Rabbi Casriel Brusowankin to hear about the kind of people who live there and the nature of this shlichus.

“To tell you the truth,” said Rabbi Brusowankin, “you have to speak with my son-in-law, Levi Forta. I came on shlichus to northern Miami

over 22 years ago, and when this area was built only ten years ago, we began working here too. When our daughter Chanie married the son of Rabbi Aryeh Forta, shliach in London, I had them take over the shlichus here. Go speak with him,” he urged me.

I did as he suggested and headed for the Chabad house at 21001 Biscayne Blvd. I was afraid I wouldn’t be able to find it but a Jew I stopped along the way explained it simply. “Continue down this street, and after about twenty blocks you’ll see a big building with a menorah. You can’t miss it.”

About ten minutes later, I saw a huge and stunning building with a menorah built into its façade.

## STARTING OFF WITH MIRACLES

Rabbi and Mrs. Forta are here only six years, yet they have really made their mark on Aventura already, both physically and spiritually. His father-in-law asked him to take on the project of building a new Chabad house. The land had already been purchased by Rabbi Brusowankin for \$400,000. There was a small and simple house on the property that served as a shul and Chabad house.

Rabbi Forta felt daunted by the challenge. It seemed too big for him to take on. “It took me some time to realize that if I went with my own kochos, I wouldn’t build anything, but as the Rebbe’s shliach I wouldn’t be limited, because the Rebbe gives unlimited kochos. My wife Chanie gave me the push, quoting the saying, ‘think good, and it will be good.’

“The serious problem we faced was money, of course. In order to put up a building that would meet the standards of the area we live in, we



Inside the shul



Stained glass windows



needed a lot of funds, and we didn't have it. The community wasn't large at that point, and what we needed to do was build up the community first, and then, with their help, try and build a building. However, we went l'chat'chilla aribber, getting the building up first, and then filling it up with Jews from the area.

"Just at that time, the municipality told us we had to change the existing building. The zoning board had decided that in a city this upscale, especially on the



**Rabbi Casriel Brusowankin**

main street, where we are located, our simple building was an eyesore.



**Rabbi Levi Forta**

"We could have sold the property and gotten over a million dollars for it, but we didn't consider doing that. We knew that the Rebbe had given my father-in-law a bracha to buy this property in order to put up a building here."

Rabbi Forta went from house to house and from office to office to raise the enormous sum needed to do the construction. Incredibly, he got a bank loan for half the money he needed. He hoped this would prove to everybody that he was serious about getting this building up. In the contract he signed, he promised to return \$300,000 in a year, and to pay back the rest of the money over a seven-year period.

A year went by and Rabbi Forta didn't have the money. He went to the bank and asked them to extend the loan for another year. Incredibly, the bank manager agreed, but he warned Levi not to delay the payment.

Another year went by and again he didn't have the money. Levi waited for a miracle. At the end of the year, someone from the bank came to appropriate the property. When he heard about this, Eliyahu Ezagui, who had moved to the area, told the bank he would be a guarantor for the payment of the entire sum!

### **IT'S A CHALLENGE TO PUT UP A BUILDING**

Stage by stage, the dream of putting up a building began to take shape. When the old building was



taken down, davening took place at the Forta home. The table in the dining room was used both as a bima for the Torah as well as for the Shabbos meals. Later on, the shul was moved to other locations. This was not a time of growth for the congregation, since they had no regular place for davening.

“Constructing a building is difficult but possible if you have the money; but a congregation cannot be bought with money, and this is where the real work begins,” says Rabbi Forta.

He went among the businessmen in the area, mainly on Fridays, and brought them t’fillin. Along with the t’fillin, he distributed challos for Shabbos to his mekuravim.

While I spoke with the shliach, he was called out of the room. He excused himself and returned to the office ten minutes later with a bag full of bills and coins, including many hundred-dollar bills.

“Look at this,” he said. “The person who gave this to me had made a deal with G-d: if G-d helped him in his business, he would give **half his profits** to tz’daka.”

A series of amazing hashgacha pratis and miracles enabled the loan to be paid off and the building to be completed. Only three years later (which seemed like forever to the Fortas), the Chabad k’hilla of Aventura was able to celebrate. On Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur that year, about 1000 Jews joined the davening!

The leaders of the Conservative temple nearby nervously watched the incredible growth of the fledgling Chabad community.

Another problem Rabbi Forta had to contend with was the fact that the area served primarily as a vacation spot, which meant that many people weren’t permanent residents. He began signing up mekuravim as

members of his congregation because, “If a person contributes towards an organization, he feels that it belongs to him and he doesn’t want to leave.”

### WHAT A MIKVA!

Whereas with the shul, Rabbi Forta tried to save as much money as possible, when it came to constructing the mikva, he gave the architects free reign. The mikva alone cost \$300,000.

I went to see the mikva and was

*“In order to get more families interested in using the mikva, we couldn’t cut corners.*

*It has expensive marble, stunning ceramics, a Jacuzzi, a shower for the use of the disabled, and even gold-plated ornamentation on the walls and floor.”*

bowled over by its opulence.

“People here are used to a very high standard of living,” explained Rabbi Forta. “In order to get more families interested in using the mikva, we couldn’t cut corners. It has expensive marble, stunning ceramics, a Jacuzzi, a shower for the use of the disabled, and even gold-plated ornamentation on the walls and floor. This mikva is definitely a match for the exclusive spa nearby, for those unfamiliar with the halachos.

“Our mikva provides five-star service. We change the flowers in the vases daily. If we were on shlichus somewhere else, I don’t think we’d spend so much money on these externals.

(Smiling) “In all of Aventura, ten percent of the people live a normal life, and my wife and I are part of the ten percent!”

The day the mikva opened was celebrated in an original way. From morning on, there were workshops on Family Purity. Mrs. Malka Touger came in from Eretz Yisroel and did a wonderful job explaining the importance of the mitzva from many different angles. In the evening, husbands were invited to attend workshops too.

“At first we thought our mikva would be available by appointment only, but my wife thought it should be open daily, which requires more money. We decided to keep it open daily for a trial period, to see whether there was a need for it. Since then, we haven’t closed the mikva even once.”

The keilim mikva is also promoted during classes about kashrus and Shabbos. Speaking about Shabbos, “Despite the classes, many people could not understand why they couldn’t take their children out in carriages on Shabbos. ‘We’re not riding, we’re walking, so what’s the problem?’”

So an eiruv was built. A string was put up around the community and the Chabad house that nearly surrounded it all. “Nearly” is not good enough, but part of the eiruv’s route was a bridge. Nobody could climb it to put the string of the eiruv on it, certainly not without permission from the city.

A solution was found with one of the mekuravim who works for the FPL (Florida Power Light). He had learned from Rabbi Forta how to tackle problems, and he showed up



The Jewish Journal reports about the new building.



The new mikva



A beautifully appointed corner of the mikva

one day with a FPL truck, turned on the warning lights that indicated that work was being done, and put up the eiruv on the bridge. That's how the eiruv unofficially became official.

### FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the usual Chabad houses activities, Rabbi Forta opened a Hebrew School. Children come every Sunday and Wednesday for the only Jewish education they get all week. In the summer, there is a day camp, and between the school and the day camp, the entire family learns

about Yiddishkeit and Chassidus. 110 children participate and there are 14 teachers.

A shiur for couples is given twice a week at the Chabad house, and Rabbi Forta also gives shiurim at the homes of mekuravim. Couples invite other couples and the circle of mekuravim grows. Once a month, usually in connection with a Chassidishe date on the calendar, a guest speaker talks about the significance of the day and its relevance to daily life.

Every Sunday, Rabbi Mendelsohn gives a class in inyanei Geula and Moshiach, from the sources. On Shabbos, the people who come to the Chabad house live with Moshiach by singing "Yechi" after Lecha Dodi, and hearing Rabbi Brusowankin say over a vort from *Beis Moshiach*.

Upon entering the shul, I saw fifteen round tables set for Shabbos with a white tablecloth and a vase of flowers. On the plates were bentchers.

"Are you having a special event tonight?" I asked.

"Yes. Once a month we have a Shabbaton for the community. As our community grows, even if we invite a couple every Shabbos, it will take us over a year until we have that couple again. So we decided to hold a Shabbaton where we can eat the Shabbos meals and have a wonderful time together.

"Do you see that woman?" Rabbi Forta asked me, motioning towards a woman who was working there. "She is a wealthy woman, and she and her husband became baalei t'shuva after being impressed by the beauty of Shabbos. Now, they invite other couples to join them for their Shabbos meals. Their kashrus is impeccable. She feels so much a part of this place that she comes to help and make the Shabbaton a success."

### What special shlichus ideas do you have?

"There are always ideas, and the goal is to impart messages in a roundabout way. I'll give you some examples. We do events for parents and their kids, or an evening in which the food of some country is featured. Aside from uniting the members of the community, these programs have many Jewish and Chassidish themes. Ideas that would be hard to convey in a shiur, are more readily accepted in a fun atmosphere."

**Now that you've completed the building, do you have any other big plans in the works?**

"Yes, of course. In a month from now, b'e'zras Hashem, we will be celebrating the Hachnasa of four Sifrei Torah to our shul. The plan is to close the main street where the Chabad house is located, and to have the parade walk the length of the main street.

"As a police chaplain, I got permission to do this. With G-d's help, it will be an event that the whole city will be talking about!

"We are also planning on constructing another building which will have a simcha hall and a pre-school program for children ages 2-5, as well as a Sefardi shul."

**Why do you need so many Sifrei Torah?**

"First of all, in addition to the main shul, we have another shul for those who daven nusach Sefard. This enables Sefardic Jews who want to maintain their traditions to do so. In certain places, when Sefardic Jews are mekurav through Chabad and they want to maintain their own traditions, they look for a Sefardic community to join. By maintaining our own Sefardi minyan, our mekuravim stay with us and continue to be mekusharim to the Rebbe.

"Another reason to have many Sifrei Torah is for Simchas Torah, when it's nice to have so many. Aside from these two reasons," adds Rabbi Forta with a smile, "we don't ask questions. When people give, we take!"

### **YOU CAN'T MISS IT**

Rabbi Forta and I continued our tour and went outside, where we passed by the menorah that is built into the façade of the building.

"The law in Miami forbids public menorahs. This makes the shluchim here quite unhappy, since they can't fulfill the Rebbe's horaa. We got



**The shluchim get the children involved in the atmosphere of Mattan Torah**

around this problem by making the menorah part of the building, so they can't complain."

The menorah, which is built with straight branches, as the Rambam holds, was donated by the Maimon

family, descendants of the Rambam. It's the largest menorah in Florida.

That Jew who gave me directions was right: drive about twenty blocks and you'll see a big building with a menorah – you can't miss it!

### **DANGER: ELECTRICITY!**

Erev Rosh HaShana two years ago, the shluchim wanted to open the new building for the Rosh HaShana davening. All they needed was a final permit from a licensed electrician who had to ascertain that all the electrical work in the building was working properly. The electrician worked for hours, and was almost done.

Over the platform with the Aron Kodesh is an electrically operated window that is opened for chuppas, so that the chuppa takes place under the sky. The window wasn't working yet, and the question was: would this prevent people from being able to daven in the new shul on Rosh HaShana? Would the shluchim have to pay for a tent for them to daven in?

"When the electrician went over to check this window, we held our breath. We knew this was the only problem. Just then, the (gentile) electrician who had done the wiring for the building went over to him and said, 'Don't dare try to open that window because it's for the Jews' prayers on Saturday. If you try and open the window, you'll have bad luck,' he warned him.

"The licensed electrician signed the permit allowing us to use the building."

# I WAS THERE...

*Miracle stories witnessed by T'mimim in the course of mivtzaim.*

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

## SUDDEN CHANGE

Dovid Kirschnzaft relates:

I have been working with Jewish kids in Sunday school for about a year now. We do projects with the children in one of the Kollel Levi Yitzchok rooms off of 770. Sad to say, this is the only Jewish affiliation the children have, because the rest of the week they're in public school.

The following story is about one of the children who started coming only a few months ago. He was really a handful. The very first time we met him he behaved terribly. In addition, he began inciting other children to follow him.

We thought of asking his parents not to bring him anymore, but every time we wrote to the Rebbe about this, we opened to an answer that spoke about the special quality of the neshama and how you can't know where it will end up.

Lately, I heard about radical changes with this boy and I understand what the Rebbe means. I don't know how to explain it except for the fact that the G-dly spark in the boy was suddenly lit, and surprisingly, he asked his parents if he could go to yeshiva.

In a phone conversation with him, he asked about proper dress and I was amazed to hear his polite way of talking – a real change over

what he used to be like.

## "I OWE HIM MY LIFE"

Dovid Kirschnzaft relates:

A few weeks ago, a gentile woman came over to my t'fillin stand in Queens and pointed at the picture of the Rebbe. She said, "I must thank him because I owe him my life."

*Lately, I heard about radical changes with this boy and I understand what the Rebbe means. I don't know how to explain it except for the fact that the G-dly spark in the boy was suddenly lit.*

"What connection do you have with the Rebbe?" I asked her in amazement. She told me that although she wasn't Jewish, she was raised to respect the Jewish religion, and her mother once got a dollar from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe made a tremendous impression on her entire family, and every morning she prayed facing the Rebbe's picture, and asked the Rebbe to bless her. Before our astonished eyes, she took out a folded copy of *The Voice of Moshiach* with the Rebbe's picture on it. A few days earlier, she had been driving her car on the highway near New York when she veered and collided with an oncoming truck. Her car was totaled, but to her amazement and the incredulity of all who witnessed the accident, she extricated herself from the car and came out without a scratch.

"This miracle is only because of my blessings from the Rebbe." We asked her to tell her friends about the Seven Noachide Laws and about the besuras ha'Geula.

## A STORY BETWEEN THE FISH AND THE SOUP

Dovid Kirschnzaft relates:

On Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, all those heading the fight against the Disengagement gathered at Neve Dekalim in order to come up with a plan to prevent this tragedy from happening. My parents had a guest. The conversation at the Shabbos table was about the Rebbe and ways to connect with him nowadays. My father, the shliach in Gush Katif, explained that this tragic Disengagement plan is one of the final battles of the forces of evil

against the Geula. The guest was fascinated by the conversation.

After the fish was served, the guest told his personal story. He is a surgeon, and a year ago a patient came to him, whom he examined and determined needed an operation. But at the end of her appointment, the patient nearly left without discussing the operation. The doctor wanted to know her thoughts on the matter, and she said she didn't know what to say until she wrote to the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The doctor hadn't heard about this and asked her to explain.

The Lubavitcher woman explained how you write to the Rebbe and receive an answer and brachos through the *Igros Kodesh*. Her faith in the Rebbe and the few miracle stories she told him piqued his interest tremendously.

"Four months later, my daughter had problems with her eyes. The eye doctor recommended certain medication, but we didn't know if it would help or be harmful. My daughter was suffering but I found it difficult to make a decision, especially when the family was looking to me for an answer.

"Then I remembered what my patient had told me about the *Igros Kodesh*. That same day I went to the store in Kfar Chabad and bought the entire set of *Igros Kodesh*. I didn't care about the price, trusting that this would resolve my dilemma.

"On my way home, I pulled up at the side of the road and couldn't believe what I was reading. The letter was addressed to a woman who couldn't decide whether to take the medication the doctors were prescribing, because some said that the danger far outweighed the benefits. The Rebbe stated clearly that she should take the

medicine and listen to the doctors, for Hashem gives doctors the ability to heal."

The doctor finished his story and said, "At that moment, my doubts melted away. I hurried home and told my daughter to take the medicine. My family, who were aware of my indecisiveness regarding the medicine, wondered how I had suddenly become so sure of myself.

"A few days later I saw how we had done the right thing. After months of pain, the problem completely disappeared, and I thanked the Rebbe for the miracle that he did for me."

***My daughter was suffering but I found it difficult to make a decision, especially when the family was looking to me for an answer.***

#### **A CLEAR ANSWER**

Dovber Farber relates:

I have been doing mitzvaim for years at the t'fillin stand on the corner of 108<sup>th</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> streets in Queens. Dozens of people put on t'fillin, including many who never put t'fillin on before in their life. We also bring some volumes of the *Igros Kodesh* with us and help people get advice and brachos from the Rebbe.

We met a woman named Aliza Natanalov who began becoming observant a few years ago. Although her home is still not

observant, she began keeping some mitzvos, such as wearing a sheitel and improving in kashrus.

One Friday she came to our stand wearing a kerchief instead of her sheitel, and she was very upset. She was coming from the hospital, where her son had been taken. He had been playing wildly at home and the television fell on his head. He had turned colors and then went pale. He had undergone a series of X-rays and tests.

"Now I am coming to ask for a bracha for him," she said.

We suggested she write to the Rebbe. She wrote about her son, and included a request for a bracha for parnasa. When she opened the volume of *Igros Kodesh* (vol. 15, p. 198) she was amazed to read a letter to a woman where the Rebbe said she should wear a sheitel.

She was excited by this answer though we didn't understand why, since she usually wore a sheitel anyway. It turned out that she had weakened in this area after her friends urged her to wear a kerchief instead of a sheitel.

The Rebbe also wrote a bracha that her daughter should follow the mother. The woman was even more amazed because at that time, her daughter was veering off the path in which she had been raised, and here she was getting a bracha for her daughter.

The letter ended with, "**a blessing for good news in the aforementioned and for good health and in parnasa.**"

She stood there for a long time, in shock over the letter that addressed all her concerns.

Another woman stopped by who was a friend of hers. The first woman told the second about the amazing letter she had opened to, and said that from then on she would only wear a sheitel outside.



## A QUICK RESPONSE

Avremi Makovitzky relates:

We do Mivtza T'fillin on Fridays on 28<sup>th</sup> street in Manhattan. We see many Israelis who work in that area, and we put t'fillin on with them. In one of the companies, there's a fellow who is very open to Judaism. Not only does he put on t'fillin, but he listens closely to anything we tell him about Judaism.

For a few months, we asked him to visit 770, and he promised to come, but each time there was a different reason why he couldn't make it. Over a year went by like this.

One Monday, he called me and left a message on my answering machine asking that I call him back as soon as I could. I quickly returned his call.

He sadly told me that he had been fired from his job that morning and he didn't know what to do. The thing that disturbed him most of all was that he had been suspected of embezzling money. I sympathized with him and suggested that he come to 770 and write to the Rebbe for a bracha.

He knew about writing to the Rebbe, and within a few hours we met at 770, where he sat down to write about his problem. He commented about what a pity it was that these unfortunate circumstances finally got him to keep his promise and come to 770.

In the answer he opened to in the *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe wrote about the importance of immersing in a mikva. The letter ended with a bracha for great success in business. The man was excited by his answer, both because of the

bracha for business and because the previous time he had written to the Rebbe, the answer had also referred to mikva. He went to the mikva and we parted ways.

The truth is that I was also surprised by how things worked out so quickly. He called me about half an hour later, and as I wondered what he could be calling about so soon, he yelled, "The Rebbe's bracha was fulfilled!"

As he returned home on the subway, the company called and apologized for firing him and asked him to come back to work the next day.

## THAT'S THE MAN!

Efraim Biran relates:

I was at my t'fillin stand in Ohr Yehuda when a woman came over to write to the Rebbe. I told her how to go about it, and she made a

good resolution and wrote her letter. As I always do, I took out a picture of the Rebbe. When she saw it, she was dumbfounded! When she finally calmed down, she explained her unusual reaction.

A few years before, her son's stomach swelled up for no apparent reason. The doctors at the clinic sent her to the hospital, where they discovered a serious kidney problem. The doctors said he was born with the problem and they didn't understand how no doctor had identified it before.

The doctors said he needed a serious and immediate operation because any delay would cause irreparable damage. If that wasn't enough, the woman's father had a serious heart attack and the doctors wanted to operate on him immediately.

"I never experienced such a difficult period as I did then. I felt

***"The night before the operation, I couldn't sleep. Finally, after many hours, sleep overcame me, and in my dream, I saw a rabbi with a white beard and a majestic face..."***

all alone and worried about these two people who were so precious to me. I had nobody to talk to, nobody to consult with.

"The night before the operation, I couldn't sleep. Finally, after many hours, sleep overcame me, and in

my dream, I saw a rabbi with a white beard and a majestic face. He was wearing a long black suit and walked erect. He stood near my little son, caressed him and hugged him for a few minutes.

"The man's face gave me a feeling of calm. The man didn't say a word, but his wise eyes spoke. Afterwards, I knew that everything would be all right.

"The next day, when both operations were done, was a tense and fearful time, but tension and fear dissipated when the doctors said they were pleased with the results of the operations.

"The man I saw in my dream is the man in the picture you just showed me!"

The woman took the picture, kissed it many times and said she would buy a large picture of the Rebbe for her home.



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# RABBI ZALMAN LEIB ESTULIN A”H

Rabbi Zalman Leib Estulin passed away on Wednesday, Purim Katan. He was one of the distinguished elder Chassidim who was mekushar to our Rebbeim and was considered a tremendous gaon.

R’ Zalman Leib had connections with Jews of all backgrounds – Chassidic and Litvish, old and young. This was possible because of his great humility. His bittul and humility attracted many people to him and he gave respect to all. When the Rebbe spoke a great deal about Moshiach, R’ Zalman Leib would bring up the subject, even when his audience was Litvish. He spoke about Moshiach without arguing about it, but brought sources from the Gemara and showed how Nigleh of Torah supports the Rebbe’s view.

In his youth, he was moser nefesh to learn Torah and keep mitzvos despite the enormous danger of doing so in communist Russia. He was outstanding in his learning and in his acts of chesed and tz’daka with other Jews, and it was all with tremendous self-sacrifice. He once repeated a line from the Chassid, R’ Yona Cohen (may Hashem avenge his blood), who ran the network of

Tomchei T’mimim yeshivos in the Soviet Union: “I will not get Gan Eden for mesirus nefesh, because mesirus nefesh you do because the situation demands it, and not as a result of avoda.”



R’ Zalman Leib’s funeral left the Chabad shul in B’nei Brak, where he lived when he left Russia. Among the crowd were distinguished Chassidic and Litvishe rabbanim of B’nei Brak, who were in touch with him and who enjoyed talking in learning with him. Among the rabbanim were Rabbi Gershon Eidelstein, one of the roshei yeshiva in Ponovezh, who had learned with R’ Zalman Leib in his youth. Rabbi Eidelstein came with many of his talmidim and eulogized R’ Zalman Leib, calling him “*mori v’rabbi*.”

R’ Zalman Leib is survived by two sons – R’ Naftali, shliach in Los Angeles, and R’ Dovid of Crown Heights – as well as two daughters – Chaya, wife of R’ Yosef Motchkin a”h, who was known as a Chassid baal mesirus nefesh, and Gissa Brayna, wife of R’ Avrohom (Bumi) Friedland of Nachalat Har

Chabad, who is a maggid shiur in Tomchei T’mimim in Kiryat Gat.

# 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. \* Part 2 of 2*

For many years, R' Mordechai Giladov worked with the Jews of the Caucasus. When you meet his talmid Levi Shuvayev, you get a glimpse of the success R' Mordechai had and the impact he made on the Jewish community. The fact that Levi recently left to work with the Jews of the Caucasus says it all.

When I interviewed Mordechai, Levi was mostly quiet as he listened closely to his teacher's story. Then Levi got his turn to tell his own fascinating story.

When you look at Levi, it's hard to believe that he wasn't born into a Lubavitcher family in Kfar Chabad or Crown Heights, because he seems like a Chassid in every way, and he is! But this is not what Levi was like when Mordechai met him as a child.

We'll let Levi Shuvayev, shliach of the Rebbe MH"M to Nal'chik in the Caucasus, who returned to his hometown just a few months ago, tell his story:

I was born in Nal'chik, Caucasus in 1970. On my mother's side, I am a descendent of Rabbi Nissim, a great Torah scholar who was very poor, but who always helped other poor people. I am the middle child in my family.

Like the other Jewish families in the Caucasus, my parents got a basic Jewish education at home, were married with chuppa and kiddushin, circumcised their sons, and kept kashrus and holidays. Compared to other Jews in the Caucasus, this was considered a lot, but there was still much room for improvement.

A classic example of the lack of knowledge of these innocent Jews was their using their cars after going to shul on Shabbos. They didn't realize that this was wrong.

There were two schools in Nal'chik. The Jewish school was called "Jewish" because the students were Jewish, but that was it as far as Judaism went. The staff

and education were communist. The other school was run by gentiles and was atheistic of course, and children of Jewish, Moslem, and Christian homes went there. The atmosphere and education were anti all the religions equally.

When I turned thirteen, I had a bar mitzva like everybody else. I put on t'fillin, had an aliya to the Torah, and wore the traditional Caucasian hat. I read the brachos from a sign that was written with Russian letters. And that was that.

I kept the holidays and kashrus like the rest of the family, but nothing more than that. It was in 1986, after certain events occurred, that my life began to change. I felt the overt anti-Semitism in the school and I wondered why everybody hated the Jews. What was it about us that aroused such hatred on the part of gentiles? Why were we treated differently than everybody else?

I went to the local library in Nal'chik to find answers to these disturbing questions. I looked for books about Jews but found only one book on the subject, and it was about Zionism not about Judaism. This book was a collection of U.N. resolutions, which included the resolution declaring Zionism being equal to racism. It also wrote against a Jew named Kahane and his Jewish Defense League, and

against the Zionist “occupation.”

I felt proud that there were Jews who stood up against the anti-Semitic attackers, but I still had no explanation as to why anti-Semitism existed. I continued my search.

The next place I searched was the local shul in Nal’chik, the shul run by R’ Mordechai Giladov. Until that point, I went to shul only on holidays, being a typical traditional Jew. This time, I went to shul with a goal, to find a solution to the mystery as to why Jews were different and hated.

I thought that perhaps, learning my nation’s language, lashon ha’kodesh, would help, and I asked Mordechai to teach me to read.

Just a short time before, a young Ashkenazi by the name of Emanuel Tzires came from Leningrad where he had become interested in Judaism through the people working there at that time,

*We loved mysticism.  
We felt like starving  
people who were  
served the finest  
delicacies. We were  
so hungry we wanted  
to taste everything!*

including Chabad. He was a university graduate and worked in textiles. He married into my family and was close to me.

When he first started out in Nal’chik he had problems with parnasa because of Shabbos. He was fired from his job. Mordechai, who knew him well from shul, came to his aid. He suggested that Emanuel help him with his work and be paid a salary by the shul.

However, the shul committee strongly opposed paying an additional salary. Mordechai said that if they didn’t accept Emanuel, he would leave. The committee had no choice but to pay Emanuel too.

I knew Emanuel had the explanations I sought. Our entire extended family knew that Emanuel was a proud Jew and a role model as to how a Jew should behave. The “shidduch” was made in heaven. I yearned to learn and he (who wasn’t exceptionally busy in his community job) wanted to teach. An ideal situation, except the KGB didn’t think so. They called Emanuel down for interrogations but I wasn’t afraid. I was always a strong kid who protected Jewish children from attacks.

I quickly learned how to read from the siddur. Emanuel had brought a few s’farim with him like a Tanya printed by Kehos in England, a Rambam Yad HaChazaka, etc. He taught me Tanya, reading and translating. I will admit - I didn’t understand a thing!

The schools in Caucasus had a number of tracks. I chose the track that went until eighth grade and then went to work for my uncle.

When draft age was approaching, I registered for night classes in order to complete high school. This enabled me to postpone my army service. In the morning, I learned with Emanuel for a few hours. We learned everything: Rambam, Tanya and Rabbi Chaim Vital’s Shaarei K’dusha. Don’t be surprised. We learned it and thought we understood it all. We loved mysticism. We felt like starving people who were served the finest delicacies. We were so hungry we wanted to taste everything!

I accepted and did every mitzva I learned. I progressed in my



Mordechai way back when

observance of Torah and mitzvos rather quickly. Whatever I undertook to do was done seriously. I felt I had found exactly what I was looking for.

Mordechai obtained a pair of t'fillin for me from Moscow and I began putting them on daily.

**What did your parents think about this?**

My parents weren't thrilled. At 17, I began growing a beard and this was over the top for them. They felt (although they didn't say this directly) what a pity it was. They were most bothered by the fact that I closed myself up in my room during davening. Mordechai heard about their discontent and he calmed everybody down and explained that I was growing in my observance which was a positive thing.

My mother was pleased by the change in me. Until then, I had been a mischievous boy and she was happy to see me turn into a serious, quiet boy.

Emanuel had me speak by phone with some Chabad Chassidim in Leningrad and Moscow. When I was 17, I flew to Moscow and the Marina Roscha shul, for the first time. It was a two and a half hour flight.

**Who do you remember from that early period?**

There were some truly outstanding T'mimim: Sasha Shentza, Dovid Karpov, Moshe and Nachum Tamarin, and other terrific guys whose names I don't remember.

**And the atmosphere?**

It's hard to describe the atmosphere. It was warm and very secretive. I remember how Nachum Tamarin would organize a minyan for Rosh HaShana in the home of an old Jew. It was a two-hour walk each way to and from his house.

We didn't make a big deal out of it. I simply joined the bachurim because a Jew needs a minyan for Rosh HaShana, and it doesn't make a difference how far away it is. That concern for a single Jew despite the discomfort it entailed made a tremendous and indelible impression on me.

When I returned home to the Caucasus, I brought back treasures of s'farim with me.

In 1988, I went home one day and my mother told me that two non-Russian speaking men were

***We knew we had to find another place, and we didn't forget that in Soviet Russia we didn't have too many alternatives. We couldn't just show up with thirty Jewish children and ask for a place where we could learn Torah!***

looking for me. The next day, I met them in shul. One was Yossi Engel and unfortunately, I don't remember the name of the other one. They had already been in touch with Mordechai.

They were shluchim who came to breathe life into our community. Since it was before Purim, they suggested that we bring the children to shul for a party. Mordechai told the parents about the program, and the bachurim came well prepared. They had an organist, candy, and prizes with

Jewish themes. About thirty children came, and they spoke and I translated. It was the first Tzivos Hashem rally in the Caucasus and it was very successful.

The bachurim stayed another few days. When they left, they gave me a precious gift - a picture of the Rebbe! It was the first picture I ever had.

After they left, I knew what I had to do. I saw how excited the children were and knew I had to take over. The spark that the shluchim had ignited grew tremendously.

Mordechai and I decided to begin with Alef beis. The children came, as we anticipated they would, and beyond our expectations, and we divided them into three learning groups according to age. We held classes three times a week and the children came after school. We got the Alef beis books from the shluchim along with large Alef beis posters. For the first time ever, the Caucasus had a serious learning program that wasn't a club, and the children treated it as such.

The classes took place in the shul and for a while, it all went smoothly, way beyond our expectations. Who would have believed that the children of Nal'chik would be learning Torah al taharas ha'kodesh!

But as always happens with a good thing, something came up to disturb the program. The old men in shul couldn't allow themselves to ignore what Mother Russia was ignoring. They complained to Mordechai that the noise the children made during recess bothered them. We knew we had to find another place, and we didn't forget that in Soviet Russia we didn't have too many alternatives. We couldn't just show up with thirty Jewish children and ask for a

place where we could learn Torah!

Before I go on to tell you what happened, I would like to tell you about a group of people called the Tats of the Caucasus. This ethnic group lives throughout the Caucasus. They were originally Persian tribes who migrated to the Caucasian mountains. They were Jews who did not want to identify as Jews, and they adopted the Tat identity. The Tats have their own language, culture, and way of life but they have no specific religion. There are Moslem Tats, Christian Tats, and Jews who identify as Tats. In Nal'chik, if someone said he was a Tat, it was known that he was Jewish.

In Nal'chik there was a cultural center for children. A communist

Jewish woman, who called herself Tat, ran it. When we were stuck without a place for our school, we asked her for a few rooms in her building. On the one hand, she was happy to know that there was a program for Jewish children, but on the other hand, she was a communist and our program didn't exactly fit the official nature of her cultural center. She asked us not to emphasize the Jewish nature of our work.

I told her I was the director of the program and that the school would remain as it was, but I offered to pay her to rent the rooms. I was sure she would accept my offer, but she made a counter-offer saying that I didn't have to pay anything and we, she and I,

would run the program together.

We ended up not paying anything and she didn't mix in to the program. She even began learning a bit about Judaism because we were on her premises.

\* \* \*

Levi went on to describe a series of miracles and I found it hard to take it all in. A Lubavitcher school in an official building in the Soviet Union?! Who, aside from the Rebbe, could do such a miracle? A communist administrator, who had identified as a Tat, hosted a Tzivos Hashem program?!

Levi continued:

The rooms at the cultural center were decorated with posters of brachos and other Jewish ideas,



R' Levi Shuvayev, Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzal, R' Mordechai Giladov

which I had brought from Moscow. I didn't think I was doing anything unusual, and I didn't take any pictures.

Dozens of children, ages 6-15 regularly attended the program, and more and more children registered. I had to hire additional staff. At its peak, the school had 80 children. Mrs. Tova Shuvayev who took a job as mora, began seriously keeping Torah and mitzvos. The other teacher, Marc Ifraimov, did the same and began carefully keeping Shabbos. He would walk great distances in order to daven in shul on Shabbos.

My day was exhausting. In the morning, I worked, and in the afternoon, I taught and ran the school. In the evening, I attended night school.

\* \* \*

At this point in the interview, Mordechai, who had been sitting and listening to his dear talmid Levi, felt the need to interject:

In many other places in Russia, it was extremely hard to be religious, but the Minister of Religions in our district ignored us and our work, thanks to bribes. I regularly bribed him and he turned a blind-eye to what we were doing. He stopped seeing the Jewish funerals, the Jewish school, the circumcisions, and other religious ceremonies we had. He saw nothing. I thank G-d that he didn't change his mind one fine day and inform on us. This is one of the miracles of Nal'chik.

Levi continued his work for another two years. He visited the Marina Roscha shul a few times a year to be in yeshiva with the T'mimim who learned there, and to derive new strength and knowledge to continue his shlichus.

Levi: In 5750, I decided to make aliya in order to learn Torah

*I couldn't have hoped for a more clear answer than that. I knew I had to go on shlichus to Nal'chik, my hometown. I spent a long time preparing spiritually and materially. I studied sh'chita and prepared learning material for my children.*

and Chassidus and to make up for all I missed throughout the years. My family thought I was going just to study and didn't know I was planning on living there permanently.

In Eretz Yisroel I studied in Yeshivas SHAMIR which was run by Rabbi Farkash at the time. I was asked to give a shiur in Russian to talmidim in Boystown. I used my free time to teach Russian boys with no Jewish background.

After half a year at SHAMIR, I went to the yeshiva in Tzfas where I felt at home. I became particularly close to three staff members: Rabbi Y.Y. Wilschansky, Rabbi Giora Wolf, and Rabbi Ofer Maidovnik.

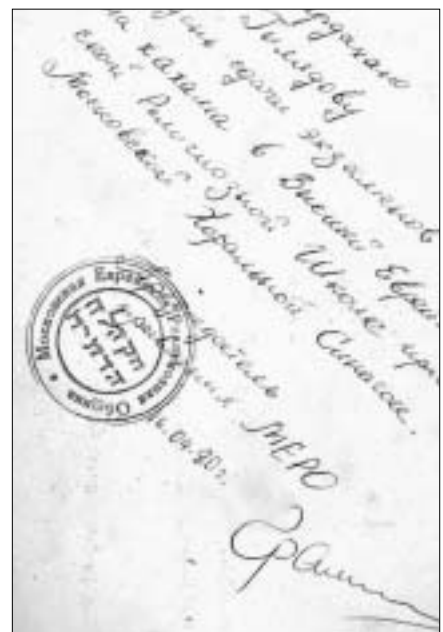
Then I went on shlichus with the Chabad Mobile Tanks in the north, until I became engaged to a girl from Natzeret Ilit who was also from the Caucasian community from the city Derbent. She regularly attended the shiurim of the N'shei Chabad in the area and was close with Chabad.

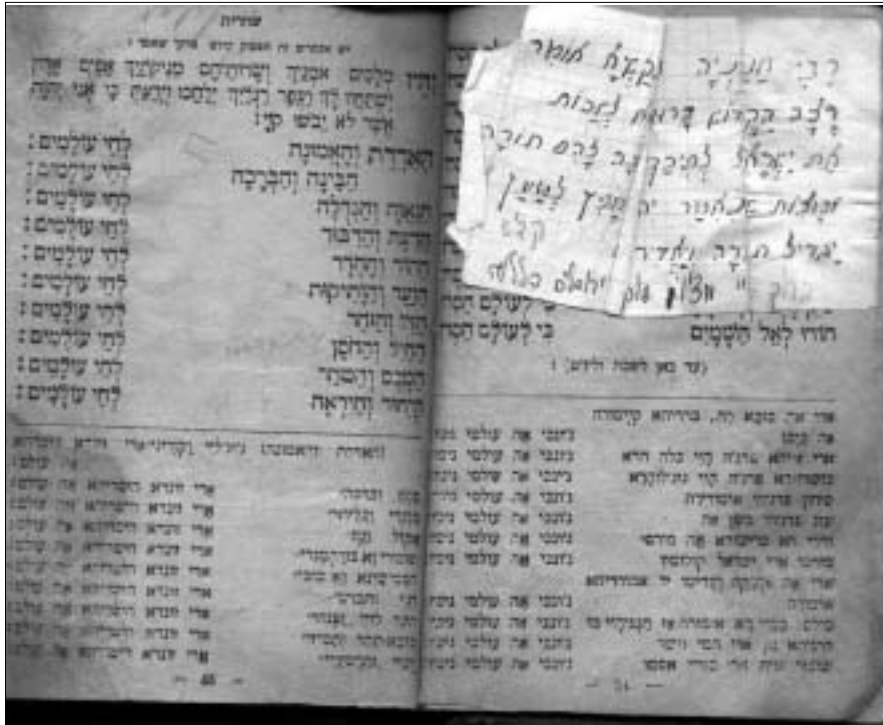
Since my marriage up until half a year ago, I lived in Natzeret Ilit where I was welcomed with open arms by the entire Anash community there. Mordechai continued his work in strengthening Yiddishkait in Nal'chik and every so often, shluchim would come, and it didn't have to be secretly any more.

But then Mordechai left Nal'chik and 2000 Jews of the community. These Jews needed a rav who understood their language and mentality. I was asked a number of times to return to Nal'chik but I wasn't interested. When I was urged yet again, I asked the Rebbe and the answer I opened to in the Igros Kodesh (vol. 6, p. 191) said:

As you told me, that you are preparing tomorrow, G-d willing, to leave, I give you my blessings for a good trip, to reach your destination in peace and good health and for many more years to use your influence to help the Chabad movement in all areas that you can.

I would be happy to receive good news of your successful arrival and I thank you ahead of time.





Siddur with Russian translation

I couldn't have hoped for a more clear answer than that. I knew I had to go on shlichus to Nal'chik, my hometown. I spent a

long time preparing spiritually and materially. I studied sh'chita and prepared learning material for my children who had, until then,

attended the Chabad school in Natzeret Ilit.

I returned to Nal'chik half a year ago and began working with the Jews of the community, this time on a permanent basis. I am here in Eretz Yisroel in order to take my family back with me, in order to prepare the Jews of Nal'chik to greet Moshiach.

**How do you sum up the first six months as the official shliach?**

I have to say that my shlichus is much easier than that of most shluchim since I have returned to my hometown. Most of the Jews remember me and warmly welcomed me. They look forward to meeting my whole family. They are very interested in Jewish leadership. It's not easy for my wife but I hope that she too will find her place, for there is a lot of work to be done and not much time, for Moshiach is coming momentarily.

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# JOIN TOGETHER ALL THOSE WHO STAND UP FOR HASHEM

BY SHAI GEFEN

## PURIM KATAN 5687

The mass rally took place Shushan Purim Katan (February 24th) in Yerushalayim, under the slogan of *Mi L'Hashem Eilai*. The rally and the events it was protesting reminded me of the dark days of Purim Katan 5687 (1927) when the Rebbe Rayatz farbrenged in Moscow. Members of the Yevsektzia were present, albeit disguised, yet the Rebbe spoke openly and fearlessly. The Rebbe called upon his Chassidim to cast themselves into the fire rather than hand over their children to the wicked and heretical government.

At that farbrengen, the Rebbe said the maamer, "V'Kibel HaYehudim," and spoke about the power of mesirus nefesh that every Jew has from Mordechai. Those who are familiar with the chain of events of those days, knows it was this farbrengen, which led to the imprisonment of the Rebbe Rayatz. But fear of reprisals did not deter him and he openly said the truth.

Those who participated in the mass rally in Yerushalayim felt elevated and united in the spirit of, "go and gather all the Jews," along with a feeling of dread about the terrible decree hanging over our heads.

Someone pointed out to me that the calendar this year is set up identically to the year of 5687. And the day that the Disengagement is scheduled to begin is right around the Chag HaGeula of the Rebbe Rayatz on 12-13 Tammuz.

We are certain that Shushan Purim Katan 5765 is the day that our salvation began. We will yet see how the cries of thousands of Jews led to mercy and salvation for the Jewish people.

## MORE OF A DICTATORSHIP THAN RUSSIA

The present Israeli government is not much different than the Soviet government of 80 years ago. The Rebbe pointed this out in the sicha of Zos HaBracha 5746, saying that the government in Israel is far worse than the Soviet government.

Last Sunday, the Israeli government decided to form a special unit in the Legal Department to deal with inciters, i.e., anybody who says a word against Sharon. Whoever tries to say something is already suspect, which is precisely how the KGB operated.

When a minister comes to visit a certain city and a council member is held in detention until the minister finishes eating supper, all because

the person opposes the Disengagement, this is a Bolshevik government with Mafia enforcement.

If a rally of thousands of people expressing their pain and the p'sak halacha is considered incitement, to the extent that the commander general of the police says it must be investigated, it shows how undemocratic this government is.

An entire country is being led to its destruction by a corrupt family and a dictator who doesn't stop at any red lights, who tries to muzzle his opponents with nonsense about incitement. He tries to forcibly prevent legitimate opposition to his criminal laws, which decree destruction on Jewish settlements. Sharon doesn't even allow those sentenced to expulsion the right to protest.

No other government in the world acts this way; there is no other normal nation that expels its people and destroys its own settlements, ethnically cleansing its own land, except in the State of Israel.

Only in the State of Israel, a day after five Jews are murdered in Tel Aviv, can we be focused on the so-called incitement of the Right. Only in Israel can a Minister of Police say that the murderous attack was





indirectly caused because the demonstrations of the Right against Disengagement kept the police occupied!

## WHERE THERE IS A CHILUL HASHEM

One of the most important aspects of the mass rally on Shushan Purim was definitely the **protest**. The Rebbe MH"M insisted that protests be made, especially about giving away land, in order to avoid a chilul Hashem. The protest rally was made even more significant when chareidi parties are in the Coalition, and rabbanim and other believing Jews are silent!

The mass rally, which was attended by rabbanim and thousands of loyal Jews, clearly presented the halacha, for the first time since the Disengagement plan was announced. The halacha about pikuach nefesh was the only message, not a referendum, and not "Love Will Triumph."

It was a rally for the sake of Heaven. This was the first time that a rally was based solely on truth, the truth of Torah, which doesn't change with the times and the influence of the media.

Truth is a precious commodity these days, and it greatly interferes with all the bootlickers and government sycophants.

The truth expressed at that rally is bringing down accusations of incitement, but it won't help. Nothing will help them. We've endured Stalin and other enemies, and we'll endure Sharon's government too. Chabad was never afraid of threats. The truth of Torah will be loudly heard, come what may!

## TOYING WITH LIVES

On Sunday, the day the Israeli government voted to destroy the settlements of Gush Katif, the

defense minister decided that the army will not destroy any more homes of terrorists because it's not effective. Just a few hours later, the government passed a resolution to destroy 26 Jewish settlements.

Is there a connection? Yes. Those who are merciful to the cruel, to those who murder women and children, will ultimately be cruel to their own people.

As a goodwill gesture to Abu Mazen, Israel released 500 terrorists from jail. Then Friday night, Jews were murdered in Tel Aviv. While Israeli ministers were busy with torpedoing the protest against the Disengagement and praising the Arabs, the Arabs executed another successful attack in the heart of the first Israeli city; not in Gush Katif, but in the heart of Tel Aviv.

Those who think they can resolve anything by making additional concessions is mistaken! Israel always pays a price. The question is: how long will Israel persist in pursuing an approach that has repeatedly failed? How many times can they sell us the lie about concessions for peace?

## HOW IS GONEN SEGEV DIFFERENT THAN ARIK SHARON?

Gonen Segev was recently indicted for attempting to smuggle illegal drugs. For those who don't remember, Gonen Segev defected from the Right to the Left and it was his vote that tipped the scale to ratify the terrible Oslo Accords. This criminal and menace to society is the one who brought the horrors of Oslo upon his people.

So who are the people who decided to give away parts of our land to our worst enemies and what moral stature do they have? These are people who got a mandate from the nation for a certain platform and

then went and defected with the mandate to carry out another plan. In one word: fraud.

There is another person of stature like Gonen Segev, but he is not a member of the Knesset but the Prime Minister. He and his family have no shortage of criminal files. The deeper the investigations go, the worse the expulsion and destruction they wreak upon our nation. But as usual, the media keeps quiet and doesn't ask questions.

## 20 YEARS AGO THE REBBE SAID THAT SHARON WOULD EXPEL JEWS

Twenty years ago, on Purim 5745, the Rebbe spoke about Sharon's failures in the war in Lebanon. The Rebbe said a sharp statement, which is most astonishing considering what's going on now. This is what the Rebbe said:

Those people who caused the tzaros mentioned before, are the present leaders who try, with all their might, to continue in this way. Whether in southern Lebanon or the Galil, etc., to concede more land of Eretz Yisroel that was given to the Jewish people by Hashem in a miraculous manner. They seek merely to find the right way of preparing public opinion so they will accept it, and just as they expelled Jews from Yamit, they can expel Jews from other places, Heaven forbid, don't open your mouth to the Satan. And so too with Egypt – they seek ways to make concessions to Egypt in other areas.

B.H

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ב"ה

# EVERY JEW MUST CONDEMN LAND CONCESSIONS

*From A Talk By The Rebbe MH"M  
Delivered Shabbos Parshas Mattos-Massei, 5730*

TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN

Every Jew, regardless of where he lives, owns at least one square cubit of the land of Israel. This has halachic ramifications. For example, a *pruzbul* may be written only by someone who owns a piece of land; yet, every Jew is permitted to write a *pruzbul* on the grounds that he own at least a portion of the land of Israel. It is his eternal inheritance from the Creator of the world.

As such, everything that transpires with the land of Israel involves all the Jewish people, and they are all qualified to express their opinion on anything concerning it, regardless of whether that opinion ultimately prevails.

As the rightful possession of every Jew, no one has the right to take Israel away from the Jewish people. Moreover, since the Torah declares that the land is their eternal inheritance, the Jewish people themselves may not relinquish any part of it, and the actions of anyone who does so have no validity whatever.

In light of the above, it might appear that a Jew is qualified to express his opinion only with regard

to the square cubit that he owns. This is not so, however, for in certain respects the land is a single, unified entity. The jubilee laws, for example, or the laws concerning the appending of other lands to Israel, apply only when the entire land is in the possession of the Jewish people.

*Without the Torah,  
G-d forbid, the Arabs  
who lived here in  
previous decades have  
a more legitimate  
claim to the land...*

2. Clearly then, there is nothing surprising about a Jew expressing his opinion on how things ought to be in the land of Israel, even if his opinion does not ultimately prevail. Not only is a every Jew *permitted* to express his opinion on these matters, he is *obligated* to do so; otherwise, he

shares in the responsibility of the wrongs committed there.

## SUMMARY, ANALYSIS, COMMENTARY:

1. In many respects, the land of Israel is a unified entity belonging to the entire Jewish people. Any person or entity, including a Jew or Jewish group, who takes or gives away any part of the land, commits an act of thievery against the entire Jewish people, and the Torah does not grant the act any validity.

2. Every Jew possesses the right and the obligation to protest the land concessions.

3. In the past, the Israeli government has refused to respond to arguments against land concessions coming from Jews not living in Israel, claiming that such Jews have no moral right to voice their opinion on such matters. But aside for the fact that an argument has to be considered on the basis of its own merits, the fact that every Jew owns a part of Israel, and every part of Israel is intrinsically connected with the rest of it, grants every Jew the moral right to express his opinion with regard to Israel, and the moral obligation to protest against land

*concessions, and other such evils.*

The obligation applies even to the type of person described by the Sages as “one who knows his Master and purposely rebels against Him.” Even an individual who rebels against G-d by denying the Jewish people’s claim to the land of Israel (a claim based on the fact that G-d Himself took it away from the nations of the world and gave it to the Jewish people) is obligated to voice his opposition to land concessions. Lest one entertain the notion that someone who purposely rebels against G-d is not held accountable for the minor transgressions resulting from his rebellion, which are overshadowed by the rebellion itself, Maimonides teaches us that while King Jereboam was punished for his rebellious act of placing idols in Beis-El and Dan, he was also punished for the comparatively minor act of neglecting the mitzvah of *eiruv tavshilin*. Clearly, then, one who rebels against G-d does not escape punishment for the minor transgressions resulting from his major transgression.

The same is true with regard to land concession: in addition to receiving punishment for harming Israel by assisting the PLO, a Jew with connections to the PLO and similar entities, will be held accountable for keeping silent on matters pertaining to Israel’s safety and security.

The obligation to speak out applies even when it is clear that those in charge will pay no attention to what is being said. Indeed, the Torah instructs us, “Admonish shall you admonish your fellow,” the repetition indicating “even a hundred times,” as stated by the Talmud. In other words, if one admonished his fellow ninety-nine times, and it was totally ineffective, he must admonish him yet another

time, or be guilty of neglecting the positive commandment to admonish his fellow. Clearly then, the obligation to do one’s part by speaking out applies even where one’s words fall on deaf ears. The Torah does not give one us a choice in the matter — if there is any possibility that one’s silence might be interpreted as acquiescence, or the like, he is obligated to speak out,

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even if he is not used to speaking out on issues, and even if it makes him uncomfortable.

#### SUMMARY, ANALYSIS, COMMENTARY:

*One whose entire way of life is contrary to the Torah will nevertheless be held accountable for failing to voice his opposition to land concessions.*

*The fact that one’s words will fall on*

*deaf ears does not exempt one from the obligation to speak out.*

*Some people enjoy the spotlight; others make a career of speaking out on issues. But even one who prefers keeping a low profile, or minding his own business, is required by the Torah to protest the wrongs being committed with the land of Israel.*

3. While it is true that the Jewish people conquered the land of Israel, it is nevertheless our rightful possession; we have taken what is ours, for G-d gave this land to our forefathers, the Patriarchs. The argument that the land of Israel is ours because it was the homeland of our ancestors over a thousand years ago, and enemies came and drove them out is a weak one. According to this argument it would be legitimate for the [American] Indians to chase the President of the United States out of Washington and put an Indian in his place. Indeed, there are Indians who have made this claim! Yet no one gives it any consideration at all. The difference between our claim and the claim of the Indians is that G-d made the Covenant of the Parts with our forefather Abraham, at which He promised the Holy Land to the descendants of Abraham’s grandson, Jacob.

By abandoning the *Code of Jewish Law*, and proclaiming that Israel is not a country that is ruled by Torah, the Israeli leadership relinquishes their claim to the land; indeed, without the Torah, G-d forbid, the Arabs who lived here in previous decades have a more legitimate claim to the land.

*Our claim to the land of Israel rests on the fact that G-d gave it us. Since the Israeli leadership does not recognize the Torah’s authority, they truly have no claim to ownership over the land of Israel — certainly no more than the Arabs who lived there prior to the founding of the State.*

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# THE GAON

## RAV YITZCHAK ISAAC

### HA'LEVI HERTZOG Z"l

*From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha*

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO  
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN

Rav Yitzchak Isaac Hertzog was born in Lumzhe, Poland, on 28 Kislev 5649, (December 2, 1888) to his father, the *gaon* Reb Yoel Leib. When he was but nine years old, Yitzchak Isaac was already proficient in two Orders of the Talmud. He was also about nine years old when his father was appointed as the chief rabbi of Leeds, England, and it was there that the young prodigy continued his very diligent study of Torah. At the age of sixteen, he knew the entire Babylonian Talmud by heart, and later, the Jerusalem Talmud as well.

In 5668 (1907-08), Rav Hertzog received rabbinic ordination from leading Torah sages, among them the *gaonim*, Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, author of *Ohr Sameiach*, and the Ridvaz of Slutzk. In 5676 (1917-18), he was appointed as chief rabbi of Belfast, Ireland, and later, as chief rabbi of Davlin. In 5685 (1924-25), he became the chief rabbi of Ireland.

With the passing of Rav Kook in 5697 (1936-37), Rav Hertzog was appointed as chief rabbi of the Holy Land. Together with the leading Torah sages of the

generation, he established Vaad HaYeshivos there, an organization focused on improving the state of the rabbinical courts in the Holy Land. He also helped establish the Harry Fischel Institute. He played a very helpful role in the creation of *Otzar Haposkim* and *Encyclopedia Talmudis*. During World War II, and especially afterwards, he traveled to Europe to help the Jewish refugees, and to find and rescue Jewish children who had been hidden in monasteries and other Christian institutions. A book was published on these activities of his, describing how he worked “without letup, neither by day nor by night, and without regard for his health,” and how “he breathed a spirit of life and encouragement into the hearts of the refugees and forlorn scattered throughout the Jewish camps and communities.” (From introduction.)

It is told that whenever Rav Hertzog traveled abroad he carried with him a tractate of the Jerusalem Talmud. When asked about this he explained that wherever he went he wished to be connected with the holy city of Jerusalem, and he accomplished

this through the studying the Jerusalem Talmud.

Rav Hertzog published a number of *s'farim* containing his novel Torah insights, such as *Divrei Yitzchak*, *Toras HaOhel*, *Shaalos Utshuvos Heichal Yitzchak*, *T'chuka LeYisroel Al Pi HaTorah*, and others. His halachic works contain many responsa dealing with questions that arose as a result of the state of emergency during Israel's War of Independence, as well halachos pertaining to the Israeli army and police force. He also produced a comprehensive study on the subject of the *t'cheiles*.

Rav Hertzog passed away on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, 19 Tammuz, 5719 (July 25, 1959), at the age seventy.

#### “A PURE TORAH SCHOLAR”

Rav Hertzog's connection to the Chabad Rebbeim dates back to the Rebbe Rashab, as we find in a letter to the *gaon* from the Rebbe Rayatz, dated 24 Adar, 5701 (March 23, 1941):

On one of his trips to Mentone (France), my holy father, the Rebbe {Rashab}, stayed in Paris.... When he came home, he told me about

how your father, the *rav* and *gaon*, Reb Yoel Leib Hertzog, o.b.m., was very warm to him, and how your honorable mother made sure to bake bread for him. My father related that during this latter trip of his he took great pleasure in making the acquaintance of the *rav* and *gaon*, Rav Hertzog the junior. My father described him as “a pure [i.e., uncontaminated] Torah scholar,” and said that during his conversation with him he discovered that [the young Rav Hertzog] also has proficient knowledge of secular wisdom and languages. My father added that the teaching, “Words of Torah do not contract impurity,” entered his mind. He said: “That’s what I call a pure Torah scholar,” and he praised him highly.

Afterwards, my holy father said that secular wisdom stands in opposition to Torah and tries to contaminate it, but with one whose fear of sin takes priority over his wisdom, the words of Torah repel the impurity, and moreover, enable him to use his secular knowledge for the benefit of the masses, as was the case with Rav Sadya Gaon, the Ramban, and others.”

In Nissan 5693 (April-May, 1933), the Rebbe Rayatz traveled to Paris. There, he was visited by Rav Yoel Hertzog, who gave him a set of his five-volume *Imrei Yoel*. It was during that visit that the Rebbe Rayatz also met Rav Yitzchak Isaac. In the abovementioned letter, the Rebbe makes reference to this meeting:

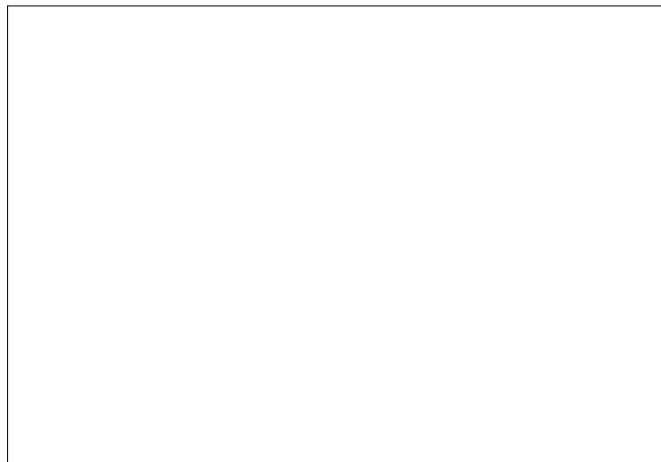
My noble friend, when you honored me with a visit in Paris...when I looked at you and heard your pleasant words I beheld an image that matched the one I saw

[in my mind] when my father spoke to me about you, as mentioned above, and I was stunned at the [likeness] to the impression that I got decades ago.

### PASSING OF RAV YOEL RAV YITZCHAK ISAAC’S APPOINTMENT

On 29 Iyar, 5693 (May 25, 1933), the Rebbe wrote to the *goan* Rav Shmuel Yitzchak Hilman, father-in-law of Rav Yitzchak Isaac Hertzog:

“May I ask that you please send my regards and convey my special blessing to your son-in-law, the *gaon* Rav Yitzchak Isaac, with whose



booklet, *Divrei Yitzchak*, I was delighted.”

It was during that year that the Rebbe MH”M moved to Paris, and Rav Yoel Hertzog used to visit him and converse with him in Torah.

On 28 Mar-Cheshvan, 5695 (November 6, 1934), the Rebbe Rayatz wrote a letter of consolation to Rav Yitzchak Isaac’s mother [and family]: “I was shocked to hear the terrible news of the passing of your husband/father/father-in-law, the honorable *rav* and *gaon*, who was renowned and celebrated among the *gaonim*... our teacher Rav Yoel Leib, may his soul be bound in the bundle

of life.... Knowing the great pain the tragic news would cause me, my loved ones did not reveal to me what had happened.... How is your son, Rav Yitzchok Isaac, doing?

In a letter dated 5 Shevat, 5697 (January 17, 1936), the Rebbe Rayatz blessed Rav Hertzog in honor of “the day of your assuming the role of chief rabbi of the Holy Land, may it soon be rebuilt. Mazel Tov. May G-d make it a good and auspicious hour, and may you be successful in all the endeavors you will undertake to strengthen all aspects of our religion in the Holy Land – e.g., *kashrus*, Shabbos observance, family purity, Torah study, etc. May you succeed.”

### THE ZIONISTS PROLONG THE EXILE

After Rav Hertzog’s appointment as chief rabbi of the Holy Land, the Rebbe Rayatz began sending him many letters on topics pertaining to the Jewish masses. There are dozens of such letters in *Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz*:

In one such letter, dated 11 Teives, 5699, the Rebbe asks Rav Hertzog to write an essay on family purity aimed at the type of women who might be affected by the mitzvah’s rational explanation. In reply Rav Hertzog wrote: “To the friend of G-d, the holy *Admur* and *gaon*.... I received your holy letter, and I hastened to carry out the great mitzvah of bringing merit to the masses....

In the abovementioned letter of 5701, the Rebbe wrote to Rav Hertzog that a certain newspaper described the latter as a Zionist, something that “caused an uproar in my heart.” The Rebbe goes on to

describe the Zionists in very grave terms: "Not only do they delay and push off the Redemption, they also prolong the bitter exile, desecrate the Name of G-d, His religion, and His Torah, and deny the promises of His holy prophets." The Rebbe warns him to distance himself from them and not to let them associate his name with them. "The entire world needs to know that you are not under the disgraceful influence of these parties, and that all your views are in accordance with the perspective of Torah and mitzvos."

### RESCUING THE CHILDREN OF THE REFUGEES FROM HERESY

In *Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz* we also find several series of letters on the following topics:

15 Iyar, 5697 (April 26, 1937) – Problems with *sh'chita* in Sweden.

1 Iyar, 5700 (May 5, 1940) – Thank you for Rav Hertzog's visit to Yeshiva Toras Emes.

29 Teives, 5701 (January 28, 1941) – Welcomes Rav Hertzog on his visit to the U.S.

26 Nissan, 5701 (April 23, 1941) – The public recitation of T'hillim, and the establishing of fasting periods.

20 Sivan, 5701 (June 15, 1941) – The sate of the *rabbanim* who immigrated to Israel from Russia.

7 Iyar, 5704 (April 30, 1944) – A contingent of rabbis to meet with members of the Russian government.

22 Tammuz, 5704 (July 13, 1944) – Rescuing the Jews in the [concentration] camps.

9 Teives, 5709 (January 10, 1949) – Blessing in honor of Rav Hertzog's sixtieth birthday.

15 Sivan, 5709 (June 12, 1949) – Support for candidate for

rabbinical post in Yaffo.

20 Kislev, 5710 (December 11, 1949) – Using the Joint's money to support Chabad yeshivas.

A great many of the Rebbe's letters to Rav Hertzog deal with the matter of obtaining and sending aid to Russian Jewry, and obtaining visas to the Holy Land for some of the refugees.

With the help of Rav Hertzog, the Rebbe also battled vigorously to rescue children of the refugees from the Jewish Agency, which had placed them in secular schools and institutions. While Rav Hertzog took the leading role in the struggle in the Holy Land, he received the Rebbe's backing from the United States, where the Rebbe enlisted hundreds of *rabbanim* and *Admurim* in support of the struggle. There are dozens of letters concerning this matter in *Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz*, dating from 5703 to 5710.

In Sivan 5709 (May-June, 1949), when Rav Hertzog traveled to Europe (and the United States) the Rebbe wrote to the chassidim in London that they should go welcome him when he comes off the ship and then he would meet with their delegation.

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