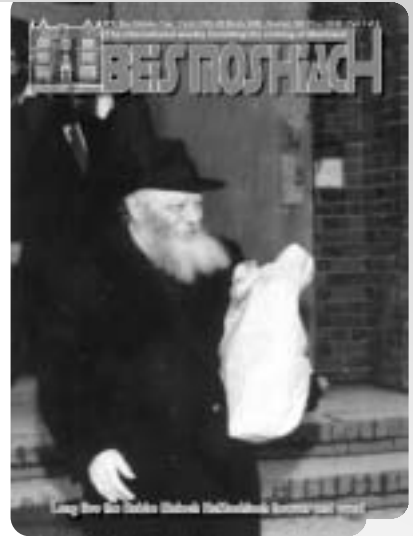


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PURIM: PERMANENT IMPRESSION

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



PURIM, 5749 (AFTER MINCHA)

1. The holiday of Purim emphasizes the idea of new development. Though new development can also come about through increasing the resources one has available, the most complete dimension of new development is associated with transformation. This is revealed on Purim which represents the transformation of our people's deepest agony to a state of great joy.

This aspect of new development is clearly seen in the practices of Purim, the reading of the Megillah, Mishloach Manos, and presents to the poor and also the four mitzvos that our Sages associated with the verse: "For the Jews there was light, happiness, gladness, and honor." Our sages commented, "'Light' refers to Torah, 'happiness,' to the festivals, 'gladness,' to circumcision, and 'honor,' to t'fillin."

The reading of the Megillah is associated with wiping out the memory of Amalek, for Haman was an Agagite, a descendant of Amalek. Therefore, by reading the Megillah, one fulfills the positive

commandment to "Remember what Amalek did to you." Thus, the reading of the Megillah represents a new concept, the fulfillment of a Rabbinic mitzva – the latter being, in our sages' words, "more precious" and "more severe" than the mitzvos of the Torah – in addition to fulfilling the Torah command to remember Amalek.

This is related to another concept associated with the remembrance of Amalek. On the Sabbath before Purim, we read the portion Zachor, "in order to connect the destruction of Amalek to the destruction of Haman." The Rabbis explain that by reading the portion Zachor, on the Sabbath before Purim, one fulfills a positive mitzva from the Torah. Therefore, some authorities require even women to hear the reading of the portion Zachor, for the remembrance of Amalek is a positive mitzva which is not associated with a specific time.

This concept requires explanation. It is Jewish custom to recite six verses of remembrance each day after the morning service. One of these remembrances concerns Amalek. Indeed, it is customary each day to recite the entire passage which

is read as the portion Zachor.

On the surface, by reciting this passage, a Jew also fulfills the mitzva of remembering Amalek. When the Rabbis stated that by reading the portion Zachor, on the Sabbath before Purim, a Jew fulfills a positive mitzva of the Torah, they did not intend to be restrictive, implying that just then, one fulfills a Torah commandment. Rather, whenever a Jew recites the passage – for our sages explained that the remembrance must be made verbally – he fulfills the mitzva. For example, when he recites the six remembrances after the prayer service on Shabbos Zachor, he fulfills the same positive commandment that he did when listening to that reading.

A parallel to this concept can be seen in regard to the mitzva of t'fillin. Even though one fulfills the mitzva by putting on t'fillin in the morning, if one continues wearing the t'fillin, one continues fulfilling the mitzva. [In particular, there is a difference in this regard between the t'fillin worn on the arm and those worn on the head. The Torah commands us to "tie them (the t'fillin) as a sign on your arm," i.e., the mitzva is the act of tying and afterwards, wearing the

t'fillin is merely an extension of that activity. In contrast, the Torah commands that the head t'fillin "shall be an ornament"; i.e., that the mitzva is that "the t'fillin shall be" and thus, as long as the t'fillin are upon one's head, one fulfills the mitzva.]

Thus, one can ask: What is the new dimension which is added to the mitzva of remembering Amalek that is possessed by the reading of the portion Zachor, over the recitation of this passage after the morning service?

This question cannot be answered by drawing a parallel to the difference between the mitzva of remembering the exodus from Egypt daily and the recollection of the exodus on Pesach night. Though the exodus is recalled twice daily, that recollection is only general, while on Pesach night, the story of the exodus is retold with all its particulars. However, such an explanation cannot be used in regard to the remembrance of Amalek, for the very same passage that is read on Shabbos Zachor is recited each day.

Similarly, the fact that the portion is read from a Torah scroll and in public is not at all related to the essential mitzva involved in recalling Amalek. These added factors enhance the mitzva, but they are not fundamental to its fulfillment. Similarly, the association of the portion with Purim by reading it on the preceding Shabbos does not, in its own right, establish it as a mitzva. Rather, the mitzva is fulfilled by reciting the passage every day.

[The Rebbe Shlita did not resolve the above question. However, he concluded that] surely, reading the portion from the Torah adds a new emphasis to the fulfillment of this mitzva. Similarly, the reading of the Megillah on Purim contributes a new dimension, the observance of the Rabbinic commandment of Purim, to the fulfillment of the mitzva of

remembering Amalek.

A similar concept applies in regard to the mitzvos of mishloach manos and gifts to the poor: Mishloach manos expresses the love which a person feels for a friend. Thus, it is an expression of the mitzva of ahavas Yisroel, the love for one's fellow Jew. There are a number of ways this mitzva can be fulfilled, beginning from the recitation of statement before prayer (as is Chassidic custom): "Behold, I accept upon myself the fulfillment of the positive commandment, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Similarly, this

Haman had decreed that these four mitzvos should not be observed, and after Haman's downfall, these mitzvos were fulfilled with more enthusiasm and commitment.

mitzva can be fulfilled by many other activities including giving gifts of food as in mishloach manos.

Thus, by fulfilling the Rabbinic mitzva of mishloach manos, one also fulfills the Torah commandment of ahavas Yisroel. Thus, it is also a new development, adding the observance of the Rabbinic commandment to the performance of the existing Torah commandment.

Similarly, the mitzva of gifts to the poor is related to the mitzva of tz'daka. Fulfilling the mitzva of gifts to the poor is also a fulfillment of the

mitzva of tz'daka. Nevertheless, establishing this practice as one of the mitzvos of Purim endowed it with unique importance as a special Rabbinic command.

As mentioned above, the same concept also applies in regard to the four mitzvos, Torah study, festivals, circumcision, and t'fillin that are associated with the verse: "For the Jews there was light, happiness, gladness, and honor." Haman had decreed that these mitzvos should not be observed, and after Haman's downfall, these mitzvos were fulfilled with more enthusiasm and commitment. Though on one level, there is no difference between the fulfillment of these mitzvos on any other day of the year and on Purim, nevertheless, the verse's association of them with the Purim holiday implies that Purim adds a new dimension to their observance.

In particular, it can be explained that a parallel to each of these mitzvos exists in the world at large, but, nevertheless, G-d's granting us these mitzvos introduces a new dimension to their performance.

For example, the concept of Torah study exists among gentiles as well. They must study the laws governing the seven mitzvos which they are obligated to fulfill. However, it can be explained that their Torah study is only a preparatory step for fulfilling those mitzvos and not a desired activity in its own right. Even according to the opinions that maintain that their Torah study is also a desired act, it surely cannot be compared to the new development with which the giving of the Torah endowed the Torah study of the Jewish people. The unique oneness with G-d that a Jew establishes by Torah study cannot be reached by gentiles, even the "pious of the gentiles."

Similarly, a parallel to the concept of the observance of the festivals

exists in the world at large. The festivals were instituted as an expression of thanks to G-d for the miracles which He performed on our behalf, e.g., Pesach is an expression of thanks for the miracle of the exodus. The obligation of expressing appreciation exists among the gentiles as well, for it is one of the fundamental principles of establishing stable human relations. Nevertheless, the mitzva of celebrating the festivals includes in it a far greater dimension, for the fulfillment of this mitzva establishes a bond that connects a Jew with G-d.

A parallel to this idea also exists in regard to circumcision. The Rabbis have explained that, in certain cultures, it was customary for an owner to brand a sign of ownership into the flesh of his servants. Similarly, circumcision is a sign that we are the servants of G-d. Nevertheless, the mitzva of circumcision introduces a new dimension to this practice, making it an act of connection to G-d and not merely an expression of His dominion over us.

This is reflected by the name, bris, which means “covenant.” A covenant was established by dividing an animal in half and the two parties walking between the two halves. This bounds them together as a single entity (Likkutei Torah). Similarly, through the bris, their covenant with G-d, the Jews become one with Him.

This idea is also obvious from the age when the mitzva is fulfilled, eight days. At this time, the child himself is not obligated in the mitzva, nor does he comprehend it. Nevertheless, by circumcision, he enters into a bond with G-d that transcends understanding.

A similar idea also applies in regard to t’fillin which can also be considered as a sign that we are G-d’s servants. Indeed, our Sages have associated the verse, “And all the

nations of the earth will see that the Name of G-d is called upon you,” with the mitzva of t’fillin. Here, too, the t’fillin are more than a sign of ownership and represent a transcendent bond with G-d. Furthermore, this connection is openly displayed in a manner that can be perceived by “all the nations.”

Our Sages declared, “All the mitzvos are equated with t’fillin.”

The idea of “recalling” the days of Purim is that the celebration of these days should make a permanent impression on our souls. This is also reflected in the Rambam’s ruling that the celebration of Purim will never be nullified; i.e., even in the Messianic age, the celebration of Purim will be significant.

This implies that the fulfillment of the mitzvos also establishes a bond of oneness with G-d within the context of the material articles with which the mitzvos are fulfilled. This bond will be perceived by the nations and, as the above verse concludes, motivate them “to fear you.” This fear is a preparatory stage for the time when, G-d’s sovereignty will be revealed throughout the world with

the coming of the Messianic redemption.

May we witness the fulfillment of the verse, “For the Jews there was light, happiness, gladness, and honor” this Purim, both in a simple sense and also in association with the mitzvos as mentioned above. May the joy of Purim, a joy which transcends the limits of intellect, ad d’lo yada, be drawn down in the entire year to come.

In particular, this is relevant to those who traveled or who will travel to spread Purim joy to others living in distant places, distant physically and distant spiritually. May these efforts hasten the coming of the Messianic redemption and may we proceed from the redemption of Purim, not only to the redemption of Pesach, but also to the Messianic redemption.

The Rambam writes that, “The Torah has promised that ultimately, the Jews will repent in the final exile and they will be redeemed immediately.” T’shuva is “in one moment and in one minute;” i.e., it is above time. With one turn, we will see how the entire Jewish people, men, women, and children, are all proceeding to Eretz Yisroel, to Jerusalem, and to the Temple. May it be now, in the immediate present.

PURIM, 5749 (AFTER MAARIV)

2. On the verse, “these days are recalled and celebrated,” Rashi explains: “‘Recalled,’ through the reading of the Megillah; ‘Celebrated,’ through the drinking, festive rejoicing, giving gifts and presents.” The plural usage of the verbs “recalled” and “celebrated” can be associated with the fact that the Megillah is read twice, two presents must be given to a person as mishloach manos, and presents must be given to at least two poor people.

The idea of "recalling" the days of Purim is that the celebration of these days should make a permanent impression on our souls. This is also reflected in the Rambam's ruling that the celebration of Purim will never be nullified; i.e., even in the Messianic age, the celebration of Purim will be significant.

Therefore, it is appropriate to continue the celebration of Purim at least in regard to those aspects where it is easy to do so, for example, giving presents to the poor. Also, the celebration of Purim should be continued. This celebration is by nature, boundless, transcending the limits of intellect, *ad d'lo yada*. This does not mean merely fulfilling this obligation as it states in the Shulchan Aruch, drinking until one falls asleep, but reaching the state of *ad d'lo yada* in its simplest meaning, without seeking any special license or compromise. Happy is the portion and great is the merit of anyone who will follow this course of action. May others observe him and follow his example.

There is a Divine promise that no bad will result from this. On the festivals, the court would send emissaries among the people to make sure that the festive celebrations were kept within bounds because of the possibility of undesirable results. However, no such emissaries were sent on Purim. On the contrary, special leniency was shown in certain areas in order to allow for increased celebration.

All of the above is also relevant on the night which follows the fourteenth of Adar. Firstly, as regards all sacred matters, the night follows the day and, therefore, the limbs from the sacrifices could be offered on the altar at night. Thus, all the matters which are relevant on the fourteenth of Adar are also relevant on the following night.

Also, this night shares a direct connection with Purim, for the walled cities celebrate Purim on this night. Indeed, there are many places, who because of the doubt whether they possessed a wall during the time of Yehoshua's conquest of Eretz

Yisroel, celebrate Purim on both nights. Thus, even in the places where the celebration is only held for one day, in a spiritual sense, each of the days represents a different service.

May we proceed from the redemption of Purim to the Messianic redemption. There is added emphasis on the celebration of Purim this year because it is a leap year and also, the fortieth year after the Previous Rebbe's passing. Also, the day on which Shushan Purim falls, Wednesday, possesses a unique quality, being the day on which the luminaries – the sun, the moon, and the stars – were created.

The latter concept is also related to the spreading of Chassidus. The Alter Rebbe noted that the Baal Shem Tov's passing and his own redemption from prison took place on Wednesday. Thus, this day is associated with the spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus outward. This activity is the preparatory stage for the revelation of G-d's essence in the Messianic age.



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LETTERS

COLLEGE: AT BEST AN IRRETRIEVABLE LOSS OF TIME AND ENERGY

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.

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

It is surely unnecessary to explain to you at length that every Jew and Jewess, young and old, has a purpose and task to accomplish in his or her life. The task, broadly speaking, is to illuminate the world with 'Ner Mitzvah v'Torah Or' in every-day life. After so many Jews lost their lives in recent years, among them the best and choicest of our people, the responsibility of those whom G-d in His mercy has spared is increased many-fold. It is therefore more obvious than ever that no Jew has a right to give of his time, and even more so of his heart and mind, to matters which not only do not help but are very likely to hinder in the fulfillment of his sacred task and purpose. One of these matters would be to spend several years in college, and especially in a college environment. While it is true that in recent years, in certain colleges, especially in New York, there are groups of orthodox Jewish students, young men and women – and may G-d help them to come out of it unharmed, at any rate not worse than they were when they entered college – we have a rule not to rely on miracles. It is certain, however, that college will not help fulfill the true and inner desire of the Jew to carry out his abovementioned task and purpose in life, so that even at best it would be an irretrievable loss of time and energy.

It is therefore my sincere hope that you will discard the idea, and do so not only because – as you told your father that you wish to be guided by me – but also because you will recognize that the idea does not represent your own true thinking and desire. I hope, moreover, that you will use your good influence in this direction with your friends who might entertain a similar idea in the mistaken belief that it might be a good idea.

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THE BURDEN OF PROOF IS ON THE CLAIMANT

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

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

a person's approach to avodas Hashem depends on how he answers this question: Who has established the "chazaka" of creation in the world – G-d or nature? Around this principle swirls all of a Jew's ups and ch"v downs in his avodas Hashem, hiskashrus to the Rebbe, longing for Moshiach, etc., etc.

WHO HAS THE "CHAZAKA"?

A young man who once learned in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, and then went far and wide in search of the material pleasures in life, met his mashpia, and came to him angrily with a complaint. "I have access to all the fun and excitement that anyone can dream about, but I don't enjoy any of it – and it's your fault! Since you forced me to learn *Tanya* by heart, you destroyed my ability to derive enjoyment from the world like everyone else... (Today, this bachur heads a proper and thriving Chassidic family.)

What does Chassidus have that

brings everyone, even simple people, to loathe the vanities of this world? To understand this point, we must look into a Chassidic explanation of a principle in halacha.

HaRav HaChassid R. Chaim Shaul Brook, of blessed memory, told a story about someone who was an expert in all four portions of the *Shulchan Aruch*. When they tested his ability, he said rather ignorantly that the main principle of Orach Chaim is "to be lenient when there is a doubt regarding [the saying] of brachos." The main principle of Yoreh Deia is that something forbidden is nullified in

a ratio of 1:60, and the main principle of Choshen Mishpat is "the burden of proof is upon the claimant."

We will concentrate for a moment on the principle of "the burden of proof," which obligates the claimant who wants to extract something from someone else to prove his ownership over the item in question. This rule is essentially the central principle of the entire *Shulchan Aruch* and is also a strong foundation for *avodas Hashem* in accordance with the teachings of Chassidus. This is because a person's approach to *avodas Hashem* depends on how he answers this question: Who has established the "chazaka" of creation in the world – G-d or nature? Around this principle swirls all of a Jew's ups and ch"v downs in his *avodas Hashem*, hiskashrus to the Rebbe, longing for Moshiach, etc., etc.

LAST IN CREATION, FIRST IN THOUGHT

The *Eitz Chaim* states that in the beginning, G-d's Infinite Light filled

every open space, etc., and then, G-d contracted the light, etc. Chassidus explains this as follows: At first, there was only pure G-dliness with no room for anything else, however, the *tzimtzum* that followed created a situation where there was room for another metzius. This means that at first G-d had a chazaka that He was the one and only and there was nothing besides Him. Afterwards, the *tzimtzum* allowed for the perception of some additional existence. Thus, the exclusive existence of a Creator was no longer so readily accepted. As a result, the “chazaka” has been turned around. The physical world has been established as the apparent *baal ha’bayis*, and only at its very essence, in the higher spiritual worlds, does the world’s existence appear less tangible.

Later, following *shviras ha’keilim*, the complaint of the moon, and the sin of the Tree of Knowledge (and other similar transgressions), the Sh’china withdrew, thus signifying the apparent nullification of the Creator’s chazaka of ownership over the world. This removal took hold to such an extent that He didn’t seem to have any basis in the world. He remained above and beyond the heavens, and only there did He have what to say.

Then came the tzaddikim. Avraham Avinu began to publicize throughout the world that the Creator is *Keil Olam*. The emphasis is that He is not *Keil HaOlam*, which would indicate that the world retained its chazaka, while G-d was merely just a claimant. *Keil Olam* means that the world’s true existence and metzius is G-dliness. Similarly, we find with the succeeding tzaddikim, until Moshe, the tzaddik of the seventh generation, brought this reality down literally into gashmius through the fifteen vessels used in

the Mishkan, where we can see clearly that the world has no chazaka or ownership, rather, the world’s entire existence is G-dliness.

Therefore, each and every Jew can draw strength for his personal avoda from the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash, as it is written, “And they shall make Me a sanctuary, and I shall dwell within them” – within each and every Jew – to have an effect upon his body, his animal soul, and his portion in the world in every detail to the fullest extent possible, as ordained by Divine Providence, in order to purify them. The purpose for this is to demonstrate what has the chazaka at that very moment of thought, speech, or action.

BEGINNING OF THE AVODA: THE CONCEALMENT WAS CREATED FOR ME

This effect first comes through the service of *iskafia* (subjugation) and then through *is’hafcha* (transformation). Nevertheless, we still don’t see G-d’s exclusive chazaka in material matters. This will only be realized in its fullest sense at the time of the Redemption, as is written, “And there will be revealed, etc., and all flesh will see” – they will see who has the chazaka through their eyes of flesh. Of course, it is no simple task to create a situation that stands in direct contradiction to what we presently see with our own physical eyes, to “peel away” the state of



concealment that hides G-dliness and establishes the world as an existing entity, prevailing according to its rules.

The attainment of this seemingly unrealistic objective is made possible through *avodas Hashem*, from the same root as *oros abudim* – *m'ubadim* (processed animal skins), i.e., processing that which is revealed before our eyes, so we can perceive beyond what we actually see – a world and its established *chazaka*. This erroneous perception comes due to the concealment that began with the first *tzimtzum*, followed by additional screens that divide between the various spiritual worlds and the lower the world, the thicker the degree of concealment. The *chazaka* of created beings appears real in this world, filled with *klipos* and *sitra achra*, where evil prevails. However, when we clean these screens, we see the truth.

Why were these screens created in the first place? Chassidus explains in connection with the saying of our Sages, “a person must say that the world (*olam*) was created for me,” that the *helem* (concealment) was created for me in order that I should have the opportunity to do the arduous *avoda* of processing these skins.

This is what Rashi means, as interpreted by the Rebbe shlita, in his famous question at the beginning of his commentary on the Chumash: Why did the Torah begin with “B'Reishis,” and not with the first mitzva given to the Jewish People: Rosh Chodesh – “This month shall be,” etc.? What would have been so terrible if the power of G-d Alm-ghty had been described in a later portion of the Chumash? Why the need to do this specifically at the beginning of the Torah?

The explanation to this comes to nullify the claim of the physical

world, a.k.a. the animal soul, who is the *baal ha'bayis* over the world (for if it has the true *chazaka*, there is no relevance to the proper fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos). Therefore, there first must be the emphasis that “B'Reishis *Bara Elokim*” – G-d has the real *chazaka*, and He is the true *baal ha'bayis*, and thus, the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos is very relevant, even when it appears otherwise at face value.

This is the reason why it is said that if the Jewish People had not accepted the Torah, the world would have returned to a state of Tohu. At first, this seems like some kind of child's game: “Break the pieces, and don't play...” However, what this really means is that if the Jewish People had not accepted the Torah, the world has the *chazaka* – and that's a lie – and how can such an untruth possibly exist?

ADMITTING TO THIS TRUTH “FIRST THING IN THE MORNING”

For this very reason, it is incumbent upon each and every Jew to say “*Modeh Ani*” immediately when he wakes up in the morning. This is not merely thanking G-d for restoring our soul. If that were the case, then the purpose is unclear: What's so urgent about saying this before washing our hands? Granted, “*Modeh Ani*” does not include any of the Seven Names of G-d that are forbidden to erase, and therefore, it is permissible to say it before *Netilas Yadayim*. However, this is still not understood: Why do we say G-d's Name in the brachos that follow, but in “*Modeh Ani*,” where we say “that You have returned my soul to me,” we don't mention G-d's Name anywhere?

Chassidus explains that “*Modeh*” comes from the same root as “the Sages admit (*modim*) to Rabbi Meir,” i.e., even if we have

differences on certain things, here we admit. Similarly, a Jew says to G-d: Despite the fact that from my body's perspective, You have no *chazaka*, nevertheless, You really are the *baal ha'bayis*. (In this connection, the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Rayatz were known to say that our souls did not go into exile, only our bodies. This is because our bodies perceive that the world has the *chazaka*, whereas, the soul has remained “faithful to Him,” even at a moment of transgression.)

Thus, we say “*Modeh Ani*” before *Netilas Yadayim*, because this is an expression of thanks from the soul of a Jew, which cannot possibly be damaged or defiled. As a result, it does not contain any of G-d's Holy Names, because the truth of the Creator's *chazaka* is on a level higher than signified by a name. All names are cloaked behind some form of screen or curtain, albeit thin and light. Therefore, at that level the Creator's *chazaka* is not absolute, since there is something else there.

In this light, the Rebbe shlita explains the question in the Gemara asked by Tosafos and the other Rishonim: Why does *Masechta Shabbos* begin with the laws of moving objects from one domain to another, as opposed to other forbidden forms of labor? The reason is that a Jew is able to do *aveiros* and other forbidden labors only when he believes that there is a private domain (*r'shus ha'yachid*) and a public domain (*r'shus ha'rabim*), i.e., the ability to go out of the domain of “*Yichudo Shel Olam*” (the Unique One of the world) and to enter a public domain, where the Creator has no *chazaka ch"v*. Thus, we must first clarify who controls the domain, and then there is no possibility of violating His word.

LEARN CHASSIDUS, TRAVEL TO THE REBBE

This clarification can be achieved only through the study of Chassidus. Chassidus interprets the pasuk, "And he is a witness, either he saw or he knew," in reference to the two modes of testimony that a Jew can give regarding G-d and His chazaka over the world. This testimony can be in the form of "he saw," which will primarily be at the revelation of Moshiach, or at least in the form of "he knew," attainable now through study and contemplation of Chassidus.

We find this, for example, in the Alter Rebbe's explanation in *Tanya* of the levels of *tzaddik*, *beinoni*, and *rasha*. In the eyes of a *tzaddik*, the Creator is the sole dominant force, and thus, the world takes up no space. This is especially true in the case of a complete *tzaddik*, who does not recognize the world's existence whatsoever, as opposed to the incomplete *tzaddik*, who does not negate it categorically. Regarding the *beinoni*, there are two forces with a perceived foothold in the world, each one claiming its sole rightful ownership: the *yetzer tov* and the *yetzer ha'ra*. Finally, there is the wicked, whose primary *metzius* is the world, or in the case of the completely wicked, the only *metzius*.

Therefore, the Alter Rebbe explains the statement, "be in your eyes as one who is wicked," as meaning that the *beinoni* is compared to a *rasha*, who believes that there is room to establish a *chazaka* for the *yetzer ha'ra*. Even when the *beinoni* is at the highest possible level he can attain – i.e., one who davens all day long – he still hasn't broken the *yetzer ha'ra's* grasp in the world, and thus, he is essentially like a *rasha*.

The entire path of Chassidus and its instructions are for the

expressed purpose of nullifying the perception that the world is an established entity. Furthermore, as R. Zalman Moshe HaYitzchaki used to say while doing somersaults, even in the mud, "*veil m'darf bagrahben di velt*" (because you have to bury the world)...

This is something that a person simply can't understand without Chassidus. Otherwise, the material world stands as the established reality, and G-d would require a

Suddenly, he saw the goats in the Rebbe's courtyard, and said how jealous he was of these goats that saw the Rebbe all the time!

"True," said the other Chassid, "but they're still goats!"

virtual tsunami to nullify it...and even then, there would still be remains left for the Zaka crew to deal with. However, a Chassid knows that G-d does not need to take any action to nullify the world's *chazaka*, as its very existence is a lie from the very outset. This *metzius* exists only at the will of the Creator, Who renews and strengthens its existence at every moment, and if *ch"v* He should decide to terminate it, everything would cease to exist.

Therefore, a Chassid has no logical reason to think that the world has what to tell him, nor is it a determining factor in his life. On

the contrary, he intensely hates anything based upon the logic of the world, and there is only one thing that can determine anything for him, and that's the *Shulchan Aruch*, particularly as it is illuminated in the light of the teachings of Chassidus.

This is the objective when we travel to the Rebbe shlita, a journey founded upon the traditions of *aliya la'regel*, as only in the Beis HaMikdash could Jews fully grasp who the *baal ha'bayis* really is. However, it is important to note that the actual journey itself to 770 is not enough.

We learn this from the story about the two Chassidim who came to Lubavitch when the Rebbe Rashab was not there. "What a pity," said one Chassid to the other, "that we weren't privileged to see the Rebbe." Suddenly, he saw the goats in the Rebbe's courtyard, and said how jealous he was of these goats that saw the Rebbe all the time!

"True," said the other Chassid, "but they're still goats!"

This brings to mind the Misnaged who studied Chassidus, and understood that the main thing is to instill the concept of "There is nothing besides Him." He paced back and forth, repeating to himself, "There is nothing besides Him." Then, without watching where he was going, he banged his head against the wall, which prompted him to begin saying, "There is nothing besides Him and the wall." Afterwards, when a bump developed on his forehead, he said, "There is nothing besides Him, the wall, and this bump on my head..."

WHAT DOES A CHASSID THINK ABOUT?

I once heard a story about a prominent Torah scholar from

Lithuania who learned *Tanya* on a weekly basis with R. Shmuel Levitin in his room in 770. This young man was very talented and inquisitive, asking many questions during the shiur, and R. Shmuel Levitin answered him each time with much patience. On one such occasion, R. Michoel Dworkin, of blessed memory, was lying on a bed in the room, and when it came time for the shiur to begin, R. Shmuel asked R. Michoel to leave, because he knew that R. Michoel would be unable to tolerate all the questions and inquisitiveness. But R. Michoel said that he wasn't feeling well and he had to rest there, and R. Shmuel persisted in asking him to find another place. Eventually, after some discussion on the matter, R. Michoel promised that he would remain quiet for the duration of the shiur. The young man soon arrived, and he and R. Shmuel began learning together with the usual questions and answers, etc. Suddenly, one could notice how R. Michoel was tossing and turning in bed with great disquiet, until he could stand it no more. He jumped up as if he had been bitten by a snake, and screamed at the young scholar from the depths of his heart, "How dare you have questions about G-d?" and stormed out of the room.

R. Shmuel Levitin was certain that this young man would not come back to the shiur, yet he continued to do so. Afterwards, he said that none of the classes he attended had as much effect upon him as the one when R. Michoel Dworkin exploded at him with an unvarnished expression of truth.

The truth lies with G-d's chazaka, with all questions stemming from the animal soul and how it considers itself to be the real metzius. This is the meaning of "a person does not commit a sin unless there enters within him a

ruach shtus (a spirit of folly)" – not only is the very committing of the sin itself an act of folly, but even before this act, there comes a *ruach shtus* that leads to the sin. What exactly is this *ruach shtus*? An error in one's judgment and understanding of who has the chazaka: The Creator or *ch"v* the created?

This nonsensical way of thinking reminds us of the atheist teacher who told his class: Pay attention, dear students! You see the blackboard, you see the table, etc., etc. If so, then it exists. If you don't see G-d, then He does not exist!... However, there was one clever student who replied in kind: We see the table and the blackboard, and thus, they exist, but the teacher's brain, we don't see, therefore, he must not have one!

This is the *ruach shtus* of the animal soul, whose entire approach and understanding is: *The fact that I exist is a certainty!* This is similar to the well-known saying comparing the difference between someone who is a Chassid and someone who is not. The Chassid thinks about himself, because in his eyes, G-d's existence is a certainty, and he has to consider whether he really exists and for what purpose. On the other hand, someone who is not a Chassid always thinks about G-d, because he has no question about his own existence, but he constantly needs to prove to himself how G-d exists...

Similarly, there was a certain "rabbi" who was known to be lenient in every halachic question that was posed to him on the grounds of *sfek sfeka* (a twofold doubt), i.e., a) a doubt whether the halacha is according to those who are stringent, as there are differing opinions on every ruling, and b) it's not absolutely certain that there is a G-d (*r"l*).

This is the animal soul's approach, which revolves around every possible issue. For example, a young man's parents were fervently opposed to his growing a beard, claiming that it would hurt his chances for a shidduch. When people tried to explain to the parents that G-d runs the world and they have nothing to worry about, the parents replied that there are three partners in man: G-d, his mother, and his father. If so, we must go according to the majority and support the position of his parents, while G-d sits in minority opposition.

LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASSES OF T'FILLA AND FARBRENGEN

One of the best ways to overcome the *ruach shtus* is through davening. As a result, it is forbidden to eat, drink, or engage in business matters before davening, because this serves as an indication that he sees the world as his boss. Thus, all of his worldly involvement drags him down to a much lower level. However, after he davens and internalizes the knowledge of who has the real chazaka, then he can be involved in worldly affairs without getting mixed up about who's the boss.

There's a story about Chassidim who once, after studying Chassidus or davening with great concentration for several hours, went out to see the world, and were initially stunned by what they saw! When they were deeply engrossed in their learning and davening, they realized that the Creator has exclusive rights to the chazaka. Suddenly, they go out and see a world that broadcasts an entirely different message. However, the impression left by their learning and davening remained intact, bringing them to a proper mode of

conduct based on the realization that they already know what the truth is.

Anyone who accepts this knowledge that G-d is the established entity, despite the fact that his physical senses totally fail to grasp this, is considered completely crazy: *shtus d'k'dusha* (holy nonsense). According to simple world-oriented logic, any approach based on Torah and Yiddishkeit, particularly as illuminated in the light of Chassidic teachings, appears as sheer nonsense, i.e., the mere suggestion that the world's dominance is completely non-existent, just as it was prior to its creation.

We also draw this strength from Shabbos, the day "from which all the [other] days are blessed," because Shabbos possesses an aspect of elevation of the worlds, i.e., the realization of who is the true established entity, which then extends to all the days of the week.

Chassidim have set times for strengthening this point – farbrengens – when they strive to reach the truth, or at least to know exactly where they're holding, in the event that they haven't reached it yet. Chassidim bring the example of someone who wants to remember a certain niggun that he seems to have forgotten. When people remind him of one niggun after another, he rejects each one, saying, "No, that's not it." At first glance, this is not clear – if he doesn't remember the niggun, then how does he know what it's not? However, we see that while it's true that he can't seem to remember the niggun, he does remember, "That's not it."

It deeply hurts us to know that we're in a state where we haven't found it yet. It says in *T'hillim* (42:4), "As for me, my tears were sustenance (bread), day and night,

when all day long they say to me, 'Where is your G-d?'" In connection with our discussion, the Rebbe shlita explains that the tears come to us from deep sorrow, and thus, they are in place of bread (as when someone is crying, he has no desire to eat). This is because they are demanding to know, "Where is your G-d?" i.e., why don't you feel that your strength and vitality comes solely from G-dliness?

Chassidim would describe the procedure of a farbrengen. First, they think that they're Chassidim, so they take a little mashkeh. After

There was one clever student who replied in kind: We see the table and the blackboard, and thus, they exist, but the teacher's brain, we don't see, therefore, he must not have one!

speaking for an hour or two, they come to the conclusion that they're really not Chassidim. Thus, they continue farbrenging in order to determine what they really are. After another hour or two, they come to the conclusion that they're actually misnagdim. If so, how can they possibly get up and leave things as they are? So they farbreng for another hour or two until they come to the conclusion that they're neither Chassidim nor misnagdim, however, they want to be Chassidim.

THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM COMES FROM BREAKING THE BONDAGE

What is the importance of such a level? Chassidus explains that when you make a vessel, first you have to carve from the outside, i.e., breaking off and separating the wood you need from the rest of the tree, and then you can begin carving out the inside portion of the vessel for a receptacle. Similarly, we find in our service to G-d: The animal soul is connected to certain fixed assumptions stemming from an outlook based upon the world's chazaka. Therefore, first and foremost, we must free ourselves from all this. This means that we first must raise doubts regarding what had previously been accepted in absolute terms. We see this from what the Rebbe shlita said to R. Avraham Pariz, of blessed memory, as he prepared to publicize the declaration of "*L'alter l'tshuva u'l'alter L'Geula*" (Immediate repentance, immediate redemption) – that if we succeed in annoying someone in this world, we will know that we accomplished something.

Even on mitzvaim, we don't manage to get everyone to put on t'fillin or keep Shabbos and kashrus, etc. However, each time that we speak with people, we arouse a feeling of doubt, even the slightest, about their subservience to the world, and subsequently, this has a tremendous effect in making someone into a proper vessel to internalize the message of G-d's chazaka, each person according to his ability.

This is what a farbrengen does: While a person presently does not see what he perceived during his learning and davening, nevertheless, he at least knows that what he sees now is not the real thing. This is the falsehood of our world, presenting

itself as an existing entity – true, pleasant, lovely, etc. Thus, we have the Chassidic interpretation as to why this world is called “*alma d’shikra*” – not because you can make untrue conclusions here, but insofar as the world presents itself as an existing entity is a total lie. This is the reason why a Jew is made to swear, “Be a tzaddik” – as a source of strength so he will not be dragged after this false chazaka. Furthermore, since someone suspected in money matters is not necessarily suspected of violating an oath, therefore, even if he might err on the issue of ownership, when he swears an oath, he has to admit the truth.

This is also the meaning of the expression “*olam ha’zeh*” – people say that the *helem* is *zeh*, i.e., the state of concealment is the true reality. However, the truth actually lies with *olam ha’ba*, something that is presently not accepted by our way of thinking. Therefore, Chassidus teaches us that “*olam ha’ba*” does not mean “the time to come,” rather, the time is even now – only not yet on the level of *zeh*. Only in the future will we say, “Behold, *this* is our G-d; for *this* G-d we have hoped, etc.” He has the chazaka, and the twofold “this” (*zeh*) indicates that no one even dares challenge it.

THE REVELATION OF THE TRUE BAAL HA’BAYIS AT THE REDEMPTION

This is the revelation of Moshiach that the Rebbe MH”M has already begun. This process was initiated at Mattan Torah with the announcement of “I am Hashem, your G-d,” i.e., your strength and vitality derives from G-d and there is no other chazaka.

Thus, this statement is preceded by “And G-d spoke all these words, saying,” bringing the well-known

question: What is the meaning of “saying”? This is normally used when the words must later be conveyed to others, but all Jews for all generations were present at Mattan Torah! The Mezritcher Maggid explains that this refers to the instilment of the “saying” of the Ten Commandments into the “saying” of the Ten Utterances from the time of the Creation, which maintain the world’s existence, in order that the world should not be the established, independent entity

Each time we speak with people we arouse a feeling of doubt, even the slightest, about their subservience to the world, and subsequently, this has a tremendous effect in making someone into a proper vessel to internalize the message of G-d’s chazaka.

that it appears to be. Therefore, it is written, “Who took you out of the land of Egypt” – at first glance, aren’t there much loftier things that could have been mentioned here, for example, the creation of heaven and earth? However, this is the whole purpose of Mattan Torah: to transform the exile of Egypt – typified by the statement “I do not know G-d,” as Pharaoh said that he was g-d and he had the chazaka – into the exodus from Egypt.

When the Ten Utterances have

been instilled with the Ten Commandments, then the chazaka will truly be G-d’s. In such a situation, there is no need to fight for the preservation of what is written in the *Shulchan Aruch*, even as it is interpreted according to the teachings of Chassidus.

However, all this is still on the level of betrothal, where a woman is not yet totally in the husband’s possession, e.g., he can neither inherit her estate nor become ritually unclean for her (if he is a Kohen). Only in the very near future, *mamash mamash*, through the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M, will this be on the level of marriage, when the woman’s entire existence will be under the husband’s authority and chazaka, as is written, “For your husband is your Maker” – her total being is her husband – G-d.

The pasuk says, “And the glory of G-d will be revealed and all flesh will see, etc.,” and therefore, the question is asked: Why the need to add the latter portion of the pasuk? If it has been “revealed,” isn’t it obvious that “all flesh will see”? If we can’t see it, then it hasn’t been revealed... However, there is a form of seeing that is mystical – e.g., envisioning the Beis HaMikdash at moments of special revelation, when the world still does not perceive G-d’s domination – but in the Future to Come, we will see it with the naked eye, just as those students saw the blackboard and table, and thus its existence and chazaka will be absolutely certain, “for the mouth of G-d has spoken.”

Even though all this will be in the future, nevertheless, the Rebbe shlita has already taught us to live with the Redemption right now. In other words, the Redemption already has an absolute “chazaka” at this very moment, and thus, the exile is the “claimant” that must bear “the burden of proof.”

המטה העולמי להצלת העם והארץ

HAMATEH HA'OLAMI LEHATZALAT HA'AM VEHA'ARETZ

Urgent call to Anash around the world

Emergency Lifesaving Fund

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

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

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Shofar Association

BRINGING SIMCHA TO ISRAELI SOLDIERS ON PURIM

BY DANIEL GORDON

IDF soldiers were sent to an undisclosed location in the south of the country, in order to defend those living in Eretz Yisroel. Who joined them? As they do on every holiday, Chabad Chassidim, on shlichus of the Rebbe, brought them some holiday joy and enabled the soldiers to do the mitzvos of the holiday.

These pictures show an encounter between Chassidim from Nachalat Har Chabad and soldiers in a tank brigade, on Purim. The soldiers were convened so they could hear the Megilla being read, and to sing and dance. Individual mishloach manos were distributed, to the soldiers' delight.



Above: Joyous dancing with tanks and tents in the background. In the center, you can see Rabbi Yaakov Notik.



R' Avrohom Meizlich relates: We once went to the "Tempo" post near the Canal when suddenly the enemy began heavily shelling us. We went down immediately into a bunker. The soldiers sat there trembling in fear of imminent death. These were 220 millimeter mortar shells that only the Russians had.

Then we heard our planes cross

Left: Thousands of mishloach manos were packed at Gittle's kiosk in Kfar Chabad. In this picture, we see a soldier receiving one of these packages.



Soldiers gathered to hear the reading of the Megilla.

the Egyptian border and shell them. We didn't know what was happening. They exchanged fire for a few hours. When the shelling ceased, they sent a tank from the base in order to get us out. We heard them say over the radio equipment, "We are sending a special tank to extricate the Chabadnikim."



Above: Simchas Purim – Chassidim singing together with one of the groups of soldiers

explicit request that they distribute it amongst themselves the next day.

Chabad's work in the Sinai Peninsula began after the Six Day War. At that time, there was a great spiritual awakening after



Mishloach manos to all the soldiers



Putting on t'fillin with a soldier

* * *

Once, when Anash visited one of the army posts in Sinai, the shelling began right in the middle of the Lubavitchers' activities. The soldiers and Chassidim entered the bunkers. The soldiers sat silently, in fear.

Suddenly, R' Aharon Tenenbaum got up and took out a bottle of mashke and began singing with the soldiers. The atmosphere changed instantly, and the smiles returned to people's faces.

Wherever they went, the Chassidim celebrated and danced with the soldiers. Then they left them with mishloach manos with the



Minutes before take-off to drop Purim flyers over Gush Dan – from right to left: Rabbi Meir Hershkop, Rabbi Yosef Hartman, Rabbi Yisroel Drizin, Rabbi Meir Simcha Chein, and Rabbi Tzvi Rosenberg

The pilot came over to us looking pale. Lightning had struck him, and his instrument panel failed to work. He was terrified and had no idea what to do. He couldn't contact the flight tower either. After a long moment, the instruments began working again. The pilot rolled up his sleeve and said, "I want to put on t'fillin."



The Chassidim with the pilot

the miraculous victory. The Rebbe announced Mivtza T'fillin at that time, a campaign that conquered the hearts of the nation, particularly of the soldiers.

R' Shlomo Lifshitz spoke about Mivtza T'fillin on Purim: At the air force base in Tel Nof we went over



Rabbi Refael Kahn – Rabbi Gansburg's father-in-law



Rabbi Gansburg, who originated the idea, in the center, with Rabbi Lifsh and his son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok



Members of the delegation presenting Shazar with Mishloach Manos – from left to right: Rabbis Maidanchik, Wilimovsky, Chefer, Eidelkopf, with President Shazar on far right



President Shazar introducing R' Zushe Wilimovsky to author R' Chaim Lieberman



R' Shlomo Maidanchik presenting mishloach manos to President Shazar from the Rebbe. The inscription on the cake says, "Simchas Purim from Kfar Chabad."

to the fleet of F-15's. This new and most advanced squadron of planes was considered "Holy of Holies." We went over to a pilot who was sitting in one of the planes and asked him to put on t'fillin. He refused.

A few minutes later, he flew off on a mission. Within half an hour, the plane landed and the pilot came over to us looking pale. Lightning had struck him, and his instrument panel failed to work. He was terrified and had no idea what to do. He couldn't contact the flight tower either. After a long moment, the instruments

began working again. The pilot rolled up his sleeve and said, "I want to put on t'fillin."

HEAVENLY PURIM

Rabbi Itche Gansburg always looks for creative ways to reach out to others. The usual Purim activities take place on land – such as meetings with distinguished public figures and going out to the soldiers. In 5724 (1964), R' Gansburg thought up an original way to reach hundreds of thousands of Jews living in Gush Dan on the coast. He decided to rent a plane and drop flyers that described the Chassidishe significance of the mitzvos of Purim.

A group of bachurim and men took off from the airport in Hertzeliya and dropped thousands of flyers over Hertzeliya, Rechovot, Rishon, Petach Tikva, Raanana, Ramat Gan, and B'nei Brak.

"With great difficulty I managed to pull myself away from the compelling sights," says R' Gansburg. "Hundreds of people chased after the papers that fluttered in the breeze. I knew the Rebbe would have much nachas from this."

In the days preceding the project, he knew that a lot of money was needed. Tzach's administrators decided to try and sell advertising space on the flyers. The idea was a good one but it had a problem in that it could create the impression that Tzach was giving its stamp of approval to the company that advertised on the flyers.

R' Gansburg took advantage of the fact that his father-in-law, Rabbi Refael Kahn, was visiting the Rebbe at the time. Rabbi Kahn sent a telegram with the Rebbe's

answer which said, "If through this they will sign up companies that will not arouse the ire of the public over their publicity. And if such action will not be seen as kosher certification of what will be considered by some of the religious population as inappropriate, then they should consider the proposal. It is the responsibility of Tzach to choose the appropriate candidates. Signed, Refael.

Tzach chose the famous Karmel Mizrachi wines because the chareidi community generally accepted the kashrus of these wines and Tzach had good connections with the company.

This project went on for a few years, until one year when Tzach received a letter from the Rebbe that said they should stop. R' Gansburg, who was visiting the Rebbe at the time and didn't see the letter, heard about its contents directly from the Rebbe when he had a yechidus.

The Rebbe explained that due to the security situation, people were under constant tension and when a plane flew overhead (which emptied things out over their heads) it frightened them and didn't necessarily bring simcha. "And so I thought to myself, why frighten Jews?"

"The increased joy in the month of Adar continues throughout the year, and the month of Geula of Nissan should, this year, herald our true and complete Geula through Moshiach Tzidkeinu."

"AND MISHLOACH MANOS FROM ME"

On Purim 5734, a distinguished delegation of Chassidim from Kfar Chabad appeared at the president's residence in Yerushalayim, in order to bring President Shazar the joy of Purim with the flavor of Kfar Chabad.

Those heading the delegation were Rabbi Shlomo Maidanchek, the "Partisan," Rabbi Zushe Wilimovsky, Rabbi Shmuel Chefer, and Rabbi Yona Eidelkopf. They gave Shazar regards and mishloach manos from the Rebbe.

Shazar was thrilled and the Rebbe thanked Shazar in a letter sent on 29 Adar II 5733: "I would like to express my thanks to you for your gracious welcome of the Lubavitch delegation on Purim, when they gave you regards and mishloach manos from me."

At the end of the letter, the Rebbe wishes President Shazar: "The increased joy in the month of Adar continues throughout the year, and the month of Geula of Nissan should, this year, herald our true and complete Geula through Moshiach Tzidkeinu."

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LIVING ON MIRACLES

BY MENDEL TZFASMAN

*The Halsbands came to Miami Beach to work with immigrants from Argentina. * The shlichus story of Rabbi Shlomo and Faige Halsband.*

GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

ARGENTINA, 5760/2000. The economy was in terrible shape and the Jews were suffering along with everybody else. Many of them left their homeland to try their luck in other countries. Hundreds of Jews headed for Florida, particularly North Miami Beach. They all hoped their mazal would shine like the Florida sun.

They didn't have official papers, food or clothing, and they looked for work, but it wasn't easy to find. The situation became intolerable.

It was at this time that Rabbi Dov Brinn, shliach in North Miami, became seriously ill. He was in great pain and because he had to visit doctors and have surgery, he wasn't able to properly address the needs of the Argentinean Jews. He decided to bring in a young couple to take over this work.

Rabbi Shlomo and Faige Halsband arrived at the end of 5761. R' Shlomo was born in Buenos Aires and speaks Spanish, and was able to connect with the local Jews in Miami. He devoted himself to them and helped them

with their material concerns while providing them with spiritual nourishment.

YOU DON'T EXPLAIN EMUNA

My meeting with Rabbi Halsband made quite an impression on me. His warmth and effusiveness won me over. I was with him and his wife while they defrosted chicken and meat for Shabbos and guided a young couple that was about to join the community. R' Shlomo told me

the story of his shlichus:

"I was a shliach even before I married. When I finished learning in Tiferes Bachurim in Morristown, I transferred to Tomchei T'mimim there, and then I was sent to Venezuela with another two T'mimim. We were mostly involved in shlichus. One of the projects we did was to organize a Shabbaton every month, which was attended by dozens of kids. We also held a summer and a winter camp.

"Before we came here, we wrote a letter to the Rebbe in which we asked whether we should accept this shlichus offer. The answer in the *Igros Kodesh* was clear, and we came full with kochos and brachos from the Rebbe.

"Our first concern here was to help the Jewish immigrants from



A Shabbaton organized by Rabbi Halsband when he was a bachur-shliach in Venezuela



The Chabad house that was bought through a series of miracles. Inset: Rabbi Shlomo Halsband and his son, Menachem Mendel

South America. Whoever needed money, clothing, food, or official documents, knew where to go. Our first project was a communal Shabbos meal. Although we didn't officially advertise, word spread, and on the very first Shabbos we had 100 people.

"We made some strong connections with many young people that Shabbos. Some of them became ardent Chassidim of the Rebbe. Our success surprised us and we decided to carry on with these public Shabbos meals. We have kept it up since then, and these meals turn into lively farbrengens. They take place at the

shul near the Chabad house, which everybody calls Beis Moshiach."

Despite the success with the

"Our first concern here was to help the Jewish immigrants from South America.

Whoever needed money, clothing, food, or official documents, knew where to go."

Shabbos meals, R' Shlomo didn't rest on his laurels. He visited the homes of his mekuravim and their places of work, where he began giving private shiurim for small groups.

"We strive for quality more than quantity. We see that shiurim in the homes of mekuravim affect the entire household, and leads to progress in the observance of Torah and mitzvos and Chassidic customs.

"I also have a practice of bringing some mekuravim with me when I go to the Rebbe. You can't believe what a transformation can take place during one visit to 770."

What are the topics of your shiurim?

“Everything. It depends on who the audience is. The common denominator is the constant focus on Geula in our lives. Events like the tsunami naturally lead to a discussion about the prophecies in Chazal and the words of the Rebbeim. And it all leads to the Rebbe’s prophecy, ‘Behold, Moshiach comes,’ and that we are the first generation of Geula.”

How does your audience respond to this message?

“During the course of hundreds of shiurim, I’ve noticed a recurring interesting phenomenon. When I would explain the fact that we are in the final moments of Galus and that the Rebbe is Moshiach based on logic, it wasn’t always accepted. But when I began giving shiurim in the sichos of 5751-5752, it was amazing how people accepted what the Rebbe said. The difference seems to be that when I explain things, with my understanding, it doesn’t necessarily affect people. But when they see that it’s something the Rebbe said, they are receptive.”

HE WILL SEND MANY BLESSINGS

At a certain point, the Halsbands ran into severe financial trouble. Their regular monthly income was suddenly cut by a third. In the meantime, they had another two children, and their expenses exceeded their income even more.

Just at that time, the affluent Jews in the area moved to Aventura and gentiles began moving in. Practically overnight the quality of life dropped dramatically.

Other shluchim heard of their plight and offered them other shlichus positions. But the Halsbands didn’t consider leaving

the shlichus they had taken with the Rebbe’s brachos. Rabbi Halsband wrote a long letter to the Rebbe in which he described the situation and asked what he should do, and whether he should accept a different shlichus position. The answer he opened to in the *Igros Kodesh* (vol. 4, p. 117) was:

I read and reread your letter and couldn’t believe my eyes. Hashem placed you in a goodly portion, with no effort on your part, and you have the merit of knowing about Toras HaChassidus and also learning from it, yet you are doubtful... Hashem brought it about



A swimming pool behind the Chabad house that is also used as the men’s mikva

that your lot is to teach Jews the ways of Chassidus – i.e., to draw into them chayus, warmth, and light – yet still you doubt whether you should continue this work, and you even have “holy excuses” for this ...

“Days are formed.” It is explained in Chassidus that every person has a set number of days to fulfill G-d’s shlichus in this world, and every hour and day that is spent on things that are not your issues is also a lack in the fulfillment of your shlichus. On the other hand, Hashem does not come with complaints to His creations, and since He loaded you with this

shlichus, certainly you were given the kochos for it.

Needless to say, the couple set aside their fears and placed their trust in what the Rebbe said.

* * *

At that time, the Chabad house was located in a shopping center that belonged to a wealthy Israeli. He had been renting the premises to them at a very affordable rate, but just two weeks before Rosh HaShana 5765, the owner told Rabbi Halsband that the bargain price was no longer available and they now had to pay the full rent.

“We didn’t know what to do, because we didn’t even have the money to pay the rent for our house. I tried pushing him off again and again, having faith that a miracle would happen.”

Rabbi Halsband wrote another letter to the Rebbe, opened a volume of the *Igros Kodesh*, and read the following:

I was pleased to read about the lot they purchased to construct a shul. The main thing is that it be located in a central place where Jews reside, for this way the residents of the neighborhood will



Inside the spacious Chabad house shul

unite to be worshippers and friends in their shul when it is built in a good and auspicious time.

Rabbi Halsband was sure that now, after such a clear message from the Rebbe, the owner of the shopping center would offer them the Chabad house for free, but it didn't work out quite like that. Erev Sukkos, people were sent to take down the sukka that Rabbi Halsband had put up. It was with great difficulty that the shliach managed to convince them not to do it.

That week, one of the congregants came to the shliach and

suggested that he look into buying a certain house that was near where the rabbi lived. The location was ideal, and despite having no financial wherewithal to purchase it, Rabbi Halsband began looking into it.

"Sometimes people do irrational things. You have to understand that our credit card was stopped by the bank because of the huge deficit and we didn't even have money to pay the rent, but the answer we got indicated that the Rebbe wanted us to act in a manner beyond nature.

"In order to buy the house, we had to pay \$1800 a month, and we

would avoid having to pay a down payment. The offer was terrific, and I began to fundraise, \$200 here and \$500 there. I somehow got \$1000 together, but that's when we learned that we were misinformed and that we actually had to pay a down payment of \$15,000 in cash. And the monthly payments were \$2100, a difference of \$300 a month, an amount that seemed insurmountable in our situation.

"I didn't know what to do. To be honest, I thought perhaps we hadn't understood what the Rebbe said and maybe we shouldn't set our sights that high.

"I went to our shul, Beis Moshiach, and one of the congregants came over to me and gave me a \$2000 donation in cash! I was astounded, but I still needed so much more money.

"One day, I got a phone call from a mekurav who was a contractor, who told me that that day he had worked on the house of a certain wealthy Jew. 'It might be worth your while to ask him for a donation,' he said. I didn't have high expectations but I said that I was willing to meet with the man if he agreed.

"Two hours later, the mekurav called me and exclaimed, 'Rabbi Halsband, I am in the man's house and he wants to meet with you. Come now!'

"I hurried over to his house and by the end of our conversation he had pledged to give \$13,000, just the amount we needed. When the real estate agent, who knew about our problems, heard the story, he was flabbergasted and he waived his fee, donating it to Beis Moshiach.

"I had occasion to speak with Rabbi Yaakov Fellig, shliach in Coconut Grove. In answer to his question about how we were managing financially, I said, 'Baruch Hashem, there are constant



On the left is the president of the shul, Scott Simms

miracles, but you can't live on miracles!

"And Rabbi Fellig asked, 'Why not?'"

"His brief response completely changed my way of thinking."

DREAMS

Even after that miracle, Rabbi Halsband needed plenty of money, which, as usual, he didn't have. He had to renovate the new house, which was unfit to live in. The members of his community didn't have money, and the little they could contribute they gave.

The next miracle came from a completely unexpected source. One of the mekuravim of the Chabad house, a convert by the name of Yisroel Menendez, had a dream in which the Rebbe asked him to continue his work. A while later, he opened to an answer in the *Igros Kodesh* which said he should use his work for mitzvaim purposes.

When he went to work, he excitedly told his manager, who was not religious, about the answer he had gotten from the Rebbe. His manager, Scott Simms (Shlomo Eliyahu Simms) got excited too. He said, "You know, I also dreamed of the Rebbe. I was standing in a big crowd and I saw the Lubavitcher Rebbe in front of us. I turned to one of the rabbis standing there and said, 'I want to meet Moshiach.' Suddenly, the Rebbe turned towards me and held out his hand in the shalom aleichem greeting."

Yisroel, realizing that his manager had had a powerful spiritual experience, invited him to visit the Chabad house. Scott was impressed by the shliach, seeing how he helped every Jew, and without asking for anything in exchange for his efforts. On the spot, Scott decided to donate the costs of the renovations and agreed



Rabbi Halsband (far right) giving a shiur

Many people who used to come just for the davening, have become religious, have grown beards, and have become ardent Chassidim of the Rebbe.

to oversee the project.

"Scott also became more knowledgeable in Torah and mitzvos and began keeping Shabbos and kashrus. He bought Chabad t'fillin and became the president of the shul. He calls himself a Chassid of the Rebbe."

A section of the new building is set aside for guests, enabling visitors to stay at the Chabad house for Shabbos without having to travel.

"You have to understand," explains Rabbi Halsband, "that many people who used to come just for the davening, have become religious, have grown beards, and

have become ardent Chassidim of the Rebbe. They are very impressed by the fact that a young couple is able to take care of the material needs of many families while struggling financially themselves, and they are aware that this is only possible through the Rebbe's brachos and guidance.

SHLUCHA

As I said earlier, this interview took place in the shliach's kitchen as they prepared for Shabbos. Rabbi and Mrs. Halsband work very hard to prepare for the large number of guests that come to the Shabbos meals.

"Tell me," I asked, "what is the role of the wife of the shliach?"

R' Shlomo smiled and said, "What's the role of the shliach's wife? She's a shlucha in her own right! That's her role! She's the Rebbetzin, lecturer, cook, kalla teacher, secretary, project manager, and first and foremost, mother of the young shluchim. In short, she takes care of everything."

As we spoke, seven-year-old Chaya Mushka enters the kitchen. She is in charge of preparing the salad for a hundred people!

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PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY SHAI GEFEN

A wonderful collection of stories and sayings, recorded by the Chassid, Rabbi Shlomo Galperin a”h, from the sayings of Rabbi Yisroel Neveler z”l. The 6th of Adar is his third yahrtzait. We thank the Galperin family for giving Beis Moshiach the privilege of being the first to publicize this collection of stories.

THREE TERMS

This world is referred to in three ways: gentiles call it *sovet*; Jews call it *velt* in Yiddish; and in Lashon HaKodesh it is called *olam*. You can say that *soviet* is the Russian word for “light,” being that the coarseness of all the pleasures of this world is a light to the gentiles.

Jews call it *velt*, which in Yiddish is also the word for “ratzon,” wanting, for there is a desire for all manner of things of this world.

But for someone who works on subduing his inclination, it is called *olam ha’zeh* (lit. the concealment of this) for this world conceals the revelation of G-dliness and one must illuminate the world with the light of Torah.

TO NULLIFY THE SITRA ACHRA

There was once a Chassid, who

used to travel to one of the Polish Admurim. One time, as he traveled, he saw a large yeshiva with a rosh yeshiva and talmidim sitting and listening to a shiur. He sat down too, listened in, and enjoyed the shiur.



R' Yisroel Neveler in Samarkand

Afterwards, when he went to his Rebbe, his Rebbe did not want to greet him, saying: “You no longer belong to me and you have no *takana*. Go back to the yeshiva and tell the rosh yeshiva: ‘You’re a liar and your Torah is false.’”

The Chassid did this, and upon doing so, he saw that there was no yeshiva and no rosh yeshiva. It had been a mirage of the *sitra achra* and the Chassid nullified it.

THE REBBE TOOK APART AND PUT TOGETHER THE REVOLVER

The Rebbe Rayatz once traveled with a Chassid, and a young man entered and sat facing the Rebbe. The Rebbe said to him, “Young man, give me what you are holding.”

The man took out a revolver and gave it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe took it apart and put it back together. When they reached the station, the Rebbe returned the revolver to the man.

[Apparently, this individual was contemplating suicide and the Rebbe Rayatz saved his life.]

THE ANGEL OF DEATH ENTERED THE TZEMACH TZEDEK’S ROOM

One time, Chassidim were sitting in the room adjacent to the Tzemach Tzedek’s room, when a man walked in wearing boots that made noise as

he walked, and he walked here and there. The Chassidim called out to him, “Young man, have some derech erez!”

Immediately afterwards, the man went inside and the Chassidim saw that he was full of eyes [i.e., a description of the Angel of Death]. The Tzemach Tzedek said, “Why did you have to yell at him? I was fighting for a certain Chassid and now I can no longer do so.”

Indeed, the Angel of Death has no permission to touch a Jew except with the permission of the Nasi HaDor.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

In the time of the Alter Rebbe, there were Misnagdim who stood guard to prevent Chassidim from entering the mikva (in addition to other forms of persecution). Chassidim were forced to immerse in the mikva at night.

In those days, there weren't electric boilers to heat the water, and they had to heat up the water in huge pots. One time, a pot of boiling water fell on one of the men and he died. It was an extremely dangerous situation because the Misnagdim were under the false impression that Chassidim would kill them. The Alter Rebbe ordered the dead man to rise and he did.

MOSHE'S HANDS

In the picture of the Rebbe Rashab, we see his hands resting on the armrests of the chair. This is because of his bittul to Hashem, as is explained in Chassidus.

THE ALTER REBBE'S STRENGTH

The Alter Rebbe was physically a powerful man. When he wanted to see whether he should stop fasting, he would take the Vilna Shas and attempt to hold it out with two

fingers and his thumb. If he couldn't lift the Shas, then he stopped fasting.

The simple explanation is that in addition to being the Nasi HaDor, a great tzaddik, and a new neshama, he was physically strong. Indeed, the Divine Presence rests on “one who is strong, wise, etc.”

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUNG AND OLD

When we were young, we were embarrassed to say in the morning brachos, “and force our inclinations,” because a person is supposed to work on his own and

*When the Mitteler
Rebbe heard the Alter
Rebbe read the
Megilla, he heard
deep secrets, etc., but
from a simple person
he merely heard the
story of the Megilla.*

subdue his Evil Inclination.

But when we got older we saw how we had to have Hashem's help to subdue the Evil Inclination, and if not for Hashem's help, we would fail.

THE MEAT IS TOO TOUGH

The early Chassidim were completely immersed in the service of Hashem, in learning Torah, and doing mitzvos. When did these Chassidim have a good day? Not when they earned money or the like, G-d forbid. A good day for a Chassid was when he davened with the necessary kavana and meditated on

Chassidus as it's explained in the *Kuntres HaT'filla*. A good day meant that they did a favor for another Jew with joy, as the *Shulchan Aruch* says, “cleave to His middos – just as He is compassionate...”

Once, when a certain Chassid went home at night from the beis midrash and wanted to eat, his household was already sleeping. The Chassid went to the kitchen and saw a pot on the stove. Since it was dark and only a small candle illuminated the room, he took the pot, poured its contents into a plate, washed his hands, and sat down to eat. As he began to eat, he found the food hard to chew. He chewed and chewed but couldn't grind it between his teeth, and he finally discarded it.

The next day, his wife asked him, “How was the food?”

He said, “The soup was fine but the meat was a bit tough.”

When she heard this, his wife was surprised because she knew she hadn't prepared meat. She ran to the kitchen and saw the pot with the food in its place, but the pot with the wash in it was empty.

That's when she understood why he thought the meat was tough, because her husband, didn't realize that he was chewing on socks.

That's how Chassidim were, detached from physicality and only desiring and thinking about Torah, whether Nigleh or Nistar.

We know that where a person's desire is, that's where he is, which is why it could have happened that he drank the wash water and thought it was soup and chewed on the socks or other clothing and thought it was meat, because Chassidim were just not into physical pleasures.

The story is told as a joke but it explains what the Chassidim were like then.

A VOW THAT COULD NOT BE ANNULLED

A Chassid asked the Tzemach Tzedek what he should do, since he had vowed not to drink mashke that was called burda (a type of mashke that had wine in it), and now the doctors told him he needed to drink it for his health.

The Tzemach Tzedek said that since he had made a vow as a protective “fence,” it could never be annulled.

HOW MUCH SHOULD A CHILD PLAY?

R' Yisroel Neveler said, “Children need to play and should be allowed to play, but you must watch them so that they do not play until they sweat. When they start to sweat, stop the game. It is good this way.”

A BIT OF TRUTH

R' Yisroel Neveler would say, “May Hashem help us hold on to a bit of truth.”

R' Yisroel was a great scholar, both in Nigleh and in P'nimius HaTorah, spent many hours in meditation and in the avoda of t'filla, and was one of the well known Chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbe Rayatz. Yet, still and all, when he farbrenge and said l'chaim, his request was that Hashem should help us hold on to a bit of truth.

This is the feeling of elder Chassidim with expanded minds: it is like someone who reaches great heights and sees how the first level is nothing in comparison.

LIKE POURING BOILING WATER ON HIS HEAD

Better that a Jew stand in one place and daven and not run about the shul, here and there, as it says that one who has a set place to daven, the G-d of Avrohom answers him.

When a person paces about the



shul and doesn't stand in one place, then when he says the name of Hashem in his davening, and another person hears it, it is like he poured an

The next day, his wife asked him, “How was the food?”

He said, “The soup was fine but the meat was a bit tough.”

When she heard this, his wife was surprised, knowing she hadn't prepared meat...

urn of boiling water on his head.

A SPECIAL MOMENT

When a person perceives that he is not thinking about himself, nor about his middos or intellect, but simply goes out of his *yeshus* (ego) for a while, and out of his desires, etc., this moment is good and worthwhile.

EYES

Fortunate are the eyes that saw the eyes that saw a true tzaddik.

A NICE PURIM STORY

The Mittlerer Rebbe would listen to his father, the Alter Rebbe, read the Megilla. One time, he heard it read by a Chassid, and not by his father, and he commented, “It's a nice story.”

When he heard the Alter Rebbe read the Megilla, he heard deep secrets, etc., but from a simple person he merely heard the story of the Megilla.

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IN THOSE DAYS, IN THIS TIME

BY SHAI GEFEN

WE ARE ALL SOLDIERS IN THE ARMY OF HASHEM

As Purim approaches and we learn about Haman's decree, we feel we are living through something similar, although this time, it is a decree imposed upon us by our fellow Jews. They are planning on withdrawing from Gaza and conceding to our enemies while these same enemies are planning dozens of attacks against us.

On Purim 5738, the Rebbe spoke about Israel making concessions and called the P.L.O. "the descendents of Haman the Wicked":

Acting in this way invites pressure, heaven forbid. And in the natural way of things, there is likely to be pressure, heaven forbid – because of which Israel will not only not make progress but will return what they have already conquered, just as the P.L.O. who are the descendents of the wicked Haman want!

The question is: how is it possible, after all we've suffered, after everybody has seen where capitulation to the enemy gets us, that they are still continuing to make concessions which will lead to further murder and mayhem? The same prime minister of Israel, who collaborates with the enemy, said just two years ago, "that Netzarim [in Gaza] is the same as Tel Aviv!"

Sharon is right, because to the Arabs, there is no difference between

Netzarim and Tel Aviv, because Netzarim is just phase one in their plan to eradicate the Jewish people.

The situation today is far sadder than the situation in the time of Haman, for today it is Jews who are leading us to disaster. They work hand-in-hand with the descendents of Haman, despite knowing what will result. Sharon certainly knows where he's leading us, but his calculations are personal. He wants to please the Left, the media, and the historians.

Those who think nothing can be done to stop the Disengagement are mistaken and misleading others. Even when you hear the arrogant and egotistical statements emanating from the Defense Minister and the Prime Minister, we know we can still stop it. We can stop it through spiritual as well as physical means.

These days we must live with the awareness of "those days" also being "in this time." To implant the feeling that the decree is not just a local one but is against the entire Jewish people, and the Jewish people have the ability to stop it. We all have the obligation to follow the mitzva of not standing by our fellow's blood. We must all do what we can to prevent the Disengagement from happening. Each man, woman, and child is a soldier in this war to save our people since this is truly a War of G-d.

G-d willing, we will soon celebrate

the Geula of Am Yisroel from this tzara, and will immediately go to the true and complete Geula together with the Rebbe, at our head.

SHARON'S FRIENDS

P.M. Sharon had many friends in his military career over the years. His erstwhile friends, who went to war with him, are now openly expressing their opinions of the man who switched sides and now favors our enemy.

An old friend of Sharon's who, sadly, is no longer with us, was Rechavam Zeevi (may Hashem avenge his blood). The last thing he said about Sharon before he was murdered was that Sharon "is the Hertzfel of the Palestinian state."

Meir Har-Tziyon, a friend of Sharon's from the same mythological unit 101, and one who Sharon called "a model of an IDF fighter," was interviewed in *Maariv* a few weeks ago and said, "Sharon is crazy," and today, "he in endangering the security of the State." He added that the Disengagement Plan is like a "Holocaust."

A week ago, at the protest rally, Moshe Zar spoke about Sharon. He too, is an old friend of Sharon and among other things, he said as follows:

"Arik Sharon was my friend. He visited my home dozens of times. He also came to console me after my son,



Benny Gilad, was murdered. I said to him, ‘How can you allow such *hefkerus*? Why were you elected?’

“Sharon answered me, ‘I was elected to fight. They elected me so as not to make peace.’

“Today, I am embarrassed of this friend. In the past, it is true he used to fight. But what is he doing now? My wife Yael came up with a great name for today’s Sharon – Josephus Flavius. Do you know who that was? He was also a fearless hero, who fought and led the camp. One day though, he turned his back and became the enemy. And not just any enemy, but an enemy who knew his people’s strategy, knew the fortresses, and his people’s fighting techniques, and he used this inside information to betray his people.

“Sharon built the settlements and he knows the settlers and was one of them, and today he turns his back and uses his knowledge in order to destroy and expel.”

KATYUSHAS IN AFULA – NOT JUST A DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

While the plan to expel Jews from Gush Katif and northern Shomron moves forward, there appeared a news item that got lost from view in order not to obstruct Sharon, G-d forbid, from carrying out his plan. The news item spoke about terrorist plans to shoot katyusha rockets at Afula. Here’s the news item as it was broadcast in the media:

“The Islamic Jihad are planning to carry out this shooting by setting up the launchers in the area of Chevel HaTaanachim, and shooting at the city of Afula. The missile launch didn’t work out due to technical difficulties. It should be noted that in light of the damage to morale as a result of aimless rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, it was not difficult for terrorists like Zawidi and the like to see the potential that

lies in shooting from northern Shomron into Israel.”

No, it’s not some doomsday scenario that the settlers are using to scare us. There’s not the slightest doubt that if the government continues its policy of withdrawal and concessions, thus awarding prizes to murderers, that our enemies will attack us everywhere. After the Arabs’ attempts to expel us from Gush Katif and northern Shomron, the missiles will reach not only Ashkelon, but also Afula, Chadera, and Kfar Saba.

Rabin, who started the Oslo Accords, would make disparaging remarks when they spoke of missiles being shot at Ashkelon. If that happens, he would say, we will re-conquer Gaza. He didn’t realize that it would work out in just the opposite way, that the more missiles they shot at us, the faster we would run.

THE DANGER OF A REFERENDUM

It’s difficult to say which is more dangerous: Disengagement or a referendum. Those people, who champion a referendum and think that this is what will save us from the Disengagement, are causing terrible damage to Eretz Yisroel and to the goals for which they are fighting.

They used to explain that there was a strategy how not to return land. Shamir said that he would drag the Arabs out for ten years and not give them anything. But the Rebbe warned that diplomacy and strategies are ultimately carried out, as indeed did happen.

Now too, it has to be made clear that a referendum is not in our best interests. The very fact that those loyal to Eretz Yisroel are announcing and admitting that if a referendum of the people says that it’s okay to give away land, they will go along with that. How despicable! Would it then be permissible to endanger millions of

It’s difficult to say which is more dangerous: Disengagement or a referendum. Those people, who champion a referendum and think that this is what will save us from the Disengagement, are causing terrible damage to Eretz Yisroel and to the goals for which they are fighting.

Jews? Can we accept the decision of Arab voters in Israel? What will the proponents of the referendum say then?

Unfortunately, there are rabbanim who have been convinced to support a referendum. Clearly, they don’t understand the dangers inherent in it. The moment you agree to withdraw

because of a referendum, you have agreed in principle to uproot Jews from our land.

In this kind of fight, there must be a clear strategy. The expulsion of Jews cannot be carried out, no matter what. We must fight this to the end. This is the only way we can win.

THE THOUGHT POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY

Noam Livnat was taken in for questioning for the “crime” of addressing the thousands of people at the rally in Binyanei HaUma, a rally that shook up the entire establishment and will, G-d willing, lead to the results we want. What was he arrested for? He was arrested for daring to express his pain over the expulsion of Jews. Noam said it right, when he told the media that this was a political investigation, and he did not agree to answer the questions of the interrogators for the Thought Police.

We recommend to anybody who is taken in for questioning for opposing the wicked expulsion plan, not to cooperate, and to announce that it is a political interrogation. Unfortunately, it's likely that many other Jews will be taken in for questioning because of their opposition to the Disengagement Plan. Let's take Noam Livnat as a model of how to handle the police who try to muzzle us.

THE ENTIRE COUNTRY CONSISTS OF OUTPOSTS

The report on outposts that Sharon ordered is intended to crush the settlers and champion the enemy. This report demonstrated the hypocrisy prevalent in Israel. Part of this hypocrisy lies in the fact that the report was prepared by an ardent Leftist who hates the settlers, who used all her positions to harm those on the Right. The report doesn't even hint to Sharon's ties to the outposts even though he took an active part in building them up when he was a

senior minister in the government, and that Sharon originated this approach.

When Sharon travels from his ranch to his office in Yerushalayim, he sees tens of thousands of illegal outposts that are being built before the astonished eyes of the authorities, and which cause untold destruction. These outposts are not being built by the settlers but by Bedouins and Arabs living in the Negev and the Galil, and in all the integrated cities that they live in.

According to a Knesset report, the number of illegal outposts within Israel is up to 100,000! In Yesha, the number doesn't pass the 1000 mark. Therein lies the hypocrisy. They scream about justice being done to the settlers, but not with the Arab settlers who settle on our land illegally, thus conquering huge sections of our country without firing a single shot.

THE REBBE ON FIRING THE CHIEF OF STAFF

IDF Chief of Staff Moshe Bogey Yaalon is not what you'd call an extreme hawk in the political arena, but when he was asked for his professional military opinion about the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif, he called the Disengagement, “in the spirit of a payoff for terror.” Naturally, the politicians were unhappy with him and this is why he was pushed out of his job. Air Force Major-General Dan Halutz, Yaalon's immediate subordinate in the IDF, will replace his former boss. (Halutz is infamous to Left-wingers for responding, when asked how he feels after dropping a bomb, that all he feels is a slight shudder to the plane...)

In a sicha of Parshas Emor 5738, the Rebbe referred to a situation in which they attacked the Chief of Staff for expressing his opinion:

This affects the security of three and a half million Jews in Eretz Yisroel, and as the Chief of Staff announced, if even one area is returned, it will

adversely affect their ability to defend the entire country. As for those who opposed this pronouncement, it's not that they opposed it because it is incorrect, for they all admit that the Chief of Staff is the expert in these matters and said the truth. The debate is over whether he should have said what he said, or should have kept quiet.

We're talking about the defense of three and a half million Jews, yet Jews debate whether he had the right to say what he said or should have kept quiet and borne the responsibility of defending the borders himself! This is unheard of, not just among Jews but even by goyim!

Again, all concede that he is the expert, and nevertheless they keep on debating. One says it's a political issue and another says it's a security issue. One says that a minister should have said it, and another says that a general or the Chief of Staff should have said it.

But he said it already, yet they continue to debate this for months, even though they know that among all the defense experts, there is not a single one who says that from a security perspective, it's acceptable to give away land.

Today, not only is there debate about whether it's okay to say things, but they push out the Chief of Staff. It's yet another indication that we live in a dictatorship where criticism of the government is forbidden. This is also the reason why the head of the Shin-Bet, Avi Dichter was pushed out, because he said – at every government session and at sessions of Knesset committees – what would happen after the Disengagement Plan is implemented.

May Hashem have mercy and speedily annul all evil decrees against His people.

HU RA! – THE REST OF THE STORY

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN, RYAL INSTITUTE AND TOURO COLLEGE

In addition to his prophecies, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach has performed countless miracles, both for individuals and for the entire world. One of the most dramatic of these was in fact a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah regarding Moshiach: “And with the breath of his mouth he will put the evil man to death.” This happened in January, 1953 when the evil Stalin arrested a group of Jewish doctors accusing them of killing some government officials. This was the infamous “Doctor’s Plot.” It triggered a wave of intense anti-Semitism throughout Russia. Jews were attacked in the streets and many prominent Jews disappeared or mysteriously “died of heart attacks.”

On the night of Purim that year, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach held a farbrengen in 770. Late in the night, in the middle of the Purim celebration, Melech HaMoshiach’s face suddenly became very serious and he began to tell a story. He said that after the fall of the Czar, they held elections in Russia. The Rebbe of Lubavitch at that time, the Rebbe Rashab, instructed the Chassidim to vote in the elections. There was one Chassid who was totally removed from worldly matters and had no idea what an election was. But he followed the Rebbe’s instruction and went to vote. When he got there, however, he didn’t know what to do – how to vote or who to vote for. He met other Chassidim there and they told him what to do. After the elections,

everyone started shouting “Hoorah! Hoorah!” But this Chassid thought that they were shouting the Hebrew words “*Hu ra! Hu ra!*” meaning “He is evil! He is evil!” So he began to shout, “*Hu ra! Hu ra!*”

The Chassidim listening to the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach tell this

On the night of Purim that year, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach held a farbrengen in 770. Late in the night, in the middle of the Purim celebration, the Rebbe’s face suddenly became very serious and he began to tell a story...

story understood that he was telling them that they should also shout “*Hu ra! Hu ra!*” So they all stood up and began shouting “*Hu ra! Hu ra!*” Around this time, back in Russia, Stalin had a stroke, and a few days later it was announced that he was dead. Subsequently, the doctors were

freed and the case against them dropped.

It is important to note that it was not just the lives of the Jewish doctors that were saved by this miracle. It was reported that Stalin had planned to deport all the Jews of Russia to a distant northern region. He had already built camps for them in that region. He planned to transport them in open cattle cars so that thousands would freeze to death on the way, ch”v. Khrushchev later reported that when Stalin revealed his intentions at a meeting of Soviet leaders, Mikoyan and Voroshilov protested and said that such conduct was worthy of Hitler. Stalin flew into a furious rage in response.

Indeed, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach’s father, once used a *gematria* to express that fact that Stalin and Hitler were essentially the same.

A miracle similar to this Purim miracle of Melech HaMoshiach was once performed by the Tzemach Tzedek. One year on Taanis Esther, the afternoon before Purim, when the Tzemach Tzedek was davening *Shmoneh Esrei* he stopped after the words *melech meimis* (“a king who puts to death”) in the second bracha. He waited a long time. A Chassid standing by watching this commented, “A strike from a Rebbe.” They later found out that at the time the Tzemach Tzedek was saying “*melech meimis*,” the cruel, anti-Semitic Czar Nikolai was killed.

The Alter Rebbe once said that in every generation when there is an extraordinary holiness in the world, there is also an opposing force of extraordinary evil. He gave the example of a certain evil priest in the time of the Baal Shem Tov and the emperor Franz Joseph of Austria in the time of the Maggid of Mezritch. He concluded by saying that Napoleon was an extraordinary force of evil and that they had to have mesiras nefesh to defeat him.

In our time, the generation of Melech HaMoshiach, I believe it is correct to say that Stalin was such an extraordinary evil. But not just Stalin. Saddam Hussein has said that he modeled his dictatorship after Stalin. He was the other extraordinary evil of our time, and it is well known that if he had been given a free hand he would have done a lot more of what Stalin did, *chas v'shalom*.

Thus there are striking similarities between the way Melech HaMoshiach “put the evil man to death with the breath of his mouth” and the way he defeated Saddam. He edited and published the very same maamer which he had said at the 1953 Purim farbrengen – which put Stalin to death – for Purim 1991, the exact date that Saddam was defeated in the Persian Gulf War.

THE DOCTOR'S PLOT

Dr. Yakov Rapoport, one of the doctors arrested in the Doctor's Plot, wrote in his memoirs, “The Doctor's Plot...defies common sense. All one can do is attempt to analyze the series of events that led up to it.” In this paper we will attempt to do just that: analyze the series of events leading up to the case, the case itself, and the miraculous sudden death of Stalin that resulted in the case being dropped and charges brought against those responsible for prosecuting the doctors. It was a total reversal, or, to use the term of the Megillah, “*v'nahapoch hu.*”

The doctor's plot was a complex fabrication spun from many threads, connecting events – some of which happened and some of which never happened – with people who had little or no relevance to the alleged events. The “evidence” was either a false confession extracted under torture or the mere accusation, and guilt was determined in advance. As one Russian official told a prisoner, “The question of your guilt is decided by the fact of your arrest.”

The threads were spun by Stalin himself, and the intended victims were not just the doctors but all the Jews of Russia. It was a genuine Purim story complete with a Mordechai, a couple of Hamans, and even an “Esther.”

While several books have been written on the Doctor's Plot, they are all incomplete and flawed, partly because the authors did not have access to enough information and partly because there are aspects of it on which there is no information. The most complete account appears to be that of Jonathan Brent and Vladimir Naumov, an American and a Russian, who were given access to almost all the KGB files on the matter, including many original documents which had not been seen by anyone for fifty years. In 2003 they published a book on the Doctor's Plot based on this information and our account here is based primarily on their book.

And it was in the dark days of Stalin, he was Stalin who reigned over all of Russia, from Baku to Yakutsk, many states and provinces. In the early days of his reign, in the 1930's, he carried out purges in which millions of people were killed. Now, in the 1950's, he was about to execute a repeat of those horrible purges.

THE FIRST THREAD: TIMASHUK'S LETTER

Andrei Zhdanov was a powerful member of Stalin's Politburo. He was considered by many to be the second most powerful man in Russia. He was

the architect of Soviet postwar ideology and cultural policy, and he was the one whom Stalin assigned to present Soviet ideology at various international conferences. Also, his son Yuri married Stalin's daughter.

In July 1948, Zhdanov, who suffered from heart disease, went to Valdai, a health resort for the Soviet political elite northwest of Moscow. While he was there, he suffered some sort of “heart attack.” The exact nature of this attack was later to become a major issue. An EKG was taken by Dr. Sophia Karpai, a Jew. Her diagnosis was that he had an intraventricular blockage that may have been caused by a heart attack (myocardial infarct). Accordingly, the doctors treating Zhdanov ordered that he have absolute bed rest.

On August 7, Dr. Karpai was “sent on vacation.” After this time the doctors relaxed their treatment of Zhdanov and he was allowed to get out of bed, walk around in the park, go to movies, etc. On August 28, Dr. Lydia Timashuk, manager of the electrocardiograph unit at the Kremlin hospital, was called to Valdai to take an EKG of Zhdanov, the results of which, she claimed, showed that Zhdanov had actually suffered a heart attack (myocardial infarct), and she objected to the doctors' relaxation of the requirement of strict bed rest.

The next day Zhdanov suffered another attack. Timashuk was called back but told not to take an EKG until the next day. She then wrote a letter to Lt. General Nikolai Vlasik, head of the Kremlin Bodyguards, accusing the doctors of neglecting the treatment of Zhdanov, who, she said, should not have been allowed to leave his bed and walk around freely since he had suffered a heart attack. Such mistreatment, she concluded, could lead to the patient's death. Two days later, on August 31, Zhdanov died.

Timashuk's letter, which was delivered to Vlasik and shown to Stalin, was the first piece in the puzzle



that was to become the Doctor's Plot. Timashuk herself has been accused by some of being an anti-Semite. But at this point the issue does not appear to have been anti-Semitism since none of the doctors treating Zhdanov were Jewish. The only Jewish doctor involved was Dr. Sophia Karpai, the EKG technician. She was not directly involved in Zhdanov's treatment, and she was sent away from Valdai on August 7. It was later discovered that Timashuk was an agent of the MGB (the KGB of that time) and was possibly just informing on those doctors that she believed were negligent in the treatment of an important government official.

One of the mysteries of the Doctor's Plot is that while Timashuk's allegation later became central to the government's case against the doctors, in 1948 Stalin took no action on her letter. He just sent it "to the archives." Timashuk herself was dismissed from her position and transferred to another hospital.

Why was no action taken on her letter? What was really going on here? Brent and Naumov connect this with an incident that took place a few months earlier. A Soviet scientist named Lysenko had been promoting a

theory of wheat farming, which, he claimed, would yield a tremendous wheat production for Russia and alleviate their recurrent shortages. Russian scientists considered the theory nonsense and it was found that much of his data was faked. But Stalin liked the theory, so it was dangerous to speak against it. Most of the Russian scientists who did oppose it were dismissed from their positions and sent to the gulag. At a certain conference Zhdanov's son Yuri spoke against it and this angered Stalin. In April 1948 Stalin said at a meeting at which Zhdanov was present that those responsible for this provocation should be punished in "exemplary fashion." He held Zhdanov – the father – responsible. "It was necessary to question the father and not the children," Stalin said at the conclusion of the meeting. Zhdanov's was now a marked man. His trip to Valdai was actually a banishment: Stalin told him to go there "to improve his health." His attack in July followed a phone call in which he was apparently informed that his position had been taken over by Malenkov.

While Stalin gave no orders for Zhdanov's death, his intention was clear. He almost never issued a direct

order. Rather he would approve or have others approve orders issued by others. In his system, loyalty and intuitive knowledge of his wishes counted for more than any other quality. Loyalty to Stalin meant knowing Stalin's enemies and what to do about them. This system was known as "vigilance." Thus, Brent and Naumov suggest that the doctors at Valdai knew that Stalin wanted Zhdanov dead and understood that they should let him die. As Dr. P. I. Yegorov, the head doctor treating Zhdanov, said, "A heavy job has fallen to us...the fate of Zhdanov is predetermined."

The date of August 7 was the turning point in carrying out the "heavy job." On that day a letter written by Yuri Zhdanov, in which he recanted on his criticism of Lysenko, was printed in Pravda. This was the first mention in public of the rift between Stalin and Zhdanov and was the signal to the doctors that Zhdanov had fallen out of favor with Stalin. They knew what they had to do. After August 7, they allowed Zhdanov to walk around freely, which was extremely dangerous for him. The nursing care became sloppy. His personal physician went fishing. Dr. Karpai was sent away from Valdai on August 7 so no EKGs were taken. The official medical record was manipulated so that Zhdanov's eventual death would appear sudden and unexpected.

This may be why Dr. Karpai was sent away on that day. She was Jewish and she was not part of their conspiracy. She knew too much about Zhdanov's condition and would not acquiesce to their neglect of the patient.

As Dr. Yakov Rapoport said, "The Doctor's Plot...defies common sense." We must ask how it was that Timashuk's letter which was discarded in its time, later became the foundation of the Doctor's Plot?

(To be continued.)

THE GAON RAV YOSEF ELIYAHU HENKIN Z”L

From Shemen Sasson Meichaveirecha

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER ZUSHE KOHN



Rav Henkin was born in White Russia in 5640 (1879-1880), to his father, the *gaon* Rav Eliezer Klonimus z”l. He learnt under the *gaon* Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer z”l, in Slutzk, and under the *gaonim*, Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz z”l and Rav Yechiel Michel Epshtien z”l. As a young man, Rav Henkin served as *rav* of Sokolov, Smalin, Kulashi and Oni, respectively, (the latter two are located in Gruzia).

In 5682 (1922-22), the *gaon* moved to New York, where he served as *rav* of *Anshei Shtutzin*, and where he founded *Ezras Torah*, an organization that assists Torah student immigrants from Europe.

The *gaon* was a man of very unique character, combining brilliance, halachic expertise, and the pursuit of kindness and peace all in one. At the same time, he was a great warrior when it came to defending and upholding the Torah. He brilliance and erudition

were particularly pronounced with regard to the laws of divorce and the freeing of *agunos*. Together, these qualities made Rav Henkin one of the most sought after halachic authorities of the generation. His halachic responsa are collected in *Even Mikeer Tiz’ak*, and in his *Pirushei Eivra, Kisvei*



Rav Henkin, and other works.

Rav Henkin passed away on 13 Menachem Av, 5733 (August 11, 1973), at the age of ninety-three.

LAG LA’OMER? OR LAG BA’OMER

Rav Henkin had a very friendly relationship with Lubavitch of

America. Reb Avraham Shmuel Levin of Tel Aviv, the *gaon*’s personal assistant from 5729 (1968-69) to 5732 (1971-72), related the following to me:

1. “Rav Henkin once asked me: why does everyone — including those who say *La’omer* (as in *Nusach Sefard*), with a *Lamed* when they

count the *Omer* — and the holy books too, refer to the Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai’s *Yom Hillula* — as *Lag Ba’omer*, with a *Beis*? I decided to ask the Rebbe this question, and he answered me immediately: “It is brought in the works of Polish Chassidus that ‘*Lag Ba’omer*’ has the numerical value of ‘*Moshe*,’ an

allusion to the fact that Rashbi was a spark of the soul of Moses, and — in the words of the *Eimek HaMelech*, and others — ‘became elevated to the same light that Moshe received when he ascended [to Heaven] to receive the second Tablets.’ I told Rav Henkin the Rebbe’s answer, and he enjoyed it immensely. (The

answer appears in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 7, p. 337).

2. “Rav Henkin issued a halachic ruling against the custom some congregations have of making *kiddush* before the blowing of the *shofar*. As a result of the sharply worded ruling, some yeshivas that practiced this custom became opposed to the *gaon*. This caused the *gaon* great distress. One day, he asked me what the Chabad custom was with regard to making *kiddush* before *shofar* blowing. I said we do not make *Kiddush* and we do not eat before the *shofar* blasts — it is unheard of in Lubavitch. I then thanked him for not being afraid to issue his halachic ruling. He was very pleased with my answer, and he said he was overjoyed that in Lubavitch he had a *tanna* who supported his view, and that this gave him the courage to withstand the pressures.

LISTENS TO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REBBE’S TALKS

3. “One day, the *gaon* called me in and asked me why chassidim don’t say *Tachnun* on a *tzaddik’s yahrtzeit*. He was clearly unhappy with this custom. I told him that Lubavitch does say *Tachnun* on a *tzaddik’s Yom Hillula*, and I repeated

I repeated for the gaon what the Rebbe said about this in the name of the Rebbe Rayatz: ‘Can there be a more auspicious day for the reciting of Tachnun than the Yom Hillula of a tzaddik!?’

for him what the Rebbe said about this in the name of the Rebbe Rayatz: ‘Can there be a more auspicious day for the reciting of *Tachnun* than the *Yom Hillula* of a *tzaddik!*?’ Rav Henkin was extremely pleased when he heard this, and he had high praise for it.

4. “Every *Motzaei Shabbos*, Rav Henkin would listen with great interest to Rav Yosef Weinberg’s radio program, where the latter highlighted some of the main points of the Rebbe’s talk at the *Shabbos farbrengen*. The *gaon* was deeply

impressed by the depth of the Rebbe’s talks on *nigleh*, and very inspired by the Rebbe’s words of Chassidus.”

A portion of the Rebbe’s letters to the *gaon* appears in *Igros Kodesh*. For example, in response to the *gaon’s* questions concerning the reciting of *Kaddish*, the Rebbe sent him a letter, on 16 Kislev, 5717 (November 20, 1956), which addressed the subject from both a halachic and kabalistic perspective. At the end of the letter, the Rebbe blesses Rav Henkin with success “in your holy work of assisting the Torah’ and its torchbearers.” In a letter dated 28 Tishrei, 5720 (October 30, 1959), the Rebbe confirms his receipt of the *gaon’s* request for a blessing, and notifies him that he will mention him, and the others whose names the *gaon* mentioned in his request, at the Rebbe Rayatz’s holy gravesite. The Rebbe also commends the *gaon* for his efforts at supporting Torah scholars, citing the Alter Rebbe’s teaching concerning the greatness of those about whom it is written, “*And its supporters are praiseworthy.*”

NOTES:

1 Rav Henkin was the head of “Ezras Torah,” lit., [“Assistance of Torah”].

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ASKING A CHILD

BY RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK FREIMAN, SHLIACH IN ZICHRON YAAKOV

On Sunday, 4 Adar I of this year, I got a phone call from Dovid, who davens in the Chabad shul in Zichron Yaakov. He told me that the son of the neighbors, Avrohom Yeshaya ben Lillian, was taken the day before to the hospital after suffering from stomach pains for a few days. The doctors said, had they come one hour later, it would have been too late. The boy had appendicitis and the toxins had spread throughout his body. He was taken immediately to the operating room.

The people of the community in Zichron Yaakov were asked to daven for him, since the doctors said his life was in danger. I immediately wrote a *pidyon nefesh* to the Rebbe on the boy's behalf and then put it into



Rabbi Freiman with Zichron Yaakov in the background

a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. It turned out to be volume 25 with letters the Rebbe wrote about forty years ago.

The letter I opened to was to an Israeli soldier in which the Rebbe wrote that since he was at war and in danger, he had to be particular about the mitzva of t'fillin, because this mitzva protects a person.

When I saw this answer, I figured that the boy's t'fillin must need checking. I called Dovid and asked him to bring me the t'fillin to be checked. A few minutes later, he brought me the t'fillin and some of the mezuzos in the house. I gave the t'fillin in to be checked by Rabbi G.

At eleven o'clock that night, the sofer called me and said that the mezuzos were kosher but the t'fillin shel yad had a problem. There was a question about a letter in the last word, and under these circumstances, the halacha is that a child has to be consulted to identify the letter.

I went up to the family's home and told them what the sofer had said, and how a child who knows the Alef-Beis but doesn't yet know how to read had to be shown the parsha.

A child happened to be up at that late hour and he was the perfect person for the job. I took him along with one of his brothers to Rabbi G.'s house and Rabbi G. showed him some letters in the parsha and the child knew them all. When the sofer showed the child the last word, "ha'Aretz," where the question was whether the letter was a Reish or a



Vav, the child said it was a Vav. This meant that the t'fillin were pasul from day one, and the sick boy had never fulfilled the mitzva of t'fillin since his bar mitzva!

Since the problem was in the last word, the sofer was able to fix it, and that very night, the t'fillin were made kosher.

When the mother said that it was nighttime when you can't put on t'fillin anyway, I told her that once, people came to the Rebbe for a bracha for someone who was sick and the Rebbe said his t'fillin should be checked. The sick person was abroad and his t'fillin were in Eretz Yisroel but the Rebbe said that the very fact that he possessed kosher t'fillin would protect him (though naturally, he was supposed to put them on too). I said the same was true here, that since her son's t'fillin were fixed, even though it was night, it would certainly help him, as the Rebbe had written.

Indeed, the boy began to recover, and on Thursday, he put his kosher t'fillin on for the very first time. The doctors said his recovery was miraculous, and the family is planning a seudas hoda'aa.

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