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BEIS MOSHIACH

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G-D'S WISDOM EVEN IN OUR WORLD

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



SHABBOS PARSHAS BA'MIDBAR; 29 IYAR, 5749

1. There are a number of factors which connect the present Shabbos to “the season of the giving of our Torah” that we will celebrate in the coming week:

a. It is the Shabbos on which the month of Sivan is blessed. Sivan is the “third month” and is associated with the Torah, “a threefold light” given to a “threefold people.”

b. It is also the Shabbos which precedes the holiday of Shavuos. Since all the days of the coming week are blessed from the previous Shabbos, it follows that this Shabbos contains a specific blessing associated with the holiday of Shavuos.

c. Shabbos falls directly before Rosh Chodesh, the day associated the essential preparatory step for the giving of the Torah. The Torah relates that on Rosh Chodesh, the Jews camped before Mount Sinai “as one man, with one heart.” The Midrash relates:

The Holy One, Blessed be He, declared: “Since Israel [demonstrated] hatred for division and love for peace..., it is time for Me to give them My Torah.”

Accordingly, the primary preparatory steps necessary for the

receiving of the Torah are an increase in ahavas Yisroel and achdus Yisroel (the love and unity of the Jewish people).

Also, it is self-understood that in preparation for the receiving of the Torah anew, we should increase our study of Torah, both Nigleh and P'nimius HaTorah. In particular, guidelines regarding this increase in Torah can be taken from the sixth chapter of Pirkei Avos, the chapter customarily studied on this Sabbath.

In general, the custom of studying Pirkei Avos on the Shabbasos between Pesach and Shavuos is to teach “the manner of Torah study and how to behave with it after one has studied.” With that intent, the Rabbis added another chapter, a collection of Braisos to be studied on the sixth Shabbos. These Braisos all focus on the study of Torah or the rewards given for its study. Therefore, it is called Kinyan Torah, “the acquisition of Torah.”

There is a deeper lesson to be learned from the fact that on the first five Shabbasos, we study Mishnayos and on the Shabbos before Shavuos, we study a collection of Braisos, which are on a lower level than Mishnayos.[103] As will be explained, the final preparations for receiving the

Torah are dependant on the study of the Braisa.

The latter concept can be explained as follows: There are two aspects to the giving of the Torah. On one hand, Torah is G-d's “hidden treasure,” His will and His wisdom which existed before creation. Conversely, the Torah was given within the context of our material world. “It descended... from level to level in the downward progression of spiritual worlds until it enclotted itself in physical things and entities of our world.”

In particular, this concept is expressed in the contrast between the giving of the Torah by G-d and the receiving of the Torah by man. G-d's wisdom is drawn down to the extent that it can be perceived and comprehended by human intelligence in a manner where the person's intellect grasps and encompasses the Torah he is studying. The person, his thought, and the subject matter he is studying become fused in perfect unity. Furthermore, since “study is great because it brings to deed,” the effects of the giving of the Torah are also apparent in our deeds,” both those directly connected with the performance of the mitzvos and those carried out in the spirit of “All your deeds shall be for the sake of heaven,”

and “Know Him in all your ways.”

Even though the Torah undergoes such a tremendous descent, it remains essentially unchanged. Even in our world, it is G-d’s wisdom. Thus, it can bring about the refinement and the elevation of our world, drawing down the revelation of the giving of the Torah within it.

An allusion to this concept is found in the opening words of the sixth chapter of Pirkei Avos: “The Sages taught [this chapter] in the language of the Mishna:,” i.e., the chapter is a collection of Braisos, however, the manner of expression resembles the Mishna until the level of the Braisos is almost equivalent to that of the Mishna.

To explain the above: Pirkei Avos begins by relating the chain of tradition through which the Torah was transmitted from generation to generation. This process also reflects a chain of descent as obvious from the continuation of that Mishna which states, “Make a fence around the Torah.” Why are fences necessary? Because the people’s spiritual level had descended and they needed new safeguards to prevent them from transgressing Torah law.

Nevertheless, the safeguards that the Sages instituted cannot be considered as additions to the Torah. They are also a part of the Torah which “Moshe received at Sinai” as our Sages declared: “Every new concept which is brought out by an experienced sage was given to Moshe at Sinai.” Similarly, the Braisos of the sixth chapter of Avos, though on the surface on a lower level than the Mishna – reflecting the extension of the Torah to lower levels, “outside” the sphere of Torah – are taught in a manner which makes them “almost equivalent to the Mishna.”

The first teaching of the sixth chapter of Avos continues: “Whoever occupies himself with [the study of] the Torah for its own sake merits many things” and continues to list various qualities and attributes that such study

will bring. As mentioned above, this chapter is intended to arouse a person’s desire to study and acquire Torah. By promising all these qualities, the sages desired to motivate people to involve themselves in Torah study. Since people are different and what motivates one may not necessarily motivate another, the Braisa mentions a variety of different qualities and attributes so that every Jew, whatever his goals may be, will have a reason to apply himself to Torah study.

This also relates to the concept explained above: On one hand, it reflects a descent for the Torah, its teachings being lowered to the level of

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people who have to be motivated to study it. On the other hand, even after descending to that level, the Torah retains its ultimate perfection to the extent that it can bring these people the full range of benefits mentioned in the Braisa.[104]

This line of thought is completed by the final Braisa of the chapter which states:

All that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in His world, He created solely for His glory as it is stated, “All that is called by My name, indeed, it is for My glory that I have created it, formed it, and made it,” and it says,

“The L-rd shall reign forever and ever.”

This Braisa teaches how each and every creation was brought into being to express G-d’s glory – “and there is no glory other than Torah.” The ultimate expression of this glory will be in the Messianic age. However, in microcosm, there was already a revelation of this nature at the time the Torah was given.

As is customary, when completing the study of a Torah text, we connect the conclusion of the text to its opening statements. Similarly, Pirkei Avos begins with the statement “Moshe received the Torah on [Mount] Sinai.” This statement also brings out the concept that the Torah effects all the aspects of our life, the material as well as the spiritual. Moshe was both the Torah leader of the Jews, the Nasi, and also, their king, the one who is responsible for their material well-being. Therefore, it was in his merit that the manna descended.[105] When G-d wanted to grant the Jews meat, it also had to come through Moshe’s influence. Though Moshe complained, “From where will I have meat?”, i.e., his spiritual level was too high to descend to such material things, G-d told him, “Collect seventy men... and I will separate from the spirit which is upon you and place it upon them;” the influence came from Moshe’s spirit.

Pirkei Avos explains that Moshe “passed on” the Torah to Yehoshua. Though Moshe also taught Elazar, Pinchas, the Elders, and the entire Jewish people, Yehoshua was the fundamental recipient of Moshe’s teachings. Thus, our Sages declared “Moshe’s face was like the sun, Yehoshua’s face was like the moon,” i.e., Moshe’s full light was reflected in Yehoshua. Therefore, Yehoshua also had both qualities of Nasi and king.

This phenomenon was not repeated in the generations that followed, however, it will be revealed again in the person of the Moshiach. He will be the teacher of the Jews and their king. In these three personalities, Moshe,

Yehoshua, and Moshiach, their Torah knowledge and leadership permeated through their entire beings to the extent that even their leadership of the Jews' material affairs came through Torah.

This is also the concept expressed by the Braisos of the sixth chapter of Avos, that the Torah is the source of all influence in the world, thus revealing how, "All that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in His world, He created solely for His glory."

2. There is another aspect which is necessary in order to receive the Torah, the declaration "Naaseh V'Nishma – We will do and we will listen." The Jew's made this declaration before the giving of the Torah, on the fifth of Sivan. Similarly, each year, in preparation for receiving the Torah anew on Shavuos, the Jews must reaffirm their commitment of Naaseh V'Nishma. Not only did the Jews promise both to "do" and "listen," they promised to "do" first, i.e., they gave G-d an unbounded commitment, agreeing to accept His will regardless of what He commands. This reflects an acceptance not only of G-d's will, but an all-compassing commitment to G-d, Himself, the Master of the will.

This aspect of unbounded commitment is also reflected in the custom of reading Parshas BaMidbar before the giving of the Torah. Our Sages explained that the Torah was given in a desert to teach us that to be given the Torah, a person must make himself like a desert over whom everyone treads. The fundamental quality necessary for a person to be prepared to receive the Torah is bittul, self-nullification. In this context, we can see a positive dimension of our Sages' description of a desert as "a place where man does not dwell," i.e., it reflects a level of bittul above the limits of human intellect, the very source of the Torah.

The lesson derived from the chapter Kinyan Torah, the importance of bringing Torah down within the

context of our lives in the material world, also relates to the service of Naaseh V'Nishma. Within the realm of Torah study itself, there is a concept of Naaseh V'Nishma which is reflected in the study of Torah law. In regard to the abstract study of Torah law, the study of halacha represents a descent. Nevertheless, it is described as "the crown of Torah," which reveals G-d's will. Though a person may derive more pleasure from the study of other aspects of Torah, because of his commitment of complete bittul, he will

The Baal Shem Tov interpreted the word "shivisi" in the verse, "I placed (shivisi) G-d before me at all times" to mean "It is equal for me." Since G-d is constantly before me, all situations are equal. "Whenever anything happens, one will say to himself, 'It is from G-d.'"

devote himself to the study of halacha for it is that realm of study that G-d's will is revealed.

3. The above is also connected to today's portion of the text of halacha which is studied on a daily basis, the Rambam's Mishneh Torah.[106] Today's portion of study deals with the delegation of the duties associated with the services in the Beis HaMikdash. The Rambam states that these duties were delegated by lot. Why were these tasks delegated in this fashion? The

Rambam explains that this practice was a later institution, ordained by the Rabbis.

Originally, whoever wanted to remove the ashes from the altar would be allowed to do so. If there were many, they would run, ascending the ramp to the altar. Whoever reached within four cubits of the altar first would merit it... Once, it occurred that two were even while running up the ramp, one pushed the other. Since the court saw that the situation was becoming dangerous, they ordained that the selection of the person to remove the ashes would be done by lot.

Though originally, the division was not made by lot, once the Rabbis instituted this practice, it became Torah law. Even when there was no danger: i.e., a priestly watch with few members or for the third lottery – which selected those to offer the incense offering – a lottery was required.[107]

There is a parallel to this in our spiritual service: A lottery refers to a high spiritual level for a person has no choice in the matter at all. He leaves everything up to G-d. Therefore, one of the central aspects of the Yom Kippur service was the casting of lots to designate the goats to be sacrificed to G-d and to be sent to Azazel. Similarly, the Purim[108] miracle which expressed the Jews' ultimate self-sacrifice centered around the casting of lots.[109]

Thus, casting lots for the service in the Beis HaMikdash implies that a person is willing to leave the determination of the service appropriate for him to perform to G-d. This is possible because a person has reached a high spiritual level.

In this context, the Baal Shem Tov interpreted the word shivisi in the verse, "I placed (shivisi) G-d in front of me at all times" to mean "It is equal for me." Since G-d is constantly before me, all situations are equal. "Whenever anything happens, one will say to

himself, 'It's from G-d.' Therefore, even if one might not think it desirable... since his intention is for G-d's sake, from his side there is no difference." Since the person gives himself over to fulfilling G-d's will, he is willing to perform any and every service. Whichever service will come his way – and he is open to all types of services, letting the decision come by Hashgacha Pratis (Divine Providence) in a manner similar to casting lots – he is willing to perform.

Thus, we can understand the parallel to the service in the Beis HaMikdash mentioned above: Each Jew, by nature, desires to run to fulfill G-d's will ("running up the ramp to the altar"). He does not proceed slowly, but runs. However, at present, Torah law teaches that a person's own desires should not determine which service he is to perform. Rather, he should leave this to G-d's will.

To conclude with practical directives for action:

a. Since today is the day directly preceding the first of Sivan, the day on which the Jews camped before Mount Sinai in perfect unity in preparation to receive the Torah, we should increase

our service in ahavas Yisroel. Also we must develop bittul, total commitment, which like Naaseh V'Nishma is a necessary preparation to receive the Torah, and, of course, we should increase our Torah study itself.

b. We must increase our service in "raising up many students." This is particularly relevant in the summer months when the secular schools are on vacation and it is possible to have them enrolled in summer camps in a Torah environment. Efforts must be made to insure that all Jewish children are enrolled in Torah camps in the summer months.

May these activities prepare us to receive the Torah anew "with happiness and in a way that it is internalized," as the Previous Rebbe would wish. And may we receive the Torah in a manner – as Pirkei Avos concludes – "G-d will rule forever," which will be realized with the coming of the Messianic redemption.[110]

NOTES:

103. This is implied by the very name, Braisa, which is related to the word m'bara, "outside," i.e., teachings that were related outside the study sessions of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi.

104. This Braisa can be seen as a continuation of the concept explained at the conclusion of

Chapter 5, "Learn it and learn it [the Torah], for everything is in it." That Mishna speaks of the potentials that are contained within the Torah. Our Braisa speaks of the advantages that a person can derive from Torah study, teaching him that through Torah study, he can acquire "many things."

105. Even the well and the clouds of glory, which our Sages associate with Miriam and Aharon respectively, were also connected with Moshe. The fact that when Miriam and Aharon died, these miracles returned in Moshe's merit reveals that even originally, they were dependent on his influence.

106. The study of the Mishneh Torah parallels the declaration Naaseh V'Nishma, for the Rambam (in contrast to the Alter Rebbe in his Shulchan Aruch) states the halacha alone without explaining its underlying principles.

107. It is likely that only a small number of people were eligible for the latter lottery since it was restricted to those who never offered an incense offering before.

108. The Rabbis have noted the connection between the two holidays, stating that the name, Yom Kippurim, can be translated to mean, "a day like Purim."

109. Thus, we see that many Sages would follow a practice that resembles the casting of lots to help them decide questions regarding their future. They would take a Chumash or another holy text and open it at random and find an answer to their question based on the passage to which the text was opened.

110. This is particularly true since the coming year, 5750, is a unique year. Its letters are an acrostic for the words, "It will be a year of miracles."

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BY BORUCH MERKUR

At a farbrengen in 770, on Yud Shvat 5735, the mathematician Professor Pesach (Paul) Rosenbloom a”h,* who was niftar just this Lag B’Omer, speaks with the Rebbe one-on-one. The Rebbe had given a manuscript on mathematics to the professor for him to review.

To lend itself to greater objectivity, the Rebbe had left the authorship anonymous. Indeed, the author was none other than the Rebbe’s younger brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib a”h** (whose yahrtzeit was observed on the 13th of Iyar). The Rebbe reveals this fact in the following dialogue, wherein Professor Rosenbloom reports back to the Rebbe regarding the manuscript.

“It has material which is worth publishing,” the professor offers. “[Though] it needs some revision. It needs an introduction. It needs references. The manuscript is not complete...”

“But he [the author] is deceased,” explains the Rebbe. Thus, the manuscript cannot be completed by its author. “That means,” the Rebbe continues, “that if something can be done by someone else—”

“Yes, but then someone like myself would have to do it, I would suppose.”

“If there’s someone who will do it, as a paid job, I’ll be very glad to compensate someone capable to complete it, and then you’ll maybe supervise his work.”

At this point Professor Rosenbloom pauses, tries to respond, but fails to find words. Perhaps he is considering what would be involved were he to take on the entire project himself. The Rebbe anticipates this concern.

“I don’t know if you have time enough, and more so, your time is valuable, but if you can find someone – and I will gladly pay him, but you will only supervise him – then I will be very glad to do so on a priority basis.”

Changing the topic slightly, perhaps probing into what exactly the job would entail, Professor Rosenbloom asks, “This is all you have from him?”

“Yes.”

“I see. Because he mentions some other things—”

“Yes, but that is all, nothing else, and he died ten years ago...”

“Well then,” Professor Rosenbloom says hesitatingly, touching his forehead, “I can do it myself, because I’ve [already] done some work in this report. I [had] thought it might be of some use to him [not knowing that he is deceased...].”

“But it will be of use to me,” says the Rebbe encouragingly. Then the Rebbe drops the bomb.

“I was not willing to tell you who is the author, [so as] not to influence you, but it is written by my brother.”

“I see.”

*See article that follows for more on Professor Rosenbloom.

**The paper was later published in the *Journal of Approximation Theory* under the title “Location of Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors of Complex Matrices.”

"I had a brother. He was younger than I am, and he died ten years ago, and that is the only thing left of him."

"I see. Evidently he had to work independently and he didn't have any access to a library."

"No."

"That was obvious."

"He was an independent character," the Rebbe reveals. "He was not willing to look at anything, [choosing instead] to write all on his own. And only after that he looked in a reference [to determine] if someone has explained the same thing. He was very jealous [zealous?] about his independence. And because of that, the references are the end of it."

"But I'll be very eager, very happy if it can be printed. And if something must be done to complete it, I'll be very glad to pay someone for his time, if you'll supervise him to know that it is done [properly]."

"Well, I could do it myself," says the professor, reaffirming his decision, now fully appreciating the Rebbe's personal interest in the project.

"You have time enough?" the Rebbe asks.

"I would put in the time."

[Smiling] "May G-d Alm-ghty bless you. If so, I'll give you an additional thanks [i.e., for not only supervising but taking on the entire job personally – and on a volunteer basis?]. Thank you very much. Lchaim v'livracha."

Professor Rosenbloom says a hearty l'chaim.

* * *

The Rebbe concealed the authorship of the work from Professor Rosenbloom so as not to bias the professor's report, but it seems that there was an additional motivation. The Rebbe apparently didn't want to bias the professor's decision to take on the entire project of preparing the material for publication himself, suggesting instead that it be done by someone else and only supervised by Professor Rosenbloom. In fact, even after the professor agreed to take on the work himself, the Rebbe provided him with an opportunity to back out, suggesting again that he only supervise the project. And still, after the professor reiterates his decision, the Rebbe expresses his concern for the professor's valuable time, asking if he can manage the additional burden.

The Rebbe requests something unique of each of us individually. Sometimes the Rebbe comes outright and asks and even demands us to act, to take on a certain responsibility. Sometimes the Rebbe is more subtle, sufficing with a hint or suggestion. How do we react when faced with this opportunity? How do we respond when we are charged with our mission?

Do we hesitate and start making calculations? Do we have the tendency to feel that there might be "someone like myself" who is equally or better equipped to take on the challenge, maybe deferring to someone else out of humility, or maybe out of consideration for other important projects that demand our attention – "one who is occupied with a mitzva is exempt from taking on a [second] mitzva"? Or are we quick to jump at the opportunity to use our unique, individual gifts, and capacities on the Rebbe's shlichus?

If the Rebbe presents this task to me, I can be confident that I have the ability to see it through in its entirety. If I am already overburdened, surely the Rebbe is fully aware of that fact and had taken that into consideration before approaching me. The Rebbe gives us the ability to continually add



in holiness, bringing the infinite into the finite limitations of nature (time and space), defying archaic notions of logic and mathematics. Moreover, if the Rebbe asks something of us, it is an opportunity to connect to the Rebbe in the most personal way, knowing that the Rebbe certainly doesn't ask out of a whim ch"v; the shlichus, rather, bears great personal relevance to the Rebbe ("But it will be of use to me").

Interestingly, the Rebbe only reveals that his brother authored the work after Professor Rosenbloom agrees to take on the project personally. It may well be that the unique significance of our own particular shlichus will eventually become apparent to us. The Rebbe might choose to share his exact reasons in asking for specific things, why these things are so pertinent, etc. Indeed, being privy to this kind of information is like our pay, our reward, an extra incentive. But we have to be prepared to take on the job regardless, even – and especially – on a volunteer basis, trusting that the merest hint from the Rebbe is enough to validate our time, etc., and that the greatest reward – the only reward – is to connect to the Rebbe by fulfilling his directives and suggestions in simple faith and devotion.

The Rebbe MH"M is a leader who brings out the best in us, charging each of us with a unique mission designed to bring out our unique capabilities (whether we excel in mathematics, business, teaching, etc.), all ultimately for the sake of perfecting the world for the true and complete Redemption. How much more so that the Rebbe is exact in defining the unique mission or our entire generation. With so much at stake, the Rebbe does not suffice with subtle hints, leaving it to our better judgment. The Rebbe spells our mission out in no uncertain terms: *The only remaining shlichus is to receive Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actuality!* The Rebbe sees the incredible *maala* (virtue) of our generation - that it is specifically we who are gifted with the unique ability to bring the true and complete Redemption. May it happen now!

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WHAT YOU NEED AND WHAT YOU ARE NEEDED FOR

BY ELIYAHU AND MALKA TOUGER
SICHOS IN ENGLISH

Besides being a mathematical genius, Prof. Paul Rosenbloom had a vibrant Jewish heart, and a sincere desire for spiritual growth. His discussions with the new faculty member soon went far beyond mathematics, and he established a close relationship with the Feller family and a growing interest in Judaism and Chassidism.

In 1963, Prof. Rosenbloom was called to Brooklyn College for consultation. When he told Rabbi Feller about the upcoming trip, Rabbi Feller suggested that he visit the Rebbe for yechidus.

“Why would the Rebbe want to spend time with me?” Prof. Rosenbloom asked.

Rabbi Feller assured him that the Rebbe would find subjects which would interest both of them, and arranged an appointment.

The meeting was scheduled for 11 PM. Prof. Rosenbloom realized that the Rebbe would be seeing many people before and after him. Feeling that the area in which he shared the greatest common interest with the Rebbe was chinuch (education), and to save the Rebbe time, he wrote some of his ideas down and gave them to one of the Rebbe’s secretaries.

When he gave him the note, Prof. Rosenbloom told the secretary the general thrust of his thinking – that the programs of limudei kodesh (Torah studies) and limudei

chol (secular studies) in Jewish day schools should be integrated.

“There must be a distinction between the holy and the mundane,” the secretary responded. “A child must know what is sacred and what is not.”

When speaking to the Rebbe, however, Prof. Rosenbloom received a different picture. “Children should be taught to

“If a person thinks of secular wisdom as being unrelated to the Torah, he does not understand the Torah, nor does he truly understand the secular subject he is studying.”

appreciate that everything is connected with the Torah,” the Rebbe told him. “When they perform an experiment in a science lab, they should know that it is G-d’s creative power that is causing the chemical reactions they observe.

“There are some,” the Rebbe continued, “who have two sets of

bookshelves, one for s’farim [sacred texts] and another for secular books. That is the wrong approach. If a person thinks of secular wisdom as being unrelated to the Torah, he does not understand the Torah, nor does he truly understand the secular subject he is studying.”

This yechidus spurred Prof. Rosenbloom to continue his progress in Jewish observance and deepen his connection with Lubavitch. Several years later, when he moved to New York to accept the mathematics chair at Columbia University, Prof. Rosenbloom was an observant Jew with a strong connection to the Rebbe. At first, he rented an apartment close to the university, but he and his family felt the lack of Jewish community there, and he asked the Rebbe if they should move to Crown Heights.

“Absolutely not,” the Rebbe answered. “You should live near the university. A Jewish professor on campus should see that he has a colleague who wears a yarmulke; a Jewish student should see a young boy who walks proudly with his tzitzis hanging out.”

Although the Rebbe wanted Prof. Rosenbloom to serve as an example of Jewish practice, he made it clear that this was not to be done at the expense of his professional advancement. On the contrary, he urged Prof.

Rosenbloom to forge ahead with his research. At one point, he invited him to bring a new mathematics paper to every farbrengen he attended.

Prof. Rosenbloom faithfully adhered to this directive. On Yud-Tes Kislev, Purim, and other occasions when some people chose to offer presents to the Rebbe, Prof. Rosenbloom would present him with a mathematics paper.

Once he brought a copy of a paper that had been published in a major journal. The Rebbe gave it a quick perusal and asked if he had not seen the paper before. The professor directed the Rebbe's attention to a footnote on the first page. There it stated that the preliminary draft had been presented to the Lubavitcher Rebbe at a Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen.

Prof. Rosenbloom shared a birthday with the Rebbe, Yud-Alef Nissan. Year after year, at the farbrengen held on that date, he found a unique way to celebrate together. He would present the Rebbe with a mathematical problem which he had devised in the course of weeks of work, then wait a few brief moments until the Rebbe responded with its solution.

As their connection developed, the Rebbe began to entrust Prof. Rosenbloom with projects, some in the field of Jewish outreach and some in mathematics. One day, Prof. Rosenbloom received a package from the Rebbe's office containing a mathematics paper written in German and a note from the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Groner. Rabbi Groner stated that the Rebbe would like to know if the professor could find someone who understood German, and who would complete the paper and prepare it for publication.

Prof. Rosenbloom answered that

the language was not a problem; most students of higher mathematics knew enough German to appreciate the paper. The problem was that mathematical research was very individualized, and it would be necessary to find someone with an expertise in the particular field which the paper addressed.

Rabbi Groner relayed the professor's answer to the Rebbe, who replied by asking the professor to prepare a summary of the paper so that it could be presented to another person.

As Professor Rosenbloom began writing the summary, he realized that it would be difficult to find someone to complete the paper,

***“For such a person,
the project itself
would have to be the
inspiration.”***

and so he chose instead to offer advice to the author as to how he could complete the research himself. Neither the Rebbe nor Rabbi Groner had revealed the author's identity, and Prof. Rosenbloom had not inquired.

At his next visit to a farbrengen, Prof. Rosenbloom presented his letter of advice to the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked him if he could find someone to complete the research, but the professor answered that it was unlikely. “Any person who would have the knowledge and ability to think creatively needed to complete this paper would most likely want to work on his own research,” he explained. The professor added that he had

prepared the summary in a manner that would allow the author to finish the paper himself. This, he felt, would be the best alternative.

The Rebbe answered that this was impossible because the author was no longer living, and again spoke of finding someone else. “Would money make a difference?” asked the Rebbe, offering to pay a generous fee for the work.

“No,” answered the professor. “For such a person, the project itself would have to be the inspiration.”

“Could you find a graduate student whom you could direct in this work?”

“I'm afraid not,” answered the professor, explaining that the subject was too complex for an ordinary student.

Seeing the Rebbe's sharp interest, however, Prof. Rosenbloom offered to complete the paper himself. Initially, the Rebbe refused, saying he did not want to take him away from his own research. But the professor persisted, sensing that the Rebbe genuinely wanted the paper completed.

Ultimately the Rebbe agreed, and allowed him to undertake the project. He then revealed that it was his own brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib Schneerson, who had begun the paper.

When the project was completed, the Rebbe asked the professor to try to have it published. He requested, however, that it be published under a pseudonym, with no biographical data concerning the author, aside from the fact that he had served as a professor of mathematics at the University of Liverpool.

*From Chapter 1 of To Know
and To Care - Volume 2*



LETTERS TO A SCIENTIST*

PART 5

B.H. 21st of Sivan, 5725
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dr. Velvel Greene
Minneapolis, Minn.

Sholom uBrocho:

You have undoubtedly received my regards through Rabbi Moshe Feller, who had also brought me your regards. I trust you had an enjoyable and inspiring festival of Kabbolas haTorah, and that the inspiration will be with you throughout the year, to animate all your daily activities, inasmuch as the Torah totally encompasses the daily life of the Jew in all its aspects.

I acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of May 9th, also your works on your scientific research. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and trouble in sending me the material. Although the subject matter is entirely beyond my province, I trust that I will be able to glean some general ideas from your writings, and perhaps also some specific ones.

At the risk of not sounding very "scientific" to you, I nevertheless wish to express my hope that you will apply also your research work to good advantage in the service of G-d, in accord with the principle, "Know Him in all thy ways." Indeed, the discoveries in the natural sciences have thrown new light on the wonders of Creation, and the modern trend has consequently been towards the recognition of the unity pervading Nature. In fact, with every advancement in science the underlying unity in the physical world has become more clearly discernable; so much so, that science is now searching for the ideal formula which would comprise all the phenomena

*From the book *Mind of Matter*, edited by Rabbi Joseph Ginsburg, Professor Herman Branover, and Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd, Ph.D. Published by Shamir Books. Available in Judaica stores everywhere.

of the physical world in one comprehensive equation. With a little further insight it can be seen that the unity in Nature is the reflection of true monotheism in its Jewish concept. For, as we Jews conceive of monotheism, it is not merely the belief that there is only One G-d, but that G-d's Unity transcends also the physical world, so that there is only one reality, namely G-d. However, inasmuch as Creation included all the souls, etc., there has been created a multiplicity and diversity in Nature - insofar as the created beings themselves are concerned, without, however, effecting any change in the Creator, as explained at length in Chassidus.

You ask me about my reference to the Rambam and where it contains in substance, though in different terms, the concepts of the conscience and subconsciousness³²² of modern psychology. I had in mind a passage in Hilchos Gerushin, end of ch. 2, in the Rambam's Opus Magnum ("Yad Hachazakah"). The gist of that passage is as follows: There are certain matters in Jewish Law, the performance of which requires free volition, no coercion. However, where the Jewish law requires specific performance, it is permitted to use coercive measures until the reluctant party declares "I am willing", and his performance is valid and considered voluntary. There seems here an obvious contradiction: If it is permitted [to] compel performance, why is it necessary that the person should declare himself "willing?" And if compulsory performance is not valid, what good is it if the person declares himself "willing" under compulsion?

And here comes the essential point of the Rambam's explanation:

Every Jew, regardless of his status and station, is essentially willing to do all that he is commanded to do by our Torah. However, sometimes the Yetzer (Hara) prevails over his better judgment and prevents him from doing what he has to do in accordance with the Torah. When, therefore, Beth Din compels a Jew to do something, it is not with a view to creating in him a new desire, but rather to release him from the compulsion which had paralyzed his desire, thus enabling him to express his true self. Under these circumstances, when he declares "I am willing," it is an authentic declaration.

To put the above in contemporary terminology: The conscious state of a Jew can be affected by external factors to the extent of including states of mind and even behavior which are contrary to his subconscious, which is the Jew's essential nature. When the external pressures are removed, it does not constitute a change or transformation of his essential nature, but, on the contrary, merely the reassertion of his innate and true character.

To a person of your background it is unnecessary to point out that nothing in the above can be construed as confirmation of other aspects of the Freudian theory to the effect that man's psyche is primarily governed by libido, the sex drive, etc. For these ideas are contrary to those of the Torah, whose view is that the human being is essentially good (as in the Rambam, above). The only similarity is in the general idea that human nature is a composite of a substratum and various layers, especially insofar as the Jew is concerned, as above.

I will conclude with the traditional blessing which I have already conveyed to you through Rabbi Moshe Feller - to receive the Torah with joy and inwardness, as a daily experience throughout the year.

With blessing /signature

Please send copies of the Rebbe's letters to:

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

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THE DREAM PARENT

BY ITTY CHAZAN

*To peek into your child's bedroom as he contentedly learns Chitas,
To watch your child reaching the shelf for a Rebbe video,
To see her socially integrating with a bunch of great friends,
Is truly a joyous moment of parenthood.*

This article is for the other moments.

He disguised himself as a beggar, and arrived in tatters and rags to town. He knocked on the first village door, and cried out, "Please, mercy, I haven't eaten in three days!" Through the slightly opened door, a voice bellowed in response. "Beggar, I don't toil all week to waste my money on handouts!

The poor man turned away in pain, hunger evident on his pinched face. He softly knocked on the second village door, and a woman screeched back. "What, don't you know we do not give a single soul a morsel of food? Are you oblivious of our nature, beggar?"

Haggard, weak and hungry, the pauper knocked on each village home. The responses were swift, selfish, and cruel. "Get out!" "Find a job!" were amongst the dagger sharp cutting remarks aimed to chase the poor man away.

Seven days later, the village was swarming with feverish activity. An eloquent and royal banquet was well under way. The huge shul was bedecked in finery. Glistening candelabras emanated radiance. An expensive feast was prepared, and the finest chefs rushed to spice the foods to perfection.

At long last, the holy Rabbi, Reb Zushe of Anipoli, was seen riding down the road, in an exquisite wagon with four sturdy stallions. The highway was adorned with tiny lamps on each side of the road.

Honorary guards welcomed Reb Zushe in grand style. He was led to the center of the stage, and every village inhabitant was present. All wished to bask in the holy presence of this great tzaddik.

The large shul, crowded to overflowing, was silent. Everyone waited expectantly for the profound d'var Torah that Reb Zushe was sure to deliver. Heads nodded in confusion, looking around, and wondering why the prolonged silence. And still not a sound. Thinking that perhaps the Rabbi was hungry after his long trip, the waiter served the fish.

The crowd waited respectfully for Reb Zushe to begin the festive meal. Reb Zushe raised his fork, and to the horror of his audience, placed the fish in his pocket. Numb and speechless, the waiter served the soup. Reb Zushe placed the contents of his entire bowl of soup in the brim of his hat. Soup overflowed, and the men squirmed uncomfortably in their

seats.

And still no sound. With no d'var Torah forthcoming, the waiter served the meat. Reb Zushe took this too, and placed it in his shoe.

And then the holy tzaddik stood up, looked around at his shocked observers, and began.

"My dear friends, I recently heard that there exists a village of our beloved brethren, who never give tz'daka. They honor Shabbos, study Torah, and daven three times a day, yet close their hearts and hands to a luckless poor man who dares trespass their territory."

The crowd shifted uncomfortably. "I didn't believe it! I did not believe that it is possible for an entire village to refrain from this most basic mitzva. I traveled to your village, my friends."

Reb Zushe lowered his voice, anguish and pain written all over his face. "Last week I visited your town, dressed and disguised as a pauper. I asked for a mere piece of bread, and was attacked with verbal and insulting words, "Hey you lazy good for nothing beggar, get out!"

I visited every single home, hoping and praying that someone

would express compassion and pity on my starving soul. I felt crushed, defeated, and shattered. You saw my clothes, tattered and ragged, and promptly slammed the door in my face. Unceremoniously, I was dumped.”

The crowd bowed their heads in shame. “Today, I have once again joined your village. Ah, what a grand royal reception! The finest and most expensive wines and delicacies, and honor, honor, honor, is given in abundance!

Reb Zushe raised his voice. Tell me, am I not the same Reb Zushe, last week and today? Do I not carry the identical rabbinical post? Then why did your acceptance of me so drastically differ?”

Reb Zushe looked around the room, pity and compassion, arousal and remorse, evident in every syllable. “The difference of course, is not in me, for I am the same, seven days ago and today. The difference is my coach! My stallions! My new set of clothes! It’s not really me you wish to honor. For had that been the all-pervading truth, you would have honored me last week. The difference is my new suit! I am therefore simply doing your bidding, I am feeding my suit!” And Reb Zushe sat down.

The silence in the room was deafening. The remorse came rumbling and tumbling, searing every fiber of their being. Suddenly, one voice could be heard amongst the noise. With a pained expression, he slowly stood up, and turned to face the tzaddik.

“Holy Rabbi Zushe, Today you have opened our eyes and showed us our deficiency. We want to thank you, holy tzaddik, for having the courage not to be intimidated by our actions. You saw a terrible flaw in our behavior, and you clearly pointed out the fault. Above all, we want to thank you Rabbi, for the manner in which you rebuked us. There was

sensitivity, compassion, and tears in your eyes. Your love for your poor brother propelled you to help mend our ways. You did not yell, screech, shout, hurl insults, or express disdain at us. Rather, you pointed out our faults in a righteous manner. You Rabbi Zushe are an outstanding disciplinarian.”

The crowd waited respectfully for Reb Zushe to begin the festive meal. Reb Zushe raised his fork, and to the horror of his audience, placed the fish in his pocket. Numb and speechless, the waiter served the soup. Reb Zushe placed the contents of his entire bowl of soup in the brim of his hat. Soup overflowed, and the men squirmed uncomfortably in their seats.

* * *

To discipline is to live and teach, long-term middos tovos, proper morals, and ethics. To discipline is to be wise, cautious, and clearly state rules. To discipline is not to punish.

Why is there such prevalent confusion in the art of disciplining

our children today?

The answer is simple. Discipline is unpopular, and many parents are afraid of the three most dreaded words ever to be uttered: “I hate you.”

When parents refuse to give in to a request of their child, an impulsive or immature child may not merely think in his mind but actually verbally express these three horrid words: “I hate you.” This touches a chord so raw and deep within that an instinctive spontaneous reaction is often a tragic whipping, an abusive screeching, or attacking the child on all their faults from the day he was born.

Others respond with total permissiveness, just to eradicate these words, or any type of comment that indicates their child wishes they were raised in another home. After all, the parents find their mesiras nefesh for their children so intense, and they cannot swallow this barbaric statement.

A teenager testified, “I asked my mom for permission to go out with my friends late at night, and she refused. I told her she was real mean. I know it was an insensitive thing to say, but I was so looking forward to this event. My mom began to hurtfully list all of my misdeeds of the previous ten years. I know I must love her, but I don’t. Not in those moments anyway. And boy buddy, do I want to stay out of her way as long as I can. Or maybe, as long as I still have some cash in my pocket.”

“I came home from school one day in an angry sour mood. My teacher yelled at me for no reason, and I was seething mad. As I walked through the door, I threw my briefcase on the floor, kicked the door hard, and ran for a cookie. My mother started yelling: ‘Put away your briefcase! Did you wash your hands before eating?’ I just ignored her, my blood boiling and thinking

how to get even with my teacher. My mother yanked the cookie from my hand and screamed, 'Put away your briefcase now!' I stalked to my room and muttered 'I hate you.'"

Question: Did the teenage daughter own a **policy plan** for late nights?

Question: Did the boy own a **policy plan** for briefcases and cookies?

Question: Do Abba and Ima write out a **policy plan** for their home rules?

Question: Is there a **policy plan** for expressing hurt feelings, emotional pain, a bad school day, a failed test, or a fight with a friend?

HOW DO I BEST DISCIPLINE MY CHILD?

Home Tips for organized behaviors:

- * **Policy Plan**
- * **Reward**
- * **Consequence**
- * **The love laced in the consequence.**

Our Master Disciplinarian teaches us the Policy Plan, Reward, and Consequence.

Hashem set up His **Policy Plan**. The sun and moon are created equal. That's the rule in His Home. The sun, good child that she is, accepts. The moon, in a moment of negative behavior, is jealous and complains, 'Why? It's not fair!' (Words often heard around town, aren't they?)

The sun, and likewise every single person who is insulted and does not insult back, receives big time **reward!** The **consequence** of the moon is being diminished. And yet, despite the moon's inappropriate behavior, Hashem appeased the moon. This is **the love laced in the consequence.** Hashem bestowed lavish gifts to the moon: Stars, Rosh Chodesh, and tzaddikim.

Hashem's behavior is a beautiful

lesson to us. We are hurt, insulted, drained after a long day, and verbally abused by our child. We do not respond. We do not erupt into a volcano, earthquake, or hurricane.

Your discipline in your silence is a time to introspect, collect yourself, and **think**. It is not a moment to relieve stress or personal tension. Shall you then simply ignore?

Hashem's consequence is midda k'neged midda. You don't dish out an irrelevant punishment that is fifty times harsher than the crime. You don't dole out in haste or hate. The moment of silence and thought is to **lace the consequence with love.**

To **discipline** is to guide, teach, point out the proper midda – but **later**. You must be in a calm and rational mood. This is very difficult when one is seething in anger. But it is wise, and how can you preach discipline without practicing it.

Home Tip Suggestions:

Policy Plan:

Invite your children to a family meeting. Consider their age and gender. Decide on family rules that pertain to your home, and to standards you wish they meet.

- * **Some examples:**
- * **Homework before entertainment**
- * **Complete your daily house chore**
- * **Sibling peace**
- * **Acceptable test marks**
- * **Curfews**
- * **Permission to use the car**
- * **Joining the daily family Rebbe video time**
- * **Prepare nightly negel vasser, etc.**

Important: The list must be short enough for mother to **consistently** rate.

Together with your children, discuss the rewards and benefits for adhering to the policies. Review the rules **many** times. Repetition is the

art of memory. Together, discuss consequences. Children's suggestions are usually on target and midda k'neged midda-oriented. Plus, they afford parents the least resistance. It's after all, their idea! Review the consequences often.

Very Important: You must be in a good mood and pleasant disposition during meetings.

Describe to your child a family trip you are taking. You ask each child to decide which clothing they will pack, what snacks they enjoy, which sports equipment and games to take along. You pack food, barbeques, drinks and coolers. Cameras and bikes are stored, and with a quick glance that all is indeed in your car, you're off.

Spirits are high! Two hours into the trip, you pull alongside the grassy field and convene. Ask your children what they feel about the road signs, speed limit postings, rigid maps that must be obeyed, and safety seat belts.

No child will whine about a map! They understand that sign posts, travel guide and strict adherence to the map do not subject the excited travelers to shackled imprisonment. They understand that the thick rules increases freedom to safely reach a destination.

Do all parents understand it?

Our **home policy plan** is the vehicle to reach our destination. A home that is ultimately a Mikdash permeated with Hashem and ready to greet Moshiach. The rules are our maps, the book to freedom, not constriction. Indeed, restrictions and sometimes saying no are the seat belts to freedom and happiness. Provide bold sign posts with large "yes" imprinted on each beautiful Torah halacha expected.

State your home rules clearly, with power, persuasion, aggression, and laced with love. It is the Torah that rules! Not children and not parents!

Your child is in the midst of a tantrum. He picks up his brother's glasses and aims to break. You can shout that his brother will...to him if he dares break 'em. You can scream yourself hoarse that it is the most disgusting thing to do and boy will he ever be punished! Or you can state a simple message: "The Torah speaks about damaging properties. Why weaken your reaction when you can empower your expectations according to the guidelines of Hashem, and not merely a human when breaking glasses. Ultimately, it is the weight of halacha and not whims or personal interests that lock your children into disciplined behavior.

Rewards:

Don't be stingy on compliments. To reward is to compliment verbally and congratulate acceptable behavior. Please remember to **reward** your child, and please! Do not fail to recognize good deeds, kind middos, and warm gestures! Don't merely take for granted positive behavior. Your recognition and compliment is his fuel and recharge.

Love notes, thank you cards, enunciating the words thank you, propel a child to do a repeat performance. You must meet him with a repeat reward. Reward is the generator, and the cycle turns children into good deed owners.

Consequence:

To punish is to express displeasure at inappropriate behavior. Why the confusion today in the art of discipline?

This occurs when parents punish without a policy plan and in haste, and in anger. Anger causes irrational behavior.

When a child acts against a home rule, you ask them to check up the policy plan consequence chart. They are to express what punishment awaits them. And you? You may even say you are sorry for them, but you

are sure they understand.

Helpful Hints:

Do not be afraid of your child. Do not become barbaric and rant, yet simply hold firm control. You are a respective leader and your strength and courage is the parenting skill needed to raise healthy children.

Take a moment to tell your child that you feel their pain, and you notice their shattered heart. Discipline is consistency, but it is not hate.

Never punish your child because you are in a bad mood. Never ever ever!

Try with all your powers not to

Ultimately, it is the weight of halacha and not whims or personal interests that lock your children into disciplined behavior.

punish immediately. A hasty word can damage so severely that it may take months to repair.

Check your policy plan. If you never set up a reward and consequence chart for your rules, you may **not** punish. The Torah has a warning system, surely we must imitate.

One may never severely punish if they don't also "severely" reward.

And so, the chore wasn't completed, the table is in shambles, the test is a 70% the fighting an overactive battery, and curfews non-existent. Step back and think. Reward the child that did complete their

work before punishing the infraction.

What must I bear in mind when punishing?

Principal: "Mrs. B., your child punched a classmate in the face today. I am notifying you that he is expelled for two days."

Mother: "I totally back you up. You did the right thing."

Child comes through the door and you are burning angry. You will lose a day at work to stay home with him.

Mother: "I can't believe it! What's the matter with you, you...kid! Why did you punch that kid? Who do you think you are? What's happened to you? I can't believe I have such a wild disgusting selfish kid! You are cruel and mean! I am so mad at you! You are definitely not going on our family trip. I will not have a stupid, dangerous child in the car!

Child: "But he's a bully and—"

Mother: "You're the bully! No snacks for a month! Go to your room right now! Just wait till Abba comes home! I'm so embarrassed that the principal had to call! And no computers or videos for an entire week!

Child runs to his room, screaming "I hate you."

Replay:

Principal: "Mrs. B., your child punched a classmate in the face today. I am notifying you that he is expelled for two days."

Mother: "But why did my child punch? Hi isn't the aggressive bullying type at all."

Principal: "I don't know. However, that's our rule."

Mother: "Listen, I cannot accept this punishment until I speak with my child. When he comes home from yeshiva, I will discuss this incident. I will call you tomorrow morning. Until then, can I kindly ask you to hold off any consequence until we

both hear two sides to this story?”

Principal: “That’s a fair and reasonable request. I await your call.”

The child comes through the door. Do **not** mention anything at all. Remember, its silence first. **Think** first.

Mother: “How was your day David?”

David: “Horrible”

Mother: (Looking at the child and not into her pot or phone). “What is the rule in our home David, when we ask how was your day?”

David: “B”H – and Horrible!”

Let it go. Your son had a horrible day. Don’t stifle his vocabulary. It is the window to his heart. You prohibit this description this time, and he will never bother to share his feelings with you again. Children are permitted to feel negative emotions, release them, and then heal.

Mother: “I have a special dessert for you today.” (After dinner – not before, and not during the meal. Your child is starving when he walks through the door.) “Did anything happen in school today?”

David: “Nothing.”

Mother: “But I got a phone call”

David: “And they’re blaming me, right?”

Mother: “No one is blaming anyone. We want to understand what happened.”

David: “I can’t say.”

Mother: “O.k. I **trust** you. Maybe later you’ll let me know.”

David: “It’s like this. I...”

(Mother is silent she sees her son is embarrassed or scared. He needs time and space.)

“Well, there is a uh a bully. He never starts up with the big shots or popular kids. Only with the quiet ones. For a few days, he is bothering me. He trips me, spills ketchup on my shirt, and is very annoying. But I

was scared of him. Then my friend whispered to me that if I punch him once in the face, he’ll never start up with me again. (Trembling) I was really scared. That bully was so shocked when I went over to him. Quiet little me punching him back! Ma, I had to do it.”

Mother: “I understand.”

And she did, because she was listening, not judging. That was the end of their talk. The child found a friend in his mother, a confidante, and a truly understanding Ima. He gained support and comfort for his tremulous feelings. He’ll be coming back to her again and again! Lucky relationship!

Parents too get into bad moods. The last thing you want is scorn, pain or scolding. You can’t handle criticism all that well in this weakened state. You want and need an understanding sensitive ear, to hear your frustration. You want a kind heart and comforting word to ease the pain. The last thing on your list is rebuke, disparaging remarks or judgmental speeches.

Way, way later, when the fear of the bully shadowing him down the yeshiva staircase recedes and dissipates, you **must** discuss alternatives that will resolve the situation in a proper manner. Hinting to your child that you too had your share of a class bully, and you asked your parents for advice, goes a long way to assist future solutions. And just because your child was hurt, it nevertheless does not excuse all behaviors. Way after the incident, tell your child that it is unacceptable according to Torah to hit another Jew. Discuss options that can gain identical goals with kosher means.

Another look at effective disciplining:

It’s an early Winter Motzei Shabbos Kodesh.

Bina: “Ma, I need \$15.”

Mother: “What for?”

Bina: “I’m going out with my friends”

Mother: “Where to?”

Bina: “Bowling”

Mother: “Bowling? On Motzaei Shabbos? It’s packed, it’s wild, wrong crowd, noisy, and I absolutely refuse. What? All the other girls have permission to go? Who are they? I want to call their mothers.”

Bina: (Eyes rolling)

Mother: “How many times have I told you to stop rolling your eyes? Who do you think you are anyway? All you come to me for is money! You are disrespectful and you just want me to say Yes? Well, it’s final! My answer is No!

Bina: “But Ma, why do you have to be so unfair?”

Mother: “ME unfair? What is this? You think you can go wherever you wish, whenever you please! That’s it! There’s nothing to talk about. And you didn’t even answer me –who’s going?”

Bina: “Are you going to call their parents?”

Mother: “That is not your concern!”

Bina: Remains silent

Mother: “I must know who is going with you.

Bina: “Debby, and Rochel and Nina and Brocha and Dina and Simmy.”

Mother: “Well, I don’t want you to go tonight.”

Bina: Runs to her room, bangs the door, and we can imagine next week’s relationship between mother and daughter.

Two Alternative Options:

Bina: “Ma, I need \$15.00”

Mother: “What’s on your agenda?”

Bina: “I’m going out with my friends”

Mother: “Oh that sounds exciting. I’d love to go out with you too. Can I

pretend I'm in your school circle?"

Bina: "Oh Ma (laughing). I'd love to go bowling with you but I'm not sure Chana and Sara and Bracha and Nina will – uh..."

Mother: "Oh I'm just kidding."

Bina: "Thanks! Maybe next time we can go out – just the two of us!"

You can imagine **this** mother and daughter relationship the coming week.

If you must say No:

Bina: "Ma, I need \$15"

Mother: "Where are you off to

Mother: "Yes you do, you really do."

Silence.

Mother: "You can go Sunday night. Our **Policy Plan** rule is no bowling on Motzaei Shabbos.

Bina: Sighs, "My friends can't go Sunday night. I tried to change their mind."

Mother: "Your know Bina, I am very impressed. You knew our family regulation regarding no bowling on Motzei Shabbos, and you already asked the others about Sunday night.

children to act disciplined in other areas.

To discipline with love does not equate with always saying Yes. But our No is gentle.

Take a look at a gorgeous discipline from the Rebbe in 1952. Discipline is the avoda of acceptable behavior.

(To quote this story from Beis Moshiach Menachem Av 5757)

The Rebbe said on Yud-Tes Kislev 1952 that all T'mimim following the study schedule in yeshiva will receive a surprise in "about another ten days." On the fifth night of Chanuka, the Rebbe said he would give out Chanuka gelt, and this was a most unusual custom back then.

When the T'mimim entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe said that there were those that didn't belong there. Not because they aren't Chassidish or don't learn, but rather, because they don't keep the s'darim. After the Rebbe spoke, each bachur received a coin.

That night, the Rebbe was mesader kiddushin at a wedding. Many bachurim left seider, to see the Rebbe at the wedding. At that very moment, all the T'mimim were called to the Rebbe's room, where the Rebbe said a sicha and distributed coins.

The boys heard they missed Chanuka gelt, and they asked the Rebbe if they too can receive. The Rebbe agreed on condition that the Hanhala had given permission for these boys to attend the wedding. Although permission had not been granted originally, the Hanhala agreed to do so now, thus enabling these boys to receive a coin from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe commented, "Retroactive permission cannot be given."

The Dream Parent is the most sublime gift and there are no shortcuts.

**Dearest Hashem,
You know I spent many a sleepless night,
His joys are my joys, his tears my plight.
You know my life surrounds my gem
And now I plead and beseech you Hashem.
Gather my teardrops, my Tehillim my cry,
Elevate my effort, for I truly truly try,
To raise my child as a Chossid, as a Jew,
But the ultimate siyata d'Shmaya is up to you.
You and the Rebbe, my anchor my pole,
Please continue to assist me to excel in my role.
Thank you for generous and abundant hatzlacha
Thank you, yes thank you, for every single bracha.**

now?"

Bina: "I'm going bowling with my friends."

Mother: "I'd love to see you enjoying this activity with your friends. But do you remember one of our family rules?"

Bina: "Oh Ma, can we break it just this once?"

Mother: "I know "Rules are meant to be broken" is a classical joke, but my love..."

Bina: "But I really want to go!"

I'm sorry they turned down your offer, But I am **very** proud of you."

Often, we don't want to disappoint our kids. But if you stated rules in advance at a family meeting, calmly, and repeated them often, then although your child is definitely disappointed by your refusal, she does not hate you.

(Yes, she may even love you and thank you when she finds out the principal called in the girls to reprimand. Even if not, this fair peaceful discipline encourages our

THE SHLIACH OF 770

*Thousands of shluchim around the world bring the great light of 770 to people far and wide. But one shliach brings thousands of people from far and wide to the great light of 770. * Meet Rabbi Beryl Epstein, founder of the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center, and find out how one man from Crown Heights has changed the lives of Jews from many places.*

770 has always attracted thousands of Jews from around the world. They come for all sorts of reasons — some for a blessing, others to see the center of the worldwide Lubavitch movement; to find out more about their Judaism; to see the Chassidic way of life; to pray; etc. But the past two decades have seen a significant increase in the number of visitors. This is because in the '80's, the Rebbe stated that according to the Sages the shul and beis midrash of the Nasi Hador is the holiest place in the world.

But there was a time when visitors had to contend on their own. See on their own, hear on their own, and try to put together the peaces of the puzzle called "770" on their own. More importantly, there was no one to take advantage of

their eagerness by inspiring them to live a life of Torah and mitzvahs.



R' Beryl Epstein, director of the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center

Rabbi Beryl Epstein, a resident of Crown Heights, changed all that. Understanding the great importance of welcoming the visitors, and appreciating the great impact it could have on them if they understood what they were seeing, Rabbi Epstein took the task upon himself, and established the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center.

Beryl Epstein grew up in a non-observant family in Tennessee. Following Israel's Operation Entebbe in 5736 (1976), many young Jews felt thankful to G-d for the miracle he made, and sought ways to express their Jewish identity. It was then that Beryl's brother, Mordechai, decided to enlist in the Israeli army. But before he could do so, he met a shliach, Rabbi Zelig Rivkin, while attending Tulane University in New Orleans. Rabbi Rivkin explained to Mordechai that he would be giving G-d a much greater 'thank you' by strengthening his observance of Torah and mitzvos.

A short time later, Mordechai joined the Chabad yeshiva in Morristown, and became a Lubavitcher chasid. Beryl himself began taking an interest in Jewish history, and resolved to become more observant. Gradually, the entire Epstein family — the parents too — became religious, chassidic



Dancing in 770

Jews.

The Epstein's often marveled at how they became Lubavitcher chassidim despite the absence of a shliach in their hometown. One day, they discovered how this happened.

During a Shabbos meal in Crown Heights, at which Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin *a"h*, the rav of Crown Heights, was present, Rabbi Dvorkin asked Beryl where he was from. Beryl said he was from



Putting on t'fillin in 770

Tennessee.

"And where is your family from?" asked the rav.

"Russia."

"Where in Russia?"

When Rabbi Dvorkin heard that the Epstein family came from the town of Szedrin, and that Beryl was the great great grandson of Itche Nachum Schmitd ("Shmidt" is Yiddish for "blacksmith"), his face lit up and he rose from his seat in excitement.

"I remember Itche Nachum from when I was a boy. I used watch him work as a blacksmith. He was a Lubavitcher Chassid! No wonder, then, that all of you became Lubavitcher Chassidim. G-d inspired you to do this."

In 5738 (1977-78), Beryl decided to follow in his brother's footsteps, and he went to learn Torah in Morristown's Yeshiva Tiferes Bachurim. He was very successful in his studies, and before long, was indistinguishable from any other Tamim.

One day, the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Avrohom Lipsker, asked Beryl to organize a Shabbaton for American teens on the yeshiva campus. Beryl agreed, and despite some difficult challenges he encountered, he organized a successful Shabbaton, which was attended by dozens of teenagers.

In the wake of the successful event, a close friend suggested that Beryl organize additional groups and give them guided tours of 770, and maybe have them spend a Shabbos in Crown Heights. Beryl liked the idea, but it took a few years until it was implemented. When the tours were finally a reality, Beryl was amazed at the impact they had on the participants, and he decided to form an organization whose purpose would be to bring groups of tourists to 770, the spiritual center of the

world. Beryl called his organization, "The Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center."

In 1984, Rabbi Epstein married Dina Esther, *a"h*. This strengthened the work of the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center because Dina got very involved in the work. For eighteen years, until her untimely passing two years ago, Dina took groups of women and girls to the women's section of 770, and to other important places in the Crown Heights neighborhood, and explained to them the spiritual significance of all they were seeing. Her mikva tours became a highlight of inspiration for Jewish teenage girls.

The format of the tour is the same for all groups, though it can be adjusted upon request or in accordance with the composition or background of a particular group. Most tours take place on Sunday, when most people are off from work. But quite often, there are tours on other days of the week as well. The tour begins with a lecture that prepares the group for their visit. Rabbi Epstein speaks to the tourists about the importance of the places they will be visiting, and he opens before them a world of Judaism and Chassidus. He explains the principles of Chabad Chassidus, and tells his listeners about the importance of learning Chassidus ("In 770 you will see the yeshiva students studying Chassidic philosophy, which they study for three hours a day"). He also speaks about family purity ("Money comes and goes, but what remains are the children").

Rabbi Epstein talks to his audience about the importance of learning Torah and observing mitzvos. He discusses with them the meaning and value of being a Jew. ("A Jew remains a Jew even if he sins, because G-d gave him a Jewish



soul through his Jewish mother. A gentile who wants to convert to Judaism has to undergo a halachic conversion in order to receive this amazing gift - the neshama.")

Rabbi Epstein guides the tourists step-by-step to arrive at their own conclusions about the importance of Jewish chinuch, and how it is the ultimate answer to assimilation. His audience, especially the younger members, bombards him with questions: How does one nourish one's soul? What is kosher food? What is special about Shabbos? And so on. But the topic that attracts the most interest is Moshiach. They want to know what Moshiach means and what his role is.

"How is Chabad managing today without a Rebbe?" Rabbi Epstein was asked on a recent tour. He replied without hesitation, "Chabad is not without a Rebbe; the Rebbe is here with us!" He then explains to his captive audience in a few brief words that in every generation there must be a great tzaddik whose soul encompasses the souls of all the Jewish people, and that the world cannot exist without this. Clearly,

then, the Rebbe continues to lead Chabad and the rest of the Jewish people."

All sorts of people join these tours, but who is your main target?

"Everybody. And we get everybody. The Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center is known to tour agents, synagogues, day schools, and universities throughout the world, and as a result, the many groups of tourists we get are of very diverse backgrounds and ages. Secular Jews, Reform and Conservative Jews, and even a fair smattering of gentiles. The latter usually come as part of a comprehensive religious tour of the New York metropolitan area. Our main focus, however, is on the





Jewish tourists, of course, especially the teenagers.”

Why teens?

“American teens are surrounded by all the pleasures of this world. Ironically, this causes them to search for some deeper meaning in life. It might sound a bit strange, but kids between the ages of sixteen and seventeen assail me with interesting questions about deep topics in Judaism, such as the truth and eternity of Torah, the age of the universe, the essential difference between Jews and gentiles, and so on. It’s precisely at that age that teenagers begin thinking about their future and about what they want to be when they grow up.

“Jewish children love their Jewish tradition, but because they lack the proper education about the importance of Torah and mitzvos, they tend to abandon their connection to Judaism when they become teenagers. But many young people become Torah observant after touring 770, where they are exposed to true Ahavas Yisroel, authentic Judaism, and a type of boundless joy they have never seen anywhere else.



R' Epstein with a group of cadets who came to visit 770 on their way to Iraq

“For example, my wife, a^h, once spoke with a girl about the importance of family purity. By the time they concluded their conversation, the girl had already decided that family purity would be a foundation of her home when she got married.”

What part of the tour affects the young people the most?

“The singing and dancing at the end of the Rebbe’s minyan.”

Seriously....

“I’m not kidding! For the first time in their lives, these Jews experience real and pure simcha.

They never experienced ‘separate’ dancing before, and certainly never danced in a shul. They suddenly begin to feel that everything they experienced up until then was false, and that their idea of having a good time was rather shallow. When they see the truth, they are simply swept up by it.

“In addition, they are deeply affected by the fact that the people who just put on tefillin with them (for some of the them the first time in their lives) are now dancing with them. This changes their lives.

“The impact that a visit to 770 can have on such a person is inestimable. We cannot fathom the influence of a place as holy as Beis Moshiach. All we can do is bring Jews to the Rebbe; the rest is up to the Rebbe.”

What’s your modus operandi?

“Every Sunday, at 10:00 a.m., a group of fifty-sixty Jewish boys and girls arrives at the Levi Yitzchok library, where they hear a talk that prepares them for the tour. They love this brief preparatory stage, because they learn a lot in a very short period of time. Remember, our aim is not just to show them places and expose them to new ideas, but also to penetrate their souls and effect a change in them. It sounds pretty simple, but in fact, it requires a lot of work. You have to get them to a state in which they trust the lecturer and are not embarrassed to ask questions. I often see how a response to a child’s question has a greater impact on the tourists than hours of lecturing.”

Where do you take them?

“After the preparatory talk, the boys go with me, or with Rabbi Yisroel Ber Kaplan, to the shul, while the girls go to the *ezras nashim* with a woman guide. In the shul, the boys put on tefillin, are shown around the building, and are told

about the activities that take place there. They daven one t'filla with the Rebbe, at the end of which they dance with the chassidim. In the days when the Rebbe davened in the small *zal*, he used to honor our tourists by davening with them in the main shul.

“As with every guided tour, the tourists are told about the history and importance of the places they are seeing, and in the process, they find out a great deal about Yiddishkai. For example, when we arrive outside the Rebbe’s room, they are told about the CNN reporter who joined the Sunday dollars line and asked the Rebbe what message the Rebbe wanted to convey to the world. The Rebbe told him to tell the world that Moshiach’s coming is imminent and everyone should prepare for it by increasing in acts of goodness and kindness.

“From the shul we proceed to the Rebbe’s library, where they hear about holy books and the importance of learning them, and about the great spiritual value of the objects on display there. Our next step is the *sofer*. For the first time in their lives, these people see 21st century Man writing with a quill and ink. They are taught about the process of making tefillin, sifrei Torah, and mezuzos. After discovering the tremendous importance of tefillin, many of them resolve to put on tefillin every day.

“Afterwards, the girls are given a tour of the women’s mikva, where they learn about the importance of maintaining the holiness and purity of the Jewish people. The tour ends with a visit to the matza bakery. Seeing how *shmura* matza is made today, not unlike the way it was made three thousand years ago when our forefathers went out of Egypt, is an exciting attraction for these people. In addition, they are taught about the spiritual aspects of this

“food of faith and healing.” Sometimes, they visit the Jewish Art Gallery too. The tour concludes with a deli lunch, and afterwards the visitors go shopping, mostly for Judaica.”

Tell us about some special groups you hosted.

(Smiling) “Each group is special. I mean that. But since you’re asking... about six months ago we had a group of naval cadets from Annapolis, who were soon to depart for Iraq. They wanted blessings from the Rebbe who had been very optimistic about the original Gulf War, and had prophesied the Allies’ victory. At the end of their tour, they said they felt strengthened by the

“I often see how a response to a child’s question has a greater impact on the tourists than hours of lecturing.”

knowledge that their going to Iraq was part of the justice and righteousness campaign heralding the coming of Moshiach, as the Rebbe spoke more than a decade ago.”

Is there a fee for the tour?

“There is. There are two advantages to this: (1) People have a greater appreciation for something pay for. (2) Because we charge for the tour, visitors are not afraid that our goal is to bring them closer to Judaism.”

You are often asked whether you believe the Rebbe is Moshiach. Can you tell us if the tourists are generally receptive to your affirmative response, or does it turn

them off?

“First of all, it’s important to point out that *‘b’ofen ha’ miskabel’* (‘in a manner that is accepted’) was not meant to be used as a measuring stick for determining whether Moshiach’s identity should be publicized. Moshiach’s identity should definitely be publicized. *B’ofen ha’ miskabel* means that we, the message bearers, must work hard at finding ways to ensure that the message is indeed accepted by our respective audiences.

“Remember, the entire tour is only three hours long, which is a very short time for fulfilling the Rebbe’s shlichus of preparing people to welcome Moshiach. We have to use this brief time span to teach them not only about Moshiach, but also about Torah and mitzvahs in general. Nevertheless, Moshiach is a rather popular topic with the tourists, and I think the reason for this is that Jews want to connect with something higher — they want to have faith.

* * *

Over the years, more than 140,000 Jews have visited the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center. Rabbi Epstein and his wife, *a”h*, were greatly encouraged in their work by the Rebbe. For example, on Erev Rosh HaShana, 5751, Mrs. Epstein received a special bracha from the Rebbe for the expansion of her husband’s work. Moreover, every Sunday, the tourists of the Chassidic Discovery Welcome Center received special attention from the Rebbe. Here’s one example:

A teacher from a Jewish school in Riverdale used to come to Crown Heights every year with a large group of boys and girls from his school. One time, he contacted Rabbi Epstein a week before his planned visit and asked if the Rebbe would agree to distribute dimes to the children. Rabbi Epstein told him



Visiting the sofer

that he would give over the request to the Rebbe's secretariat.

A week later, at Shacharis, the Rebbe passed through the group of boys and gave each one a coin, and then did the same for the girls (who

came down from the Ezras Nashim). Then the Rebbe gave the teacher two coins and spoke a few words with him.

Six years after this incident, Rabbi Epstein met the teacher at a

family simcha. The teacher said to him, "I never told you what happened at that meeting with the Rebbe. It was supposed to be my last year as a teacher. When the Rebbe came over to me, he gave me two coins and, in a few brief words, described to me the tremendous nachas he had from the children.

"I sensed that the Rebbe saw with divine inspiration that I would be leaving my job as a teacher, and he was gently trying to persuade me not to leave the field of chinuch. I subsequently abandoned my plan and continued teaching. I soon became one of the school's main educators, and over the course of the past six years, I developed a unique approach to educating Jewish children, which has been adopted by schools across America. All of this was a result of the Rebbe's blessing and foresight."

For more information or to book at tour visit www.jewishtours.com

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THE POWER OF THE REBBE'S PICTURE

BY S. NAHARI

*As in the time of the Maggid of Mezritch, there are people who are annoyed by the widespread distribution of the Rebbe's picture, fearing it will be ch"v desecrated by certain people or will end up on the ground or in the garbage. * A story about the Rebbe's picture.*

I heard the following story from Rebbetzin Rochel Hendel:

Machon Ascent. Tzfas. Mysticism. Kabbala and Chassidus. "Graduates" of India, meditation courses, and various cults. We have heard a lot about Ascent. Well, here's another story about Chabad's work in publicizing the Geula and the Goel.

The program for a Shabbos at Ascent is full of classes and farbrengens, tours and t'fillos. It's Tzfas at its best, from a Chassidic perspective. It's enchanting and every detail and moment is planned and used to the fullest. Registration fills up quickly.

One would think that all the guests would eat the Shabbos meals together in the lecture hall, but the organizers prefer to set up the visitors with local families. Anash in Tzfas are happy to serve as hosts. The organizers at Ascent know that there will be some participants who will feel uncomfortable about eating at

strangers' homes, which is why this point is not mentioned in the brochure. But it works out in the end and the personal encounters around the Shabbos table sometimes make more of an impact than all the lectures. And the hosts benefit too.

The encounters, the stories, the experiences, there are many. Anash give, but also receive. These Shabbosos change both the hosts and the guests. Here's a story about one such Shabbos meal.

Shabbos B'Reishis. "The way you start on Shabbos B'Reishis, is the way the entire year will go." When you host Ascent guests on Shabbos B'Reishis, everybody benefits.

Among the guests at the G. home, was a family from Kfar Vradim. The C. family were old hands at seminars. This was their third Shabbos with Ascent. When the parents and their ten-year-old son came to Ascent for the first time, they knew nothing at

all about Judaism, which is typical of everybody at Kfar Vradim.

Kfar Vradim is in the western Galil and was meant to be an exclusive area. An elite element lives there, who chose Kfar Vradim for its quality of life. Perhaps needless to say, Kfar Vradim is not at all religious.

The area where Kfar Vradim is located has many schools. One of them is an experimental school. In 5751, a group of parents, including parents from Kfar Vradim, decided that the educational system in Israel didn't suit them. They organized an alternative educational approach. They started an "open" school, open as far as ages – the students are 3-18, as well as origin of the students – any child in the area is welcome. Jews as well as Arabs are accepted in the school. The school also has students with physical and mental disabilities. The basic idea is equality, a democratic education, and openness.

Was it that very openness which enabled someone to distribute the Rebbe's picture in this alternative school? We have no way of knowing, but the fact is that one fine day, colorful pictures of the Rebbe with the words, "HaRebbe M'Lubavitch – Melech HaMoshiach" were found in one of the classrooms.

The son of the C. family picked up one of these pictures. He didn't like it at all. Annoyed, and without thinking

twice, he crumpled the picture.

Some time later, the Lubavitchers left more pictures at the school, and the same scene repeated itself. The boy saw one of these pictures of the Rebbe and crumpled it. This time, it was in front of the astonished eyes of his teacher.

“That does not befit a student at the open school! Where’s your tolerance? Where are your manners, your acceptance of things that are different? Where’s your derech eretz? Is that what we’ve taught you here – to treat property that way? To crumple and destroy?”

The teacher wanted to teach the child a lesson, so she gave him an educational punishment. The boy had to do a report on the Lubavitcher Rebbe in order to learn who the man in the picture is. He had to do the research and write it up, and certainly this would ensure that he wouldn’t do something like desecrate a picture again.

The boy went home with the crumpled picture. He had to tell his mother what had happened in school and what his homework assignment was. He anticipated a lecture from his mother.

Mrs. C. looked at the picture and said the teacher was right. It would be interesting to find out about the man in the picture. Who is this man whom people say is Moshiach? She would help him do the research and write up the report.

Where should they begin? They opened an encyclopedia to the letter L and found “Lubavitch.” There wasn’t much there. “Lubavitch is a small town in White Russia.” There were a few more details, but nothing much.

Mrs. C. asked her religious friend for help. Her friend told her that in order to find out about the Lubavitcher Rebbe, she had to go to a Chabad house, because Chabad and Lubavitch were one and the same.

How interesting! That was news to Mrs. C. She had no

idea that Chabad was synonymous with Lubavitch.

She went to the nearest Chabad house where she found what she was looking for. She got plenty of material and working on the project made an impression on her. What began as a homework project, turned into a desire to learn and know more and more.

The Chabad house suggested that the C. family visit Ascent. They went and they loved it. On their journey towards religious observance, the C. family discovered something that was a surprise to them. Mr. C. was not Jewish! What an obstacle on the road to truth! But when the Rebbe is overseeing things, no obstacle is too great.

Mr. C. left his house for nine months and studied for conversion. Everything was done according to halacha. After he was accepted as part of the Jewish people, the couple were married with a chuppa and kiddushin. The next time they went to Ascent for Shabbos, the couple looked quite different. Mr. C. had a beard and Mrs. C. was dressed modestly and wearing a hair covering. The boy went around Kfar Vradim wearing a kippa and tzitzis!

Teachers in Tzfas, who study with Mrs. C., say that when her husband calls to speak to her, she says, “Excuse me, my chassan is on the phone,” and this is because they are still in their first year of marriage, and are chassan and kalla!

A shliach by the name of Amichai Marinovsky, does outreach work in Kfar Vradim now, and rumor has it that the founders of the Kfar, who wanted an idyllic and exclusive and religion-free settlement, have failed!

And it all started with a picture of the Rebbe that someone thought of bringing to a secular school. A picture of the Rebbe changed the lives of the C. family, as well as all those who have met them.



The boy had to do a report on the Lubavitcher Rebbe in order to learn who the man in the picture is. He had to do the research and write it up, and certainly this would ensure that he wouldn’t do something like desecrate a picture again.

CHASSIDIC INTENSIVE CARE

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN LEVIN

*I found Dr. Eliyahu Sorkin, director of the I.C.U. in Ichilov, fascinating. As a boy, he knew nothing about his Judaism, yet he has become a Chassid of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. * Dr. Sorkin's story.*

The few hours that I spent with him flew by like a few minutes. At the end of the interview, Dr. Sorkin asked me to accompany him on a brief tour of his department, the Intensive Care Unit at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv.

We walked quietly, as though afraid to disturb the heavy silence, or the beeps and noises of the various machines. Dr. Sorkin scanned the rooms and finally entered one of them. The curtain that hid the patient was moved aside, and I saw the sad sight of a young Israeli, about 20 years old, lying motionless. A nurse stood nearby and, every so often, injected him with something.

"What's wrong with him?" I whispered. Dr. Sorkin sadly answered, "He's in critical condition. He went touring in the Far East and got into a motorcycle accident. He's been on a respirator and hasn't regained consciousness. Let's hope for the best."

CHILDHOOD WITHOUT JUDAISM

Eliyahu Sorkin was born in Paris, the City of Lights. He grew up an average Parisian child, and knew nothing about his being Jewish. He was a bright child who preferred books to games.

When he was about to turn 13, he asked his parents to mark the occasion in church! "That's what everybody would do. When my classmates turned 13, they would have a priest come to their house, and he would teach them the fundamentals of their religion. So I asked my parents to do the same thing. I didn't want to be different."

To Eliyahu's surprise, his parents refused. Upset, he went to his room and cried. His parents had not anticipated such a reaction, and they whispered to each other about what to do. Then they called him to their room and told him they were Jews, which was why they could not do the ceremony in

church.

"Jews?" Eliyahu asked in surprise. "What's that?"

From that day on, Eliyahu knew he belonged to a people that was different from all others, but he didn't really know what it was all about.

"I knew that we were different, and that we had certain restrictions, but because of my parents' fears, I was never told about the mitzvos and the concepts of Judaism."

Why were your parents fearful?

"You have to understand, my parents were raised in the shadow of anti-Semitism, and their parents were afraid they'd be affected by it. My grandparents had fled the Ukraine because of the Nazis, and therefore, their fears ruled their lives. When my parents got married, they decided they would hide their Jewish identity from their children. They never imagined that one day we would discover it, and that the discovery would change my life completely."

When Eliyahu learned he was Jewish, some changes occurred in his life. He was constantly in search of meaning in his empty life. He looked for Jewish symbols that could tell him something about the Jewish way of life, but for a long

time didn't find anything.

One year, his aunt went on a trip to Israel, and she brought back a silver Magen Dovid for her nephew. Eliyahu was excited about the gift and showed it proudly to his friends at school. To his dismay, they beat him up and called him derogatory names.

Eliyahu returned home sadly, but his Jewish pride grew.

"It was quite absurd. On the one hand, I knew I was Jewish and was even proud of it, but on the other hand, I had no idea what being

Jewish entailed. All I knew was that this nation is different than all nations and that some Jews lived in the state of Israel in the Middle East."

When Eliyahu turned 20, there were ideological wars in France. The French were divided into a number of groups, some of them admired Israel, but the rest did not. Sorkin joined the group that admired Israel, and spoke a great deal about this with his friends.

In 1967, during the Six Day War, Eliyahu was very concerned

and he decided to go to Israel and help out. He called the Jewish Agency in France but they were no help. He finally decided to go to Israel on his own.

Eliyahu had such a strange reaction when his feet touched the holy soil of Eretz Yisrael. He felt a sense of *deja vu*. Wherever he went, he felt he had been there before, and this feeling intensified his love for the land.

He returned to France with his feelings of belonging to the Jewish people stronger than ever. This is how Eliyahu went through his childhood and young adulthood knowing he was Jewish but not knowing what that meant.

Eliyahu worked hard studying medicine for ten years. He put all his time and energy into his studies and was awarded his degree.

"Throughout my years in medical school, I dreamed about moving to Israel and being a doctor there. When I finished my schooling, I called the administration of Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital and asked whether there was a position available. They said there was. 'You can be a senior doctor in the I.C.U.' they told me."

All Eliyahu needed to do was move to Eretz Yisrael, but money was a problem. He had an apartment that he tried to sell, but after a year of advertising he still had not received any calls regarding it. He was forced to shelve his plans of emigrating to Israel. Of course, he lost the position at Hadassah.

JEWISH PURSUITS

It was at this time in his life, when his desire to move to Eretz Yisrael became a distant dream, that Eliyahu felt the need to pursue his Jewish identity.



Dr. Eliyahu Sorkin

“I had a sudden urge to learn what being Jewish was all about. When I realized I would have to be a doctor in France, I decided to act as a Jew in all ways. Toward this end, I met with a big rabbi in Paris, but he refused to teach me the basics. ‘Come to me after you learn the basics,’ he said, ‘and I will teach you the rest in depth,’ he said.”

Dr. Eliyahu Sorokin is a smart man, but he’s also an obedient man. He did as the rabbi told him and began studying Hebrew and basic Judaism out of books.

Where did you get the books from?

“In France, there are clubs for Jews, and that is where I got most of the books. Slowly, I began picking up the basics. I learned about Shabbos, Jewish holidays, and other concepts, and I began practicing what I learned.”

Eliyahu’s parents, who had hidden the fact that he was Jewish until it they were forced to reveal it when he became 13 years old, were furious about the changes in their son. They were afraid he lost his mind. Eliyahu and his parents quarreled a lot, and as a result, Eliyahu, who lived with his parents, packed his belongings and moved out.

“One day, I met my wife-to-be through incredible Divine Providence; it still amazes me. She contributed a lot towards my becoming more observant. Unlike the other Jewish families in the area, my wife came from a traditional home. I followed her lead and took on more mitzva observance. 999

“In my role as a doctor, I decided to organize a convention. I invited doctors from all over the world, including a doctor from Israel. I insisted on his being

invited, despite the opposition of some of my French colleagues.

“At the end of the convention, when the Israeli doctor heard about my being Jewish, he asked me about myself and what I was doing. I told him about my attempts to be accepted as a doctor at Hadassah Ein Kerem, as well as my efforts to sell my apartment.

“As long as I can’t sell my apartment, I cannot move to Israel,” I explained.

“The Israeli doctor thought a moment and then said he would accept me as a doctor at the medical center he worked at. He said he would wait until I sold my home.

“I suddenly realized what Divine Providence means. I felt that G-d was directing me to my destination.”

“We parted as I said I would let him know what happened with my apartment.”

Following his friendly meeting with the Israeli doctor, thoughts about moving to Israel began to preoccupy him once again. He advertised his apartment in the French papers.

“One night, I had the following dream. I dreamt that I saw a familiar person standing in my home who said to me that I should move to Eretz Yisrael. When I asked the figure how I should do that when I had no money, she answered, ‘Divide your living room in half so one half is a living room

and the other half is a dinette. That way, you’ll be able to sell your apartment.’

“I woke up in great excitement. I told my wife my dream but she dismissed it. ‘It’s only a dream. Even if there’s something to it, you don’t have the money to make renovations anyway...’

“My wife’s sensible words brought me back to reality. I stopped thinking about the dream until one day when I met one of my patients. I asked him what he did for a living, and he told me he did renovations. When I asked him about doing renovations for me, he said he would do them for free.”

As soon as the man finished making the renovations, the phone rang. Eliyahu picked up the phone and when he heard what the person on the line was calling about, he was flabbergasted. After months in which nobody inquired about his apartment, this person was calling about the apartment. He was the first in a long line of people who were interested in buying it.

“I suddenly realized what Divine Providence means. I felt that G-d was directing me to my destination. Within a few months we were living in a spacious apartment in Chaifa, and I had begun working as a doctor in the Rambam hospital in that city.

“Two months after we arrived in Eretz Yisrael, the war in Lebanon began. All doctors who were Israeli citizens, were sent to the front. As a new immigrant, I remained at the hospital and was over my head with work with the wounded.

“At that time, I belonged to a community of French immigrants who lived in Chaifa. I had no connection to Chabad. When we moved to Raanana, I registered my children in Mizrahi schools, but felt I hadn’t quite found my place.

Despite my strengthening my observance in Torah and mitzvos, I felt that something was lacking, and I yearned to discover more and more within Judaism.

“One day, a shliach of the Rebbe, Rabbi Eliyahu Shadmi, moved near my home and we slowly became friends. This was many years ago, at the beginning of his shlichus and before he founded the Chabad shul.

“I registered my children in the Chabad gan that he opened, and also began davening at the Chabad minyan he started. That’s when I learned what t’filla is really about. I also began learning Tanya with Rabbi Shadmi. The event which pushed me firmly towards Chabad was a farbrengen where I met the famous mashpia, R’ Reuven Dunin a’h. That’s when I saw a man whose love for the Rebbe was unbounded.”

Dr. Sorkin was silent for a moment. He went on to talk about the unforgettable R’ Reuven.

“When I looked at R’ Reuven, I saw a true Chassid. His image remains engraved in my mind till this day. I remember the day I met him for the first time. R’ Reuven was farbrenging at the Chabad house and when he began talking about the Rebbe, he started to cry. That’s when I realized what a true Chassid is.”

FIRST VISIT TO 770

The years passed and Dr. Sorkin went to 770.

“R’ Dunin begged me to visit 770, but I refused. When he heard my answer, he stopped importuning me. ‘Your time will yet come,’ he declared.

“I had seen the Rebbe in my mind’s eye all along, thanks to R’ Reuven who had become my mashpia. When I visited R’ Reuven,

he would describe how the Rebbe conducted himself on different occasions.

“When I learned of R’ Reuven’s passing a few years ago, my world caved in. I had lost my personal mashpia, who was far more than my mashpia.”

After the passing of R’ Reuven, Dr. Sorkin saw the Rebbe in a dream. It was this dream that brought him to 770.

“As director of the I.C.U. I don’t have much free time. When I began thinking about going to the Rebbe, I looked for a suitable date to make the trip. I visited 770 on Yud-Tes Kislev for two days.

“Since I had never been to see the Rebbe before, I didn’t know what to expect. Before I left I inquired about a hotel nearby. It was only after I went to Crown Heights that I learned the “rules” and how Chassidim look out for one another.

“When I entered 770, I felt that the Rebbe was looking at me. You cannot deny the holiness of the place, as well as the special

atmosphere.”

It was only for two days, but Dr. Sorkin derived chayus and kedusha from even this brief visit. When I asked him about the high point of his trip, he answered, “When I saw the wonderful brotherly love that characterized each Chassid, I was amazed. Many people approached me to ask if I had a place to stay.

“Another thing I remember in particular happened during the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen. While I sat and listened to the speakers, I suddenly heard my name being announced. I was being asked to speak!

“I don’t know how they knew me or who told the organizers about me. I went up to the lectern and began to speak. At first I said, ‘gut Yom Tov,’ and then there was silence. I was shy. I had never spoken before Chassidim before, and this was a big crowd. I finally told them about my work at the hospital. I told them about a critically ill patient who became better thanks to the Rebbe’s bracha and giving tzedaka.”



DISPENSING SPIRITUAL, AS WELL AS MEDICAL, ADVICE

Dr. Sorkin helps many patients. He does his best to heal them physically and simultaneously offers spiritual aid. Many ill people who lost hope, fully recovered thanks to Dr. Sorkin. He asks each patient to put some coins in a pushka in his office, in order to make a vessel for Hashem's blessings.

"There are many people who end up here after an accident or a terrorist attack. Their family members feel helpless and hopeless. They come to me as the director of the department and as a religious man. I suggest they start putting on t'fillin or take on another mitzva, and baruch



Hashem we see immediate results.

"We had a woman here in

critical condition. Her family was extremely worried and they kept asking me what her chances of recovery were. I told them that we were doing our best to help her and gave them some spiritual advice. After the family members strengthened their religious practice, the woman fully recovered.

"We had a patient who was unconscious, whose family was extremely worried. I explained to them about Divine Providence and about strengthening Torah and mitzvos but they didn't want to hear it. I was disappointed by their reaction but a few days later I saw the power of Divine Providence.

"One morning, as I was sitting in my office, the son of a different patient appeared in my office. He told me he had overheard my conversation with that family and had decided, in order to improve his father's health, that he would strengthen his observance of Torah and mitzvos.

"That's when I realized how influential I could be. That young man merely overheard what I had said and decided to change."

Dr. Sorkin calls his spiritual advice-giving the "Spiritual Department" or what we can call, "Chassidic Intensive Care."

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IN THE NAME OF CHABAD AND ALL THAT IS HOLY

BY RABBI SHALOM BER WOLPO

I heard the following story from Rabbi Shmuel Chefer:

In Tel Aviv lived a man by the name of Rabbi Avrohom Weissman z"l. He was a mashgiach in Yeshivas Chassidei Sadigora, under the Sadigora Rebbe, Rabbi Avrohom Yaakov (who corresponded with the Rebbe MH"M).

Rabbi Weissman was a friend of R' Chaim Yosef Rosenblum z"l (the father-in-law of Rabbi Chefer), and one day, when he visited R' Chaim Yosef, around the year 5718 (1958), he told his life story (in the presence of R' Chefer).

Rabbi Weissman was born in Besarrabia to a very wealthy family. He was one of 24 children, although 20 of them died in their youth from various illnesses. Naturally, the parents were especially protective of the surviving four children. Their mother's goal was to see her sons grow in Torah and fear of Heaven. She would wake him up early in the morning for learning and davening, and if he didn't get up, she would pour cold water on him.

By the time he was 15, he was very successful in his learning and was known as a prodigy. At that time, a certain Lithuanian gaon's yeshiva was becoming well known in the Torah world, and he wanted to learn in that yeshiva. His father, a Chassid of R' Avrohom Yaakov, the first Sadigora

Rebbe, known as the Abir Yaakov (who was the son of the holy R' Yisrael of Ruzhin, and the grandfather of the Sadigora Rebbe in Tel Aviv mentioned above), said they should ask the Rebbe.

The next time he went to Sadigora, he asked the Rebbe whether his son should go and learn in that yeshiva, and the Rebbe said, "I say No."

When the son heard the answer, he told his father that the next time he went to Sadigora, his father should take him along, and he would ask the Rebbe himself. Sure enough, the next time, the two traveled to Sadigora together, and the boy went to speak with the Rebbe. He described the Rebbe looking like an angel and smoking a pipe. The boy said, "I really want to learn Torah by the gaon..." The Rebbe repeated his previous answer, "I say No."

"I was quite stubborn and I persisted in my questioning the Rebbe. I asked him: Why not?"

"The Rebbe answered me, referring to the rosh yeshiva by name, and said that although he was a yerei Shamayim, 'he was still a Litvak.'

I asked: So what?

"The Rebbe answered: Since he's a Litvak, he is a misnaged.

"I asked again: So what?

"The Rebbe answered: Since he's a

misnaged, he is cold.

"I insisted on repeating: So what?

"The Rebbe answered: Since he's cold, he makes others cold.

"Once again, I asked: So what?

"At that point, the Rebbe threw the pipe down and exclaimed: If you are cold to a d'var mitzva, then you are warm to a d'var aveira. Get out!"

The boy who wanted to learn in that yeshiva did not listen to the Rebbe. When he arrived back home, he packed his belongings and said goodbye to his parents. He learned diligently in that yeshiva for three years and was considered one of the big iluyim there. But at that time, the Enlightenment had begun making inroads into the Lithuanian yeshivos, and he began reading secular books and slowly went off the derech. He stopped observing Shabbos and kashrus, left his Torah study, and joined the Communist movement and later the Trotskyites (an extreme Leftist group led by Trotsky). He raised a non-observant family.

His entire family was exterminated in the war, but he miraculously survived. He emigrated to Eretz Yisrael and settled in Tel Aviv. He began to recall his past and decided to do t'shuva. He rented a little house and afflicted himself. He slept on the ground and ate a minimal amount of



bread and drank a minimal of water, and learned Torah day and night. His learning and knowledge from his youth helped him get back on track and he became known as a great talmid chacham.

When the Sadigora Rebbe met him and heard that his father had been a Chassid of his grandfather, he suggested that he take the position of mashgiach in his yeshiva. He served in this position until he passed away (he died at the age of 84, about a year after he told this story).

When Rabbi Weissman finished his story, R' Chaim Yosef Rosenblum said: You see R' Avrohom, how we must listen to a Rebbe.

The mashgiach gave this astonishing reply: Listen, R' Chaim Yosef, the Rebbe was an angel of G-d, but he made a mistake regarding ...'s yeshiva.

Indeed, a stubborn-minded person remains stubborn till the end, and does not allow his emuna or the facts change his mind.

What lesson does this story have for us?

THE LESSER OF EVILS

There are "Friends of Chabad," or even actual Chassidim, who extol the Rebbe as an angel of G-d or even beyond that, but when all is said and done, they don't quite accept what the Rebbe said about Moshiach and Geula (Menachem is his name, Kabbalas HaMalchus, the proclamation of Yechi HaMelech, the singing of Yechi, "chai v'kayam," etc.). Nor do they agree with everything the Rebbe said about shleimus ha'Aretz.

Sad to say, there are those who have connections in the White House and other high places, and they have the ability to bang on the table and loudly declare that the pressure on Israel to expel Jews and to give land to terrorists is terribly dangerous and the Rebbe "cast his life away" for this war. But they don't speak up. They even go so far as to say, "If we heard the Rebbe

today, he would say otherwise."

There are others who heard the Rebbe with their own ears say that just talking about giving away land endangers millions of Jews, that by giving away even an inch, "the entire land is open before them." They saw that whoever spoke about political agreements conceding land and security, caused the deaths, maiming, and wounding of thousands of Jews, and caused a situation in which there is no end to concessions.

Yet, instead of conceding the terrible mistake they made in which they dragged thousands of Chassidim into supporting "the lesser evil," they continue to hope that this "evil" will bring us salvation.

This is what was quoted in a chareidi newspaper in Eretz Yisrael: "He will give only 30% of the territories, and only after they keep all the conditions and promises." This is why he is "the lesser evil."

However, we know that just speaking about giving away land endangers millions of Jews, so actually giving away 30% of our land will surely be dangerous! And it's supposed to be *if* the Arabs stand by their commitments, but we know they consistently lie! So what else needs to happen for us to finally believe what the Rebbe said?

AGAINST VIOLENCE

It also said there, "The Rebbe is against violence...and never supported any form of violence."

I want to know the following. If someone owes me money, and he has property that is collateral for that debt, am I allowed to take his property by force? If that is allowed, then I should certainly be allowed to defend my property with force, to protect it from robbers who want to take it away from me. And this situation is not one that entails violence anyway, but is passive resistance against thieves who not only want to remove property and the livelihoods of thousands of Jews, but

The rebbe threw the pipe down and exclaimed: If you are cold to a d'var mitzva, then you are warm to a d'var aveira. Get out!

also plan on bringing destruction upon the entire country. What a chutzpa it is to speak against such a defense and to bring the Rebbe into this, as though the Rebbe's view is that people ought to quietly wait for thieves to show up and then turn the other cheek.

Just a few weeks ago, there was a battle between chareidim in Yerushalayim and the police regarding paving Highway 6, which involved desecration of ancient gravesites. This battle entailed the use of physical violence on the part of the chareidim against the workers and the police, and included a great deal of damage to expensive equipment. The battle was won and they stopped desecrating the graves.

Would anybody dare to write in a chareidi newspaper against the mesirus nefesh exhibited by the members of "Asra Kadisha" or the Satmar Chassidim and others who helped them in their battle? So why then is it allowed to violently protest the

desecration of graves but it is forbidden to violently protest the desecration of the graves of those who died al kiddush Hashem in our generation, and the expulsion of thousands of Jews from their homes, and that which endangers millions of Jews?

And these terrible things are written in a paper whose position (including the editorials) is one that disparages the settlers and their battle and supports the chareidi representatives whose participation in the Coalition has wrought havoc.

REFUSING ORDERS

Another quote from that paper, "We did not hear [from the Rebbe] any support for refusing orders...the refusal itself poses a danger to life, and could cause a war between soldiers and civilians, and who knows where it will end."

Continuing what I referred to before, about the battle against the desecration of graves, what if a policeman would ask: Do I need to follow the orders that I got to protect the tractor that is destroying graves and scattering bones like fertilizer on the ground, or should I refuse this order and tell my commanding officer that I cannot, in good conscience, be involved in this. What would any posek tell him to do? And if a soldier should ask: Must I follow orders to desecrate the Shabbos in a situation where there is no pikuach nefesh, or an order to eat treif, what would be the psak of any rav?

How is this situation any different? Expelling Jews from their homes entails pikuach nefesh, which sets aside the entire Torah. Expelling Jews from their homes entails robbing them by light of day. Giving Jewish homes in Eretz Yisrael to gentiles is prohibited because of "lo sichanem." And if the expulsion is carried out, it will lead to the next crime, the expulsion of Jews from all of Yehuda and Shomron, and ultimately the Old City of Yerushalayim and all of Eretz Yisrael!

Can there be a question, al pi halacha, as to whether orders should be refused or not?

Even Sharon, who is giving the obscene order for Jews to expel Jews, declared in an interview with *Kfar Chabad* on Erev Rosh HaShana 5756 (issue #684):

"As someone who was a soldier for many years, I say...if a soldier feels that his conscience does not allow him to carry out an order, he presents himself to his commander and says: 'I **cannot do this.**' Unfortunately, **the army is**

Calling on people to refuse orders is not illegal, and passive resistance to the Disengagement is not a crime. So let each one of us prepare for battle! There is no doubt that we will win, because we act in the name of Hashem and His anointed one.

involved in politics and has become a tool of the politicians."

Sharon said the same thing in an interview with *Arutz 7* on July 13, 1995. And in June of 1974, when the army tried to dismantle Alon Moreh, Sharon said to the soldiers: "This is an immoral order, and orders such as this **must be refused.** I would not carry out an order like that."

When I wrote the deputy Legal Advisor, Shai Nitzan, that Sharon should be put on trial for these

statements (and others), he wrote me back on 2 Adar II, "Regarding your complaint against the Prime Minister, Mr. Ariel Sharon, I hereby inform you that in your letter we did not find a reason to open a criminal investigation." If the Legal Advisor doesn't see something wrong here, must we be bigger tzaddikim than Sharon?

How bizarre it is to say that "the refusal itself entails pikuach nefesh and can lead to civil war." What danger is there when thousands of soldiers and policemen inform their commanders, "We will not take part in the expulsion of Jews from Eretz Yisroel. We will not give the homes of those who were murdered to their murderers. We will not support terrorism!"

Which will lead to civil war: refusing orders or carrying them out?

CHABAD'S PARTICIPATION IN DEMONSTRATIONS

And here is the most shocking statement of all from that chareidi paper, "Chassidim were never told to go to demonstrations...in the past, was Chabad ever the moving force at demonstrations...the way of Chabad was always the way of pleasantness and peace...the real way to strengthen the settlements in Gush Katif is through t'filla, Torah, tzedaka, and fasting."

I am absolved of responding, because there is the clear response from the Rebbe from 23 Iyar 5753 and the instruction of the beis din that followed it. At that time the Rabin government was pushing through the Oslo accords, giving away land and creating the so-called Palestinian Authority. Tzeirei Agudas Chabad asked the Rebbe:

"Due to the shocking developments regarding shleimus ha'Aretz – that according to what has been publicized, the government is ready to hand over large parts of our Holy Land in Yehuda and Shomron as well as the Golan Heights, to Arabs... – we held an

'AM YISROEL WILL STOP THE EXPULSION OF JEWS'

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

Among the 550 Jews who were arrested a fortnight ago during the “civil disobedience” actions throughout the country were dozens of Lubavitcher Chassidim, who took an active role in the campaign, going out into the city streets to protest against the proposed Gaza expulsion. One of those arrested, Rabbi Arye Levy of Yerushalayim, a local businessman who is known for his generous support to Chabad institutions. In an interview with Shai Gefen, R' Levy reconstructs the events of that day, which he sees as an historic turning point in the Jewish People's perception of the Disengagement plan.

What were the circumstances of your arrest?

We were a large group of Lubavitcher Chassidim demonstrating on Emek R'faim Street in Yerushalayim. The demonstration had been relatively calm. The police had apparently received false reports of blocked intersections, and had sent three paddy wagons with patrolmen.

At a certain point, a policeman on motorcycle slapped a minor in the face. I stood before the officer's

motorcycle, and informed him that since he is bearing no identification tag, he is presently not serving in an official police capacity. A crowd began to gather, and the policeman responded by demanding that I leave the premises. I replied by telling him that he is not an on-duty police officer, I have no intention of obeying his orders when I have no obligation to do so, and I'll stand wherever I want. He tried to push me with his motorcycle, and when he saw that I wasn't

budging, he lost control and began to engage in a scuffle with me. Another policeman told me that I was under arrest.

How did you feel about this?

I responded to my arrest with great joy. The policeman didn't quite know how to digest this open display of simcha to being arrested as they led me to the police car. Since they saw that I was neither violent nor problematic, they didn't put me into handcuffs. They eventually moved me into another police vehicle, together with another member of Anash. With immense and heartfelt joy, we went to the Moriah police station, where we met up with other Chassidim, who were equally engulfed by great joy from the fact that they were privileged to get arrested.

The moment we entered the police station, we began singing jubilantly “Didan Notzach,” “Yechi Adoneinu,” “HaRabi M'Lubavitch Melech HaMoshiach,” while all those present accompanied us with applause. The policemen were utterly bewildered.

At this point, they brought all the Chabadnikim into a secluded area within the station. I davened Mincha with the kind of boundless joy that I hadn't experienced during davening in many years. During the repetition of the Amida, for which I was the shliach tzibbur, a police investigator came to take me for questioning. The others tried to stop him from disturbing the *chazares ha'shatz*, but he dragged me

away forcibly. I somehow said the *chazares ha'shatz* walking, while the police watched in confusion...

What happened at the questioning?

The investigator, a Druze policeman, asked me different questions. The central theme of the investigation became a class in the Seven Noachide Laws. The policeman even showed me pictures of his children... I told him that he has an obligation to believe in G-d and to fear only Him. He spoke with me for just five minutes about the demonstration itself.

How did you respond to the questions?

I replied that this is a political investigation and I have nothing to say, adding that I hadn't seen my attorney yet. On every factual question, I declared that I was innocent of any crime, stating that we are for the police, not against them. Our objective: to tire them out in their job so they won't *ch"v* commit the terrible transgression of expelling Jews from their homeland. I can tell you with absolute certainty that many policemen are very pleased by our war of attrition. They simply want no part in the expulsion, and as loyal Jews, we have an obligation to help them.

I know about a policeman who went to one of the demonstrators and showed him the bruises he had received from another demonstrator, saying that he had done everything not to raise his hand against another Jew or to carry out the orders he had been given.

How did you endure your night of imprisonment?

There were ten of us in one cell. Half the night was spent farbrenging, singing, and telling stories about *tzaddikim* and the great merit of sitting in prison. It is impossible to describe the unique atmosphere that everyone felt. No one was sorry about being behind bars. Everyone saw this as a great privilege. Our great joy was one of victory and not *ch"v* a feeling of

misfortune. In general, the "prisoners" conducted themselves in a fashion that left no room for "klipa."

I want to point out that the imprisonment took place on the day of the *sefira* of "*chesed sheb'netzach*." The entire imprisonment was on the level of "kindness" and an experience of "victory."

Would you say that the events that day were a success?

An unreal success. After the day's activities, you started hearing very high-ranking officials expressing serious doubts about the Disengagement plan. Senior military people now dare to open their mouths. I have not the slightest doubt that all



R' Arye Levy

this stems from this campaign, which shook up the country and had a powerful effect in Heaven. When a strong protest takes place, there are immediate results. Last week, the people woke up to a new reality.

What will happen if *ch"v* the real thing comes along?

It's impossible to know for sure. Each person must make a firm and determined decision that when the order goes out, he cannot remain at home. He must already take into consideration that he will have to devote the next several months to the salvation of the Jewish People. This is our reserve duty. There is no choice;

the situation has become extremely serious. Anyone who hears what top officials in the security forces are saying understands that the real catastrophe will start after the expulsion *r"l*. We now have a possibility of stopping this. When the day of reckoning comes and tens of thousands of people go out and shut down the country, the Disengagement will not take place.

What influences you to go out?

The great importance of the matter. Before we went out, I had no idea what would happen in the next five minutes. We couldn't imagine what was going on at other intersections throughout the country. We only knew that we had to do everything we possibly could.

As a Lubavitcher Chassid, what did you feel that day?

For a Lubavitcher, this was no great self-sacrifice. We are the children of Chassidim who in the previous generations literally risked their lives. I felt that what I was doing was something completely natural.

Is it possible to stop the Gaza evacuation plan?

Most definitely. Anyone who saw what was going on that day throughout Eretz Yisroel clearly knows that the Disengagement will not happen. The people of Israel by the tens of thousands or more went out into the streets when the order came out. Jews are now revealing their power of self-sacrifice. The government has already lost. There will be no way to carry out this plan.

I want to emphasize again: This is no great self-sacrifice for us. What is demanded from us is very small in comparison to what the Chassidim in Russia endured. If only we could succeed in knowing how to get through this difficult period as we should, and not *ch"v* to remain under "our vine and our fig tree." When the police offered to release us, 90% refused to sign and preferred to remain in prison. From my point of view, I felt

THE TRUTH AND THE PSYCHOTIC ANIMAL SOUL

BY CHANA KATZ

If Dr. Chaim Jacobson had not left his medical practice in Australia to come to the holy city of Tzfas to learn Chassidus, and if the Tzemach Tzedek Kollel hadn't been temporarily relocated to the old Mesivta Yeshiva's dormitory and if . . .

But anyway, there's no room for ifs here, because Divine Providence had the final final say in this chance meeting of neshamos...

* * *

It was in the month of Menachem Av, when thousands trekked to Tzfas to visit the burial site of the Ari Zal, Rabbi Issac Luria.

The 31-year-old doctor and the kollel students were deeply into their day's studies, when all of a sudden a piercing scream came from the nearby balcony.

Jacobson quickly assessed the situation that met his eyes: a group of bachurim and avreichim standing around helplessly watching a man around the age of 40, lying on the floor, screaming out in pain.

Pushing his way through the crowd, Jacobson made a quick determination that the man – now clutching his chest and hyperventilating as beads of sweat poured from his forehead – was having a heart attack. He immediately sent for an ambulance and then began to check the man further to gain information about the nature of the pain and his medical history.

Suddenly, Jacobson sent out word

to cancel the ambulance. What was going on here?

“Very quickly I began to realize this person wasn't having a heart attack at all,” Jacobson explained. “Almost everything the person described wasn't typical of a heart attack! He described the pain as going down his right arm – normally it goes down the left arm. He described a stabbing pain – normally it's a heavy pressure... It occurred to me that the origins of this person's pain was arising not from his heart but from his mind.”

Jacobson made a few more inquiries to confirm his diagnosis. Then he asked everyone to leave the balcony, until he and his “patient” were left completely alone.

* * *

In this split second, Jacobson quickly reflected over his own life's course. A doctor reaching the same conclusion as Jacobson – that the man writhing on the ground before him was in need of some psychiatric medicine – might have just written him a prescription and taken leave, at most.

Four years of medical school, however, did not leave Jacobson fulfilled. He was searching for something and decided to take a year and a half off from his studies to find it. He searched in India, Nepal, and Thailand.

Somewhere along his travels he discovered the Torah and spent a year in yeshiva. Only then did he have the peace of mind to complete another two years of medical school. Learning

Torah full-time, he became a medical doctor in the year 2000. Three years later, he married and the young couple moved to Tzfas, where he's been learning in kollel since.

* * *

Back on the balcony of the yeshiva dormitory, Jacobson drew on all his past experiences and within what was only a matter of seconds, came up with a diagnosis and a plan of treatment.

“I decided to sit down and talk with him gently and personally. I realized the truth of his situation was really he was suffering from severe spiritual, psychological problems. The only way to uncover these problems was to give some time to him and give him a feeling of trust and let him open up to tell his story.”

* * *

The man had some feeling for Chabad, and apparently had slept on the yeshiva's balcony after visiting the Ari's kever. He confided to Jacobson that he's had these episodes before and mentioned a long list of medications he was taking, which were mostly anti-psychotic drugs. He had spent much of the past 20 years in and out of various psychiatric hospitals in America and Eretz Yisroel and apparently had resigned himself – even felt comfortable with – being labeled a psychotic.

Yet the man had a “frum appearance,” said Jacobson, and spoke vividly about his exposure to Chabad and the Rebbe.

“I started to see this man as a lost Jew, a psychiatric prisoner, labeled as a schizophrenic and a manic-depressive and fed for 20 years with a cocktail of anti-psychotic medicine. He never really had any constructive advice and wisdom and help to get out of his situation.

* * *

For Jacobson, the shortcomings and short-sightedness of the medical and psychiatric professions were glaring. His Jewish mind had always questioned the limited outlook of science and psychiatry in understanding human nature and life itself.

When he was fortunate to discover Chassidus, Jacobson recalled drinking it in like a person thirsting for water. He concluded that all the questions of human life and nature are dealt with absolutely in Chassidus and the teaching of our Rebbeim.

Looking at the broken man before him, Jacobson thought to himself: “It seemed Hashem prepared me very much to help this person.” That meant abandoning his medical eyes and peering into the man’s soul from Chassidus eyes.

“To help him I really had to look into myself, and by understanding my own inner spiritual challenges and issues, I could relate to him and help him through his, as opposed to seeing him as something separate from me. I saw that together we could work and help each other.

“Knowing the battle of the animal soul and the G-dly soul, it was very, very obvious that this was just a very strong case of the animal soul overshadowing the G-dly soul.”

With that realization, Jacobson had a very optimistic picture that like any Jew with the right counsel and the right advice, the two G-dly souls could work on the one animal soul.

* * *

Knowing that he only had a short time with this man, and not knowing if

he would ever see him again, Jacobson took a straight and direct path to the heart of the matter. In what seemed like hours but in reality had only been around 30 minutes time, the two men discussed the nature of the problems, focusing on Torah and mitzvos, and then took a final dive into the depths of Chassidus.

Then it really came to tachlis...

“I told him very abruptly that if he didn’t decide to change now, he would in all likeliness continue in the way he

“From that moment, that encounter, a Jew was released from a lifetime of imprisonment to foreign ideas concerning human nature, and he had a renewed hope and optimism for change and improvement.”

was going, hopping from one psychiatric hospital to another and being sedated by one drug followed by another.

“Together we got through to each other. He realized that he had to change himself and it was all in his hands to do it – that nothing stands in the way of one’s will power.

“The Jewish neshama in front of me broke down crying, and he sobbed and sobbed for 10 minutes. In that moment he had a flash of all the wasted years, relying on promises of aid and therapy from doctors and medications.”

* * *

With time running out, Jacobson

demanded that the man make positive resolutions.

Together, the two neshamos decided that the best thing was to increase in Torah, mitzvos, and t’filla, and even more importantly to become consistently involved in learning Chabad Chassidus. Jacobson’s “prescription” also included giving him contacts with Chabad shluchim in his area and advised him to find a mashpia to guide him in his step-to-step journey of improvement.

Then Jacobson felt it was best to leave the man to act on his new conclusions and departed as abruptly as he had entered...

* * *

“I don’t know what happened,” said Jacobson, “but I know from that moment, that encounter, a Jew was released from a lifetime of imprisonment to foreign ideas concerning human nature, and he had a renewed hope and optimism for change and improvement.

“There’s no hopeless situation. We can always get out of it. So I knew that it was okay to leave him, because I could see that it was a light coming out of the darkness.”

* * *

As a footnote, it is interesting to note that Jacobson’s wife Leah, who had spent many years earning advanced degrees in the field of psychology in South Africa, has reached a similar professional and spiritual conclusion as her husband. Mrs. Jacobson has recently begun teaching a Tanya class for women in Tzfas and has assured participants that all the answers to life’s problems are to be found within these holy chapters.

“Chassidus has the answers to everything,” concluded Jacobson. “Even though sometimes the Rebbe would suggest people totally out of control to see a psychologist – the only true path of healing and psychology of a Jew is Chassidus. Everything else is just temporary and superficial.”